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MAVIS GALLANT'S SHORT FICTION:
HISTORY AND MEMORY IN THE LIGHT OF IMAGINATION

by

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Abstract

Since 1944, Mavis Gallant has published over one hundred short stories. Her position as Canada's foremost expatriate writer is subsumed in her importance as a major short story writer of the postwar era: I claim that her stories enact the distortions of history and memory caused by the social, cultural, and political upheavals of the second world war. Her stories depart from their realist ground to register impressionistically these fissures in time; style and structure teach readers to discern Gallant's theme in the forms of characters' returns to and evasions of the past. As Gallant traces these returns to moments in memory and history, her fiction modulates between apparent documentary realism and transparent impressionism, between scrupulously accurate representation of a historical world and reflexive commentary on memory's processes of invention.

The structure of Gallant's fiction formulates characters' returns to missed moments of insight, returns which imply time's fractured progress in their circular eddies between present and past. Studying Gallant's fiction chronologically, I trace in Chapters One through Five the articulation of a broken dialogue between history and memory which begins with characters fleeing from history's reports into memory's fictions. This dialogue develops as postwar history swamps memory, stranding individuals in an attenuated present tense, and it culminates

in characters' realization of history's moment as memory's home. In Chapter Five, I examine how these dialogues between memory and history resolve themselves in Gallant's Linnet Muir stories. I show how these lines of development underscore transformations in narrative structure, in point of view, treatment of time, and creation of character, and how the stories' settings evoke an opposition between North American and European visions of history.

In Chapter Six, these analyses lead to a concluding study of imagination in Gallant's stories as a light which illuminates the convergence of history with memory, enabling characters to imagine a homecoming in time. Gallant's stories invite readers to consider the ways in which memory's objective portraits and subjective inventions develop into comments on the writer's art of calling the past into being.

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CHAPTER I

Reading Gallant's Canon

From 1944 until the late 1970's, Mavis Gallant's career developed quietly but steadily. Her first two published short stories, "Good Morning and Goodbye" and "Three Brick Walls," appeared in 1944 in Preview;¹ in 1944, Gallant also began work as a journalist for the Montreal Standard. Over the next six years, she wrote over sixty feature articles for the Standard, as well as photo-stories, reviews, captions, and (from October 1947 to June 1949) a weekly column about radio, "On the Air."² Gallant published another short story, "A Wonderful Country," in the Standard in 1946; she left Montreal and the Standard in 1950 to try and make a living and a life writing fiction in Europe.³ In 1951 Northern Review published "The Flowers of Spring," and "Madeline's Birthday" became the first of Gallant's stories to appear in the New Yorker, which has been publishing her stories regularly ever since. To date, Gallant has published some ninety-seven stories and two novellas, most of them appearing first in the New Yorker.⁴ She has also written two novels, Green Water, Green Sky (1959), and A Fairly Good Time (1970), and four groups of her stories have been published as books: The Other Paris (1956), My Heart Is Broken (1964), The Pegnitz Junction (1973), and From the Fifteenth District (1979). The six "Linnet Muir stories" form an important fifth group, comprising one third of Gallant's latest collection of stories, Home Truths, which won her the Governor-General's award for fiction in 1981.⁵

The history of critical attention to Gallant in Canada is all too quickly told. The first article on Gallant's fiction, a study of her three "novels" by Peter Stevens, appeared in 1973.⁶ Douglas Malcolm completed his Master's thesis, "The Theme of Exile in Mavis Gallant's Fiction," in 1975, and has since published a comprehensive bibliography of works by and about Gallant.⁷ In 1978, an issue of Canadian Fiction Magazine was devoted to Gallant, with an interview by Geoff Hancock, articles by Robertson Davies, George Woodcock, and Ronald Hatch, and an updated version of Malcolm's bibliography.⁸ This CFM issue remains the single most valuable source of material on Gallant. Hancock's interview, although his questions and comments are not always as productive as they might be, is still the most wide-ranging and informative discussion with Gallant to date.⁹ In addition to Ronald Hatch's four other articles on Gallant, there is Grazia Merler's book, Mavis Gallant: Narrative Patterns and Devices (1978), a very recent article on My Heart Is Broken by David O'Rourke, a scattering of reviews and interviews, and entries on Gallant in several surveys of Canadian literature.¹⁰

One can only speculate on what this paucity of critical discussion indicates about Gallant's fiction or about the Canadian critical community. Perhaps the difficulty has been that Gallant writes stories which resist interpretation almost successfully. After praising her, as most reviewers do, as a fine "realist," and for her faithful, exacting transcriptions of setting, her precise renditions of the nuances of cultural surrounds, her fine ear for dialogue and her sharp eye for detail, interpretation has come to a dead end.¹¹ Close readings of Gallant's stories can bog down in a mass of details, all significant, none representative. Thematic interpretation, which usually begins by calling attention to Gallant's

recurring focus on exiles, expatriates, and refugees, adrift in European pensions, villas, and hotels, leaves too many unanswered questions about form in Gallant's fiction.¹² The form of Gallant's stories reflects her fiction's tendency to return to moments of potential insight--readers' and characters'--moments which might restructure the "situation" in which Gallant says most of her stories begin.¹³ Reviewing From the Fifteenth District, V. S. Pritchett calls Gallant a "circling storyteller"; Gallant herself comments to Geoff Hancock on the structure of many of her stories: "The story builds around its centre, rather like a snail."¹⁴

The centre of a Gallant story typically consists, not only of a "locked situation," but also of a moment of potential revelation. The significance, the presence of these revelatory moments, however, is often missed by characters engaged in a many-voiced dialogue with the past. These dialogues are most often broken, cut short, interrupted, as memory reaches for languages with which to transcribe, reorder or recreate history evaded, or history encountered. One line of development in Gallant's fiction runs from early stories with characters who; in retreat from history, miss the significance of these moments entirely; to characters dimly aware that such moments are "taking place" in time; to characters who tell stories which explore the potential revelations within these moments. This line of development culminates in the Linnet Muir stories, in which Linnet recreates living moments within memory and within history.

The most important interpretative journey for readers of Gallant's fiction involves constructing the potential revelations inhering in these moments. Reading Gallant's fiction also demands that we attend to characters' missed moments of insight, dialogue, and contact, and that we read these moments as the causal elements of "plot," replacing the traditional

concept of plot as a linear chain of events linked by cause and effect.

Reading the stories in this manner is less a matter of choice than of necessity. Gallant's narrators rarely announce a theme, pronounce a truth, or signal a meaning through any but the most indirect and oblique avenues. The reader wishing to take interpretative revenge on Gallant's art will be frustrated by labyrinths of particulars which do not easily lead to generalization. Gallant's fiction invites readers to return to its surfaces, to attend first to Gallant's style. And style, Gallant suggests, is married to the whole, to fictional form: "Style is inseparable from structure, part of the conformation of whatever the author has to say."¹⁵

Gallant has been writing important short fiction since the early nineteen-fifties, even if widespread recognition in Canada began only after the appearance of From the Fifteenth District, her finest book of stories to date.¹⁶ As Gallant explains in her important introduction to Home Truths, she was writing fiction while working on the Standard and before, and she has continued to write nonfiction throughout her career.¹⁷ This fact is important because one of the most striking qualities of the surface of Gallant's fiction has always been its documentary, reportorial tone, its apparently objective, detached point of view. Gallant has written two major pieces of nonfiction since leaving the Standard: her two-part "The Events in May: A Paris Notebook" (1968), which appeared in the New Yorker, and her long introductory essay to the Gabrielle Russier Affair, published in 1971.¹⁸ She has also written a number of reviews for the New York Times Book Review, as well essays on France and French customs,

architecture, and literary fashions for the Atlantic and the New Yorker. She has been working for the last eight years on what promises to be her most important nonfictional work, a book-length history, now near completion, of the Dreyfus affair.

Gallant's Standard work ranges over a wide variety of topics. Gallant herself proposed the subjects for some of the articles; other topics were assigned by her editors. Some of the features, written for a general audience, obviously reveal very little about Gallant's own interest in or knowledge of the topic at hand. Her article "Freud or Double Talk," for example, is a simplified, generalized report on basic Freudian tenets; Gallant herself, raised for a time by a New York psychiatrist who had been analyzed by Freud and had also been his assistant, was deeply interested in Freudian psychoanalysis at one stage in her life.¹⁹ In other articles, Gallant's comments on her subjects are more revealing, giving us at the very least a sense of her encyclopaedic range of interests. These interests include more than a passing acquaintance with English and French-Canadian writing: Gallant wrote features for the Standard on Hugh MacLennan, Dorothy Duncan, W. O. Mitchell, Paul Hiebert, Roger Lemelin, Louis Hémon, and Gabrielle Roy.²⁰ For her photo-story on Roy's The Tin Flute, a novel she admired very much, she had actors stage set scenes from the book in Montreal's St.-Henri district, Roy's original setting.²¹ She wrote several features on war-brides, on refugees, immigrants, on displaced people in an alien culture--the kinds of figures who populate many Gallant stories.²² She wrote several features and shorter articles on the power politics within families, a theme which was to become important in many of her stories.²³ Her weekly "On The Air" columns provide a running commentary on the atmosphere and programming practices of the

CBC, on radio soap opera (predictably, a *bête noire* of Gallant's), on radio advertising practices, on the generally poor quality of radio comedy. Occasionally, Gallant will also reflect on plot, character, dialogue, and fiction, throwing light on her own practices as a writer. Commenting, for example, on a Saturday night program, "Canadian Short Stories," Gallant writes:

[I]t gives the writer the experience of hearing rather than seeing his work, which can be a valuable lesson. There is something relentless about a story read aloud. Lack of rhythm, vagueness and faulty characterization are glaringly obvious because you can't skip and you can't reread. 24

In other columns, Gallant takes incisive and sharp-tongued measure of Canadian intellectual life. Scoffing at a program called "Critically Speaking," for example, Gallant presents her view of Canadian criticism circa 1949:

In voice and opinions most of the speakers vary from the academic groan to the petulant whine. Over everything they say, in the case of the book critics, lies that terribly [sic] pall of Canadian literary pedantry, that feeling that the speaker has read all the back issues of *Partisan Review* [sic] and is just as smart as anyone else, see? 25

Panning an album of records, "I Can Hear It Now," Gallant complains of reviewers who fail to mention the "overbearing commentary" by Edward Murrow as he interrupts speeches by Churchill and Stalin; Murrow, writes Gallant, becomes "embarrassingly emotional about events which have enough emotional value in themselves to get by without adjectives."²⁶ Gallant's own fictional idiom gains much of its intensity from compression and restraint; almost forty years later, she comments again on her wariness

of adjectives, recalling the manner in which she tried to describe the first pictures of the concentration camps sent to the Standard after the war. She tells Geoff Hancock that she had decided that adjectives would blur the pictures' significance, and so there "must be no descriptive words in this, no adjectives. Nothing like 'horror,' 'horrifying' because what the pictures are saying is stronger and louder."²⁷

Gallant's sense that literary form must accommodate the less formal patterns of real people's "case histories" emerges in another "On The Air" column. Describing Len Peterson's radio plays, broadcast on "In Search of Ourselves," she writes:

Although these short dramas deal with emotional problems, they are not relentless. They combine humour with insight, details which detract from the occasional grimness. Unlike the ordinary radio play, they don't come to the traditional fictional climax. After all, the people portrayed here are real and their stories are case histories. Real problems do not always resolve themselves tidily, and if the stories sometimes seem incomplete it is because they are true. 28

One of the most striking qualities of Gallant's style is her gift for vivid and telling simile. Describing the poor quality of the voices on a soap opera produced in Canada, she complains in one of her "On The Air" columns: "And as for the actors, I don't know what happens to these usually capable people There is so much choking and gasping that it's like tuning in on an aquarium."²⁹

Gallant's work with the Standard is important, not so much for the thematic connections between journalism and fiction as for connections relevant to Gallant's manner, style, and form, particularly to the forms reports take in her fiction.³⁰ These formal connections provide insight

into the development of Gallant's fiction from its documentary, transcriptive, representational edge to the increasingly complex, reflexive stories of the seventies. Gallant's early work on the Standard shows how sharp an eye for detail she had in her early twenties; her talents as an exacting transcriber of setting, dialogue, and atmosphere inform many of her stories, early and late. On first reading, the dominant mode of Gallant's stories appears to be documentary realism; but at the same time as Gallant's stories report on characters framed in historical settings, they also reflect on the kinds of fictions characters formulate as they encounter history's settings, as they discover themselves within history. In Gallant's fiction, the objective force of the past as history oppresses her characters with too much "other," too much world, while the past (as formulated by subjective memory, apart from history) enfolds them within too much self. Her stories, beginning at least as early as "The Other Paris" (1953), invite readers to listen to characters' increasingly complex dialogues with time. These interrupted dialogues between memory and history shape memory's fictions into retreats from history's facts in early stories; in the stories of The Pegnitz Junction (1973), this dialogue increasingly becomes history's monologue, silencing or eradicating memory; in later stories, the opposition resolves itself in a momentary convergence, a communion of memory with history, self with world, an illumination provided by Netta Asher's "light of imagination" in "The Moslem Wife" (1972) and enacted in the Linnet Muir stories. These later reports on imagination can be read more consistently on several levels than can the flatter stories of the fifties, but the focus of the Linnet Muir stories on memory, history, fiction, and imagination takes us back to "The Other Paris" and its report on Carol Frazier's broken dialogue with time.

The most useful study of the development of Gallant's fiction is a chronological one, using her books of stories as cumulative points of reference. By the time The Other Paris appeared in 1956, Gallant had published eighteen stories, six of which remain uncollected.³¹ These stories, all set in North America, provide readers with early versions of some of Gallant's recurring themes and forms. "Good Morning and Goodbye" and "Three Brick Walls" (1944) are linked stories which define a typical Gallant figure's sensation of being foreign and voiceless, silenced by what passes among characters in the "home" culture as dialogue.³² Paul, a young Jewish-German immigrant, is doubly estranged from the Trennans, the family that has taken care of him during the first year of his North American initiation. The story reports on Paul's last day with them, a day on which the only words Paul says are "good morning" and "goodbye," ironically freeing himself into a silence beyond the family's inane dialogues. "Three Brick Walls" follows Paul to his new "freedom" in the silence and anonymity of a boarding house in a working class district of an unidentified big city. Both stories, and especially the second one, are bare, stark, and flat, and both take as their crucial moment a break in the ordered but sterile patterns of Paul's life. These moments, typical in Gallant's stories, both promise and threaten: they promise a break from the stifling patterns which have imprisoned Paul in a silent but ordered isolation, but they also threaten him with the "vacuum" which the absence of a pattern, of order, will confer:

He had learned in his life of many changes never to say "This is the last time I walk down these stairs to breakfast" and "This is the last time I say "Good Morning." But it was there, the sense of ending, and the slipping into the vacuum that lies between the patterns in a life. 33

In later stories, Gallant dramatizes these moments instead of explaining them; but a similar sense to Paul's in this story, that the ordered patterns of a sterile and isolated expatriation become preferable to the "sense of ending" which threatens to disrupt even that bare minimum of routine and habit, informs many of Gallant's stories. Many stories dramatize moments similar to this one of Paul's, as he descends the stairs on the last morning in what has been an alien household; many stories also study, in their evocations of these moments, an ironic absence of communication, setting the sustained chatter of a family or of a culture over against the silence of an embattled individual groping for words with which to define himself. Paul, early in his stay with the Trennans, tries to find the words with which to explain his life to them: he wants them to understand his "great burden," the red "J" stamped on his passport. "This is in my life, a certain thing," he says, but the "groped-for clumsy English words receded again, and he faltered" (2). Unable to articulate the causes of his sense of otherness, Paul sinks "into a well of silence" (2). Set over against the potentially meaningful language contained within this silence is the pointless noise of the family's incessant talking:

It talked, this family. Even when the house was empty, the rooms were articulate : . . . They said everything and kept nothing back. They scraped the day of its doing every night at the dinner table. At breakfast, they discussed their dreams, and each told how he had slept. Every headache, each anger, every reaction, was broken down into words and phrases and exclamations. (1) 34

Paul's sense of freedom in silence is ironic, but so is the family's sense of engagement and communication through chatter.

The governing impression in these first two stories is of estrange-

ment, entrapment, and silence, but Paul's silence is also a sanctuary, a refuge. These portraits of Paul represent Gallant's first attempts to study a refugee's inner life; "Good Morning and Goodbye" is the more successful of the two stories because it defines Paul's isolation more particularly against the community of talkers he lives with.

Although it is the weakest of these early stories, "A Wonderful Country" (1946) is an instructive failure. Its central opposition is between an inarticulate Hungarian immigrant looking for a house to rent in Montreal early in the war, and the mundane, middle-aged couple he rents from. His inarticulateness stems from his difficulties with English, theirs from a life spent learning to suppress essential communication. The narrator, a junior assistant in a real estate office, mediates between her client and the couple, shifting from a determinedly neutral stance to increased sympathy for the Hungarian, who, despite his near total inarticulateness, finally exclaims in delight over an eggbeater in the kitchen: "'Madam' 'What a wonderful country.'" ³⁵ The Hungarian's ability to marvel spontaneously at the technological gew-gaw enlists the narrator's sympathy, while she is horrified that the woman from whom he is renting the house can only mutter at her, in passing ("so low I could hardly hear"), "'I'm going into the hospital and my husband's taking a furnished room Fifty-fifty chance'" (8). The distinction appals the narrator, who reflects, "If you feel awful, . . . why don't you scream and cry?", but decides that "there was no point in saying it" to the woman (8). ³⁶ The story's power lies in this central distinction between the Hungarian's willingness to articulate even the most trivial of enthusiasms and the ingrained reticence of the woman and her husband. The story's weaknesses lie with the narrator's anxiety to explain this

point to the reader, to reveal its significance. The story demonstrates Gallant's emerging powers of description, but it also shows how her form is weakened by diffuse explanation. Two passages from the story demonstrate the distinction and show in which direction Gallant's form develops. First, a description of setting, early in the story. The narrator is taking the Hungarian to see the house:

The taxi stopped in front of a small brick duplex on one of those semi-suburban streets. There was a small lawn, yellow from the August sun, and a bicycle leaning against the porch. All the shades were down, as though the tenants had left for the summer. The street was still and flat, edged with telephone poles. (4)

This passage shows Gallant's eye for telling detail, as well as the form of her reportorial surface. The flat, declarative assertions sketch a sharply visualized, reported picture, whose detail reveals aridity, reclusion, stillness, and a lack of depth, or shadow, a lack of relief. Gallant develops this kind of report into a form which more than any other characterizes her fiction's powers to render significance through detail, without comment, without explanation. But in this early story, Gallant does not allow this kind of report to stand for itself. Her narrator will also step back and explain effects which would stand better on their own. As the woman takes the Hungarian on an itemized tour of her home, the narrator pauses to reflect:

The Hungarian looked a little puzzled, but his smile was amiable as ever. I wished for the first time I had made more effort to know him. The four of us were so disorganized in that room, it would have been nice to have felt some unity. (8)

This kind of passage, with its reliance on fuzzy generalities and abstract

reflections to instruct the reader in how to read the significance of the scene being described, is uncharacteristic of Gallant's narrative. Passages of straight exposition vanish as her fiction develops, or modulate into ironic commentary from narrators who narrate less to explain their own reactions (or prescribe readers' responses) than to create telling impressions of the characters they report on.

A character very much like Paul, and with the same name, reappears in a minor role in "Madeline's Birthday" (1951). But the isolated figure in this story is Madeline, who finds herself on her seventeenth birthday at the summer house of a friend of her mother's. She doesn't want to be there, and she deeply offends her hostess and antagonist, Mrs. Tracy, by crying on what should be a festive occasion. The story turns on the opposition Gallant creates between Mrs. Tracy's tightly defined sense of social order, routine, and habit, and Madeline's spontaneous and unsettling unhappiness, which momentarily isolates Mrs. Tracy in her determination to see that everyone behaves predictably. Mrs. Tracy's response to this threatening moment, this rupture in her conception of routine reactions to "happy" events like birthdays, is skillfully handled in the most powerful ending in Gallant's uncollected early fiction. Mrs. Tracy tells her daughter Allie: "'My summers have always been so perfect, ever since I was a child';³⁷ she then bursts into tears and runs out to the garden, where she makes a gesture toward reestablishing the carefully cultivated order which Madeline has disrupted. Paul watches from a window as Mrs. Tracy "stopped and bent down to pull three or four bits of wild grass from a flower bed. Then she wiped her eyes with her hands and walked calmly back to the house" (24). It is Mrs. Tracy, with her inviolable sense that life is orderly and that people in her house must be happy on their birthdays,

who carries the day. She tells her daughter: "'I could believe I was the only person who had enjoyed being here this summer. But I know it isn't reasonable.'"(24). Gallant selects a fine objective correlative for Mrs. Tracy's re-ordering of her state of mind in the image of her re-ordering her garden; the brief explanatory intrusion is the only flaw in an otherwise masterful ending: "She had, in fact, put the idea out of her head while pulling grass from the garden"--the idea that she was the only person enjoying her summer. The reader does not need to be told to make this connection between an image and its significance. Later stories instruct readers more subtly.

These early stories suggest the scope of Gallant's themes and the directions in which her form develops. Balancing silence with language, inarticulateness with articulateness, she continues to study refugees, expatriates, and exiles, although as she begins to set her characters in postwar Europe, an emerging fiction about North American versus European versions of history evolves, elaborated through Gallant's developing exploration of memory's interrupted dialogues with the past. She also continues to develop a form in which reports become central, narrators' voices are increasingly inflected with irony, and telling detail increasingly replaces expository, explanatory intrusions.

Gallant's two novels, Green Water, Green Sky and A Fairly Good Time, are best read as illuminations of her short fiction rather than the other way around.³⁸ Like Chekhov, Katherine Mansfield, and Alice Munro, Gallant is a pure short story writer--unlike D. H. Lawrence, Margaret Laurence, or Margaret Atwood, for example. Her stories are fictions of revelation

rather than documentary accounts of life, bringing her closer in spirit to Mansfield than to a more purely documentary writer like Norman Levine.

Discussions of Gallant's form, however, run into the same problem that most discussion of the short story form has had to contend with: the short story's status in relation to the novel. Attempts to define the short story usually proceed either to establish it as an offspring of the novel, or to wean it away from its "parent" genre by establishing major formal, thematic, or stylistic differences.³⁹ The most useful definition of short story form, for Gallant as well as for other modern short story writers, may well be modal rather than exclusively generic. In "Defining the Short Story: Impressionism and Form," Suzanne Ferguson attempts to define the influence of impressionism on the modern short story.⁴⁰ She argues that the modern short story differs more markedly from its Victorian antecedents than does the modern novel: her strategy is to identify seven characteristics of modern fiction, and then to show how these seven "impressionist" qualities inform the modern short story more distinctively than they do the modern novel.

Generally, Ferguson's discussion is useful in its identification of a middle modal ground--impressionism--located between realism and post-modernism. Ferguson suggests that modern fiction moved beyond realism into impressionism when writers lost faith in and so turned away from the representation of experience via objective transcription, via pure mimesis; they turned toward emphasis on the "representation of experience as experienced by individuals."⁴¹ Ferguson sees this shift connected with the turn in philosophy away from positivism toward phenomenology, arguing that the emphasis on the seeming perceptions of characters (as opposed to the "objective" perception of reality by reliable narrators) is "inextri-

cably related" to the technical shift in modern fiction toward "limiting and foregrounding of point of view."⁴² Building on this perception, Ferguson suggests that the short story, "because it has fewer 'optional' narrative elements in its structural slots, manifests its formal allegiances to impressionism even more obviously than does the novel."⁴³

Beyond these general observations (many of which apply peripherally to modernism as well as to Ferguson's more particular focus on impressionism) Ferguson contributes four specific observations which are more directly relevant to discussion of Gallant's form. Three of these are among Ferguson's seven categories: the "rejection of chronological time ordering"; "formal and stylistic economy"; and "the foregrounding of style."⁴⁴ Ferguson contends that the "de-emphasis of the orderly unfolding of an action through time is closely related to the emergence of 'epiphany' as an ordering device." She suggests that in the modern short story, "we frequently see only one such privileged moment, which takes the place of the traditional 'turning point,' the climax of the plot."⁴⁵ In Gallant's fiction, these moments figure as points at which a character, in the "light of imagination," might discover the real nature of time, moments when memory articulates a language which can enter into dialogue with history. Throughout Gallant's fiction, these moments flicker with the possibility of voice discovering language, of self discovering ghostly presence. These are also the moments which order time in Gallant's fiction; her stories conform to Ferguson's characterization of the modern short story in that they "seem to disdain temporal order but covertly remind us how time-bound we are."⁴⁶

Ferguson's second category, formal and stylistic economy, we have already seen to be the strongest quality in Gallant's early stories and as

a concern she expressed as a journalist with the Standard. Gallant has commented that most of her work is cutting, paring description to essentials.⁴⁷ Her fictional idiom relies on nouns and verbs to communicate through compression and concentration, rather than on adjectival or adverbial expansion and ornamentation. As far as the foregrounding of style is concerned, Ferguson avers that impressionist fiction "foregrounds style in the emphasis on rhythmic prose, exact diction, and a high reliance on figures, particularly simile and metaphor."⁴⁸ Gallant relies more heavily on simile than on metaphor, and the language of her stories, although it certainly shows her concern for "exact diction," is more reportorial than rhythmic. Gallant's language is surgically precise: this precision, a quality which Ferguson suggests marks all impressionist writers' style, is Gallant's "signature."⁴⁹ With the possible exception of Alice Munro, there is no contemporary Canadian novelist or short story writer who approaches Gallant as a stylist.

But if Gallant's style molds the surfaces, the structures, and the substance, or "content" of her stories into a brilliantly polished "conformation," it also challenges readers' attempts to interpret her stories, to find what Ferguson refers to as the "'storiness' emerging from the often obscure system the author provides."⁵⁰ It is in this sense that Gallant's stories reveal or conceal nothing but the surfaces themselves. As Roland Barthes would say, her texts are composed of "a construction of layers (or levels, or systems), whose body contains, finally no heart, no kernel, no secret, no irreducible principle, nothing except the infinity of its own envelopes--which envelop nothing other than the unity of its own surfaces."⁵¹ Ferguson concludes by suggesting that the impressionist short story offers readers a complex adventure in reading, the outcome of

which is not "truth" but a proposition "whose validity remains conditional and implicit":

In the modern, impressionist short story, in which plot is frequently suppressed, in which characterization is often achieved by having the characters perceive something or somebody "other" rather than acting or being themselves described by an implied author, in which setting may displace event, and in which the very sentence structures or figurative language may imply relationships not otherwise expressed, the readers' ability to recognize a theme is paramount to their acceptance of the work as belonging to the genre, "story." Oddly, this kind of narrative, whose most typical epistemology assumes the privacy of truth in individual experience, becomes the genre in which the readers' abstraction of theme--the statement of an interpretation--is a major factor in their differentiating it from other kinds of narrative. The moral is no longer an easily abstractable truism verified by an implied author, but a complex and hardly won proposition whose validity remains conditional and implicit, unconfirmed by the authorial voice, giving the story both "unity of effect" and a certain vagueness or mystery. 52.

For Ferguson, the processes of impressionist fiction culminate in a challenge to readers to read, rather than in a demonstration of characters' self-discoveries. This distinction is instructive for readers of Gallant's short stories. Ferguson comments: "It is often the reader, rather than the character, who must directly confront the possibility that we cannot know anything for certain, that the processes we follow in search of truth may yield only fictions."⁵³ Gallant's short stories invite readers to consider the implications of this uncertainty, and to read the imaginative formulation of fictions which may be "only" fictions, but which enable characters and readers to fictionalize life through art, realizing the highest function of imagination.

In an interview with Gallant for Telescope, Fletcher Markle asks her to play free association with him, with some interesting results. Responding to his cue, "Tolstoi," Gallant says: "'There are two kinds of writers to me, the Tolstoi and the Dostoevski. You can put every writer into the Tolstoi or Dostoevski side. Tolstoi is my side.'"⁵⁴ Reading Gallant's stories, one can profitably range a series of objective and subjective (or "classical" and "romantic") oppositions under "Tolstoi" and "Dostoevski," oppositions such as history and memory, report and reflection: these are the poles between which Gallant's fiction sets characters' attempts to resolve the dialectic between self and world. When Gallant identifies herself as belonging to the Tolstoi school, she advertises the direction her characters must take in order to resolve this dialectic. They find accommodation not in romantic assertions of the supremacy of private selfhood, or in the validity of memory uninformed by history, but by acknowledging the contingency of history and the reality of historical selfhood. In exploring the connections and the ruptures between past and present, Gallant's fiction teaches readers how and where history and memory speak with each other, and suggests the implications of the absence of such dialogues for readers, characters, and cultures.

Reading Gallant's stories with attention to these dialogues between history and memory requires that we acknowledge that her fiction departs from its realist ground. Discussions of departures from realism, however, like discussions of realism itself, face the difficulties which have always attended the term. Northrop Frye quotes this "inept term" when he uses it in Anatomy of Criticism to show his distaste for it, and Ian Watt points out the problems the term has inherited from philosophy.⁵⁵ Contemporary critics are wary of the term's implications that realist

texts are referential, that they represent, transcribe, copy, document the world beyond the words of the text, that they have a subject beyond themselves.

But no adequate reading of Gallant's fiction can dispense with her stories' foundations in the realist mode. Almost every story Gallant has written is demonstrably realist as well as impressionist.⁵⁶ But her stories create worlds as well as represent them, departing from the mimetic ground of the traditional realist text to incorporate her investigation into the twin forces of time, forces which her characters encounter, exploit, and suffer privately, through memory, and socially, as history. Gallant's formulations of her characters' experience of time lead toward her stories' implicit and explicit reflections on imagination. Her stories demand that readers recognize the adventures of characters who make various kinds of fictions out of their sense of time: fictions which, ironically, flee history through memory; fictions--and memories--which are increasingly paralyzed by history; and fictions which engage history when characters begin to live within both memory and history, by imagining their convergence in the present, in the "light of imagination" which would illuminate self and world within time.

Gallant's stories are best served, not by taking them hostages for warring critical camps, one of which announces an end to mimetic theories of fiction, assuming that mimesis is a dead issue (read structuralist, poststructuralist, deconstructive), the other advocating more-formalist-than-thou adherence to new-critical strategies (read reactionary, retrograde, humanist).⁵⁷ Rather, Gallant's stories should be read as explorations of the powers of realism to reach beyond itself, to urge a reading

of fiction as mimesis and as creation. Read as realist and impressionist texts, Gallant's stories reveal themselves as fictions which oppose history, tradition, and culture to individuals' various arts of remembering. History's thesis and memory's antithesis converge in imagination's synthesis, and imagination's "light" illuminates Gallant's figures' homecoming within time. Gallant's stories express art's potential to figure imagination's fictions, not as self-conscious post-modernist games, but as the fictions through which characters create selves and self-shaped lives in an historical world. Gallant's reports on the world develop into reports on the shape and shaping of imagination; in this sense, structuralism's claim for the novel, not as mimesis, but as a reflection on how we "make sense," as an enactment of the adventure of making sense, is a valuable claim for reading Gallant's fiction.⁵⁸ Valuable, but not pre-emptive: Gallant's fiction engages readers in words and world, creation and mimesis.

In a recent article entitled "What Is Style?" (September 1982), Gallant comments on what she sees as fiction's centrally temporal purpose:

Style is inseparable from structure, part of the conformation of whatever the author has to say. What he says--this is what fiction is about--is that something is taking place and that nothing lasts. Against the sustained tick of a watch, fiction takes the measure of a life, a season, a look exchanged, the turning point, desire as brief as a dream, the grief and terror that after childhood we cease to express. The life, the look, the grief are without permanence. The watch continues to tick when the story stops. 59

The perception that "something is taking place and that nothing lasts" is a good starting point for a reading of Gallant's fiction. Her stories, as her comment suggests, provide insights into human time and into the power

of fictional, imaginative presence to illuminate actual transience and the transience of actuality. Gallant's stories show readers how characters realize the inevitable ticking of the watch by telling themselves stories about time. In emphasizing fiction's compulsion to tell time, to reveal that "something is taking place," Gallant points to her own fiction's recreation of time, even as she ostensibly discusses "style." Her stories take up time as their theme and enact time as form, as the forms of her characters' evasions, advances, retreats, and encounters with memory and history. Reading Gallant's canon, we speak parts in this stuttering dialogue with time. Her stories invite readers to discover the ways in which memory and history, in the light of imagination, illuminate the present by realizing the past.

Notes

¹ Preview, No. 22 (December, 1944), pp. 1-3, 4-6. The bibliography attached to this dissertation records both first publication and subsequent appearances of Gallant's fiction and nonfiction.

² See the bibliography for a record of Gallant's Standard journalism.

³ The question of why Gallant left Canada for Europe has fascinated her interviewers. She tells Graeme Gibson that she "always had Europe in mind. I felt the war as something very claustrophobic I got out of North America because of the whole Eisenhower mentality . . . oh it's so stupid, political and materialistic . . . something awfully wrong." She also tells Gibson that she went to Europe because she knew she would never marry again, and that in Anglo-Saxon countries, including England, a woman could not live alone (Anthology, CBC Radio, 31 August 1974). Gallant tells Earl Beattie that she is "very European-minded," and "grew up very European-minded," had "always wanted to come" to Europe. She says she is "not so sure" that she would have continued writing had she stayed in Canada. She distinguishes Canada from Europe, remarking of Canada that she's "never been in a country where there was so much gap between reality and dream . . . the people's lives didn't match up to what they seem to think they were and the people invent things or they invent backgrounds or they invent families. Canada is a fascinating place . . . in Canada you move from Halifax to Vancouver and suddenly your father was something else, your mother was something else." In Europe, Gallant says, "you can't invent," because "everyone knows too much" (Anthology, 24 May 1969). To Susan Leslie, she says that she "wanted to see if [she] could live on [her] writing" (Audience, CBC Radio, 6 February 1982). Her interview with Geoff Hancock begins with the same question:

Hancock: What attracts you to Paris? Is it the light?
The sense of assertiveness and security Parisians have?

Gallant: No. When I left Canada I was looking for a place where I could live on my own terms. That may sound very pompous, but it's true. If it had turned out to be Madrid, I'd have stayed in Madrid. I found Paris the most open city, the one that leaves you alone most, the one where you can live exactly as you like. It's very malleable. London is too large. Rome in the 1950's was provincial.

(Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978), p. 20).

Most recently, William French has linked Gallant with Elizabeth Smart as belonging to "the generation for whom exile was a very real alternative," suggesting that this phase in Canadian literary history is over ("Rewards at home end the era of the literary exile," Globe and Mail, 1 June 1982, p. 10).

⁴ Gallant's novella "The Pegnitz Junction" and her "short novel," "Its Image on the Mirror" first appeared in The Pegnitz Junction and My Heart Is Broken respectively. Although From the Fifteenth District is subtitled "A Novella and Eight Short Stories," there is no agreement as to which of the stories is the novella. Four are candidates: "The Four Seasons," "The Moslem Wife," "The Remission," and "Potter." But as Graham Good has shown in "Notes on the Novella" (Novel [Spring 1977], 197-211), the term "novella" has meant different things in English, Spanish, Italian, French, and German literary tradition and criticism; Good proposes that we collapse the two terms most often opposed to the novel--novella and short story--into one, "novella," since these two forms share so many similarities. To describe Gallant's short fiction, I am using the term "story." Gallant has also published stories in Charm, Texas Quarterly, Southern Review, Harper's Bazaar, Canadian Fiction Magazine, Tamarack Review, and Esquire. See Bibliography for details.

⁵ I am distinguishing between collections and books of stories. The End of the World and Other Stories (1974) and Home Truths (subtitled "Selected Canadian Stories") are collections, although Home Truths is supposedly unified by the stories' Canadian settings. It is more helpful to read the Linnet Muir stories as developing from the stories of The Other Paris, My Heart Is Broken, The Pegnitz Junction, and From the Fifteenth District than to read them as "Canadian" stories.

⁶ "Perils of Compassion," Canadian Literature, No. 56 (Spring 1973), pp. 61-70. Stevens studies Green Water, Green Sky, "Its Image on the Mirror," and A Fairly Good Time. "Its Image on the Mirror" was published as part of My Heart Is Broken.

⁷ Malcolm's thesis was completed at Carleton in January, 1975. The first version of Malcolm's bibliography was published as "An Annotated Bibliography of Works By and About Mavis Gallant" in Essays on Canadian Writing, No. 6 (Spring 1977), pp. 32-52. The bibliography attached to this dissertation corrects, updates, and adds to this data.

⁸ Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978).

⁹ See bibliography for other interviews.

¹⁰ See bibliography.

¹¹ Woodcock and Hatch are exceptions to this rule. Woodcock studies the relations between memory, imagination, and artifice in his CFM article; Hatch takes as his point of departure the thesis that "[T]aken as a whole, Gallant's fiction offers a devastating critique of liberal humanism, devastating, precisely because the account is also sympathetic." See "Memory, Imagination, Artifice: The Late Short Fiction of Mavis Gallant," pp. 74-91; "The Three Stages of Mavis Gallant's Short Fiction," p. 93.

¹² Other kinds of interpretations, such as that by Grazia Merler, who studies the structure of Gallant's narrative patterns, open with similar observations. In her introduction, Merler, for example, writes that "characters are almost always foreigners, travellers or guests, or they feel as if they were literally or metaphorically foreign, uprooted, transient." Mavis Gallant: Narrative Patterns and Devices (Ottawa: The Tecumseh Press, 1978), p. 2.

¹³ Gallant comments to Hancock: "A story usually begins, for me, with people seen in a situation, like that. (Locks fingers together.) The knot either relaxes or becomes locked in another way." Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978), p. 45.

¹⁴ CFM, p. 45.

¹⁵ "What Is Style?" in Canadian Forum, Vol. 62, No. 721 (September 1982), p. 6.

¹⁶ Gallant's favourite among her books is The Pegnitz Junction.

¹⁷ In "An Introduction," Gallant writes: "I wrote "Tea" ["Thank You For the Lovely Tea"] in New York, when I was eighteen, and the others ["Jorinda and Jorindel" and "Up North"] in the forties, when I was working on The Standard in Montreal." (Home Truths, p. xix).

¹⁸ "Things Overlooked Before" (pp. 9-85); originally published in the New Yorker as "The Annals of Justice." See bibliography.

¹⁹ The article appeared in Standard Magazine, March 29, 1947, pp. 3, 14. Gallant tells Fletcher Markle: "I was brought up partly by a psychiatrist who was an assistant of Freud--had been analyzed by Freud." She says that Freud was "gospel" for her at certain periods in her life, that she "went through a great period of Freud" and thought of his work "almost like a code." (Telescope, Channel 6, Toronto, 22 January 1969).

²⁰ "Duncan & MacLennan: Writers," Rotogravure, 9 June 1945, pp. 16-19; "On the Air," 9 April 1949, p. 13; "Sarah of Saskatchewan," Standard Magazine, 17 April 1948, pp. 7, 14, 17; "The Town Below," Standard Magazine, 17 July 1948, pp. 11, 15; "Maria Chapdelaine," Rotogravure, 13 January 1945, pp. 6, 8, 9-11; "Canadian Story," Rotogravure, 2 March 1946, pp. 3-6, 8-9.

²¹ While working for the Standard, Gallant herself went to live in Saint-Henri so that she would be in a French-speaking district of Montreal. (Telephone interview with a Standard colleague of Gallant's, Montreal, 7 November 1981).

²² See, for example, "Report on a Repat," Rotogravure, 28 July 1945, pp. 2-6, 8-9; "These Are the First Impressions the War Brides Formed of Canada," Rotogravure, 13 October 1945, pp. 4-6, 8-9; "Don't Call Me War Bride," Standard Magazine, 2 March 1946, pp. 5, 13; "DP Test Case--A Failure," Standard Magazine, 28 August 1948, pp. 3, 16-17, 22; "I Don't Cry Anymore," Standard Magazine, 22 April 1950, pp. 5, 14, 28; "Report on a Repat, Part II," Rotogravure, 29 July 1950, pp. 16-17.

²³ See, for example, "Bringing Up Baby," Standard Magazine, 8 February 1947, pp. 4-5; "Problem Children," Rotogravure, 25 October 1947, pp. 16-17, 19-20; "Your Child Looks At You," Standard Magazine, 18 December 1948, pp. 3-4.

²⁴ "On the Air," 21 February 1948, p. 4.

²⁵ "On the Air," 26 March 1949, p. 7.

²⁶ "On the Air," 22 January 1949, p. 5.

²⁷ Hancock CFM interview, p. 39.

²⁸ "On the Air," 5 March 1949, p. 4.

²⁹ "On the Air," 22 May 1948, p. 5.

³⁰ In suggesting that reports are an important aspect of Gallant's fiction, I do not intend to argue that reports are central, which is Helmut Bonheim's contention regarding the relation between fictional modes and reports. Bonheim writes: "Report . . . is the essential mode of fiction, although even here the honours must be shared with the journalist and the historian." Bonheim, The Narrative Modes: Techniques of the Short Story (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, Boydell & Brewer, 1982), pp. 9-10.

³¹ "Good Morning and Goodbye" (1944); "Three Brick Walls" (1944); "A Wonderful Country" (1946); "The Flowers of Spring" (1950); "Madeline's Birthday" (1951); "Thieves and Rascals" (1956). See bibliography.

³² Apparently, Gallant is not particularly happy with these two stories. Robert Weaver, writing in reply to Douglas Malcolm in 1973, comments: "She published one small early story either in Preview or First Statement [sic] just before leaving Montreal, but in a letter to me about a year ago she said that she would take it as a kindness if I ignored that affair." At that time, Weaver was compiling The End of the World and Other Stories. ("The Theme of Exile in Mavis Gallant's Fiction," p. 124).

³³ "Good Morning and Goodbye," Preview, No. 22 (December 1944), p. 2. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

³⁴ Gallant comments to Geoff Hancock on communication within families: "Some people are quiet and some people never shut up. Communication is quite other. In that sense all families are the same." CFM interview, p. 23.

³⁵ "A Wonderful Country," Standard Magazine, 14 December 1946, pp. 4, 8. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

³⁶ The woman's attitude is one which resurfaces at various points in Gallant's fiction. Canadians, in particular, are defined in terms of their reticence, their stiff upper lip: compare Linnet Muir's reflections on impassivity in "In Youth Is Pleasure" (1975):

Now, of course there is much to be said on the other side: people who do not display what they feel have practical advantages. They can go away to be killed as if they didn't mind; they can see their sons off to war without a blink.... Their upbringing is intended for a crisis. But it is murder in everyday life--truly murder. The dead of heart and spirit litter the landscape.

Home Truths, pp. 227-228.

³⁷ "Madeline's Birthday," The New Yorker, 1 September 1951, pp. 20-24. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

³⁸ Green Water, Green Sky first appeared as three stories in the New Yorker: "Green Water, Green Sky" (27 June 1959); "Travellers Must Be Content" (11 July 1959); and "August" (29 August 1959). Gallant

published one part of A Fairly Good Time, "The Accident," as a short story in the New Yorker (28 October 1967), and published another story, "In Transit" in the New Yorker (14 August 1965) which she decided not to incorporate in the novel.

³⁹ Suzanne C. Ferguson summarizes the results of some of these attempts in the opening paragraph of her article, "Defining the Short Story: Impressionism and Form":

That there is no large and distinguished corpus of short story theory because the short story does not exist as a discrete and independent genre is a hypothesis--repugnant to many, of course--that ought to be taken seriously on occasion, if only to contemplate the perspective the hypothesis provides. "Intuition" or even "experience" may tell us that the "short story" exists, but defining it has proven surprisingly resistant to critical effort Short stories are defined in terms of unity (Poe, Brander Matthews, and others), techniques of plot compression (A. L. Bader, Norman Friedman, L. A. G. Strong), change or revelation of character (Theodore Stroud), subject (Frank O'Connor), tone (Gordimer), "lyricism" (Moravia), but there is no single characteristic or cluster of characteristics that the critics agree absolutely distinguishes the short story from other fictions.

Modern Fiction Studies, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Spring 1982), p. 13. Mary Louise Pratt, in her article, "The Short Story: The Long and the Short of It," argues convincingly that the short story does not in fact exist as a discrete and independent genre. Poetics, Vol. 10, Nos. 2/3 (June 1981), 175-194.

⁴⁰ Ferguson, "Defining the Short Story."

⁴¹ "Defining the Short Story," p. 15.

⁴² "Defining the Short Story," p. 15.

⁴³ "Defining the Short Story," p. 15.

⁴⁴ "Defining the Short Story," pp. 14-15.

⁴⁵ "Defining the Short Story," p. 20.

⁴⁶ "Defining the Short Story," p. 20.

47 Gallant comments: "Some stories have been cut down almost from novel length. "Potter" was nearly a novel. Most of my work is cutting." CFM interview, p. 49.

48 "Defining the Short Story," p. 21.

49 "Defining the Short Story," p. 21.

50 "Defining the Short Story," p. 23.

51 "Style and Its Image," in Literary Style: A Symposium. Ed. and trans. (in part) by Seymour Chatman (London & New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 10.

52 "Defining the Short Story," p. 23.

53 "Defining the Short Story," p. 16.

54 Telescope (Channel 6, Toronto), 29 January 1969.

55 Frye's comment comes in his "Third Essay: Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths": "Third, we have the tendency of 'realism' (my distaste for this inept term is reflected in the quotation marks) to throw the emphasis on content and representation rather than on the shape of the story." Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 140. Watt discusses the tenets of philosophical realism in the first chapter of The Rise of the Novel, "Realism and the Novel Form"; Watt summarizes:

The general temper of philosophical realism has been critical, anti-traditional, and innovating; its method has been the study of the particulars of experience by the individual investigator, who, ideally at least, is free from the body of past assumptions and traditional beliefs; and it has given a peculiar importance to semantics, to the problem of the nature of the correspondence between words and reality.

The Rise of the Novel (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957; rpt. Penguin, 1977), p. 13.

56 "Realist," at least, in the sense that her stories are "founded on experience," as she puts it:

Hancock: All your stories have a firm foundation in actual experience.

Gallant: Essentially. All work, unless it is Surrealist or Dadaist or Gothic is inevitably founded on experience.

CFM interview, pp. 50-51.

⁵⁷ In "Culture, Criticism and Unreality," Gerald Graff draws up a witty alignment of oppositions in this debate, calling his creation a "rhetorical scorecard" for the "melodrama" the two camps take parts in:

<u>Bad</u>	<u>Good</u>
representation	creation
text as determinate object	text as open, indeterminate "invitation"
boundaries and constraints	voyages into the unforeseen
docility, habit	risk
truth as correspondence	truth as invention, fiction
meaning as "product"	meaning as "process"

Chapter One of Literature Against Itself: Literary Ideas in Modern Society (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 23.

⁵⁸ Jonathan Culler, for example, describes structuralism's shift away from mimetic theory as follows:

By focussing on the ways in which it [the novel] complies with and resists our expectations, its moments of order and disorder, its interplay of recognition and dislocation, it opens the way for a theory of the novel which would be an account of the pleasures and difficulties of reading. In place of the novel as mimesis we have the novel as a structure which plays with different modes of ordering and enables the reader to understand how he makes sense of the world.

Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature (London: Routledge & Kegan-Paul, 1975, rpt. 1977), p. 238.

⁵⁹ "What Is Style?" in Canadian Forum, Vol. 67, No. 721 (September 1982), p. 6.

CHAPTER II

The Other Paris: Memory's Fictions Against History's Reports

The title story of Gallant's first book, The Other Paris (1956), opens up fissures between memory and history, between self's fictions and world's facts, and between Gallant's "North America" and Gallant's "Europe." These discontinuities, these ruptures riddle the surface and structure of many of Gallant's key stories, beginning with "The Other Paris" and ending for the time being with the "Linnet Muir stories."¹ In "The Other Paris," Gallant's finest and most representative early story, memory flees from history, self flees from world, North America flees from Europe as Carol Frazier finds a postwar Paris that threatens her ahistorical vision. As the narrator of "The Other Paris" makes painfully clear, we must read Carol's "resolution" of the polarities of her double vision ironically: Carol makes a fiction, through memory, which allows her to retreat into a comfortably private, privileged self-hood.

Along with this first expression of the broken dialogue between memory and history, the stories of The Other Paris begin to define all of Gallant's major themes and forms. There are stories which dramatize the subtle but also savage battles within families ("About Geneva"); political stories ("Señor Pinedo"); stories which bring domestic codes of conduct into sharp focus by displacing characters in alien settings, most often Europe ("The Picnic"); and reminiscences with light, comic

resolutions ("Wing's Chips," "The Deceptions of Marie-Blanche"). These are meticulously documentary stories--stories which record a closely observed surface of details, of atmosphere and setting, without shading into forms like the memoir, the personal narrative, or the essay.

Most of the narrators in The Other Paris are ironic and detached. They take up an objective, dispassionate stance, framing characters in settings, establishing situations. They observe and record action, inviting readers to decode character, to infer motivation. When first-person narrators remember, they report their memories, rather than reflect on memory's process or meaning. As Gallant's fiction develops, reporters and documentary reports, narrators and coolly ironic narration evolve into more inventive, reflective, reflexive structures, implicitly or explicitly raising questions about narrative perspective, narrative truth, memory, history, and the recollection or recreation of the past. This process of development begins most clearly with "The Other Paris." Reading Gallant's stories chronologically, we arrive at the Linnet Muir stories and re-read "The Other Paris" as the key story among Gallant's early stories, the story which most urgently invites us to consider the functions of memory, history, imagination, and fiction.

"The Other Paris" (1953) examines Carol Frazier's encounter with history in postwar Paris and her retreat into memory's fictions. The narrator invites us to read the story Carol tells herself about Paris as an evasive romanticization, one which will form her "disappointing" experience into a pleasant fiction, a "coherent picture, accurate but untrue."² Carol is one of the first of Gallant's characters to suffer

the ambiguities of a double vision: "The Other Paris" turns on the course of Carol's engagement to her American boss, an engagement which has to survive Carol's attempts to resolve the comic distance Gallant sets up between the possibilities of love in the real postwar Paris and Carol's romantic vision of love in the Paris of her dreams.

Carol, twenty-two, has come to work in Paris and quickly becomes engaged to Howard Mitchell, who is "sober, old enough to know his own mind, and absolutely reliable" (4). A young North American girl abroad, Carol brings to Paris and her engagement an unworldliness nurtured by the "helpful" practicality of classroom talks:

The fact that Carol was not in love with Howard Mitchell did not dismay her in the least. From a series of helpful college lectures on marriage she had learned that a common interest, such as a liking for Irish setters, was the true basis for happiness, and that the illusion of love was a blight imposed by the film industry, and almost entirely responsible for the high rate of divorce. (3-4)

The sharp irony here establishes a firm contract between narrator and reader, a contract which becomes more ambiguous or dissolves entirely in other stories.³ The narrator lays bare Carol's naiveté, and more generally, the nonsensically commonsensical worldview which is her inheritance and the cornerstone of Howard's "absolute reliability." The price Carol must pay for her distinctively North American brand of determined innocence is the radical separation of the banished "illusion of love" from the precincts of the real Paris, a dull, rainy city which repeatedly "disappoints" her.⁴

Carol believes that love will grow, plantlike, in the proper environment: "Love required only the right conditions, like a geranium.

It would wither exposed to bad weather or in dismal surroundings; indeed, Carol rated the chances of love in a cottage or a furnished room at zero" (4). Her practical version of love requires an ideal setting: the comic disparity between her romanticized Paris and the real Paris she encounters daily provides the simplest of the story's oppositions. On this level, the narrator treats Carol's disappointments unambiguously. Waiting for love to unfold as it properly should, Carol searches for a Paris of "famous parks," "read about" rather than lived in, its men characters in the books of "English lady novelists"; she finds transplanted Coca-Cola signs, "men who needed a haircut," and "shabby girls bundled into raincoats" (6-7).⁵

Howard is a caricature of sobriety, almost totally lacking in imagination.⁶ Carol looks and waits for the appropriately romantic (and at the same time comfortably middle-class) environment in which love will naturally blossom; retrospectively (and hypothetically) she "sincerely imagines" (which in this story is closely linked with believing) romantic contexts for romantic events:

If anyone had asked Carol at what precise moment she fell in love, or where Howard Mitchell proposed to her, she would have imagined, quite sincerely, a scene that involved all at once the Seine, moonlight, barrows of violets, acacias in flower, and a confused, misty background of the Eiffel Tower and little crooked streets. (3)

But Howard's version of an appropriate context is, in its banality, as comically inappropriate as Carol's: "Actually, he had proposed at lunch, over a tuna-fish salad" (3).

The comedy of Carol's engagement is played out against a background

which continually threatens to become foreground--the real postwar Paris, a city in which Parisians themselves are out of time and place.⁷ Odile, a secretary in Carol's office, is a representative figure, complaining to Carol over lunch about her family's economic decline since the war; she "touche[s] on the present only to complain in terms of the past" (8). Odile sees Carol's engagement to Howard as "unoriginal"; for much of the story, she and Carol are "friendly in an impersonal way" (7).

Felix, Odile's young lover, completes the quartet. He is closest to Carol in age, but most removed from her by dint of her perception of his status and class. Unemployed, without working papers, Felix is a product of the massive displacements resulting from the war. He, just as much as Odile, is a "typical" Parisian--a refugee. Anticipating her moment of contact with Felix at the end of the story, Carol compares his situation with hers but then "los[es] track" in a passage through which we hear how effectively the narrator's tonal variations can range:

She and Felix, then, were closer in age than he was to Odile, or she herself was to Howard. When I was in school, he was in school, she thought. When the war stopped, we were fourteen and fifteen . . . [sic] But here she lost track, for where Carol had had a holiday, Felix's parents had been killed. (10)

Carol's "holiday" suggests North America's celebration of peace, but the holiday also becomes a vacation from the more immediate effects of history in Europe, where the war has killed Felix's parents.

On one level, "The Other Paris" explores Carol's dilemma in trying to reconcile her ideal of romantic love with the sound, commonsensical

approach to marriage she has been taught in her "helpful lectures." "The Other Paris" was published in 1953; in 1947 Gallant wrote an article for the Standard Magazine entitled "Is Romance Killing Your Marriage?"⁸

Gallant the journalist reports:

A few weeks ago, . . . the American anthropologist Margaret Mead offered one theory [for the collapse of so many marriages]. She said that "the myth of romantic love" was responsible for the high divorce rate, and would eventually wreck civilization unless something were done about it. 9

People who believe in this myth, writes Gallant, "are looking for something which does not exist"; she cites another authority on the question:

Ernest Burgess, author of "The Family," refers to it as a "fruitless quest for the bluebird of romance," a quest which is carried on without regard for building stable homes or emotionally sound families.

This sort of behaviour is not the exclusive property of movie stars or people with time and money on their hands. Our entire upbringing tends to concentrate on the idea that love occurs like a flash of lightning [cf. Odile's description to the dressmaker: "Fell in love "At first sight, le coup de foudre." (2)] and that marriage is the proper way to meet it. Similarity of background, religious convictions, and future hopes are mentioned but rarely considered. (3)

The objective reporting of the newspaper article contrasts sharply with the narrator's ironic report on Carol's condition. The newspaper piece presents the "myth of romantic love" as the problem and college lectures as the means to demythologize love; the short story ridicules this simplistic appraisal by ironically referring to Carol's "helpful" classes on marriage. Gallant creates in Carol a character who lives the contradictions reported in the Standard article:

In fact, as far as modern life is concerned, Burgess calls the way we live "the unique attempt in the new world of America to reconcile the romantic impulse with family welfare." Romance, he explains, "was kept apart from marriage in the old world because of its seeming incompatibility with any prudent consideration of family interests." (3)

Because Carol brings this new world romantic impulse to postwar Paris, she must try to live in both worlds at once. She does so by imagining that romantic love will blossom in a comfortable, sensible environment; her attempted synthesis of irreconcilable opposites, which fails, comments on the essential incompatibility of the two impulses described in the Standard article. "The Other Paris" opens with Carol hoping to realize her vision in the world; it ends with her adopting Howard's "prudent consideration" of comfort and stability. Through amused irony, the narrator conveys to the reader, over Carol's head, the futility of her attempt to reconcile her romantic Paris with postwar Paris.

The generalized, objective discussion of the myth of romantic love in the Standard article contrasts sharply with the narrator's ironic commentary in "The Other Paris." To close the distance between the myth of romantic love and "family welfare" and combat the rising divorce rates, Gallant reports in the Standard, "colleges in the US are giving courses" (3). The cycle of broken marriages producing unhappy children who are themselves more likely to divorce their future mates "should be stopped by education and instruction--not after the marriage, but long before" (22). A Canadian psychiatrist, reports Gallant, "suggests . . . the teaching of human relations in the classroom, which is now being done on an experimental scale in Toronto" (22). Throughout the Standard article, authorities are quoted without a trace of irony: as Gallant

has remarked in an interview, irony is a luxury newspaper writers cannot afford.¹⁰ So "Dr. Baruch Silverman, who directs the Mental Hygiene Institute, says that the romantic idea is a 'false concept which they [people] try to revive now and then'" (22). Again, "Elinor Barnstead, marriage counsellor with the Family Welfare in Montreal," suggests "qualifications" couples should have in order to think about getting married. Gallant lists them, as^o a reporter would have before the advent of New Journalism, without comment:

- (1) Similar backgrounds.
- (2) Ability to be happy, with a normally happy home previously.
- (3) Emotional maturity.
- (4) A common goal--a mutual liking for children, etc.
- (5) Thorough knowledge of each other.

She begins her final paragraph by describing Miss Barnstead's points as "real suggestions which may never be met" (22).

The narrator of "The Other Paris" adopts a more ironic perspective on suggestions like Miss Barnstead's. "A common goal--a mutual liking for children, etc." conflated with the platitudes of Barnstead's qualification (2), might well have provided the raw material for the acid suggestion that "a common interest, such as a liking for Irish setters, was the true basis for happiness." The narrator edges and hones the neutral tone of the article, not only by deriding Carol's classroom lessons, but also by shaping the themes, the content of an argument, into the form of a story. The tone of the Standard article is not colourless; at points, hints of Gallant's amusement at what she is reporting surfaces: "Romantic love . . . is supposed to have started in the middle ages, when women were elevated to the pedestal they are now alleged to occupy, and

troubadours rushed about singing their praises" (3).

The one occasion on which Gallant editorializes in the Standard piece is interesting in connection with Ronald Hatch's general claim: "Taken as a whole, Gallant's fiction offers a devastating critique of liberal humanism, devastating, precisely because the account is also sympathetic."¹¹ Gallant writes:

Cameron also believes that we are in a state of transition, and that humanism will eventually be our greatest motivating force. However, that has certainly not yet appeared on the horizon, and until it does little has been presented to relieve the combination of romance and hostility many people bring into marriage. (22)

If we assume, as seems reasonable, that Gallant is expressing her own opinion here, or at least confirming Cameron's, then support for Hatch's claim comes from an informed (if biased) course. In "The Other Paris," humanism as "our greatest motivating force" is not visible on any horizon. There is little evidence of it in the bleak and desolate version presented of Paris and Parisians, nor is it a redeeming force in Carol's vision, where it appears in its most platitudinous, blandly beneficent guise--and is shown up as such. Yet the story, for all its implicit reference to culture and ideology, is never didactic. Political and ideological concerns rarely surface as raw content in Gallant's stories.

Carol's fictionalizing--what she imagines, what she reconstructs through memory and will finally believe--must be understood in the double context of what she brings to Paris and what she finds there, and Gallant's psychological realism, evident, for example, in her presentation of Carol's interior world, is as plausible as her historical realism. But

along with these achievements in plausibility, there is another important perspective in "The Other Paris": the narrator calls our attention to Carol's synthesis of dream world and real world, inviting us to read Carol's storymaking as a process closely linked with the process of memory evading history. The connections between events and their transformation into ironic stories form the structure of "The Other Paris," so that its plot is double.

There are four major events in the story.¹² The story opens at Madame Germaine's, the dressmaker, who is fitting Carol for her wedding dress. Looking out the window of the flat, Carol sees a dreary, unpromising spring. The story then cuts away from the narrative present as the narrator fills in the events of the past six months and describes Carol, Howard, Felix, and Odile. The narrator recounts the second episode, which takes place the previous Christmas: Carol had "begged him [Howard] to take her to the carol singing in the Place Vendôme" (11). Predictably, this excursion results in one of Carol's disappointments at the actual event's unromantic nature and in Howard's complaining that his feet are cold. Then, near the end of winter, Odile invites Carol and Howard to her sister Martine's recital. Carol is excited at the prospect of finally gaining entrance to her romantic Paris, but again, reality disappoints. She realizes that her conception of Paris and what she actually encounters are irreconcilable, that vision and version will not coalesce. Returning to the narrative present, we rejoin Carol and Odile, who have just left Madame Germaine's flat. Odile persuades Carol, against her will, to visit Felix. They walk to Felix's disreputable Left-Bank apartment; Carol, ill at ease, is left alone with Felix when Odile unceremoniously falls asleep on the bed. Felix escorts Carol to the Métro,

where in a final confrontation they come together briefly and then part for good.

These are the story's four principal events. Their importance in themselves is secondary; more vital is their significance either as occasions for storytelling, or as the factual bases for stories, or as theatres, stages for the melodramatic collision of two spectacles. This set of oppositions between events and their recreations provides an important context within which to read the story, a context which meshes with the set of oppositions between the real Paris and Carol's moonlit fantasies.

The opening scene provides Odile with an occasion to tell the dressmaker the story of Carol's engagement to Howard. Carol herself is detached; there is "evidently no conversation to be had" with her (2). Odile's exchange with the dressmaker is a melodramatic excerpt from a modern fairy-tale:

"Just imagine! Miss Frazier came to Paris to work last autumn, and fell in love with the head of her department."

"Non!" Madame Germaine recoiled, as if no other client had ever brought off such an extraordinary thing.

"Fell in love with Mr. Mitchell," said Odile, nodding. "At first sight, le coup de foudre."

"At first sight?" said the dressmaker. She looked fondly at Carol.

"Something no one would have expected," said Odile.

"Although Mr. Mitchell is charming. Charming."

"I think we ought to go," said Carol. (2)

Odile mildly protests as they walk away ("I didn't say anything that wasn't true . . . it's such a wonderful story It was terribly romantic" [2-3]); but "It penetrated at last that Odile was making fun

of her" (3). Carol finds Odile's "slight irony" perplexing, as she should. Carol is the subject/object of a story, Odile the narrator, Madame Germaine the active reader. The exchange between Odile and Madame Germaine mirrors or reflects the structure of the larger story, in which a knowing and ironic narrator describes Carol to readers who are being taught how to read Carol's character, and so how to read the story. In this opening dialogue, Odile transforms Carol's actual engagement (over tuna-fish salad) into an ironically romantic ("unoriginal" [1]) story. Odile modulates the narrator's sharper ironies; her minor-key variations on the major theme begin the process of teaching us how to read the larger story in which she herself takes a part.

The next "story" has more complex implications. Carol goes to the carol singing at the Place Vendôme hoping to find the raw content for a "warm memory":

Here, she imagined, with the gentle fall of snow and the small, rosy choirboys singing between lighted Christmas trees, she would find something--a warm memory that would, later, bring her closer to Howard, a glimpse of the Paris other people liked. (11-12)

Instead of snow there is rain; the singers are "testing voice levels for a broadcast"; the whole "scene" is an empty media event: "Newspaper photographers drifted on the rim of the crowd, and the flares that lit the scene for a newsreel camera blew acrid smoke in their faces" (12). Carol is "plaintive with disappointment," but she salvages a piece of mistletoe which, by a series of sentimental associations, makes her feel sorry for Paris and for Felix. But her sorrow is orchestrated, melodramatic, as the narrator makes clear with this simile: "Her throat

went warm, like the prelude to a rush of tears" (13). Carol and Howard go on to finish the evening with friends, for whom Howard "made an amusing story out of their adventure in the Place Vendôme" (13). In the story's central passage, the narrator describes Carol's insight upon hearing Howard's version of their misadventure:

She realized for the first time that something could be perfectly accurate but untruthful--they had not found any part of that evening funny--and that this might cover more areas of experience than the occasional amusing story. She looked at Howard thoughtfully, as if she had learned something of value. (13)

Carol has learned something of value. Howard makes an uncomfortable, flat experience, a "disappointment," into an amusing story; Carol will begin to recreate her final experience with Felix--and more generally, her whole experience of Paris, including her engagement--into a warm and coherent fiction through the process of memory, uninhibited by history.

Jonathan Culler, discussing plot in Joyce's short story "Eveline," speaks of identifying a "kernel" of plot and then awaiting a "structurally more important kernel"; in "Eveline," he suggests, the first kernel is "musing": " . . . we know that musing itself will not found a story but must be related to a central problem, decision or action on which the character is musing."¹³ In "The Other Paris," the central problem or decision Carol is contemplating is two-fold. On one level, she must decide whether to continue with her engagement or to break it off. The narrator alludes to this decision directly following Carol's central "insight": "Temporarily, she put the question of falling in love to one side. Paris was not the place, she thought; perhaps it had been, fifty

years ago, or whenever it was that people wrote all the songs. It did not occur to her to break her engagement" (13). We read the story on this level to answer the question of whether or not she will finally break off the engagement; but also, because of the stories created around this plotline, we read with increasing curiosity on another level. The central enigma becomes the question of how Carol will apply her lesson-- how and if she will follow Odile and Howard's leads in making stories. Culler writes: "The goals towards which one moves in synthesizing a plot are, of course, notions of thematic structure"; when we synthesize the plot of "The Other Paris," we articulate a theme which has as much to do with the course of Carol's engagement as with its attendant transformations, the stories about Carol's engagement.¹⁴

Before Carol's final encounter with Felix, Gallant interposes Martine's recital, an important scene on several counts. In this set piece, spaced off from the rest of the text to indicate its dramatic (and melodramatic) significance, two levels of make-believe clash in an "ordinary, shabby theatre," while outside the rain comes down as ever. Carol's fantasies about the concert and its cachet, of course, are shattered. Here as elsewhere, Parisians, like the theatre itself, are "shabby" (17). At this point, Carol has not yet fully grasped the art of making amusing stories out of disappointing experiences. Instead, she compensates for her growing disillusionment with a fantasy of her own to counter the thin spectacle of Martine's recital.¹⁵ But the symbolic collapse of the theatre itself intrudes upon her fantasy:

She settled back and began furnishing in her mind
the apartment they would have in Chicago
Carol had just finished papering a bedroom green

and white when Martine walked onstage, with her violin. At the same moment, a piece of plaster bearing the painted plump foot of a nymph detached itself from the ceiling and crashed into the aisle, just missing Howard's head. (16)

The cultural furnishings that are the setting for Martine's aspirations are crumbling like the statuary, part of an age that is suddenly as far past as the age of plump plaster nymphs or "J. S. Bach," the name on a poster in the empty lobby. Martine and her family, like Carol, are playing roles in a rundown theatre; the play of Carol's mental closet drama against the shambles of Martine's recital shows them both up as inadequate dramas, private theatres from the past or in the projected future.

Here too, as in the final scene, Felix figures as Carol's true companion. In the theatre he smiles at her "much too familiarly"; outside in the rain, he tells Carol that they are twin foreigners, excluded from Odile's family circle after the concert (16, 19). Carol's outburst to Howard at this point is directed both against Felix and against "the way everything is here--old and rotten and falling down." And Howard's inability to think figuratively is nicely captured in his response: "'You mean that chunk of ceiling?'" (18).

This midwinter retrospective, narrated between the two scenes at the dressmaker's, fills in our understanding of Carol and of Odile, so that when they emerge from the dressmaker's, they come out as much more substantial figures than they were one moment (and twelve pages) earlier. So it is not incongruous that as she looks out the window, Carol sees no sign of spring, and yet a moment later she agrees with Odile that winter is finally over. Indeed, the whole final scene is charged with signifi-

cance which has accrued from intervening episodes. Nuances of description and dialogue recall earlier descriptions, earlier dialogue. Carol's "sincerely imagined" proposal scene, for example, "a scene that involved all at once the Seine, moonlight, barrows of violets . . . and a confused, misty background of the Eiffel Tower and little crooked streets," ironically echoes through the description of the neighbourhood Felix lives in, which Carol "did not like the look of":

They crossed the boulevard and a few crooked, narrow streets filled with curbside barrows and marketing crowds. It was a section of Paris Carol had not seen; although it was on the Left Bank, it was not pretty, not picturesque. (22)

What is picturesque in the imagination makes Carol uncomfortable in the world. Appropriately, it is Felix's neighbourhood that most closely resembles Carol's picture-postcard Paris, just as it is Felix himself who comes closest to touching Carol. Here as elsewhere, later descriptions of setting call us back to earlier scenes. By ironically realizing one of Carol's "sincerely believed" visions, Gallant shows us the process Carol undergoes of avoiding an education. We read of Carol's discomfort in Felix's dingy, untidy room, her "breathless . . . embarrassment" when it becomes clear to her that Felix and Odile are lovers; immediately we recall the narrator's earlier observation: "indeed, Carol rated the chances of love in a cottage or furnished room at zero" (4).

Now all of the earlier suggestions of relationship between Carol and Felix converge, and the inappropriateness of her engagement to Howard resurfaces as she reflects on the incompatibility of Felix and Odile. It is too much for Carol to believe that love can be a reality for this

pair in this "slummy quarter." Standing with Felix at the entrance to the Métro, she experiences a fleeting sense "that she had at last opened the right door" as she holds Felix's hand, but at once she responds by correcting her intuition, withdrawing, and responding to Felix "with cold shyness" in the idiom she has learned from Howard:

What she and Howard had was better. No one could point to them, or criticize them, or humiliate them by offering to help.

She withdrew her hand and said with cold shyness, "Thank you for the coffee, Felix."

"Oh that." He watched her go up the steps to the Métro, and then he walked away. (29)

Carol has learned to take refuge in Howard's literal-minded responses, "persistently missing the point" (18-19). To thank Felix for the coffee is also to deny any real contact with him, to reply in the same vein as Howard's repeated observations about the weather, his cold feet, or the "chunk of ceiling" (18).

Carol's antiseptic politeness to Felix sterilizes the immediate sting of the present--so much so that she sees herself in "a little scene," with "the gentle, nostalgic air of something past"--as it were, making fictions, making memories out of experience on the spot (29). Her warm memories of Paris, beginning at this point, in her present experience of Paris, will soon blur the sharp contours of her "disappointments": "Soon, she sensed, the comforting vision of Paris as she had once imagined it would overlap the reality" (30). The closing passage, with its echoes of Howard's "perfectly accurate but untruthful" storymaking, ironically resolves the tensions between realism and romance, fragmented experience and coherent fiction:

She would forget the rain and her unshared confusion and loneliness, and remember instead the Paris of films, the street lamps with their tinsel icicles, the funny concert hall where the ceiling collapsed, and there would be, at last, a coherent picture, accurate but untrue. The memory of Felix and Odile and all their distasteful strangeness would slip away; for "love" she would think, once more, "Paris," and, after a while, happily married, mercifully removed in time, she would remember it and describe it and finally believe it as it had never been at all. (30)

Carol's memory will be selectively creative; she will forget as much as she remembers. The deliberate, mesmerizing phrasing of the final sentence begins the process of soothing and lulling and smoothing away the harshness of her experience, transforming it into the faithful recitation of a vague, comforting memory--a memory which will be perfectly inaccurate to experience, perfectly true to Carol's fondly held vision. Commenting on this passage, Ronald Hatch writes: "The piling up of phrase upon phrase echoes time's effect on the mind, piling up new experiences on the memories of Paris, gradually easing the pain of lost potential."¹⁶ Without wishing simply to be clever, one might build on Hatch's insight by reversing his terms: Carol is already in the process of piling up new memories on the experience of Paris. For Carol, the agency of memory imposes form and so creates meaning, but ironically, the meaning she creates denies history--denies the reality of postwar Paris, of "Felix" and Odile. Much like a writer recreating the past, Carol forms a coherent story out of incoherent experience, but she does so by suppressing history in order to make memory a more comfortable home. One might describe the writer's recreation of the past--a process which Linnet Muir explores as the theme of her stories--as an art which loosely

follows the sequence of Carol's "art"; first the writer remembers ("it"--subject, content, event, experience, sensation), then describes (shapes, forms, structures, patterns--turning these nouns into verbs, turning static content into functional form) and finally believes (the result of "sincerely imagining"). But Carol's story will be an evasion, a retreat, and Carol is judged accordingly throughout "The Other Paris."¹⁷

With the larger framework of the story in perspective, we can turn briefly to details of language. Individual words, stylistic features, even short descriptive passages recur in contexts which reinforce the story's structure. A striking feature of sentence construction, for example, bearing on the ambiguities of Carol's double perspective, is the frequency of hypothetical and subjunctive clauses, many of them introduced by "as if." At the dressmaker's, "Odile looked regretfully, as if she had more to say," for example--as she does.¹⁸ Carol is never quite sure about distinctions between appearances and realities; until she realizes that Odile is making fun of her in this first scene, she reacts "as if" Odile's story were a perfectly accurate, truthful account.

At a more basic level, the adjective "pretty" is repeatedly used to signify superficially observed appearance. Howard's friends tell him that Carol is "obviously in love with him" and this is "pretty to see" (6); the piece of mistletoe that falls from a Place Vendôme streetlamp looks "pretty, and rather poor" (12). Late in the story Odile tells Felix that Carol's wedding dress ("white with white flowers"; Odile earlier calls it a "rubbish of lace" [1]), is "very pretty" (23). Carol finds Felix's neighbourhood "not pretty, not picturesque"; and finally, she wants "something pretty in her hand to take away the memory of the room and the Arabs and the dreary cafés and the messy affairs of Felix and Odile" (29).

So she buys violets, recalling two earlier occasions--one, her imagined proposal scene with its "barrows of violets," the other, one of her "disappointments": "(the Parma violets she had bought that were fraudulently cut and bound, so that they died in a minute)" (19).

Saussurean linguistics argues that language signifies by difference between terms rather than by reference to the world beyond language; we could make a strong case for the meaning of "The Other Paris" emerging from the difference, the opposition between two key words, "pretty" and "shabby," both signifying qualities of appearance to Carol.

The strengths of "The Other Paris" as realist fiction result from the documentary presentation of postwar Paris and its cultural climate, social, political, historical; these cultural qualities inhere in tangible descriptions of shabbily-dressed Parisians, gloomy restaurants, theatres, apartments, and of course the perpetual drizzle, which is so pervasive that it begins to seem figurative. These aspects of setting form the background and foreground for Carol's trials. The reflexive qualities of the story begin with the attention paid to characters' stories about Carol's engagement and end with the sharply ironic focus on Carol's art of memory. The agency of memory is a powerful and recurring force in Gallant's fiction. In "The Other Paris," memory is the means by which Carol transforms potentially educative experience into a comforting lullaby. In this sense, the story is an account of an ambiguous initiation, one which is also a retreat--a recurring theme in Gallant's fiction.¹⁹

Another young woman's ambiguous initiation into history constitutes the theme of "Autumn Day" (1955). Carol Frazier has many affinities with

Cissy, the story's first-person narrator. Both young women are adrift in postwar Europe: their identities are sustained largely by the prospect of marriage, or in Cissy's case, the fact of her marriage--a fact she is unable to comprehend. Both pass through a tentative, ambiguous initiation which prepares them, not for emergence from self into world, but for submersion in their marriages and comfortably furnished apartments in the United States. Both women's dreams of a romantic ideal realized in the world take tangible forms. Carol's is the "other" Paris, which never quite materializes; Cissy's is an American opera singer, Dorothy West, who stays for a week at the Austrian farmhouse where Cissy and her army husband Walt are boarding. Cissy, too, is disappointed; she receives West's note inviting her to lunch a day late and finds the singer's room empty. But Cissy, more than Carol, learns about the ambiguities of her experience, understanding at the end of the story that life does not quite resolve itself into neat categories. She reflects: "Your girlhood doesn't vanish overnight. I know, now, what a lot of wavering goes on, how you step forward and back again. The frontier is invisible; sometimes you're over without knowing it."²⁰ And although she finally reassures herself, as does Carol, the assertive rhythms of her final declarations reflect her less soothing apprehension of the uncertainties of marriage and of experience in general:

"We'll be all right," I echoed to Walt, and I repeated it to myself, over and over, "I'll be all right; we'll be all right."

But we're not safe yet, I thought, looking at my husband--this stranger, mute, helpless, fumbling, enclosed. Oh, we're not safe. Not by a long shot. But we'll be all right. Take my word for it. We'll be all right. (53)

Cissy emerges more fully than Carol, finally; Walt becomes the child, experiencing a world similar to Carol's "unshared confusion and loneliness." Reading "The Other Paris" over against "Autumn Day" conveys a clearer sense both of the meanings of Carol's experience and of how Gallant treats the theme of initiation. Both stories test innocence by subjecting it to experience, with Old World, postwar settings providing an unfamiliar, desolated reality against which Carol and Cissy deploy the vigour of imagination and win highly ambiguous victories.

The focus on documentary versions and romantic visions, on the conflicts between history and memory, is not always as sharp as it is in "The Other Paris." In several early stories, narrators transcribe settings without explicit reference to the shaping process of memory or of imagination. Artifice is muted, more conspicuous in its apparent absence. The shaping of actuality goes unnoticed--so much so that Gallant's editors and bibliographers disagree over whether or not these stories are more properly essays, and there is recurring discussion of the close relation between the two forms in Gallant's work.²¹ This disagreement confirms the powerful referential impulse in Gallant's fiction. The mediating, forming, reflexive patterns of artifice shape content into form--ironically--before our eyes in "The Other Paris"; this shaping process is less apparent in stories like "Wing's Chips" (1954), "The Deceptions of Marie-Blanche" (1953), "Señor Pinedo" (1954), and "When We Were Nearly Young" (1960). In these stories, the dialectic between memory and history submerges, and Gallant's documentary, reportorial talents are less ambiguous, less qualified by a character's own attempts to tell a story. A first-

person narrator remembers without commenting on the shaping force of memory; the stories read as reminiscences with a point. The keen ironies of "The Other Paris" modulate into lighter tones. We read characters more objectively, because of the more deliberate foregrounding of setting; we read them as creations, as reflections of their respective societies. These stories are at the objective, transcriptive, documentary edge of Gallant's repertoire. In them, Gallant shapes her "faith to actuality" not by "absolute artifice," but by minimal artifice--a simple, chronological narrative line, and a narrator at once detached enough to observe and engaged enough to comment on social rituals in their settings.²²

"The Deceptions of Marie-Blanche" and "Wing's Chips" are both set in Quebec, the former in East-end Montreal, the latter in an unnamed French-Canadian town in which the narrator spent a summer with her father when she was a "little girl of seven or eight."²³ Both stories open by at once locating the setting and distancing the narrator from her report on the past. The narrator then reintroduces herself into the past as she remembers it; in "The Deceptions of Marie-Blanche" she never becomes more than a detached (if amused) observer, but in "Wing's Chips" she merges with her younger predecessor to become her father's young daughter again. Unlike the Linnet Muir stories, in which the process of remembering is explicitly part of the stories' theme, a subject to be explored and commented on even while it is the central technique being employed to tell the story, the device of conflating an older narrator with her younger self in "Wing's Chips" is left unexamined; it is simply a convention used to enter the story proper. Nevertheless, we can see the typical Gallant concern with the "pictures" of memory in the opening sentences:

Often, since I grew up, I have tried to remember the name of the French-Canadian town where I lived for a summer with my father when I was a little girl of seven or eight. Sometimes, passing through a town, I have thought I recognized it, but some detail is always wrong, or at least fails to fit the picture in my memory. 24

The narrator then quickly shifts from her focus on the process of memory to address the more explicitly social themes of "Wing's Chips": the divisions between French Catholics and English Protestants in the small town, and the universal distrust and misunderstanding of her father, a painter, who as such is suspect, less than gainfully employed, less dutifully a breadwinner than he should be by rights. The story neatly and comically resolves, for French and English alike, the perceived conflict between profitable labour and esoteric foolishness, and reassures the daughter of her father's worth: the Wing family, Chinese owners of the local fish-and-chip store, commission her father to paint the sign from which the story takes its title. The girl becomes "hysterically proud" of the sign, and, "for quite the first time," of her father:

There it was, "Wing's Chips," proof that my father was an ordinary workingman just like anybody else, and I pointed it out to as many people as I could, both English and French, until the summer ended and we went away. (151) 25

Gallant inverts the traditional exploration of the artist, in which the protagonist as artist is the focus, often forming and commenting on the larger fiction. She approaches the conflict lightheartedly from outside, from the social point of view; the daughter-narrator stands at a point between her father's private world and the villagers' public one, seeing him both as a family member and through the villagers' eyes.

The sharp-eyed older narrator's cutting social commentary, as she dissects the villagers' prejudices and social pretensions, is softened by the story's comic resolution, which reconciles the demands of the workaday world with the demands of art by interposing a commercial painting. Social commentary is in the foreground; the story's strength lies in its funny report on a society in its setting, rather than in its development of character and motivation.

"The Deceptions of Marie-Blanche" is another good early example of Gallant's talents as a sharp-eyed, comic writer, a documentary realist. The first-person narrator remains detached throughout; she begins the story in her own present, identifying herself as an observer, placing herself in the context of the story she is about to tell, and advertising her amused detachment:

Marie-Blanche wrote from Canada a few days ago to say that she was engaged again

The reminder of her engagement is, for me, only a reminder of her deceptions. When I lived with Marie-Blanche and her mother in Montreal during the war, I saw the rise and fall of three love affairs in a very short time. Marie-Blanche is deception-prone the way some people keep bumping their heads or spraining their ankles. 26

The narrator, an English-Protestant in a French-Catholic household, observes and reports on Marie-Blanche's repeated ritual of engagement and disengagement as suitor after suitor retracts his vows following a closely-supervised courtship. The Dumard apartment is on a street where "a French-Canadian parish merged with a Jewish district, full of kosher meat markets and dingy shops" (126). "In her peripatetic career as a salesgirl," therefore, "Marie-Blanche had often worked for Jews and as a

result she spoke a singular kind of English, with a French-Canadian accent and a Yiddish lilt" (126). The delightful mix of idioms prepares us for the ending: Marie-Blanche dismisses her latest suitor, a farmer more in love with his horse, Victorine, than with her, by handing him his snapshots of Victorine and "addressing him in her perfect English . . . 'To heach 'is own, Monsieur Dancereau'" (140). Her mother invokes the traditional dismissal, a chorus repeated throughout the story ("Il a un grand défaut" [140]), but Marie-Blanche cuts her off with multi-cultural asperity: "'Defaut be damned 'He's just like the rest of them, nothing but a big schlemiel'" (140).²⁷

The plot of this story consists of Marie-Blanche's deceptions, chronologically recounted; character development is confined to comical details of appearance (Marie-Blanche, for example emulates Shirley Temple), and the narrator herself, unnamed, draws little attention to her own interest in or involvement with the story she tells. She remains an observer, a boarder who enters a little way into the Dumard's lives and comments from a double perspective, focussing both on the larger social milieu which Marie-Blanche's suitors belong to and on the particular society of the French-Canadian family she lives with.

"Senor Piñedo" and "When We Were Nearly Young" are stories which report on political and social environment abroad.²⁸ Gallant's fascination with foreign cultures, the corollary of her sharp curiosity about her own, informs both stories. As in the case with "The Deceptions of Marie-Blanche," the narrator of "Senor Piñedo" is a sharp observer, a reporter free from editorial constraints, free to edit tone, to style content for her own more indirect fictional purposes. She is, again,

both detached from and engaged with the society she observes. The opening locates the narrator at a point nicely balanced between public and private settings: "Because there was nothing to separate our rooms but the thinnest of plaster partitions, it sometimes seemed as if the Pinedos--Señor, Señora, and baby José María--and I were really living together."²⁹ The narrator's reports on the Pinedo family's private conversations balance with her commentary on the Pinedos in the context of the larger community of the pension. She scrutinizes the various interiors of the pension--the communal dining room, the Pinedo's bedroom, the faded sepia etching of Franco in the entrance hall--reporting on furnishings in sharp, revealing detail. She sets the Pinedo family and the other boarders among tangible artifacts which, like the Dumard's furnishings, communicate a cultural code far more explicitly than direct (and so more abstract) social commentary.³⁰ At the same time, she describes the sensibility of the Spanish community as a crowd gathers in the pension courtyard to watch over the victim of an accident. The image here prepares for the story's closing analysis of the Spanish temperament:

The courtyard suddenly resembled the arena of a bull ring. There was the same harsh division of light and shadow, as if a line had been drawn, high on the opposite wall. The faces within the area of sun were white and expressionless, with that curious Oriental blankness that sometimes envelops the whole arena during moments of greatest emotion. (213)

Senor Pinedo's portrait is double. He is a "Spanish husband and father, and his word, by tradition, was law" (202). He is also a civil servant--for him, his most important identity--a patriot who volunteered

at seventeen to fight with the Whites, a passionately politicized figure who distributes government pamphlets around the pension dinner table. In his double role as loving father and blindly committed servant of the state, Pinedo embodies the story's central irony: when a neighbour's child is crushed by an elevator's block-and-tackle assembly, Pinedo, in his happiest moment, proclaims to the gathered crowd that the child will qualify for a pension: "'I guarantee it!' Señor Pinedo said. He leaned over the railing and closed his fist like an orator, a leader 'I guarantee it . . . I work in the office of pensions'" (216). The narrator draws attention to technocrat Pinedo's "childlike" faith in his adopted political cause as she eavesdrops on his conversation with his wife following the accident. Finally, she presents Pinedo in public again, so that the story ends with his double portrait exposed in succession. Through Pinedo, the narrator evokes a national temperament in its individual incarnation; her closing suggestion of the turmoil beneath the tenants' silent surface calm confirms her own observer's status and her uneasiness as witness to a spectacle at once intensely personal and intensely, ominously political:

Through the partition I heard him telling his wife that he had much to do that week, a social project connected with the hurt child. In his happiness, he sounded almost childlike himself, convinced, as he must convince others, of the truth and good faith of the movement to which he had devoted his life and in which he must continue to believe.

Later, I heard him repeating the same thing to the pension tenants There was no reply I could not have said whether the silence was owing to respect, delight, apathy, or a sudden fury or some other emotion so great that only silence could contain it. (216)

As these closing paragraphs show, the narrator has keen insight into the

essential volatility of the Spanish character under Franco, a volatility masked by an ambiguous "silence" and rigidly observed social decorum. When Pinedo proclaims his childlike reverence for the patriarchal state to his fellow boarders, they are, if not equally reverent, politic enough to be properly deferential. Gallant brings the narrator's double perspective to a point in the description of Pinedo's description of the accident, an incident which allows her to move effectively from particular incident to general cultural sensibility. "Señor Pinedo" is a representative early example of Gallant's power to communicate an acutely familiar sense of foreign conduct, public and private, in foreign settings. The recent history of the Spanish Civil War, the continuing (if faded) presence of Franco, the complex Spanish attitude toward authority--she vividly evokes this cultural surround through close observation of setting. "Señor Pinedo," with its scrutiny of the political impulse governing Pinedo's personal conduct, anticipates the more complex, wide-ranging analyses of Fascism's "small possibilities in people" in Gallant's German stories in The Pegnitz Junction (1974).

"When We Were Nearly Young," also set in Madrid, returns briefly to a pension similar to the one in "Señor Pinedo," but passes it over quickly because the main focus is on the companionship between four "nearly young" people, three Spaniards (Carlos, Pablo, and Pilar) and the first-person narrator.³¹ Again, the narrator is both outsider and insider; their common denominator is the four friends' shared poverty, while what finally differentiates her from them is the narrator's status as a foreigner, free to leave Madrid forever when her long-awaited money from home arrives. The story transcends good journalism, transforming report into represen-

tation; even in this, arguably the flattest of Gallant's stories, the typical concern with time and memory is broached in the closing paragraph:

I don't know what became of them, or what they were like when their thirtieth year came Eventually they were caught, for me, not by time but by the freezing of memory. And when I looked in the diary I had kept during that period all I could find was descriptions of the weather. 32

If memory can create warm and coherent pictures to comfort Carol Frazier, it can also freeze into cold fact. This narrator, more than Linnet Muir, speaks in the casual, anecdotal tone of the memoir, a tone sharpened by Linnet's more urgent demands for coherence and instruction from her memories. The narrator of "When We Were Nearly Young" also raises the issue of the connections between autobiography, fiction, and "true" memory, an explicit concern in the Linnet Muir stories and an implicit concern in others.³³

The important distinction in Gallant's fiction is not between essays, content, and objective reports on one hand, fictions, form, and subjective voices on the other; the question is not one of kind but of function. The problem with essayistic writers of fiction arises when their essays intrude in their fictions, vitiating the essentially fictional nature of a novel, for example, with patently (and unintentionally) non-fictional fragments, spoken either by omniscient narrators or mouthpiece characters. But this problem, which is a formal problem, does not arise in Gallant's fiction. Rather, her stories develop different kinds of relations with the worlds to which they refer--consistent relations. At one edge of her grammar, words seem to report on world, resulting in a

powerful social text. At the other edge (at the end of "The Other Paris," for example), language enacts imaginative process, so that we read the meaning of Carol's evasion of history in the rhythm of the narrator's description of Carol's state of mind.

Although none of the remaining stories in The Other Paris is as powerful as the title story, taken together they complement "The Other Paris" by sharply depicting a linked series of dissociations between past and present. Six of the seven remaining stories are set in Europe; one, "The Legacy," is set in Montreal.³⁴ The focus in these stories ranges from the evocation of cultural, political, historical rifts opened up across the postwar European landscape (rifts only dimly perceived, at a remove, by North Americans) to explorations of the rifts between generations, particularly of the distances between children and adults. At one extreme, a story like "The Picnic" (1952--originally entitled "Before the Battle") comically reports on the mannered dance of an American army family (the Marshalls!) in postwar France, anxious to please their French landlady and their host country at a bicultural picnic the American brass has planned for "the most typically French town" they can find.³⁵ At the other end of the book's range, "About Geneva" (1955) is Gallant's finest and most representative early story about the impasses between children and adults. This story demonstrates how Gallant can use a more muted irony to less comic ends. More importantly, "About Geneva" demonstrates how skirmishes between children and adults in Gallant's fiction teach readers to construct another, related broken dialogue. The "interrupted dialogues of the deaf" in Gallant's families constitute private

analogues to the broken dialogues between memory and history and across continents.³⁶ In "About Geneva," as in many other stories, this separation is enacted as the distance between adults' reports and children's inventions, between adults' demands for reliable witnesses and children's needs for imaginative reconstruction. The important connection between "The Other Paris" and "About Geneva" lies in the relation between Carol Frazier's evasions of history's facts and the Geneva adults' evasions of children's fictions; both stories chart the distances created by missed moments of communication, moments which readers must construct in order to articulate these stories' plots.

The family of "About Geneva" fights small-scale battles in which combatants speak to each other by accident, in between orders and refusals, retorts and subterfuges. The reports of the two children to their mother "about" Geneva comment on the emotional politics of the family as much as on Geneva itself. Like so many other Gallant stories about children and adults, "About Geneva" sets children's fantasies, children's dreams and inventions, over against parents' rules and codes of conduct. Just as the shape of Carol Frazier's "other" Paris comments on the implications of her storymaking, the various "crystallizations" of Geneva in this story comment on the dramatic tensions created by the family structure as both children and adults manoeuvre toward revealing or concealing themselves through various stratagems.³⁷

Dramatically compressed into a small space and a brief time, "About Geneva" reads like a short one-act play. Its setting is claustrophobic, a "standard seasonal Nice meublé," the sitting room "hung with dark engravings of cathedrals."³⁸ The rented flat is "Granny's" winter retreat, shared with her recently divorced daughter and her two children. The

children have just returned from their first visit with their father and his new lover in Geneva. Only the children, Colin and Ursula, are named: the important identification for adults in this story is their relation to each other within the family hierarchy--"father," "mother," "Granny"--positions of power in a corporate structure rather than names which confer identities. Granny's matriarchal power over her three charges is evident from the opening lines: "Granny was waiting at the door of the apartment. She looked small, lonely, and patient, and at the sight of her the children and their mother felt instantly guilty" (190). The tensions in the family create a drama verging on melodrama; Granny's old world propriety clashes with her grandchildren's conduct, and the mother, who "at thirty-four, had settled into a permanent, anxious-looking, semi-youthfulness," transmits these tensions both ways (192).

The essentially private nature of Granny's theatre announces itself in the performance with which she welcomes her child and grandchildren home:

"Darlings," said Granny, very low. "Home again."
She stretched out her arms to Ursula, but then,
seeing the taxi driver, who had carried the children's
bags up the stairs, she drew back. After he had gone
she repeated the gesture, turning this time to Colin,
as if Ursula's cue had been irrevocably missed. (190)

As in "The Other Paris," details of language refer us to larger structures of meaning. Granny's quite clinical concern for her grandchildren shows in the empty theatricality of her "repeated gestures" and her assigning of "cues," and also in the precise impersonality of the verbs which describe her actions. She dramatically laments Colin's haircut, which has shorn him of his childhood; "releasing" him, she continues to complain to

his mother. Her manner of teaching proper posture to Ursula is to "nicely cause" her to sit correctly: "She slumped on her spine (a habit Granny had just nicely caused her to get over before the departure to Geneva)" (193). Granny's manipulative control "just nicely causes" the tensions which structure the dramas of revelation and concealment over which she presides.

The main text of the drama, a text which her daughter has warned Granny not to announce openly, examines the children's reactions to their father's new relationship in Geneva. The subtext, which, because of the adults' purposefully indirect approach to their real interest, appears to be the main focus of the story, is first articulated through a bland and indirect ploy:

"Did you go boating, Ursula?" said Granny, not counting this as a direct question. "When I visited Geneva, as a girl, we went boating on the lake." She went on about white water birds, a parasol, a boat heaped with colored cushions. (192)

Thus begins one line of the family's "dialogue of the deaf," characteristic of the communication within families in Gallant's fiction.³⁹ Granny "goes on" about a remote past, foreign to her grandchildren's experience. Her memory apparently does nothing to clear the air for a frank discussion of the visit; actually, however, subtext does comment on text. The languages of indirection and concealment that interrupt rather than convey communication between adults and children do not completely block off dialogue; the children do communicate something through their accounts "about" Geneva. Geneva's appearances announce two realities--the children's transformations as they begin to grow up, to conceive identities beyond their status as family members, and the implied details of their father's

new life.

Ursula carries on the dialogue initiated by Granny's gambit by spontaneously crossing texts to proclaim that her father's new lover is "not a good manager" (193). But after reporting to her very attentive adult audience about this managerial incompetence, she crosses languages again to announce a more important revelation.⁴⁰ Geneva is the place in which she has begun to write a play, encouraged by the Geneva adults. She quotes one line to her Nice audience: "'The Grand Duke enters and sees Tatiana all in gold'" (194). The Geneva adults have told her "it was the best thing they'd ever heard anywhere"; but although the women are gratified that Ursula appears to have inherited her father's imagination, they have no real regard for its fictions. Again, details of language reinforce the sense of the mother's distrust of imagination. "'It's lovely dear' 'It sounds like a lovely play'" she says; "'Were they lovely, the swans?'" she asks Colin after he has announced his image of Geneva (195, 198).⁴¹ Colin's silent response signals the truth about his mother's comments: "but the question bore no relation to anything he had seen. He said nothing" (198). Readers also learn that the children's creations are self-referential, turning back on the creators as much as opening out into the world. Ursula's romantic vision, for example, is almost totally self-centred, so that the creating subjective self is also its own sentimental object: "Ever since she had started 'The Grand Duke' she could not think of her own person without being sorry. For no reason at all, now, her eyes filled with tears of self-pity" (195).⁴²

Before Colin announces his distillation of Geneva, an important interlude crosses texts again, shifting readers' attention from children

to adults. The mother, offering Ursula the use of her writing desk, which has a key, draws a telling distinction between her daughter and herself. Ursula still has a "secret," but her mother, all forms of romance gone out of her life, has no essential meaning to conceal or reveal, either in a relationship or in the imagination:

"I don't need a key," said the children's mother, lacing her fingers tightly around her knees. "I'm not writing a play, or anything else I want kept secret. Not any more." (195)

She is a nameless children's mother, living with Granny in other people's furnished flats, caught between her children's eventual departure (signalled by their first crystallizations of the external world) and her mother's family theatre. She is a centre without substance, the middle generation divorced from its potential meaning.

Colin's version of Geneva is more painterly than narrative, more an image than the seeds of a story. In response to Granny's question about his walks in Geneva, Colin recalls an image:

"I fed the swans," Colin suddenly shouted. There, he had told about Geneva. He sat up and kicked his heels on the carpet as if the noise would drown out the consequence of what he had revealed. As he said it, the image became static: a gray sky, a gray lake, and a swan wonderfully turning upside down with the black rubber feet showing above the water. His father was not in the picture at all: neither was she. But Geneva was fixed for the rest of his life: gray, lake, swan. (196)

The swan at the centre of the image is magically, memorably a swan at the moment of its transformation into an imagined swan, "wonderful" in its modality. Colin purposefully, emphatically edits out adults; they will not interfere with the magic of selective memory; he will simply refuse

to record his father's new relationship. Just as "gray, lake, swan" has fixed Geneva for Colin, Ursula, the mother thinks, "was too preoccupied with herself. Everything about the trip, in the end, would crystallize around Tatiana and the Grand Duke. Already, Ursula was Tatiana" (196). Because they have their own secrets to create and convey, neither child can tell her anything about her failed relationship.

The line between fictionalizing and lying, the narrator suggests, is difficult for adults to draw; Granny and her daughter cannot distinguish one from the other. In Gallant's stories, "invention" is a term which signifies lying or imagining, depending on the context:

Having delivered his secret he had nothing more to tell. He began to invent. "I was sick on the plane," he said, but Ursula at once said that this was a lie, and he lay down again, humiliated

"He never once cried in Geneva," Ursula said. But by the one simple act of creating Tatiana and the Grand Duke, she had removed herself from the ranks of reliable witnesses. (196-197) 43

If Ursula can write a play, then she cannot be relied upon to tell the literal truth about anything. The adults cannot reconcile dreaming and witnessing, literary and literal truth, although Ursula shows she is capable of both. The mother realizes, too, that Colin is another unreliable narrator, another separate keeper of secrets. She cannot even decide whether or not Colin was actually sick on the plane; Granny, over Ursula's protestations to the contrary, asserts that he was: "'That, at least, is a fact'" (198). The mother is left looking for reliable witnesses, unable to enter into the spirit of her children's visions. She wants Colin to make a story out of his static image, a narrative beginning with "the lake, the boats, the swan" and ending with "why her husband had left her" (198).

The children's distillations of Geneva function similarly to Carol's vision of Paris. Carol's vision refracts postwar Paris into a city which will conform to her dream-city; in "About Geneva," the children respond to conflicting demands by "crystallizing" Geneva, sidestepping their mother's demand that they be witnesses, stolid statisticians of experience. "About Geneva" explores the loneliness and anxiety of a woman whose "secret life" is hollowed out by the empty theatrics of propriety-- propriety without a subtext, appearance without much reality.

Another early story about the tensions between children's dreams and adults' rules illustrates once again how Gallant fictionalizes the family into a theatre in which the players act parts from different scripts. In "Jorinda and Jorindel" (1959), she begins with a Grimm's fairy tale and shapes it into a fiction in which children's fantasies, dreams, and memories of dreams blend eerily with the strictures of family and with adult rules of conduct.

Gallant's idea for her version of this fairy tale might have had its beginnings in an article she wrote for the Standard Magazine in June, 1946. "Give the Kid a Gory Story" outlines the perennial debate among adults and educators over whether fairy tales can do psychological harm to children by distorting their sense of reality.⁴⁴ Gallant reports on adults who read their own adult experience into fairy tales and decide the stories will terrify their children. One group of progressive educators feels that adults, bored with their own lives, wishfully present the fairy tale world to their children as the real one; another group believes children's "strong sense of justice" is served by the often gory endings of fairy tales. Gallant suggests that a "balanced attitude" such as that expressed at one Montreal school would be "by far the

wisest": "The teachers feel that small children should have a good basis of realism before they dip into fantasy."⁴⁵

Gallant objectively synthesizes her information and presents a balanced account of the debate, but her tone suggests her own interest in the interplay between real and imagined worlds. She describes her sampling of fairy tales ("some of the passages have a Poe-like horror") and then quotes a passage from Grimm's "Jorinda and Joringel":

'Her song ended in a mournful cry. An owl with fiery eyes flew three times round them, and three times screamed . . . [sic] Jorindel could not move; he stood fixed as a stone, and could neither weep, nor speak, nor stir hand or foot. And now the sun went down; the gloomy night came, the owl flew into a bush; and a moment after the old fairy came forth, pale and meager, with staring eyes' [sic] 46

She comments: "It's a beautiful piece of writing; for an adult, that is."

The fairy tale Gallant has drawn on is a classic, popular enough to have been reprinted in a separate illustrated edition as recently as 1978.⁴⁷ The plot is straightforward: Jorinda and Joringel wander into the woods, straying too near to the witch's castle. The witch transforms Jorinda into a nightingale and carries her off; Joringel is rooted to the spot until the moon comes out. For months he pines for Jorinda, until he dreams of freeing her with a "red, red flower"; waking he finds such a flower, frees Jorinda and thousands of other maidens, and makes the witch powerless. He and Jorinda live happily ever after.

Gallant's "Jorinda and Jorindel" is anything but straightforward. In its reversals of the original tale and its deliberate blurring of the line between adults' and children's worlds, it presents complex interpretive difficulties. Because the characters are so distorted by the

narrative medium they are immersed in, what emerges is the feeling that Gallant has set out to show the connections and not the distinctions between fairy tale and reality, blurring the lines of demarcation through her use of an "enchanted" narrative technique which at once creates the fairy tale ambiance and undercuts it.

The story runs along two plotlines, one, an account of a jaded adult society of five gathered at a lakeshore summer cottage in Quebec, the other, the story of a young girl's relationship with two boys, her visiting cousin, Bradley, and Freddy, a French-Canadian who has "nine brothers and sisters, but doesn't know where they are."⁴⁸ The plotlines merge and cross at various points, their separation always shaded, blurred by the narrator's tone and stance. The opening replaces the traditional fairy-tale beginning by replacing "once upon a time" with events narrated in the immediate present tense:

A summer night: all night long someone has been learning the Charleston.

"I've got it!" the dancer cries. "I've got it, everybody. Watch me, now!" But no one is watching

Young Irmgard wakes up with her braids undone and her thumb in her mouth. She has been dreaming about her cousin Bradley; about an old sidewalk with ribbon grass growing in the cracks. "I've got it," cried the witch who had captured Jorinda, and she reached out so as to catch Jorindel and change him into a bird. (38)

The comfortably distant enchantment of long ago and far away becomes the immediately present enchantment of here and now. But "here and now" constitute two worlds, one enchanted, one actual. They inform each other, just as Mrs. Bloodworth's cry, unheard by the adults, surfaces in Irmgard's dream, transformed into a witch's cry of triumph. The adult world is the muted, but finally all-powerful setting for the children's

relations, a setting which is as mannered and mundane as the children's is fabulous.

Mrs. Bloodworth, the dancer, is more a fairy-tale figurine than an adult figure, "her feet in satin shoes"; she speaks to children and adults alike in a stilted, affected idiom: "'Is it really you, my sweet pet?'" she asks Irmgard; "'Darling pet, may I always stay?'" she sobs to Irmgard's mother (38). But she, like Irmgard's French-Canadian bonne d'enfant, Germaine, and the very English cook, Mrs. Queen, comes from a specifically located adult world. "There is prohibition where Mrs. Bloodworth comes from" the narrator tells us; the diction and syntax are almost childish, a bit breathless with wonder, but the voice conveys information about the real world. This deliberate clash of message with medium reflects the general intermingling of fairy-tale wonder with historical setting and enacts the tensions between parents' rules and children's dreams. Even Mrs. Bloodworth's vocabulary is distinctively American: the narrator distinguishes between Irmgard's word, "gallery," and "veranda," as "Mrs. Bloodworth would say" (38). At another point, the narrator assumes the Lilliputian perspective of a child gazing up at an adult: Irmgard, spotting Mrs. Bloodworth asleep in a hammock, "inspects her up and down, from right to left. It isn't every morning of the year that you find a large person helplessly asleep" (38).

The portraits of the other adults are also framed in larger cultural assumptions. In the kitchen, Germaine, "who does not understand one word of English," drinks tea with Mrs. Queen, who is "certainly not going to learn any French" (38). Germaine is calm and uncritical throughout, giving Irmgard "unmeasured love" although they both know "a separation is near"; regal Mrs. Queen is the Empire incarnate, unhappy

in a place "where the working people are as tall as anyone else"; when she was "interviewing Irmgard's mother, to see if Irmgard's mother would do, she said she had never taken to the place and couldn't promise a thing" (38). Bradley, Irmgard's ten-year-old cousin, is an American from Boston, who consequently misunderstands Irmgard's mother's comment ("'what a little stockbroker Bradley is'" [40]); he is "raised in a different political climate down there in Boston" (40). Indeed, Canada, with its allegedly indeterminate national character (and in between seasons, at the tail end of summer), is an apt locale for an adult fairy tale, especially one in which the child princess/witch (for Irmgard is both) is the product of several nations: Irmgard says she is "'English Canadian only I talk French and I'm German descent on one side'" (39). It is only Canadians, their national identity always in question, who must explain their origins in this way: Bradley, the narrator, remarks in a parenthetical aside "(. . . is American, and that does. But in Canada you have to keep saying what you are.)" (39). All of this commentary presents the adult world in which the fairy tale is set; but because the narrator is a bit elfin, a bit too ingenuous, and because the children are themselves so adult, so much the products of their parents' notions of class and rules of conduct, the adult world becomes more marvelous than actual, a setting to be wondered at and then ridiculed at the end of the story.

The three children's relationships form a triangle: Irmgard begins the summer with Freddy, drops him for Bradley, and then tries to re-establish contact with Freddy when Bradley leaves. But her spell has been broken: Freddy "had discovered he could do without her" (40-41). The relationship had been magical; at the beginning, Freddy and Irmgard

could "read each other's thoughts. When Freddy wants to speak, Irmgard tells him what he wants to say, and Freddy stands there, mute as an animal, grave, nodding at ease" (39-40). Her friendship with him transcends their vast social and class differences; she bewitches him, and he defers. Bradley, unlike Freddy, "has never had a vision," but he has "no trouble explaining anything" (40). In betraying Freddy for Bradley, Irmgard begins to close herself out of her childhood and its magic. She is aware of the betrayal, but she is also her mother's daughter, and so she is under her more powerful spell:

Irmgard stands by her mother's chair; for the mother is the mirror, and everything is reflected or darkened, given life or dismissed, in the picture her mother returns. The lake, the house, the summer, the reason for doing one thing instead of another are reflected here, explained, clarified. If the mirror breaks, everything will break, too. (41)

Bewitched as she is, Irmgard remembers her opening dream and, much like Colin shouting out his image in "About Geneva," announces her image at the breakfast table. The dream involves sending Freddy into the woods, where "something is waiting" for him, "the disaster, the worst thing" (41). This "disaster" links up with Irmgard sending Freddy away earlier in the summer; but her guilt is left unarticulated, and Freddy's disaster is left unnamed. Irmgard simply "grows red in the face and says loudly, 'I remember my dream. Freddy went on a message and got lost.'" Her parents make a new rule on the spot: "no dreams at breakfast" (41). But as the narrator points out in the closing paragraph, rules which govern conduct by denying dreams are empty, childish games:

Her father cheers up. Nothing cheers them up so fast as a new rule, for when it comes to making rules, they are as bad as children. You should see them at croquet. (41)

Perhaps because for once she has worked too close to an idea, the story is not one of Gallant's best⁴⁹; but "Jorinda and Jorindel," like "About Geneva," articulates the tension between reports and dreams and between ironic portraits and childlike inventions. The story's most striking quality is the magical atmosphere created by the "wondering" narrator; but at points the characters in "Jorinda and Jorindel" suffer from immersion in this magical medium, as if distorted, seen through glass. Nevertheless, "Jorinda and Jorindel" and "About Geneva" should be read as complementary early stories which show us the connections between dialogues broken across time (and between cultures and continents) and dialogues broken between generations, particularly within families. These tensions find formal expression in the distinctions we read between witnesses, auditors of history's reports, and dreamers, creators of memory's fictions.

The stories of The Other Paris establish early the importance of reading Gallant's fiction with attention to breaks in dialogue and to the moments which help readers to construct her stories' plots. As we read detached irony over against engaged invention, reports over against fictions, we also learn to read the importance of setting in Gallant's fiction. Always, the meticulous attention to detail evokes a dense cultural surround. The concise descriptions of details in the interiors of apartments, of pensions, kitchens, dining rooms, hallways, balconies, create a cultural atmosphere which inheres in tangible things, so that culture itself begins to seem tangible, taking substance from its association with the material world. The concrete is always evocative;

Barthes would say, the more concrete, the more evocative.⁵⁰

In the stories of My Heart Is Broken, the observant, detached narrator's eye typical of The Other Paris begins to evolve into an "I" that reflects on its reports. Reports on characters in closely observed settings evolve into characters' first-person reports on their manner of seeing, and characters' memories become subjects as well as objects, recreations as well as recollections. From the beginning, "realism" in Gallant's fiction deploys the tactics of mimesis, plausibility, and verisimilitude as means to an end: The Other Paris invites readers to read stories as if they were reports, and then demands that we watch and see where and how imagination begins its work.

Notes

¹ The Linnet Muir stories are a group of six interlocking stories, all narrated by Linnet in the first person. The first five appeared in The New Yorker between November, 1975 and June, 1977; the sixth appeared in Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978). See bibliography attached to this dissertation.

² "The Other Paris," in The Other Paris (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956), p. 30. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text. "The Other Paris" originally appeared in The New Yorker, 11 April 1953, pp. 27-36. When a story has been collected, I have used the first American edition for references. The bibliography attached to this dissertation records both first publication and subsequent appearances of Gallant's fiction and nonfiction.

³ A story like "Jorinda and Jorindel," for example, is told in the present tense by a narrator addressing a familiar "you" who is at times a child in the story, at times the reader, at times a general audience listening to an adult fairy tale.

⁴ Different forms of the word "disappointment" recur throughout the story (pp. 9, 10, 12, 18), always referring to Carol's disillusionment at the actual Paris she encounters. This repetition is one of several; others are discussed later in this chapter.

⁵ The word "shabby" also recurs, characterizing an aspect of Paris described by the narrator and implicitly or explicitly perceived by Carol (pp. 6, 15, 17). "Shabby" is one of a cluster of words alluding to Carol's perception of the city's rundown appearance; in this story, "shabby" opposes "pretty," an adjective repeatedly used to describe Carol's perception of romantic scenes, or others' perceptions of her engagement to Howard.

⁶ However, it is Howard who unknowingly teaches Carol about the possibilities of making amusing stories out of disappointing experiences (13).

⁷ Ronald Hatch discusses the sense in the story that "Europe has changed, but people refuse to admit it, and attempt to return to the old ways." "The Three Stages of Mavis Gallant's Short Fiction," Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978), p. 95. See, also, pp. 93-97 for a discussion of the manner in which Gallant presents postwar Paris and

Parisians in this story. Gallant implies that one of her intentions in "The Other Paris" was to capture the atmosphere of Paris in the late forties. Robert Weaver quotes from a letter Gallant wrote to him in which she comments that the story "would simply be mystifying to a young foreigner in Paris today, but that was the city five years after the last war." "Introduction," The End of the World and Other Stories (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1974; NCL N191), p. 12.

⁸ George Woodcock comments: "Given Mavis Gallant's inclination to work intermittently on stories over long periods, the date of publication is not an entirely reliable clue to the time when the writing first began" ("Memory, Imagination, Artifice: The Late Short Fiction of Mavis Gallant," Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 [1978], p. 74.) Woodcock's point is a good one. I am assuming that Gallant wrote "The Other Paris" after the Standard article on the basis of internal evidence in both story and essay, not merely on the basis of the respective dates of publication. "Is Romance Killing Your Marriage?" (subtitled "A phoney myth about love is responsible for today's staggering divorce rate," which may be an editor's wording) appeared on September 6, 1947 (Standard Magazine, pp. 3, 22).

⁹ "Is Romance Killing Your Marriage?", p. 3. All subsequent references to this article appear in the text.

¹⁰ Gallant comments on a review she wrote of Paul Hiebert's Sarah Binks: "I wrote the piece on Sarah Binks as if she had really existed. Readers took it seriously. You can't write ironically. Anyway, not in a newspaper. You have to be very careful." Geoff Hancock, "An Interview With Mavis Gallant," Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978), p. 41.

¹¹ Ronald Hatch, "The Three Stages," p. 93.

¹² There are other "events," actual and psychological, but these four are the most significant in terms of their development and structural significance. Other episodes repeat the pattern of hope followed by disillusionment, but are not as fully developed:

But Carol was changing. She hunted up odd, cheap restaurants. She made him walk in the rain. She said that they ought to see the sun come up from the steps of the Sacré-Coeur, and actually succeeded in dragging him there, nearly dead of cold. And, as he might have foreseen, the expedition came to nothing, for it was a rainy dawn and a suspicious gendarme sent them both home. (11)

¹³ Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature (London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1975; rpt. 1977), p. 221.

¹⁴ Structuralist Poetics, p. 221.

¹⁵ Ronald Hatch comments on Martine's performance: "... in her [Gallant's] depiction of Odile's family, with her sister Martine studying music, yet giving her recital in a sleazy hall, she shows that the old pretence to culture or 'Kultur' as a way of life is no longer possible." "The Three Stages," pp. 95-96.

¹⁶ "The Three Stages," p. 97.

¹⁷ In what sense a writer's transformation of memory into fiction might be considered an evasion or a retreat is explored by the character/writer herself in "Varieties of Exile" (1976), one of the semi-autobiographical Linnet Muir stories.

¹⁸ The "as if" construction occurs four times in the first two pages and some twenty times throughout the story.

¹⁹ The theme recurs in "Autumn Day" (1955), "Paola and Renata" (1965), and "Virus X" (1965), always connected with retreating or fleeing into marriage.

²⁰ "Autumn Day," in The Other Paris, p. 52. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

²¹ Thus William New collects Gallant's "When We Were Nearly Young" in his Modern Canadian Essays (Toronto: MacMillan, 1974); Douglas Malcolm wants the story to be both essay and fiction, and so annotates it as "a humorous essay about waiting for money in Madrid" when he cites its appearance in New's collection, but also cites it as a short story contributed to The New Yorker. (Douglas Malcolm, "An Annotated Bibliography of Works By and About Mavis Gallant," Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978), pp. 119, 121.) Grazia Merler cites "A Wonderful Country" (Gallant's only story to appear in the Standard, 1946) as a newspaper article, Malcolm, correctly, as a story; and George Woodcock observes that Gallant's two-part article, "The Events in May: A Paris Notebook" (1968) "showed the same sharp observation of action, speech and setting that one finds in Gallant's stories. There were parts, one felt, that only needed to be taken out of the linear diary form and reshaped by the helical patterning of memory for them to become the nuclei of excellent stories" ("Memory, Imagination," p. 75).

²² I am quoting from Woodcock's polemical opening to his CFM article:

Absolute plausibility, though not mimesis as such, I take to be one of the principal goals of fiction. The vision, no matter how fantastic, must convince the reader through its self-consistency. And absolute plausibility demands absolute artifice, not faith to actuality (p. 74).

As his title makes clear, Woodcock is discussing Gallant's late short fiction.

²³ "Wing's Chips," in The Other Paris, p. 141. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

²⁴ Several of Gallant's stories open with a memory, or a description of the act of remembering, or with a doubt as to the "truth" of memory. Her short novel "Its Image on the Mirror," for example, opens with the first-person narrator's very detailed, sharply visualized memory of leaving her Allenton home with her parents. The description of what she claims she remembers is followed immediately by her mother's explanation of what her daughter actually saw, and how those real events (real in the mother's memory, at any rate) must have been refashioned into what her daughter believes she remembers.

²⁵ In a television interview with Fletcher Markle, Gallant recalls that "Wing's Chips" is "true," that there was such a Chinese fish and chips store in a Quebec village she remembers. (Telescope, Channel 6, Toronto, two-part program, January 22 and 29, 1969.)

²⁶ "The Deceptions of Marie-Blanche," in The Other Paris, pp. 122-123. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

²⁷ A funny (if minor) example of how material from Gallant's Standard years resurfaces in her fiction: Gallant wrote a weekly column on radio, "On The Air," for the Standard from October 1947 to June 1949. Following is an excerpt from her column of June 19, 1948:

Notes on Bilingualism in radio: Added to the collection of French-Canadian folk tunes featured on the air--a collection which already includes "Le Cowboy Canadien" and "Joe le Cowboy"--is "Dans Les Plains du Far West."

(Standard Review, p. 6)

Apparently, Gallant was so amused by these titles that she cites them again. There are thirty-five people at Marie-Blanche's Aunt Elzema's

New Year's Day dinner; Sylvestre, the "schlemiel," has passed around the snapshots of his horse, Victorine:

The pictures had gone round the table silently, and then produced increasing hilarity. One of the cousins began to sing "Joe, le Cowboy," and from there they went on to "Le Cowboy des Western Plains." "Le Cowboy Canadian," [sic], and finally united in many rollicking [sic] choruses of "Dans Les Plains du Fa-ar West." (140)

28 There is very little natural description in Gallant's fiction. Most of her stories are located in civilized (as opposed to natural) settings.

29 "Señor Pinedo," in The Other Paris, p. 199. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

30 The "indirectness" we constantly read in Gallant's fiction may result from her constant reference to tangible objects. In an essay on La Bruyère, Roland Barthes writes:

One might say that the first condition of literature is, paradoxically, to produce an indirect language: to name things in detail in order not to name their ultimate meaning Now by a second paradox, the best way for a language to be indirect is to refer as constantly as possible to objects and not to their concepts: for the object's meaning always vacillates, the concept does not; whence the concrete vocation of literary writing.

Critical Essays, trans. Richard Howard (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), p. 232.

The original passage:

On pourrait dire que la première condition de la littérature, c'est, paradoxalement, d'accomplir un langage indirect: nommer en détail les choses afin de ne pas nommer leur sens dernier Or, par un second paradoxe, le meilleur moyen d'être indirect, pour un langage, c'est de se référer le plus constamment possible aux objets et non à leurs concepts; car le sens de l'objet tremble toujours, non celui du concept; d'où la vocation concrète de l'écriture littéraire.

Essais Critiques (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1964), p. 232.

Jonathan Culler originally drew my attention to this excerpt:

The best way for a language to be indirect is to refer as constantly as possible to things themselves rather than to their concepts, for the meaning of an object always flickers, but not that of the concept. Structuralist Poetics, p. 194. Barthes' comment is helpful in explaining how Gallant's fiction can seem to impenetrable and yet be so suggestive at the same time.

31 The pensions of both stories are clandestine so that the owners can avoid paying taxes; both pensions have an "inevitable English-woman," "one of the queer Mad Megs who seem to have been born and bred for pension life" ("Senor Piñedo, p. 207); in "When We Were Nearly Young" she is a "crazy old Englishwoman" (39).

32 "When We Were Nearly Young," The New Yorker, 15 October 1960, p. 42.

33 One of the most interesting stories in this respect is "An Autobiography" (1964), discussed in Chapter V.

34 See bibliography for details. "The Legacy," Gallant tells Hancock, is based on a story told to her while she was working on the Standard:

I haven't read that story for twenty years. The reason I remember it and can still see it is because it was based on something that was told to me. I was working on a newspaper story when I came across a family like the one in "The Legacy." I sat in someone's kitchen in the east end of Montreal while a young woman standing at an ironing board told me the story of her life. An unhappy life. She told me how she tried to get away from home, and about her delinquent brother, the one so dumb that the police caught him running away from a foiled holdup, still hanging onto a gun. I didn't invent any of that.

CFM interview, pp. 25-26.

35 "The Picnic," in The Other Paris, p. 106.

36 See note 39.

37 The mother thinks her daughter's memories of Geneva will "crystallize" around two characters in a play: "Everything about the trip, in the end, would crystallize around Tatiana and the Grand Duke." ("About Geneva," in The Other Paris, p. 196.)

³⁸ "About Geneva," in The Other Paris, p. 191. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

³⁹ Shirley, the central figure in Gallant's novel A Fairly Good Time (1970), "never failed to expect her mother's letters to contain magical solutions, and never failed to be disappointed. The correspondence between mother and daughter, Montreal and Paris, was an uninterrupted dialogue of the deaf" (45). In her CFM interview, Gallant remarks: "Some people are quiet and some people never shut up. Communication is quite another. In that sense all families are the same." CFM, p. 23.

⁴⁰ When Ursula reports on the other woman, her language is deadpan, uninflected. She is a witness, repeating dialogue, stating facts:

"Well," said Ursula, slowly, "once the laundry didn't come back. It was her fault, he said. Our sheets had to be changed, he said. So she said Oh, all right. She took the sheets off Colin's bed and put them on my bed, and took the sheets off my bed and put them on Colin's. To make the change, she said." (193)

⁴¹ Compare the use of "lovely" with the use of "pretty" in "The Other Paris."

⁴² Compare the description of Ursula's reaction to that of Carol's sensation in the Place Vendôme: "She suddenly felt sorry for Paris, just as she had felt sorry for Felix Her throat went warm, like the prelude to a rush of tears" ("The Other Paris," pp. 12-13).

⁴³ In "Saturday" (1961), for example, "invention" is used in a different but closely related context: "He could dream as well as Gérard. He invented: he and Don Carlos went through the gap of a fence and were in a large sloping pasture." The New Yorker, 8 June 1961, p. 40.

⁴⁴ "Give The Kid A Gory Story," Standard Magazine, 29 June 1946, pp. 9, 15.

⁴⁵ "Gory Story," p. 15.

⁴⁶ "Gory Story," p. 15.

⁴⁷ "Jorinda and Joringel," trans. by Wanda Gág, illus. by Margot Tomes (New York: Cowards McCann & Geoghegan, 1978). The tale appears in More Tales From Grimm, trans. and illus. by Wanda Gág (New York: Coward-McCann, 1947). Original title: "Jorinda und Joringel."

⁴⁸ "Jorinda and Jorindel," The New Yorker, 19 September 1959, p. 39. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

⁴⁹ Gallant tells Geoff Hancock that she never writes from a theory: "I don't begin with a theory. If I did, I'd be lost. I wouldn't know what to do." CFM interview, p. 24.

⁵⁰ See note 30.

CHAPTER III

My Heart Is Broken: Ghosts in Memory's Mirrors,
Heartbreak in Memory's Voice

The most important developments in My Heart Is Broken (1964) lie in the greater (and more rewarding) demands Gallant's narrators make on readers, and in her fuller exploration of the forms in which memory re-makes the past.¹ In the stories of My Heart Is Broken, memory engages more complex characters in increasingly fissured relations with the past. We read character in these stories by reading form: first-person narrators reveal themselves by calling attention to the forms of the stories they tell. Their stories, as well as the third-person narratives, invite us to read characters as frames, as forms, as manners or idioms of perception. We discover that Gallant reveals "ordinary" characters who startle through their manner of seeing and telling us we read these frames, learn these idioms, decode these plots of perception. The narrators of My Heart Is Broken instruct us to look and listen to how characters see and speak. They invite us to look carefully at the well-formed, neatly framed "tableaus" or "mosaics" which they present to us with such measured precision;² they also invite us to listen to the silences surrounding declarations of "heartbreak," declarations which go unheard. Readers construct characters by completing broken dialogues, supplying missing information, and understanding the silences, the gaps which interrupt communication.

Form instructs readers most directly through the manner in which these characters remember or forget. In a 1982 article on Gallant in Canadian Literature, David O'Rourke argues that the figures in My Heart Is Broken are "exiles in time," suggesting that to focus on characters' expatriation in foreign places distracts us from their essentially temporal dislocation.³ The recurring concern in these stories with returns to the past, or banishment from it, bears out his point. The act, the art of remembering is a central theme in "Its Image on the Mirror" and in the closely linked story, "The Cost of Living."⁴ Both first-person narrators learn that the "ghost" of self can be banished or evoked--within a relationship, within a family, within history--depending on the forms in which memory records, reorders, or remakes the past. Whether this "ghost" emerges or recedes is also determined by the kinds of impasses which arise when voices are greeted with silence: first-person cries of "heartbreak," like Jeannie's at the end of the title story, often go unheard in a third-person society of deaf auditors. These breaks in dialogue make My Heart Is Broken a bleaker assembly of stories than those of The Other Paris because there are fewer resolutions, ironic or otherwise, to characters' heartbreaks, fewer ways out of their impasses. Characters are not allowed, as Carol Frazier is allowed, to take refuge in comfortably private fictions, seemingly free of history. The characters of My Heart Is Broken are more painfully conscious and self-conscious, so that the only change possible in these stories is a change, rarely realized, in characters' manners of perception, a change in form.

In her introduction to Home Truths, Gallant writes that "fiction, like painting, consists of entirely more than meets the eye; otherwise it is not worth a second's consideration."⁵ What meets the eye in "Its Image on the Mirror," the "short novel" published for the first time in My Heart Is Broken, is a series of framed portraits. Jean Price, the first-person narrator, presents readers with mirror images of characters and scenes, flat portraits which she describes with scrupulous objectivity, as if she were transcribing from memory.⁶ Jean learns in the course of telling her story to explore what she mimetically represents; she remembers in precise, vivid detail and at the same time begins to announce and explore memory's distortions. In this process, she becomes, like her memories, "more than meets the eye," evolving from an objective reporter into a subjective explorer as her distanced, ghostless images resolve into more immediate ghostly figures.

One dimension of this opposition between mimetic, objective representation (an art of reporting) and subjective, engaged exploration (an art of recreating) is suggested in the verse fragment from a Yeats drama which prefaces the novel and gives it its title:

What is love itself,
 Even though it be the lightest of light love,
 But dreams that hurry from beyond the world
 To make low laughter more than meat and drink,
 Though it but set us sighing? Fellow-wanderer,
 Could we but mix ourselves into a dream
 Not in its image on the mirror! 7

For Jean, as for many Gallant characters, love is a secret kept by other people, a secret hinted at in the timbre of a voice, in the "sound of low laughter."⁸ Seeking to evoke the "ghostly" human imagination per-

vading (or announced as absent from) her flat mirror images, Jean reports on the surfaces, the portraits she draws from memory. The figures Gallant opens her stories with often watch themselves, as does Jean, and see selfless reflections in mirrors, just as they "watch" their memories, seeing framed tableaux.⁹ Because Jean separates subjects from objects, ghosts from images, memory from history, form from content, first from third person, she then has to seek out love as a secret, to look everywhere for a reality hiding behind an appearance. Irmgard's mirror-thin conception of self in "Jorinda and Jorindel" is Jean Price's point of departure: like Puss, the first-person narrator of "The Cost of Living," Jean remembers portraits in order to begin articulating herself to herself. She discovers that she must live with ghosts and mirrors, subjects and objects, memory and history.

But "Its Image on the Mirror" cannot be read only as Jean's private quest for identity. Jean's memories, like those of all Gallant characters, encounter history. In this story, wartime Montreal dramatically breaks in on Jean's memories as she waits for her husband Tom, who is overseas, and then learns of her brother Frank's death. Jean's final account of herself is as one who has "survived," awoken from a private dream, waiting for the war to end. She finishes with her memories as a realist wakened from her own romance.

"Its Image on the Mirror" is a report and a confession. Jean reports her memories to confess herself: through changes in the way Jean calls up the past, changes which we see reflected in the changing patterns of her memories, she comes to a fuller way of making sense of herself and of history, by assimilating memory as experience rather than reporting on

it as a framed picture. Jean is tantalized by her younger and more attractive sister, Isobel, who, Jean imagines, possesses the secret of love. On one level, Jean's story is a report on her attempt to gain entrance into her sister's world. She succeeds at last, but only to discover that her representations of her sister, her portraits and reports, do not describe the figure she finally encounters. Jean is the eldest of three children, the one most under the influence of the family, a "community" with no dialogue whose prevailing structural image is the reassuring reflection of one generation in the mirror of another's conduct.¹⁰ As she reports on various family portraits, pictures she remembers vividly and transcribes exactly, Jean begins to change her language to render the changing significance of her memories. She adopts a different grammar, one which allows her to show her transformation from reporter into survivor.

Jean's memories are arranged diachronically, to show their relative importance as she begins deconstructing them in order to reconstruct her life.¹¹ She remembers her own and her siblings' childhoods and adolescences in Allenton, a town in Quebec near the Vermont border, and she recalls Isobel's and her own departure to take wartime jobs in Montreal. She remembers her marriage at twenty-four to Tom Price, after Isobel turns him down; Isobel's marriage at eighteen to her first husband, the "bumptious, the unspeakable" Davey Sullivan, and her wartime affair in Montreal with Alec Campbell, a failed poet turned schoolmaster (61); she recalls Isobel dying of a kidney disease and then tricking the family by recovering. She reports on her sister's clandestine second marriage to Alfredo, a Venezuelan doctor; on her brother Frank's enlisting and going

overseas and his marriage to Enid; and on his death in England in an accident. Finally, she records the impact of Frank's death on the family, remembering her return with Isobel from Montreal to Allenton. Remembering their encounter in the family house, an encounter she records in the last of the novel's seven sections, Jean perceives for the first time the patterns of her own life within the family and, beyond it, the larger, broken patterns of history, of life during the war. Jean interweaves these patterns of memory--of private life bound up in family life, of her life in wartime Montreal, arrested in its turn as she waits for death announcements from overseas-- to form the structure of her story. But the structural coherence is suspect, depending as it does upon Jean's sense of memory as a camera eye. We learn to read Jean's memories as she learns to write them, with attention to the kinds of truth which they convey.

Jean opens her dialogue with the past as a reporter, recording a "sight" she remembers in sharp detail. She begins in the present tense, shifts to the past and then to the "presence-of-the-past," enacting the dynamics of her moment of recollection, the movement from the "now" of remembering to the "then" of what is being remembered, which intensifies as it is being remembered into the immediacy of vivid memory.¹² But at the beginning of the story memory's immediacy is fixed, frozen. Jean's memory is a "tableau," which, like one of "those crowded religious paintings," tells a "story" (57). Jean reports at this point by transcribing a visual scene into its static verbal equivalent, as if words will fix the memory, frame the picture she is reporting:

My last sight of the house at Allenton is a tableau of gesticulating people stopped in their tracks, as in those crowded religious paintings that tell a story.

. . . Our picture, on the afternoon of a July day in 1955, was this: my mother sat beside me in my car, the back of which was filled with sweaters and winter coats, the overflow of the moving Half a dozen French-Canadian children straggled along the sidewalk. They are the new tide. French-Canada flows in when English-Canada pulls away.

The faces of the unknown children, like ours, are turned to the house. (57-58)

This picture from memory, arrested, dated, and framed to tell a story, continues for a few more paragraphs, always narrated in the "arrested" present tense Gallant uses to communicate Jean's "stopped" sense of memory. The effect of this use of tense is that individual gestures, like the children's turning their faces to the house, become stylized, hierophantic: "a tall priest in black points," a real estate agent "opens the front door for a cleaning woman," a gardener "kneels before a row of stones, painting them white" (58). The gestures Jean records in this tableau take place not long from the narrative present; in the ensuing sections, Jean begins to circle further into the past in the "helical patterns" we find in many of Gallant's stories.¹³ But Jean does not come full circle. The end of the novel leaves her immersed in a scene anterior to the one she records in her opening memory.

Following immediately on this first report comes its denial. "My mother says I saw nothing of the kind," Jean recalls (58).¹⁴ Her mother provides rational explanations for what she claims are pure products of Jean's imagination, so that the precise details of a vividly remembered scene (and so, in Jean's mind's eye, a true one, even if the language she uses to describe the picture is suggestively suspect) are at once presented and then denied at the beginning of a fiction formed as a series of well-framed portraits, well-formed memories. Jean's mother explains away what

her daughter sees in her mind's eye; Jean's family, potential repository of vital memories (if the children can "re-member" themselves by calling the past into presence) actually closes off these pathways to autonomy.

And Jean, much like an adult Irmgard, "mirrors" her mother:

As I grow older I see that our gestures are alike.
It touches me to notice a movement of hands repeated--
a manner of folding a newspaper, or laying down a comb.
I glance sharply behind me and I know I am reproducing
my mother's quick turn of head. Our voices are alike,
we have the flat voice of our part of the country
I am pleased to be like her. There is no one I admire
more. (65)

Although she models her mother, there is someone Jean admires more-- precisely because she imagines that Isobel has broken out of the family circle. Isobel is not part of the "happy family" to which Davey Sullivan ironically refers. Jean remembers him repeating: "'Happy families are all alike,' . . . because he thought we weren't happy, but pretending" (66); she thinks him "odious but clever" until she finds that he has been repeating the opening lines from Anna Karenina.¹⁵

From childhood on, Jean remembers adopting Isobel's feelings as her own, "becoming" her sister. When she remembers reading fairy tales and English schoolgirl stories supplied by their mother, for example, she also recalls herself appropriating Isobel's "credulousness" as her own:

I was always putting myself in my sister's place,
adopting her credulousness, and even her memories,
I saw, could be made mine. It was Isobel I imagined
as the eternal heroine--never myself. I substituted
her feelings for my own, and her face for any face
described. Whatever the author's intentions, the
heroine was my sister. (84)

Here as elsewhere Jean is trapped within her family, caught between her

admiration for her mother's propriety and self-control--qualities which she mirrors--and her pursuit of Isobel's apparently more romantic rebellion from propriety. And just as Jean, early in her account, reports on her tableaux from memory as if she were a witness, her habitual stance in pursuit of Isobel's is an observer's. This attitude "silences" her sister: "Even when we were young I silenced her," Jean remembers. "She would catch my eye (the hopeful, watching, censor's eye) and become silent, 'behaving,' as our family called it, and nothing could bring her back except my departure" (85--emphasis mine). Jean's "hopeful, watching, censor's eye" focusses her narration, resolving it early in her story into distanced, discrete still-lives; her manner of remembering mimics meaning rather than communicating meaning.

Jean's pursuit of Isa is her guiding obsession throughout. In Montreal, the focus of her interest lies in Isa's affair with Alec Campbell; she recalls that "No romantic story of my own (if ever I'd had one) tormented me as much as her story with Alec Campbell" (91). Jean follows her around Montreal, hoping to enter into Isa's life, which seems romantic, exotic, bohemian. Isobel becomes an image of Jean's creation, but Jean's mistake is to believe that her sister's life is that creation, to believe that Isobel is the figure in an actual painting by the sisters' only mutual friend, Suzanne Moreau. She paints Isobel as a "Personnage Aux Plumes" (95). And when Jean catches up with Isa and Alec one winter night, she sees herself, again, as a witness reporting on a tableau:

Our breath hung between us in white clouds and there was something marble and monumental about the group we formed in our winter clothes on the white street They were the lighted window; I was the watcher on the street. (99)

In the closing section, when Jean finally enters Isobel's world, the "Personnage Aux Plumes" dissolves into an "ordinary" person (153), and this early encounter with Isa and Alec echoes ironically through the reversals which govern Jean's more engaged encounter with Isa in the "bright rooms" of Isa's life (149).

The distinction which Jean draws between images in mirrors and ghosts in the rooms of the Allenton house is another of the dissociations of objective report from subjective exploration which form the structure of Jean's story. Early in the first section, Jean records: "Ghosts moved in the deserted rooms We never saw the ghosts, but we knew they were there" (59). When she visits her parents for a weekend, she looks at her image in the mirror, while ghosts look at her: "a ghost in my old bedroom watched me watching myself in the glass. It was not mischievous, but simply attentive, and its invisible prying seemed improper rather than frightening. My mother must have felt that way too" (60). These "ghosts" are Jean's figurative evocations of the subjects she has suppressed behind her objective mirrors. "Improper" is an important word in her mother's idiom, used to forbid expression of any interior life, of emotion, intuition, dream, or unpleasant truth--expression of anything which might shatter the mirror of proper conduct. To exorcise the ghosts of "poor Isa" and "poor Frank," as her mother calls them, Jean first remembers and then thinks about how memories mean. One process is contained within the other in the forms of her reports.

At the time of Jean's parents' move from Allenton to Montreal, recalled in Jean's opening memory, no one has heard from Isobel in six years; she has been living in Caracas with Alfredo. Jean imagines that

Isobel has removed herself from the reassuring cycles of continuity in the family, and Jean's mother imagines that Isa would naturally have been happier with a Canadian husband and children. The second section describes the whole family's reunion at the parents' summer cottage: Jean, Tom, and their four children, Isobel, Alfredo and their two children, and Poppy, Frank's child (Enid has given Poppy to Jean's mother). Significantly, Jean remembers the whole day as a series of patterns. She remembers that three of her children "sat in a ring with the neighbor's children They were charming, there, in the porch, playing jacks. The harmony wouldn't last an hour, but it made a pretty picture" (74).¹⁶ Momentarily, she feels the "closest feeling I have to happiness. It is a sensation of contentment because everyone round me is doing the right thing. The pattern is whole" (75). But the "whole pattern" breaks apart when she looks over at her sister's family, sitting apart. She imagines Alfredo to be "daunted by our family likeness, our solidarity"; the separation she feels from Isobel sends her back to her earliest memories of the family, memories through which she tries to reconstruct the pattern of events leading up to this scene at the summer cottage.

Jean is defeated by her own separation of her life from her sister's, a separation reflected in Jean's witnessing of herself as she nears Isobel: "I was intensely conscious of my appearance as I advanced, composing in my mind's eye the picture they would have of me," she reports (76). She contrasts her own image of herself with her description of Isobel's family; the precision, the conciseness of both descriptions in these well-formed, sharply detailed portraits is the work of a memory schooled in transcription. Jean visualizes surfaces keenly: she sees memories with a camera eye and frames them in verbal captions, captions

which contain rather than relate. So, for example, the expression Jean sees in Isa's face at the summer cottage reminds her of how Isa had looked on her deathbed: "She summed me up. Her total tallied with mine, but failed to daunt her. My pride in my children was suddenly nothing I approached; we spoke" (77). Totals, tallies, summings-up; Jean's language conveys the mathematical sterility of this kind of communication, and also suggests the artificiality of her distinction between herself and Isa. She has an acute visual memory, but no language of her own. And when Isobel and her family leave shortly after this failed meeting, Jean recalls that everyone "seemed to have a private perplexity, to judge from our expressions" (77).

Jean's memories mean more to her as they resolve from framed reports into embodied reflections; history's messages also evolve in this novel, modulating from film-thin documentary images into a more contingent reality which directly affects Jean's life. Jean, Isobel, and Suzanne Moreau have husbands overseas whose absence creates an illusory stop in time for the women waiting in Montreal. They cannot imagine the reality of the places their husbands have gone to: their inability to fully understand where history--the war--is taking place coalesces with Jean's own inability to understand how her memories mean. Jean establishes this connection between the ways in which memory and history are recorded when she recalls how Suzanne Moreau's husband "had been taken prisoner in Dieppe, in 1942, and vanished from her life":

I think she forgot him because she could not imagine where he was . . . her mind's eye could not reach the

real place we had seen as a make-believe country in films. She could not see the barracks of a prison camp because she had already seen them, gray and white, with film stars suffering and escaping and looking like no one she knew. Surely there was a true landscape We all received letters that were real enough, but the letters told us that everything we saw and read was a lie. Davy, Isobel's husband, saw a documentary film about Italy and even though it was a truthful film, and he saw himself, a glimpse of himself, he wrote that it was a lie It was Suzanne's husband's bad luck to have disappeared into a sham landscape. The men we knew dissolved in a foreign rain. (128).

Like Jean's framed pictures from memory, documentary films are true but not fictionally true, documentary but not revelatory. Her images of the past, like the film of Italy, are "truthful"; like Davey Sullivan, she sees a "glimpse" of herself and her family in them, but these glimpses do not communicate significance. The "true" landscape of Jean's past eludes her, as does the landscape into which the men have vanished. Her documentary snapshots and tableaux do not announce meaning, nor do documentary films tell the same kinds of truths as the personal letters the women receive. Thus the "truth" which Jean's tableaux from memory convey become private analogues to the public "truth" which the documentary films tell. The form of Jean's memories (an eye but no voice, a picture with no language) and the form of the documentary films (images without messages) fail to convey history, private or public.

In the last section of the novel, Jean finally enters into Isobel's "real" life, and so more fully into her own. This change in Jean is a change in her manner of narration. The opening of the last section con-

trasts radically with the opening of the first one: the contrast is all the more significant because it must be a result of Jean's process of remembering, since the events recalled in the last section take place before the Allenton tableau.

Jean and Isobel have returned to Allenton to mourn Frank's death. The form of Jean's memory, its "frame," has altered dramatically:

Our period of family mourning continued for three days. One night I saw, or thought I saw, or may have dreamed, that my father sat on the stairs weeping. Our mother stood a few steps below him so that their faces were nearly level. She was in a flannel dressing gown, a plait of gray hair undone and over one shoulder. Patient, waiting, she held a glass of water to his lips as if control could be taken like a pill. Everything in that scene, which I must have dreamed, spoke of the terror of pity. "The girls are home," she said, for fear that we wake and see him and join him in grieving aloud. (147--emphasis mine)

The first difference between this and Jean's opening "sight" is her own doubt about the nature of her perception of the event--her inability to declare whether she saw, or thought she saw, or might have dreamed the event--in contrast to the crisp detail of her crowded religious painting, which tells a story, and which she reports on with an emphatic, uncontested "this:" (57). Now it is unclear--even if she concludes (in deference, perhaps, to the improbability of her father ever showing emotion openly) that she "must have dreamed"--whether memory, dream, or imagination has conjured the image. Here, too, the image of Jean's mother "consoling" her father "as if control could be taken like a pill" is part of the memory. The mother's censoring reserve, which follows and denies the "truth" of Jean's opening memory, has now been assimilated in memory. The fact that Jean can now use figurative language to suggest the quality of her mother's

control indicates her own fuller insight into the nature of this control, and tells of her liberation from her mother's stifling separation of expression from propriety. The scene now has a language, a significance it can "speak" to Jean--"the terror of pity." Jean's tableaux are now more fully integrated with their significance. The impersonal, "gesticulating" figures in the novel's opening image are "stopped in their tracks," held prisoner in the deceptive immediacy of the simple present tense; the figures in the later image are less constricted, their individual gestures more fluid, and their significance more figuratively conveyed. In both memories, structure conveys meaning, and we learn to read their significance by distinguishing between unqualified assertion in the first tableau (followed by unqualified counter-assertion) and hesitant conjecture, qualified by figurative language, in the second scene. Throughout the novel, we read discrepancies between Jean's confident observations and what we learn about what she observes. These differences become more explicit as the novel develops, until in the scene preceding this last section, Jean herself begins to recognize her own unreliability, confessing that she "had never known Frank," for all of her portraits of him (145). Recognizing that the forms of her portraits have up to this point precluded her knowing them, Jean begins to allow her memories to speak less objectively, less pictorially.

In this last section we also read Jean's adaptation of language to conform with her changing intuition of the relations between images and experience. When Isobel confesses to Jean that she is pregnant by Alec and needs her help, Jean realizes--in part, because she has retold Isobel's report, and so understands it and her sister more fully--that Isobel's

story had a "flaw" (152). Remembering Isobel's appearance, she muses: "Someone who has lost his language wears that look, that despair. Fear, despair: despair is too loud for the quiet night. Remove the word, leave Isobel with cheek on hand, eyes gone yellow in the light of the lamp" (152). Jean is now writing fiction, finding her own language and voice, so that her images can speak; they need no framing captions. She is turning a report into a story, commanding the reader to attend to the manner in which she lets her memory be, freeing it into silence, beyond the frames of words which name as a means of distancing:

"Afraid" is too loud, too. There remains Isobel, then, cheek on hand, a little tired Forget despair, fear. We were very ordinary. Leave us there . . . , my sister and I at the opposite ends of the bed, with our childhoods between us going on to the horizon without a break. (152-153)

Jean begins with pictures and framed reports, and ends with images she commands and then allows herself to leave alone. She begins with a smug understanding of life's patterns as fixed and "immutable" and ends by waking up from her patterned dreams into mutability. Her perfectly framed pictures blur with significance, and images on mirrors become fuller figures. So Jean can see now that Isobel is "ordinary" and not a "personnage aux plumes": "Looking back and down from reality," Jean can "correct the story about plumes: Isobel was considered attractive, though not a perfect beauty, and she was not lavish, and not golden, and not a bird. Those were fancies" (148).

Free of her captions and frames, Jean can now respond, if only for a moment, to Isobel's need for her "whole attention." Jean reaches out to touch her sister, but, like other such meetings in Gallant's fiction, the

encounter is very brief.¹⁷ The sisters bridge their separation for a moment and then part:

I moved forward, kneeling, in the most clumsy movement possible. It was dragging oneself through water against the swiftest current, in the fastest river in the world; I knelt on the bed near my sister and took her thin relaxed hand in mine. We met in a corner of the landscape and she glanced at me, then slid her hand out of mine and said, "Oh, don't." (153)

This moment of identification is a moment for metaphor, for water, swift currents, rivers, and landscapes; and metaphors in the language of Gallant's fiction are as rare as is this kind of encounter between characters.

Jean closes her reflections with a beautiful lament, a meditation on winter sleep and on spring, the season which, like Eliot's April, "warns that death is returning after all" (154). She is writing a letter to Tom, pondering whether or not to tell him the news about his first love; she decides that "the story could wait" (154). She ends with a poetic farewell to her dreams and memories, waking up from romance into history, reversing the direction taken by Carol Frazier at the end of "The Other Paris." The closing is the most evocative passage in the novel, suggesting Jean's reach toward unifying private with public, personal with social, and timeless with historical experience:

I suspected, then, sitting in Frank's unhaunted room, that all of us, save my brother, were obliged to survive. We had slipped into our winter as trustingly as every night we fell asleep. We woke from dreams of love remembered, a house recovered and lost, a climate imagined, a journey never made; we woke dreaming our mothers had died in childbirth and heard ourselves saying, "Then there is no one left but me!" We would waken thinking the earth must stop, now, so that we could be shed from it like snow. I knew, that night, we would not be shed, but would remain, because

that was the way it was. We would survive, and waking--because there was no help for it--forget our dreams and return to life. (155)

The Frank Jean realizes she had never known has disappeared, so that Frank's room is unhaunted, unoccupied by image (Frank as a soldier, for example, as if he were "born to be photographed, in uniform, for the Montreal Star" [139]) or ghost. Winter has always been a season of waiting for Jean, a season she "knew [she] would not survive" (113). Although Jean reflects during her winter's wait that "at any moment [she] might become Tom's widow," it is Frank who dies. Jean wakes up from "dreams of love remembered"--such as her dream of Isa's and Alec's romance, the issue of which is a real pregnancy. Remembering dreams is the process which wakes her up to the world, the historical world in which Tom is absent because he is somewhere Jean cannot imagine. The anxiety Jean feels at living an adult life, beyond the family enclave, is suggested in her waking dream; if her mother is dead in childbirth, Jean will be left completely alone. Waking alone, she imagines, might mean wintry suspension, out of seasonal and family cycles. But the flat finality of her recognition that "that was the way it was" suggests that she understands that survivors must wake up to history, must return to the present tense, progressing from the past tense with which the passage opens and moving through a subjunctive meditation on the blend of past dreams with their present significance.

Jean pursues meaning by framing her memories, distinguishing their features in an attempt to separate out their content. But what she finds in her frames, her forms, is not "content," but more forms.¹⁸ When she leaves images alone for a moment, they speak a language; they are free

of her self-conscious attempts to fix absolute meaning. With this language, Jean can write fiction rather than documentary pieces. Reading this language, we construct a self-shaped story out of a framed report.

"The Cost of Living" (1962) is in several senses a minor-key inversion of "Its Image on the Mirror."¹⁹ "Puss," another first-person narrator who calls attention to the tyranny, the "cost" of memories understood as objective truths, is the younger of two Australian sisters. She has run away from Melbourne late, at twenty-seven, and come to Paris, teaching music to eke out a living. Louise has stayed in Melbourne to nurse their invalid mother; now, both parents dead, she comes to Paris "wisely, calmly, with plenty of money for travel" (158). Puss, like Isobel, has been away from home for six years; Louise, like Jean, "was making a serious effort to know" her sister (158). Puss reports on Louise much as Isobel would on Jean. In fact, the sisters in these stories seem almost twinned, as if Gallant were splitting a character into two aspects in order to explore their relation to each other. She creates two complementary characters and voices and has each tell a similar story, but from an opposed perspective. Jean's voice in "Its Image" could be Louise's in "Cost," plain, proper, and "blunt"; Puss's voice in "Cost" could be Isa's, the rebel's voice, the romantic, the bohemian who at heart distrusts bohemia. One of the characters in each story stays home, tied to the family, while the other breaks away toward "freedom"; but finally both pairs of sisters are more similar than they are different; despite the narrator's perceptions of separation.

Louise, like Jean, is careful, frugal, loyal; she nurses Puss through a bout of flu much as Jean does for Isa in Montreal.²⁰ Like Isa and Jean, the Australian sisters are attached to the same man. Like Tom Price, he goes away to war: Louise, thirty-eight, was married at nineteen to Collie Tate, who went to Malaya with his regiment, was taken prisoner, and died "before she'd had very many letters from him" (165-66). The pairs of sisters share similar genteel middle-class backgrounds, recalled as both narrators describe early family portraits.²¹ Puss describes her "sepia studio portrait":

Two little Anglo-German girls, accomplished at piano, Old Melbourne on the father's side, Church of England to the bone: Louise and Patricia, Lulu and Puss. We hated each other then. (159-60)

Both younger daughters have been disinherited by their families for running away, Puss literally, Isa figuratively. Both narrators call attention to the process of remembering, now doubting, now affirming the truth and clarity of memory's images, scenes, and dialogues, and both draw portraits and transcribe from memory as if they were witnesses in court; yet their police-court exactitude obscures their most important revelations.

On one level, both stories are about the possibilities of relationship, and about love frustrated, denied, and concealed, love unannounced, or hoarded, or grudgingly apportioned. But more importantly, both stories enact the consequences of memory's language misunderstood. The tyranny of form--of snapshots, portraits, pictures, tableaux, framed still lifes--dictates its reports to both women, reports which Jean is more successful than Puss in transforming into the language of fiction. Both stories are about languages and images, vocabularies and grammars, and also about

formal truths and fictional truths, just as much as they are "about" two sisters--in this case, two Australians in Paris, coming up against all of the jarring dislocations, the cultural confusions and contretemps Gallant's foreigners always encounter on alien ground. The point is that these cultural dislocations, instructive in themselves, also direct us to read expatriation, exile, and transience in the context of estrangement from language itself. This exile from language is clearer with Puss, for whom expatriation is just as much a matter of expatriation from a home in language as from a home in a place.²² The language of Puss's narration, as the story's title suggests and Puss's vocabulary confirms, documents Puss's misconstruction of the economies, debits, and credits of relationship. Her accounts of character, her manner of telling stories, cost Puss more than Louise's actual expenditures. Puss's straitened means link up figuratively with her straitened means of telling; her story is "telling" in three senses--narrating, (re)counting, and revealing. But the revelations are clearer to readers than to Puss, who learns less than Jean does about the relations between reports and stories, documentaries and fictions.

Puss is jealous of her sister's inheritance, bitter at her own poverty; she is a parsimonious narrator, hoarding facts, circumscribing character more than reading it. She tells her story with hindsight, after the other three, Louise, Patrick, and Sylvie, have left the hotel and she has gathered up the objective, documentary evidence they leave behind--Louise's ledgers, Sylvie's diary, and Patrick's love letter to Sylvie, which Puss intercepts. Puss describes her sister's record of expenses, entered in two columns which Louise, like her father, has labelled

"Necessary" and "Unnecessary," crossing out the customary "Paid" and "Received." These diaries are intimate documents, because Louise records amounts spent for love under "Necessary," along with the cost of more mundane purchases, such as aspirin for Puss. Louise's accounts reveal her "blunt, plain" attempts to express affection and concern for Sylvie by giving her gifts. "Blunt and straightforward," Louise had "merged 'Necessary' and 'Unnecessary' into a single column," Puss reports; "When I added what she had paid out it came to a great deal. She must be living thinly now" (193). Here as elsewhere, it is not clear that Puss always perceives that her language consistently figures as it tells. Readers become increasingly attuned to the ring of her currency, but Puss, for all her attention to words and their meanings, misses the implications of her vocabulary.

Just as Puss's language is telling on several levels, the structure of her account tells readers the relation between reminiscence and formed story. Just as Puss's tone seems to be lighter, more anecdotal, and more comic than Jean's, she also seems to arrange her memories more haphazardly than Jean does, as if she were telling her story as unpremeditated, formless reminiscence. But reading the story, we learn that its shape is instructive. It returns, like many Gallant stories, to one scene, one moment. Puss recalls this moment in recurring set pieces: Sylvie Laval asks Louise for money on the hotel stairway. The scene is crucial, because it announces a moment of communication between Sylvie and Louise, the moment in which Sylvie makes her demand for recognition, and in which a foreigner acknowledges her. Puss opens the story by recalling this meeting: "Louise, my sister, talked to Sylvie Laval for the first time

on the stairs of our hotel on a winter afternoon" (157). Although she returns to this scene twice (161, 168), Puss artlessly denies that her account is a story, a fiction with a pattern and structure. She interjects explanatory remarks when starting on a fresh tack, as if her account were spontaneous; when Patrick leaves, she makes an effort to distinguish her way of telling from that of a shaped fiction's narration: "In a book or a film one of us would have gone with him as far as the station" (183). The point is that the story instructs readers through its structure; Puss wants to deny her fiction its shape, her story its significance--a denial that is part of her cost of living.

As we read Puss's portraits of Sylvie, Patrick, and Louise, we learn another version of the lesson Jean teaches herself about the meanings of forms. Sylvie Laval is an aspiring screenplay writer and diarist. Showing a careful concern for how texts should be transmitted, Puss transcribes verbatim, including omissions and erasures, a description of Louise which Sylvie has written for an intended screenplay (160). But her memories of Sylvie are less objective. Puss underlines her shallowness, her insincerity and duplicity, her promiscuity, her penchant for gossip, and her greed. To Puss, Sylvie and Patrick are fake artists, fake bohemians, fake persons. She recognizes Sylvie's energy and vitality, but these qualities become expressions of insolence and aggression in Puss's renditions of Sylvie. Her attempt to imagine Sylvie as a drawing, a painting, recalls Jean's image of Isobel and Suzanne Moreau's "Personnage Aux Plumes":

Passing her, as she hung over the banister calling to someone below, you saw the tensed muscle of an arm or leg, the young neck, the impertinent head. Someone ought to have drawn her--but someone has: Sylvie was

the coarse and grubby Degas dancer, the girl with the shoulder thrown back and the insolent chin. For two pins, or fewer, that girl staring out of flat canvas would stick out her tongue or spit in your face.
(162-63)

In contrast, when Puss reports what Louise has told her about Sylvie, she recalls that Sylvie "communicated" to Louise "with an intense vitality that was like a third presence on the stairs. Her warmth and her energy communicated so easily that there was almost too much, and some fell away and had its own existence" (169).²³

Patrick, like Sylvie, is an aspiring artist, an actor, a disembodied voice practising elocution all day in his hotel room. Puss is drawn to Patrick, her namesake, but only alludes to her attraction indirectly. As she does when she describes Sylvie, Puss reports what Louise tells her about meeting Patrick, an encounter between a consummate actor (and a native Parisian, graced in the art of smooth conversation) and a plain-speaking, "blunt" foreigner, resulting, Puss believes, in an affair. But Louise's relationships with Patrick and Sylvie go beyond her ledger accounts, while Puss remains isolated in a mode of recollection.

Puss mistakenly believes that she understands Louise completely, just as Jean Price believes she understands Frank. But when Puss condemns Louise for her "failure" to remember Collie Tate, we read her denial of implication as a comment on her terrible fidelity to memory: "Patrick and Collie had merged into one occasion, where someone failed. The failure was Louise's; the infidelity of memory, the easy defeat were hers. It had nothing to do with me" (189).

Puss can only allude to her interior life through reference to her practical "incompetence" (a defect she shares with Patrick). Her reve-

lations emerge from fragments of verse she remembers after waking up from a dream, and from another story, her fevered account of an incident in Hector Berlioz' life. She cannot explain why she tells the Berlioz story. She remembers that she saw Patrick and Sylvie together; then, returning from a music lesson, she goes to Patrick's room and tells the other three the story--in English, which Sylvie does not understand:

"When Berlioz was living in Italy, . . . he heard that Marie Pleyel was going to be married, and so he disguised himself as a lady's maid and started off for Paris. He intended to assassinate Marie and her mother and perhaps the fiancé as well. But he changed his mind for some reason, and I think he went to Nice." This story rushed to my lips without reason. Berlioz and Marie Pleyel seemed to me living people, and the facts contemporary gossip. While I was telling it, I remembered they had all of them died. (176) 24

Readers have to make the connection between the Berlioz story and Jean's reaction at seeing Patrick and Sylvie together; Puss can only express her feelings in disguise.

The structure of the end of "The Cost of Living" recalls the closing of "Its Image on the Mirror." When Patrick leaves, Puss becomes "dream-haunted," "watching" Louise look for Patrick. She dreams of "labyrinths, of search, of missed chances, of people standing on opposite shores" (188).²⁵ She remembers a verse from a German poem which she had tried to set to music when she was "Patrick's age":

Es warent zwei Königskinder
Die hatten einander so lief
Sie konnten zusammen nicht kommen
Das Wasser, es war zu tief. (188)

(There were two royal children
Who were very fond of each other
They could not come together
The water, it was too deep) 25

First Puss thinks that she and Louise must be the royal children; then she decides that they must be Patrick and Sylvie. Another probable pair would be Patrick and Patricia. But Puss is left at the end of her story, much like Jean Price at the beginning of hers, with "winter ghosts" (191). The last word in the story is Sylvie's: when she returns the necklace Louise had bought her, she says to Puss: "'I'd have been as well off without it. Everything I've done I've had to do. It never brought me bonheur'" (193). Puss apologizes for not translating the French word: "bonheur is ambiguous. It means what you think it does, but sometimes it just stands for luck; the meaning depends on the sense of things" (193--emphasis mine).²⁷

Puss's sense of things has not allowed for the ambiguity so nicely captured in Sylvie's last word. The cost of living for her is love unannounced, while Louise, she tells us, pays the price for love too bluntly declared.

Both Jean and Puss make sense through indirection and reversals. Their objective reports communicate meaning through form; through form, the narrators teach us how to read, to compose a figure, a "ghost" who never quite meets the eye. We compose Puss and Jean by studying their reports on Louise and Isobel. The more we pay attention to the shapes of the narrators' "whole patterns," the more fully we can read the narrators themselves.

The remaining seven stories in My Heart Is Broken are third-person narratives.²⁸ Although they are not as closely linked as "Its Image on the Mirror" is with "The Cost of Living," they also enact the distances between stilled lives and living moments, between characters who are framed, arrested in over-articulate manners and idioms, and silenced or

inarticulate characters fumbling for words with which to declare their bafflement, their heartbreak. In this book of stories, these moments are moments of defeat, of failures to bridge separations or to complete dialogues. In each story, readers are invited to attend to declarations and "tableaus" of heartbreak which signal characters' expatriation from the landscapes of memory, landscapes which have become foreign territory to them. Peter Frazier's reflections at the end of "The Ice Wagon Going Down the Street" (one of the finest endings in all of Gallant's fiction) are representative as he tries to decide who it is who is "lost" in the landscape of one of Agnes Brusen's memories from childhood. The story's ending, like those of several other stories in this book, isolates a character in his confusion as to who is lost and who found. The assured rhythms of Peter Frazier's interior monologue are undercut with sharp irony, fracturing the form of his certainty with its implicit uncertainty:

He thinks of the ice wagon going down the street. He sees something he has never seen in his life-- a Western town that belongs to Agnes. Here is Agnes-- small, mole-faced, round-shouldered because she has always carried a younger child The child is Peter. . . . He is there. He has taken the morning that belongs to Agnes, he is up before the others, and he knows everything. . . . He could keep the morning, if he wanted to, but what can Peter do with the start of a summer day? Sheilah is here, it is a true Sunday morning, with its dimness and headache and remorse and regrets, and this is life. . . . Let Agnes have the start of the day. Let Agnes think it was invented for her. Who wants to be alone in the universe? No, begin at the beginning: Peter lost Agnes. Agnes says to herself somewhere, Peter is lost. 29

"The Moabiteess" closes with Miss Horeham alone in her room, remembering her secret attachment to her father and declaring to herself: "Oh, how they would all die if they knew! Oh, how they would all of them die."³⁰

"Acceptance of Their Ways" closes with a tableau: Lily Littel and Mrs. "Freeport" talk at each other in Mrs. Freeport's "bare wintry garden," both dreading a loss of company.³¹ Mrs. Freeport fears that Lily will eventually leave her for her (unreal) sister in Nice, but Lily reassures her by straightening out the water lily in Mrs. Freeport's hat. Lily cannot leave, because she is still learning Mrs. Freeport's gentlewomanly manners, her "ways." In "Bernadette," readers are left with Bernadette's inverted hope for her unborn child, her "angel"--that when it dies, as she believes it must, it will pray for her in eternity. Appropriately, Bernadette is watching a film in the closing scene, just as she is a spectator watching her own "dark . . . personal fear."³² When Bernadette feels her baby moving inside her for the first time, that crucial moment, announcing the possibilities of a new life, is immediately transfigured into a moment announcing another death. Bernadette's society of deaf auditors, Robbie and Nora, are Knights in name only, trapped in liberal posturing and a frozen marriage. Bernadette's spectacle goes unseen, just as Jeannie's declaration in the title story goes unheard. Readers learn to attend to these failures of perception, and to construct from them the crucial moment in each story, the moment which gives each story its structure.³³

We can read the powerful title story as the book's finest evocation of just such a failure on one character's part to listen to another's declaration of heartbreak. "My Heart Is Broken" calls attention to the interruptions, silences, and misunderstandings that separate Jeannie from Mrs. Thompson, referring readers to the language or text of the society which speaks through these silences. The story opens with Mrs. Thompson speaking to Jeannie and closes with Mrs. Thompson's reflections on her

past, even though it is Jeannie who has been raped and her heart that has been broken. The first allusion to the rape comes only after the story is half completed; much of the discussion of the rape is indirect, at several removes; the camp's reactions are reported to Jeannie by Mrs. Thompson, who overhears the boss, Mr. Sherman, talking to Vern, Jeannie's husband. And most of what Mrs. Thompson reports focusses on the social consequences of the rape--the job it will cost Vern, the trouble it creates in camp.

Mrs. Thompson is the conduit for a depersonalized, social response to Jeannie's rape. The story opens with Mrs. Thompson's recollection of the day she read of Jean Harlow's death: she remembers that she had recently married, that "all the men were unemployed in those days," and that she read the news in an American newspaper while riding a streetcar in Montreal. She interrupts herself briefly to remind Jeannie (diminutive Jean) that she "wasn't even on earth" when Harlow died, and she concludes by calling Harlow's death her own biggest heartbreak: "'You can believe me or not, just as you want to, but that was the most terrible shock I ever had in my life. I never got over it.'" ³⁴ Mrs. Thompson's nostalgia for one of Hollywood's most famous sex symbols opens a story about sexual violence in the present; she thinks of Jeannie's rape in terms of her own "terrible shock" at reading of a film-star's death, so that her vicarious bereavement is ironically opposed to Jeannie's experience. For Mrs. Thompson, Jeannie is an impersonator, asking for trouble by looking and dressing like a film-star.

Mrs. Thompson's opening recollection is followed by silence: "Jeannie had nothing to say to that" (195). Throughout, Jeannie's responses signal the gaps in communication between the two women. She looks,

"uncomprehending" at Mrs. Thomspen, or frowns "absently," or she "might not have been listening." The narration itself further separates the two women by describing Jeannie in a spare and terse style, contrasting sharply with the discursiveness of Mrs. Thompson's opening memory. Most of the sentences in the story's second paragraph, for example, simply declare Jeannie's appearance as a series of hard, bare facts, mutely opposed to Mrs. Thompson's chatty description of her reaction to Harlow's death. We begin to read Jeannie's character in a series of spare assertions, their rhythm and structure unvarying:

Jeannie had nothing to say to that. She lay flat on her back across the bed, with her head toward Mrs. Thompson and her heels just touching the crate that did as a bedside table. Balanced on her flat stomach was an open bottle of coral-pink Cutex nail polish. She held her hands up over her head and with some difficulty applied the brush to the nails of her right hand. Her legs were brown and thin. She wore nothing but shorts and one of her husband's shirts. Her feet were bare. (195)

The taut sentences recall Hemingway's terse prose style; Gallant's tightly compressed idiom evokes Jeannie's absence and abstraction. She pays more attention to nails and nail polish than to Mrs. Thompson until she is ready to speak. The narration continues in this flat, compressed style for one more paragraph, identifying Jeannie and Mrs. Thompson as wives of men working in an isolated road-construction camp in northern Quebec.³⁵

The starkness of style is heightened again as it is followed by a looser, more cumulative description of Mrs. Thompson: "She was a nice, plain, fat, consoling sort of person, with varicosed legs, shoes unlaced and slit for comfort, blue flannel dressing gown worn at all hours, pudding-bowl haircut, and coarse gray hair" (195).

Just as the story's governing style, idiom, and point of view are Mrs. Thompson's, so is the governing assessment of Jeannie's proper (third-person) place in camp society. In Mrs. Thompson's eyes, Jeannie has misunderstood her role as a wife: she should have realized that if her husband liked jobs in the bush, her job would be to make a cabin a home, as Mrs. Thompson has become so expert in doing. As long as the men "like the life," the women should be satisfied; since Vern "likes it better than anything"--except for the army--Jeannie should have been content (199). Both Mr. Sherman and Mrs. Thompson see Vern as the victim, Jeannie as the guilty party: Vern "ought to have thrashed you," Mrs. Thompson tells her (202).

Through this account of a woman's place in camp life, Gallant confronts Jeannie with a society organized around men at work, with their women out of sight. Both Vern and Pops Thompson miss the army, the best of all possible men's worlds; both have chosen the closest substitute, a raw, uncivilized camp in the bush. Women can be sexy on film, in Hollywood, but not in a road construction camp, not in northern Quebec. Harlow's death is heartbreaking, but Jeannie's rape is her punishment for flaunting herself; further, it is all the more reprehensible of Jeannie to have dressed up and gone out because she has cost Vern his job.

The "dialogue" between the two women opens twice, first as Mrs. Thompson begins with her memory of Harlow's death, and then again, as Jeannie tells her the story of trying to learn about sexuality and childbirth from a Lana Turner movie. Jeannie goes to the movie six times, but "in the end [she] never knew any more (201). This confession follows directly upon Jeannie's description of the rape, which she says she would

"have to see . . . happening to know what happened" (201). Like the Lana Turner movie, the rape teaches her nothing. It is inexplicable to her, a brutal event with no meaning, counterpointing the movie version of birth, which presents Turner with her twins as a fait accompli. Mrs. Thompson's response to Jeannie's confessions, here and throughout, parallels Jeannie's absent responses to Mrs. Thompson: Mrs. Thompson "sat quite still, trying to make sense" of Jeannie's account of the Lana Turner movie (201).

The closest that Mrs. Thompson can come to imagining Jeannie's rape is to look out the "dark window" of the cabin and think of soldiers raping civilians:

"I wonder what it must be like I mean, think of Berlin and them Russians and all. Think of some disgusting fellow you don't know. Never said hello to, even. Some girls ask for it, though. You can't always blame the man. The man loses his job, his wife if he's got one, everything, all because of a silly girl." (200)

Mrs. Thompson's own experience, as evidenced by her cabin's plastic furnishings, the dolls she pushes around camp in her pram, and the records she and Pops listen to (these "dated back to the year one") is all erstaz, second-hand, third-person; thus her most terrible shock has been reading about a film-star's death. She can only transmit to Jeannie the codes of conduct which have emptied out her own life, making her little more than a mouthpiece. "'A woman can always defend what's precious, even if she's attacked,'" she tells Jeannie, but she herself has not been able to "defend" her own identity, so that she cannot speak in her own voice (200). She can only "observe" that "taking advantage of a woman is a criminal offence"; but she immediately follows this observation with a report on

what she has overheard Mr. Sherman say to Jean about bringing lawyers around, "acting" the overheard dialogue to Jeannie "with spirit" (201). Half-wisfully, Mrs. Thompson imagines that Jeannie will be scarred forever, haunted by a "terrible, terrible memory"; but Jeannie tells her that she "already can't remember it" (200).

The separation between first and third-person experience widens with Mrs. Thompson's response to Jeannie's last declaration, and we must read the story with attention to this irony. Throughout, Jeannie has been trying to tell Mrs. Thompson about loneliness and isolation, about innocence enforced by film-thin versions of experience. Mrs. Thompson, intently passing on her received notions of Jeannie's guilt, cannot hear or see her, except as an incarnation of Jean Harlow. Jeannie's final cry is an expression of desolation at not being liked:

"He could at least have liked me," said Jeannie. "He wasn't even friendly. It's the first time in my life somebody hasn't liked me. My heart is broken, Mrs. Thompson. My heart is just broken." (202)

Mrs. Thompson's response is silence. She rocks in her chair, trying "to remember how she'd felt about things when she was twenty, wondering if her heart had ever been broken, too" (202). Mrs. Thompson has not passed through any initiation, violent or otherwise; she has lived in a perpetual, childish haze, confusing movies with life, dolls with babies, self-righteousness with selfhood. She cannot quite distinguish between Jean and Jeannie, an image and a person. Yet she is also the woman who has cheerfully adapted to the demands of camp life; the price she has paid for this accommodation is evidently the loss of identity, of an interior life.

Jeannie's final declaration comes from the heart, but Mrs. Thompson, a reporter who goes so far as to act out the social responses to the rape, has no means of listening to her. Similarly, Veronica Baines' cry goes unacknowledged at the end of "Sunday Afternoon" (1962).³⁶ Like "Señor Pinedo," this story anticipates the stories in The Pagnitz Junction, Gallant's most overtly political book of stories.³⁷ The story opens on a double exposure: first, Veronica watches a "scene" from her Paris apartment window; she is completely removed from the silent movie she observes, a historical episode with meanings she cannot fathom, since she "seldom read[s] the boring part of newspapers" (204). The scene is presented in the first instance by an observer recording time and place from a completely detached perspective: "On a wet February afternoon in the eighth winter of the Algerian war, two young Algerians sat at the window table of a café behind Montparnasse station" (203). The third in the tableau is a European girl much like Veronica, "an innocent from an inland place" who turns a "gentle, stupid face to each of the men in turn, trying to find a common language" (204). The scene dissolves, and we discover that Veronica has been watching these figures for most of the afternoon. The story explores Veronica's interior life, a life ignored by the two men sitting in the apartment discussing politics--Jim, her American lover, and Ahmed, a Tunisian medical student. Jim believes that "life began only after it was prepared," while Veronica thinks "it had to start with a miracle"; both "ideologies" are more artificial (and more foreign to French life) than Ahmed's attitudes, which "were not acquired, like Jim's. They were as much part of him as his ears" (213). Ahmed briefly and coolly considers making a play for Veronica, but dismisses

the idea, and the men carry on with their political discussion while Veronica imagines herself asking them whether she is "any better than the girl" she observed earlier in the café (215). The story closes with her cry for recognition; she can only gain the men's attention by alluding to the dangers of discussing politics behind an open window:

"You both think you're so clever," "You haven't even enough sense to draw the curtains." While they were still listening, she said, "It's not my fault if you don't like me. Both of you. I can't help it if you wish I was something else. Why don't you take better care of me?" (217)

The historical world, which enacts silent tableaux Veronica watches from her window, has little relevance to her. Her political innocence counterpoints Jeannie's sexual innocence; both women cry out for recognition, to be "liked," and both cries are left unanswered.

In all of the stories of My Heart Is Broken, the interior life of the individual is a subject more alluded to than proclaimed. It is incoherently articulated in dreams, in feverish accounts of romantic episodes, in misinterpreted folksong fragments. When it is announced, as in "My Heart Is Broken," or in Angelo's plea in "An Unmarried Man's Summer," or in Veronica's cry in "Sunday Afternoon," it goes unacknowledged or is misunderstood. Characters like Angelo go unacknowledged by characters like Walter Henderson, who composes his life in an arrested frieze, a "mosaic" picture stopped in time, replacing the more "broken patterns" of less well-formed, more figurative lives. Gallant frames her characters in My Heart Is Broken, distancing their images in reports like the open-

ing description of Jeannie, or Puss's description of Sylvie Laval, or Jean Price's portraits of Isobel, Frank, and her mother, or the description of Walter Henderson's "mosaic." Gallant makes the dialogues in these stories interrupt as much as they communicate; in many stories, dialogue between characters is cut off, or cut short. But ranged alongside these objective reports and framed portraits are subjective ghosts, and the broken dialogues are potentially completed by sudden cries from the heart. The distances between subjects and objects, ghosts and images, Jeannie's cry and Mrs. Thompson's overheard reports, alternately widen and narrow as Gallant explores the reach of memory. Memory in these stories reports, reflects, frames, dreams, and recreates the past; memory transcribes the past, and when its images on the mirror are allowed to speak, evokes and explores it as well. Gallant's next book of stories, The Pegnitz Junction (1973), takes up the wider political, social, and historical implications of these private and public, subjective and objective dialogues between memory's mirrors and memory's ghosts.

Notes

¹ My Heart Is Broken (New York: Random House, 1964) was published in England as An Unmarried Man's Summer (London: Heinemann, 1965). See bibliography for details on reprints in 1974 and 1982.

² Jean Price, the narrator of "Its Image on the Mirror," calls her opening memory "a tableau"; in "An Unmarried Man's Summer," Walter Henderson composes his life in a "mosaic image." Both stories appear in My Heart Is Broken.

³ "Exiles in Time: Gallant's My Heart Is Broken," Canadian Literature, No. 93 (Summer 1982), pp. 98-107.

⁴ The story appears in My Heart Is Broken, pp. 157-193.

⁵ "An Introduction," in Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories (Toronto: Macmillan, 1981), p. xii.

⁶ In an interview with Graeme Gibson, Gallant comments on "Its Image": "I had an idea about time and memory and I was really trying to do something. I don't know whether I succeeded or not, perhaps not." Anthology, CBC Radio, 31 Aug. 1974.

⁷ The excerpt is from Yeats's verse drama, The Shadowy Waters (1906). This late romantic play tells of Forgael, a seeker after "love . . . / But of a beautiful, unheard of kind / That is not in the world" (410). Forgael is looking for "Miracle, ecstasy, the impossible hope, / The flagstone under all, the fire of fires, / The roots of the world" (408). In the poem which prefaces the drama, the speaker asks:

Do our woods
And winds and ponds cover more quiet woods,
More shining winds, more star-glimmering ponds?
Is Eden out of time and out of space?

Gallant quotes from one of Forgael's speeches to Aibric, a loyal follower:

Forgael: All would be well
 Could we but give us wholly to the dreams,
 And get into their world that to the sense
 Is shadow, and not linger wretchedly
 Among substantial things; for it is dreams

That lift us to the flowing, changing world
 That the heart longs for. What is love itself,
 Even thought it be the lightest of light love

Aibric: While
 We're in the body that's impossible. (411)

All page references are to The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats (New York: Macmillan, 1956, rpt. 1976).

⁸ Jean Price hears this sound in her sister Isobel's voice as she talks to her lover, Alec Campbell, on the telephone. Isobel's voice, "after the first words, dropped, became gentle and trusting." "What she said," Jean recalls, "was ordinary enough," but she imagines her sister to be "removed . . . to a warmer world, to a climate I could sense but not capture" (136-137).

⁹ Gallant tells Fletcher Markle: "[I] love mirrors, I have a book about them." Telèscope, Channel 6, Toronto, 29 Jan. 1969. For another important example of a character who watches images on mirrors, see Netta Asher in "The Moslem Wife." At one point in the story, Netta becomes "as watchful and as reflective as her bedroom mirrors." See the analysis of "The Moslem Wife" in Chapter V.

¹⁰ Jean refers to the "dialogue cut short" between her and Isobel (67). Again, she imagines a "deranged dialogue," one in which the family would speak openly to each other (133). See Chapter II, note 39.

¹¹ Jean's memories are arranged in seven sections; the narrative present is some time shortly after 1958. The opening section (57-70) recalls events very close to Jean's narrative present; she remembers helping her parents move from the Allenton home to Montreal. She then begins to fill in the past, recalling details from Frank's, Isobel's, and her own childhoods. The family reunion at the summer cottage, recalled in the second section (70-80), takes place after the move from Allenton. In the third section (81-90), Jean returns to her childhood, but then she shifts to her memories of living and working in wartime Montreal and pursuing Isobel there. Section four (100-112) recalls Jean's meeting Tom Price, their marriage, and his departure for overseas. In the fifth section (113-130) Jean remembers learning of Frank's death, and recalls her return to Allenton with Isobel. Section six (130-147) backtracks from section five, recording Frank's stay with his sisters in Montreal just before he leaves for England. The last section (147-155) recalls Jean's encounter with Isa in Allenton after Frank's death. Thus, at the end of the novel, Jean is remembering events which take place before those recorded in the first section. The effect of this structure is to call attention to the way in which the process of memory instructs Jean.

¹² Gallant's carefully controlled use of tense also guides us through the temporal shifts in Jean's memory of meeting Tom Price (101).

¹³ George Woodcock describes Gallant's use of memory in these terms. See Chapter II, note 21.

¹⁴ This pattern of memory followed by its denial recurs as Jean recalls the same scene later in the novel (67).

¹⁵ The 1939 Constance Garnett translation of Anna Karenina opens: "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." (New York: Random House, 1939), p. 3.

¹⁶ Compare this use of "pretty" with its uses in "The Other Paris." See Chapter II, pp. 49-50 and note 5.

¹⁷ Puss and Louise, the sisters in "The Cost of Living," struggle towards the same kind of encounter, described in similar language, except that Puss evokes the imagined encounter through her memory of a fragment from a German folk song ("The Cost of Living," p. 188).

¹⁸ In this sense Jean learns to read her memories as readers should learn to read fiction. Roland Barthes suggests that a text should not be thought of "as a binary structure of Content and Form; the text is not double but multiple; within it there are only forms, or more exactly, the text in its entirety is only a multiplicity of forms without a content." Barthes argues that we should see the text, not as "a species of fruit with a kernel . . . the flesh being the form and the pit the content," but as an "onion": the text is a "construction of layers

(or levels, or systems) whose body contains, finally, no heart, no kernel, no secret, no irreducible principle, nothing except the infinity of its own envelopes--which envelop nothing other than the unity of its own surfaces.

"Style and Its Image," in Literary Style: A Symposium, ed. and trans. by Seymour Chatman (London & New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 6, 10. Jean learns that Isobel's life is not a species of fruit, hiding the secret of love like a kernel within; she learns that appearance does not "hide" reality, form does not "hide" content.

¹⁹ Gallant tells Fletcher Markle that she began work on "Its Image on the Mirror" in 1956, then "put the whole thing away." Then, says Gallant, "I tried the same idea in a shorter form, it was a short story called "The Cost of Living"; I tried it in another way"; she was

writing about the "same relationship between sisters, one attempting to enter into the life of another. The theme of both is domination." Telescope, Channel 6, Toronto, 29 Jan. 1969.

²⁰ Compare Jean's account of nursing Isa, p. 92.

²¹ See Jean's description of a snapshot of herself, Frank, and Isobel, pp. 66-67.

²² The fullest discussion of expatriation in Gallant's fiction is in Ronald Hatch's article, "Mavis Gallant and the expatriate character," Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Kanada-Studien, No. 1 (Jan. 1981), pp. 133-143.

²³ "Communication" is an important word both in Gallant's fiction and in her remarks about fiction. It signifies a real presence or a vital exchange, as opposed to a "dialogue of the deaf."

²⁴ Berlioz was engaged to Marie-Félicité-Denise-Moke, known as Camille. Camille (1811-1875) was "one of the most celebrated virtuosos of the nineteenth century, commonly considered the peer of Liszt." Berlioz received a letter from her mother while he was in Italy, informing him that her daughter would marry M. Pleyel, a wealthy piano manufacturer. Enraged, Berlioz disguised himself as a lady's maid, took two double-barrelled pistols and "two small bottles of those invaluable cordials, laudanum and strychnine," and headed for Paris, intending to shoot Camille, her mother, her fiancé, and himself, resorting to poison if the pistols misfired. On the way he reconsidered and went to Nice, where he stayed for a month: "I breathed, I sang, I believed in God. A convalescence indeed." See The Memoirs of Hector Berlioz (2nd ed.), trans. and ed. by David Cairns (London: Victor Gollancz, 1977), pp. 153, 154, 553.

²⁵ Compare Jean Price's description of her encounter with Isobel, "Its Image on the Mirror," p. 153.

²⁶ Puss's memory is of the first verse of a traditional German folksong, "Zwei Königskinder":

Es waren zwei Königskinder,
die hatten einander so lieb;
sie konnten beisammen nicht kommen,
das Wasser war viel zu tief.

Deutscher Liederschatz, ed. Max Friedlander (Leipzig: C. F. Peters, 1915), p. 74. Friedlander cites it as a well-known traditional song. (The version in "The Cost of Living" has two errors, "warent" for

"waren," "lief" for "lieb"; both misprints are in the original appearance of the story in The New Yorker.)

27 "Bonheur" has two primary meanings, which shade into each other: "good fortune," and "good luck" or "success." See Harrap's New Standard French and English Dictionary, Part 1, Vol. 1, B: 83.

28 "Acceptance of Their Ways," "Bernadette," "The Moabiteess," "My Heart Is Broken," "Sunday Afternoon," "An Unmarried Man's Summer," and "The Ice Wagon Going Down the Street." See bibliography for details.

29 "The Ice Wagon Going Down the Street," pp. 272-3.

30 "The Moabiteess," p. 54.

31 "Acceptance of Their Ways," p. 13.

32 "Bernadette," p. 41.

33 See Chapter I, p. 16.

34 "My Heart Is Broken," in My Heart Is Broken, p. 195. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text. Jean Harlow died on June 7, 1937. She was Hollywood's first "platinum blonde":

It was generally agreed that her acting was poor, but her figure, her daring clothes, and her hair were regarded as sensational . . . her silky, radiant hair became the focus of her publicity as the first "platinum blonde"

. . . Relaxed in her acting, frank in her interest in sex, sophisticated yet with an air of innocence, she created a screen character which kept the censors alert, although it actually mirrored a wide-spread change in moral attitude.

Dictionary of American Biography, ed. R. L. Schuyler, E. T. James, Vol. XXII, Supplement 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), p. 285. For a succinct account of Harlow's influence in the 1930's, see A Biographical Dictionary of the Cinema (London: Secker & Warburg, 1975, rev. 1980), p. 248.

³⁵ Gallant travelled to northern Quebec as a reporter for the Standard. She describes Abitibi in a piece entitled "Frontier Farmers":

Abitibi, like other areas of northern Canada, offers the paradox of frontier conditions combined with 20th century conveniences. Roads look as if they had been carved out with the edge of a knife.

"Frontier Farmers," in Standard Magazine, 27 Sept. 1947, pp. 7-10.

The narrator of "My Heart Is Broken" describes the landscape and the road:

The road was being pushed through country where nothing had existed until now except rocks and lakes and muskeg. The camp was established between a wild lake and the line of raw dirt that was the road. (195)

³⁶ In My Heart Is Broken, pp. 203-217. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text..

³⁷ Most of Gallant's stories are "political" stories; The Pegnitz Junction stories are not a departure in that sense. Gallant tells a CBC interviewer that she intended to write a lot more about the Algerian war, but she didn't, nor did other writers in France. "Sunday Afternoon," she comments, was set in 1962, "just that winter before it [the war] was in the last winter." Morningside, CBC Radio, Fall 1981.

CHAPTER IV

The Pegnitz Junction: The "Corruption of Memory,"
the "Interference" of History

The implications of the "German stories" of The Pegnitz Junction (1973) extend beyond their German characters and settings to resonate across the whole range of Gallant's canon. These stories constitute Gallant's most sustained study of the forms in which recent history has haunted the West. In My Heart Is Broken, suppressed selves haunt individuals watching images in memory's mirrors; in The Pegnitz Junction, history's ghosts haunt a whole culture's image, and mirrors onto the past set off moments of conflagration which burn holes in the present tense. Reading the German stories, we arrive at ironic moments of "junction" between history forgotten and history too clearly remembered. And like Christine, Herbert, and little Bert in the title novella, we are left looking for a way to read ourselves home.

We should note Gallant's choice of epithets when she tells Geoff Hancock that she was trying to discover Fascism's (not Nazism's) "small possibilities in people" in writing the German stories.¹ The stories are a series of painfully acute probes into postwar German culture, and they do articulate a specifically German psychology of inertia and bewilderment, enacting postwar German culture's dazed introspection into its own recent history. But the "Fascism" Gallant recreates in these stories is both more generally Western and more particularly human than

a specifically German political, cultural, or emotional aberration. Readers will dramatically misread these stories if they understand them as fictions which indict Germany by exonerating the rest of Western culture. In fact, another of Gallant's impulses to write the German stories sprang from what she perceived as Canadian (and Western) misreading of the German concentration camps. Gallant was a reporter for the Standard in 1945 when the first pictures of the concentration camps arrived. Asked to write captions for them, she chose a more restrained idiom than that deployed in much Canadian reporting towards the end of the war. Judging from the articles published in the Standard in 1945, the typical Canadian reaction to news of German atrocities was shrilly hysterical and self-righteous; in retrospect, the tone of these pieces also seems sanctimonious, given what we now know (and it was not a state secret then) about Canadian immigration policies during and after the war.² Gallant's reaction to the pictures was to search for a language with which to articulate a more objective, more documentary response, a language which would not frame the pictures, defending readers from reading what the pictures themselves spoke. By choosing a language which directed readers to listen to the pictures themselves rather than to pronouncements upon the pictures, Gallant was, in effect, taking notes for what she describes as her "personal research" into the collapse of German culture. Discussing The Pegnitz Junction in her interview with Hancock, Gallant tells him the story of the book's origins:

I wrote the German stories because I was trying to explain something to myself. They were a kind of personal research

One thing you truly cannot imagine was what the first concentration camps were for someone my age

When the first pictures arrived in Canada I was twenty-two, working on a newspaper You can't imagine the first time seeing them. I kept saying, "We're dreaming. This isn't real. We're in a nightmare." You couldn't believe it

Now, imagine being twenty-two, being the intensely left-wing political romantic I was, passionately anti-fascist, having believed that a new civilization was going to grow out of the ruins of the war--out of victory over fascism--and having to write the explanation of something I did not myself understand. I thought, "There must be no descriptive words in this, no adjectives. Nothing like "horror," "horrifying" because what the pictures are saying is stronger and louder. It must be kept simple." . . .

What I wrote and thought at twenty-two I think and believe now. I wrote, then, that the victims, the survivors that is, would probably not be able to tell us anything, except for the description of life at point zero

. . . All that I knew, or felt, looking at those pictures was that we had to find out, from the Germans themselves, what had gone wrong The victims, the survivors that is, could tell us what had happened to them, but not why. The why was desperately important to people like myself who were twenty-two and had to live with this shambles.

. . . I never lost interest in what had happened, the why of it, I mean. Nothing I ever read satisfied me I had the feeling that in everyday living I would find the origin of the worm--the worm that had destroyed the structure. The stories in Pegnitz Junction are, to me, intensely political for that reason. It is not a book about Fascism, but a book about where Fascism came from. That is why I like it better than anything else. Because I finally answered my own question. Not the historical causes of Fascism--just its small possibilities in people. 3

The captions Gallant wrote for the pictures were turned down, and in the copy that was run, Gallant recalls, "all [she] could see were the adverbs and adjectives smothering the real issue, and the covering article, which was short, was a prototype for all the clichés we've been bludgeoned with ever since."⁴ The "real issue" for Gallant was how and why the reality captured in the pictures came to be. In The Pegnitz Junction, Gallant denies readers the comforts of clichéd responses to a

subject which has now been treated in every mode from the luridly docu-dramatic to the luridly sensational. In the foreground of Gallant's stories, a culture's breakdown intrudes everywhere, always particularized through "short circuits" in communication between individuals.⁵ We read the "answers" to Gallant's questions about a culture's collapse in the fissures that riddle the surfaces of these stories, fissures which open up as a culture tries to span the chasm in history created by the war.

Reading these stories--particularly the title novella--we discover their unity precisely in the fragmentation of time that they present and enact. The Pegnitz Junction is the most unified of Gallant's books in that its stories, unlike those assembled in The Other Paris and My Heart Is Broken, focus on one time and one theme. The characters are native exiles who feel most displaced at home. They are bewildered by the fragmentation of time they perceive; the "junction" these stories stop at is not a destination but a stopping point, a moment in history from which there may or may not be further "progress." Recent history is a nightmare from which the characters cannot awaken; their lives are paralyzed by time rather than lived in time. They find recent history's significance menacing, and the connections between wartime and peacetime more numerous than the distinctions. We read a series of stories in which ambivalent attitudes towards history erode the forms through which memory might recover whole selves, a whole culture, or a whole past.

Memory in The Pegnitz Junction is atrophied, withered. Characters are more apt to forget or falsify the past than to remember or clarify it. As George Woodcock points out, these are "anti-Proustian" stories: he calls "The Pegnitz Junction" "the most experimental of Gallant's works, in which she makes no attempt at that special Gallant realism

where the web of memory provides the mental links that make for plausibility."⁶ Many of these stories enact an indeterminate, precarious sense of the present moment through the sense of arrested suspense Gallant creates by narrating the stories in the simple present tense. But even though individuals, families, and the whole culture attempt to sever the present from the past, to suspend it, out of history, the past continually manifests itself, psychologically, socially, privately, and in public. The ordinary distends in The Pegnitz Junction because characters are unable to make plausible connections between past and present; they cannot establish sufficient "mental links" to communicate the firm sense of self which might realize them in time and place.

The ironies which form the fractured unity of the book begin with the title of the book's first story. In "The Old Friends" (1969), Helena, a famous West German Jewish television actress, and the unnamed police commissioner are not "old" friends, even though the commissioner believes he has known her "forever"⁷; nor are they friends in any but a superficial and ironic sense. Like several other stories in The Pegnitz Junction, "The Old Friends" is narrated in the simple present tense, effectively enacting this friendship's suspension out of time, out of history. The relations between past and present in this story, as in many others, are radically discontinuous, and they cannot be completed either by individual memory or by collective historical sense.⁸ Readers listen to Helena and the commissioner talking at each other in an atemporal, ahistorical vacuum, an ambience whose ironic significance is suggested by the story's setting in an Edenic garden in a luxurious

Frankfurt suburb, where Helena allows the commissioner to take her and her mysteriously acquired son to tea.⁹ The story's structure is fairly straightforward: the narrative present follows the course of their seemingly innocuous afternoon dalliance over champagne. But Helena consciously "ruptures" their conversation and the banality of the present moment, "orphaning" the commissioner, by casually referring to her Jewish grandmother, killed in Silesia during the war. The narrator broadens and deepens the significance of this fissure in the relationship until readers see that the "friendship" is a tissue-thin transparency laid over the interlocking tensions between historical victim and victimizer. The point of view, like that of many of Gallant's narrators, is elusive: the "voice" of the story shifts, modulating now into a tone implying the commissioner's perspective, now to one implying Helena's angle of vision, then again to "our" perspective on Helena as a kind of cultural prize, a noteworthy representative of the "0.4" per cent of West Germany's postwar population that is Jewish. Helena is "popular, much loved, and greatly solicited. She is the pet, the kitten--ours" (94). The effect of this shifting point of view is to draw both culture and reader into the relationship, to dissolve the individual relationship into a diffuse representation of "our" difficulties in reading the connections between victims and victimizers, particularly when the roles are reversed.

We hear of Helena's waste of time earlier that day, when she is interviewed by a "gaunt female reporter" (an Englishwoman), who asks her about her childhood experience in the prison camps. Like Peter Dobay in "An Autobiography," Helena as a child had been saved by chance from transport to a death camp; now the reporter wants to know if "the child . . . in these camps? . . . [was] . . . sexually? . . . molested?" (95)

Helena's response ("it was forbidden" [95]) really tells the reporter nothing, just as the commissioner learns nothing when she repeats her response to him in the garden, at the end of the story (99). But readers learn the distinction which Helena has learned to draw between her first-hand experience of "destruction" and the public, postwar, peacetime conception of her experience, which seeks to locate her suffering in a domestic and civilized context, one in which rape--a physical violation with devastating psychological consequences--is the worst possible violation of individuality. Helena's own context is more radical: the psychological obliteration she has experienced in the camps has made the mere brutality of rape seem insignificant. The shifts in point of view in the passage below convey the movement from personal to public responsibility and bewilderment, making the reporter's response, like the commissioner's, representative rather than idiosyncratic:

Rape is so important to these people, Helena has learned; it is the worst humiliation, the most hideous ordeal the Englishwoman can imagine. She is thinking of maniacs in parks, little children attacked on their way to the swimming pool. "Destruction" is meaningless, and in any case Helena is here, alive, with her hair brushed, and blue on her eyelids--not destroyed. But if the child was sexually molested, then we all know where we are. We will know that a camp was a terrible place to be, and that there are things Helena can never bring herself to tell. (95)

But "we" (the reporter, the commissioner, the reader) do not know where we are any more than Helena, for whom reality "was confounded long ago. She even invents her dreams. When she says she dreams of a camp exactly reproduced, no one ever says, "'Are you sure?'" (96). Thus Helena's view may be fabricated as well; her "exactly reproduced" version of the past is too precise to be believable.

Before returning to the garden scene, the narrator telescopes time to focus on Helena's original meeting with the commissioner on a train; this encounter is presented from a point of view looking over Helena's shoulder, so that when we return to the garden, which has become less Edenic, the commissioner's bewilderment has clearer origins. Helena closes the rupture she had opened a moment before--when she told him she could imitate her grandmother's Yiddish accent, because she must have heard it before her grandmother was killed--assuring the commissioner that rape was forbidden in the camps. Finally the point of view shifts again as we see the commissioner's relief at their reunion and his satisfaction that the friendship will continue--even as we realize that he has failed once again to confront the underlying tensions which always threaten the relationship. Gallant traces the complex motives behind this transparently superficial alliance, showing how Helena and the commissioner are bound to each other by their passage through history, which has cast them in a symbiotic relationship between parent and child, teacher and student, guard and prisoner. As peacetime erodes the distinctions between uniformed prisoners and uniformed officialdom, the civilians' roles become more clearly interdependent, interchangeable. Helena cannot stop "teaching" the commissioner, needling him with the sharp, wounding observations and jokes which thrust up in his face the destruction of identity she has experienced, while the commissioner cannot allay his professional anxiety over the official "errors" and "mistakes" which must surely, he believes, have been the causes of Helena's suffering. The commissioner "knows only one meaning for each word"; his strictly denotative model of language determines his interpretation of experience, which can only have one meaning, one dimension

(90). All of the commissioner's categories of perception would de-personalize Helena's experience; he can only conceive of her past in terms of an imaginary dossier, "typed . . . on cheap brownish wartime paper, in a folder tied with ribbon tape" (94).

The fault lines running through the relationship also represent a larger cultural fragmentation. The commissioner's apparently random references to German culture and history begin, ironically, to cohere, suggesting a whole culture's ambivalence towards its past. The critique of the commissioner's historical sense begins with his glib assurance that he has known Helena "forever," that he "cannot remember when or how they met," but he has "always known her"--that this "must be true" (89-90). As types, he and Helena have indeed "always" known each other, as is demonstrated by the relevance to their particular relationship of the joke Helena tells him about the Prussian officer and the old Jew on the train (98). But in Gallant's fiction, when a character is emphatically certain about another character's nature, or about the dating of an event, or about the real significance of a relationship, he is shown to be deluded.¹⁰ The commissioner's certainties are confounded as the narrator gives readers the details of Helena's first meeting with him; more importantly, readers learn that the commissioner's most significant "failing, as a friend, is his memory" (96). This failing extends to his sense of history, to his understanding of Helena's experience and, by extension, to his understanding of their shared past. So, for example, the commissioner, waxing incoherent as he enthuses over the beauty of the lit up swimming pools in the suburban gardens at night, tells Helena of seeing them from a helicopter: ". . . it looked . . . it was . . . it should have been photographed . . . or painted . . . described by

Goethe, he cries, it could not have been more . . . " (90). In his inarticulate rapture, he summons up Goethe, a hilariously inappropriate appropriation in this context, but one which begins to make ironic sense in light of the commissioner's other references to German culture and history. Meeting Helena for the first time on the train, he propositions her with another quantum leap backwards--over the recent war, into a past more safely out of reach, with less perplexing resonances: "In the daytime," he suggests to Helena, "you could go to a museum . . . where you can see ancient boats made out of hide, and you can see the oars. There are guided tours . . . [sic] The guide is excellent!" (97). But the commissioner himself is a less than excellent guide in his "tour" of Helena's past. Again, mistaking her on the train for a refined lady (Helena demands money, acting the role of a whore "to make the conversation move faster, to tease, to invent, to build a situation and bring it crashing down" [97]), he stammers: "I apologize. You seem . . . a woman like you . . . so educated, so delicate . . . so refined, like a . . . Holbein" (98).¹¹

For her part, although she uses her gifts as an actress and mimic to entertain the commissioner, Helena's performances have a potential "sting," symbolized by the wasps which invade the commissioner's garden retreat, attracted by the bittersweet nasturtiums on the table (91).¹² Although her stories wound the commissioner, Helena is both unable and unwilling to press the point home and sting him into self-knowledge. So, when she tells him the story of the Prussian officer and the old Jew, he looks at her "so bewildered," "so perplexed," that she can only imagine explaining the joke's meaning, its application to him. And the commissioner's response, she imagines, would be typically unambiguous,

depersonalized, stripped of connotation: "But he would only know that another injustice had been committed; another terrible mistake" (99). Helena's broken dialogue with the commissioner takes place against a shared reluctance to interpret the past; their delicately balanced "friendship" can be toppled over into a void by a single word from Helena, and a single word can rescue it. The volatility of what is left unarticulated threatens to crack the commissioner's affable veneer of professional solicitude and to upset Helena's casual passivity, but the story closes with the "old friends" reunited in the garden, and with Helena allowing a wasp to escape from the glass the commissioner had trapped it in (99).

In many stories, Gallant will repeat a word or phrase, or draw attention to the same detail in jarringly different contexts to bring a point home. The significance of the references to German culture and history in "The Old Friends" emerges through the juxtaposition of a real with an imagined reaction. First, Helena recites Schiller's "The Glove" to the commissioner in a range of accents. When she gets to "Und wie er winkt mit dem finger"--significantly, declaiming the line in the commissioner's own Hessian accent, a line which depicts the arrogance, the imperiousness of the king's impersonal, totalitarian gesture of authority (a gesture made in deference to the fair Cunigonde's imperious demands) as he signals with his forefinger--the commissioner laughs so hard that "he has a pain" (92).¹³ His laughter is edged with the pain of recognition, a pain "like pleurisy, like a heart attack, like indigestion," he would like to tell her. But she interrupts him with her wounding reference to her grandmother's exterminated Yiddish accent. The full significance of his "painful laughter"--painful because charged with stinging

insight into self and history--emerges later in the story when the narrator tells us that "only her friend, the commissioner, accepts at once that it [Helena's experience in the camps] was beyond his imagination, and that the knowledge can produce nothing more than a pain like the suffering of laughter--like pleurisy, like indigestion" (95).¹⁴ The commissioner cannot recognize his complicity in Helena's experience, and Helena cannot articulate her experience less enigmatically, so that both she and the commissioner (and the "gaunt" reporter, another survivor) might understand Fascism's "small possibilities" in people. The frequent ellipses in the commissioner's comments (and in the reporter's questions) seem almost an enactment of an elliptical view of history, which results in the ellipses in his conversation with Helena. These gaps might become vectors into the past, but only the reader is illuminated, and then only ironically. Neither character can do more than act out a public role, remaining an old friend in name only. Gallant prescribes no solutions to the impasses, the ironic "junction" which Helena and the commissioner have arrived at, sitting in the garden. The story simply presents this particular moment, this particular "locked situation," as a comment on a culture's condition.

The pattern established in "The Old Friends," of characters and their relationships presented as particular reflections of cultural stand-offs, continues in a more radical sense in Gallant's stories about ex-soldiers, ex-P.O.W.'s, and ex-Legionnaires. "Ernst in Civilian Clothes" (1963) heads a group of stories about ex-soldiers returning to Germany, or living marginal lives in Paris.¹⁵ Willi, Ernst's fellow ex-P.O.W. in

Paris, figures centrally in two other stories, "Willi" (1963) and "A Report" (1966); Ernst reappears in a minor role in "Willi." "The Latehomecomer" (1974) (which Gallant thinks "might have been the best" of the German stories), the only one of this group narrated in the first person, is the confession of a young soldier who returns to Germany after spending years in France as a laborer and a P.O.W.¹⁶ Significantly, the same suspension in time which works so effectively in "The Old Friends" recurs in "Ernst in Civilian Clothes," "Willi," and "A Report," all three of which are narrated in the simple present tense, taking place in that same suggestive limbo, detached from and so all the more subject to the past.

Ernst and Willi were taken prisoner by the Americans and handed over to the French at the end of the war; arriving in France, Ernst joined the French Foreign Legion because he saw that they were being served better food than the P.O.W.'s. Now Ernst, ex-soldier, ex-P.O.W., ex-Legionnaire, feels alien and vulnerable in civilian clothes on the eve of his return to Germany. He and Willi are members of a marginal German community stranded in postwar Paris, where, like Willi, they have all just barely found "a way of living, not quite a life."¹⁷ Conditions in Paris in 1963 are grimmer than the "disappointments" Carol Frazier found, and they have wider, more explicitly political significance. The winter is the coldest since 1880; the Algerian crisis is barely resolved; civilians rush home from their jobs as if they were escaping from prison. In spite of the semblance of organization and authority provided by policemen and traffic lights, the alienation and disorientation Ernst feels are shared by the general public: "every person and every thing is submerged by the dark and the cold and the torrent of motorcars and a

fear like a fear of lions" (137).

Gallant's portraits of Ernst and Willi are studies in dislocation. Ernst's uniforms--Hitler Youth, werewolf, German soldier, French Legionnaire--"have not been lucky. He has always been part of a defeated army. He has fought for Germany and for France and, according to what he has been told each time, for civilization" (135). Willi is "not displeased" that life in Paris is "like wartime. He might enjoy the privations of another war, without the killing" (140). Ernst has learned that all armies are alike, and the soldier's condition is his image of the human condition; Willi, a compulsive collector of documentary "evidence," newspaper clippings about the war, cannot arrive at an interpretation of the past which will include "the evil he has been told was there" (143). Ernst, like so many of the characters in these stories, has fewer problems with interpreting the past because of his "life-saving powers of forgetfulness" (143). Gallant suggests in her comments on the German stories that survivors might be able to describe what had happened to them, but not why; neither Ernst nor Willi can adduce reasons for their war experience because they do not conceive of their actions as having any particular historical significance. For Willi, the Hitler Youth movement was simply another moment in German cultural history: "'What was wrong with the Hitler Youth?' says Willi. What was wrong with being told about Goethe Rilke Wagner Schiller Beethoven?" (143).¹⁸

In civilian clothes, Ernst feels "disguised," a "marked man." His uniforms have identified him for so long that he no longer knows which set of "facts" about his origins is true. He is either thirty-four or thirty-six, either an ex-Legionnaire or the shadowy figure he dreams of

in a flooded cellar, calling out for "Mutti" (144). But at the end of the war, when he discarded his werewolf uniform and tried to return to his parents' house, his mother turned him away from the door while his father burned his SS uniform in the basement. There can be no return to family or childhood for him. The "stamped and formally attested facts" win out; like the commissioner in "The Old Friends," Ernst learns to assign one meaning to every experience. So he tells people, "without remembering why," that he was born in Mainz. Mainz is the German town he passed through as one of a trainload of German P.O.W.'s en route to France. When the train stops in Mainz, another young soldier tells Ernst "Mainz is finished. There's nothing left My father says this is the Apocalypse" (134).

Ernst's dream about the figure in the flooded cellar, searching for his mother, signals his own arrested development and his continuing search for someone (or some institution) to obey, or to love. But the ironies of Ernst's condition, a condition resulting from his recruitment at the age of seven out of the family and into the Hitler Jugend, are echoed in the domestic melodrama he hears and observes across Willi's courtyard, where a French mother chases her child around the apartment and beats him; the child, crying out for help, calls "Maman." The lesson for Ernst is clear:

His [the child's] true mother will surely arrive and take him away from his mother transformed. Who else can he appeal to? It makes sense. Ernst has heard grown men call for their mothers. He knows about submission and punishment and justice and power. He knows what the child does not know--that the screaming will stop, that everything ends. He did not learn a trade in the Foreign Legion, but he did learn to obey. (139)

Not only is civilian life a wartime experience--as seen in the image of troops of civil servants rushing from their offices--but the family life is another battlefield, where the child screams for help or for love from the very person he is trying to escape.

The story closes with Ernst deciding that dreams are of no use to him in the daylight world. He puts on a face that "no superior officer, no prisoner, and no infatuated girl has ever seen. He will believe only what he knows" (147). But the only feeling he can summon up for Germany is a thin haze of sentimentality manufactured by gazing at the posters of German scenery that Willi has on his walls. The final line of the story signals Ernst's continuing paralysis; even though he has decided that life "begins with facts: he is Ernst Zimmermann, ex-Legionnaire," the last cry is the French child's, calling to his mother for help while she beats him. From beginning to end, Ernst's story is about paralysis in time: the story opens with repeated suggestions of immobility and stasis, and closes with Ernst making his decision, "stiff with the cold of a forgotten dream" (147).¹⁹ Ernst's resolution to suppress his dreams and "invent his own truths" leaves him, like the "old friends," at an ironic junction.

"A Report" (1966) and "Willi" (1963), neither of which is included in The Pegnitz Junction, can be read as minor-key variations on "Ernst in Civilian Clothes." Just as "The Cost of Living" tells the story of "Its Image on the Mirror" in the voice of an "Isobel" figure, so "A Report" and "Willi" focus more sharply on Willi, who is less developed in "Ernst in Civilian Clothes."

"A Report" is actually several "reports": Madame Monnerot's detectives report to her on her husband's activities, while Gallant reports on French attitudes to Hitler and the war, and on Willi's ambivalent attitudes to recent history. Gallant presents two French perspectives on the war, one through Monnerot, the other through the Laurent family. Monnerot collects war memorabilia--Nazi uniforms, boots, flags, swords, and portraits--and apes Himmler and Heydrich. Willi procures these mementoes for him, sometimes substituting fake articles for real ones. Monnerot worships the power that Germany represented; he "despises the Germans for having been defeated."²⁰ The Laurent family has a seventeen-year-old servant, Bobbie Bauer; she is a perfect symbol of postwar displacement, "born of a French corporal with the Army of Occupation and a seventeen-year-old German bilingual stenographer, in Coblenz, May 5, 1947" (63). The Laurents, intent on accusing her of war atrocities, invite her to watch a television documentary on the war. But Bobbie is "extremely puzzled and depressed" by the film, "which had no action whatever, but showed ugly, unkempt, naked women standing in a field of tall grass, in a disorderly queue Presently the image changed to an abstract design of white faintly striated in gray which, when the picture became sharper, was seen to be a pile of bodies" (63). Bobbie thinks the film is about "some lost tribe in the jungle, perhaps in South America"; the Laurents tell her "'You did this If it wasn't you, it was your father'" (64). Both perspectives, Bobbie's and the Laurents', fail to place the past; the irony is compounded, since Bobbie's father is in fact a French corporal. Bobbie flees from the Laurents' apartment, only to run into Monnerot, who of course has another distorted perspective on the past.

Beyond these reports we read Gallant's study of Willi himself. He is emotionally indifferent to the spectacle of Monnerot posing in uniform; only his sense of correctness is disturbed by Monnerot's absurd collection of medals. Willi survives by refusing to interpret; he will not comment on the past or on Monnerot's infidelity to his wife. So Mme Monnerot thinks Willi "the very bastion of common sense. He may be ready to sacrifice his principles, but no one can say what his principles are" (65). He is closemouthed, like the brothers in "One Aspect of A Rainy Day"; Gunther, the elder, swears a silent oath of allegiance to Hitler, and so commits himself even if he does not speak the words out loud.²¹ Like the commissioner, Willi "sticks to the information in the report. He speaks like a rational machine" (65). But when Mme. Monnerot asks him why he is doing favours for her husband, Willi's third reason stops him short: he thinks that he "must be expecting something" (65). He considers the war trophies he has procured, and feels "bewildered, as if he had been given permission to laugh" (65). Like the commissioner, he arrives at a "junction," a moment delicately balanced between laughter and tears. Laughing and weeping at the same time, he tells Mme. Monnerot to advise her husband that he will keep looking for the boots to complete Monnerot's uniform. The pain of his momentary insight, the nature of which is never clear, is so acute, and so bewilders him, that he cannot stop laughing or crying; it is as if he recognizes an ironic equivalence between the fake war memorabilia and his own principles.

In "Willi," Gallant looks at his past from another angle, again suggesting the distinctions between faked and genuine allegiance. The story's most powerful moment poses the question which bedevils many of

the characters in The Pegnitz Junction: in what sense do individuals bear responsibility for their actions in uniform? Willi is eking out a living in Paris, this time by training young French students to march and sing in war films; in one film, he manages to get his friend Ernst a bit part. But Ernst, for all his experience in armies, cannot act the part of an SS man in the film: "Ernst wouldn't hurt a fly. Somebody must have hurt a fly once, or they wouldn't keep on making these movies. But it wasn't Willi or Ernst."²²

"The Latehomecomer" dramatizes the condition of native exile more powerfully than any of The Pegnitz Junction stories because the first-person narrator's sense of his own life as cut up, arrested, forms the story's centre. The story's central irony is that at twenty-one, coming into manhood, the latehomecomer returns home with a lifetime of memory, hoping that his mother will have remained as he left her; the story closes on his wish that he were a "few hours younger" and that he had not discovered the past eradicated and his mother in her new identity, married to a stranger.

The theme which threads through all of the German stories is most clearly articulated in "The Latehomecomer" by a character sitting in on the latehomecomer's muted welcome at his stepfather's table. Willy Wehler, who is the father of Gisele, the girl whom the narrator will marry years later, gives him "advice that would be useful to [him] as a latehomecomer":

"Forget everything," he said. "Forget, forget. That was what I said to my good neighbor Herr Silber when I bought his wife's topaz brooch and earrings before he emigrated to Palestine. I said, "Dear Herr Silber, look forward, never back, and forget, forget, forget."²³

But the latehomecomer remembers, compulsively, his prison camp life, his time in postwar France, his childhood before the war. As he remembers, he also tells the characters sitting around the table the story of his taking an American airman prisoner--the "longest story [he] had ever told in [his] life"--without knowing why (132). He remembers his botched affair with a young French girl (like Willi, he is an innocent), and, looking back on this homecoming scene, recalls that this was the first time he had ever seen Gisele; she is the only character "without guilt" (127). She is a member of a generation immune to the past, because her father's generation has carefully erased any connections.²⁴ The narrator reflects that Willy "would have called any daughter something neutral and pretty," since the "pagan, Old Germanic names" are in disrepute (133). But in erasing the past, the civilians who were passed over by the war have erased the latehomecomer, too, so that his most powerful feeling is of exclusion; he recalls that this first day of his freedom in Berlin is "one day after old Adolf's birthday," but no one else makes any mention of the fact. Finally, all that he can express is bewilderment at his return: "Why am I in this place? Who sent me here? Is it a form of justice or injustice? How long does it last?" (137) His questions form the story's central moment, a moment in which a character arrives at an ironic "junction," coming home to a sense of displacement, remembering a past which everyone else is trying to forget. Because his memories are the most powerfully described of all the recollections in these stories, he becomes the most displaced character, the one who feels the severance of past from present most acutely.

Balanced with the third-person stories about isolated, displaced ex-soldiers are three women's first-person accounts of isolation. Taken together, "An Autobiography" (1964), "O Lasting Peace" (1972), and "An Alien Flower" (1972) provide a private, domestic perspective which complements the public, "attested" identities the soldiers have had thrust upon them; at the same time, the women also reflect on the same sense of a suppressed or a vanished past. Their voices are confessional and, at first glance, the structures of their stories seem deceptively casual. Hilde, the narrator of "O Lasting Peace," ends her story by adding, after her most revelatory statement, "I've forgotten why I wanted to mention this"; Erika, the narrator of "An Autobiography," prefaces sections of her story with comments like "What I wanted to comment on was children" or "but what I have wanted to say from the beginning is, do not confide your children to strangers"; Helga, who narrates "An Alien Flower," interjects the same kinds of informal, colloquial pointers. As is the case with "The Cost of Living," however, the structures of these stories are actually tightly controlled patterns of revelation, through which the women's self-assured declarations modulate into tentative, resigned insights into their condition.

Hilde works in a travel agency to support her mother, her aunt, and her Uncle Theo; she is a martinet at work and at home, declaring that the others would be lost without her. The story turns on the opposition between Hilde's condemnation of her family's private, "secret" lives, which she thinks are childish, insignificant, and her Uncle Theo's pleas for a more charitable, Christian view of her charges. To Hilde, her mother, aunt and uncle are "aged children who can't keep their own

histories straight. They have no money, no property, no future, no recorded past, nothing but secrets."²⁵ She sees herself as their "inspector": "A lifetime won't be enough to come to the end of their lies and their mysteries. I am the inspector, the governess, the one they tell stories to" (151). The story takes its title from Theo's hymn, "O Lasting Peace"; Hilde thinks it "sounds preachy, even when sung in a lively way" (155).

The story is set on Christmas Eve, an ironic comment on Hilde's uncharitable perspective. She denounces the East German refugees living in the apartment next door as boors, threatening them with legal action for the noise they make; she refuses to cash an out-of-town customer's traveller's cheque because of trivial discrepancies in his signatures; she refuses her Uncle Theo's request that she take the family to an opera on Christmas Day, or that she send money to her father, who has left her mother after a fifteen-year affair with another woman. Hilde looks at her family with an unforgiving eye, scorning her Uncle Theo's shady war-time manoeuvres to survive. Theo, in contrast to Ernst, erased his public, "attested" identity by disappearing from a recruitment office with his official file. He served as a camp guard on the Eastern front, but was friendly enough to his Russian prisoners that when they broke out, they tied him to a tree, teaching him a phrase to repeat if the Russian army got there before the Americans.²⁶ Now he has a small pension and Hilde's scorn as a fugitive from duty and country.

Theo's final act of mercy is to advertise for a husband for Hilde. Signalling her lack of insight into her own "secret life," Hilde mentions the episode as an afterthought, a final grievance: "One last thing: without my consent, without even asking me, Uncle Theo advertised for a

husband for me" (165). She finds the prospective suitor unsuitable, "a peasant who sits with one foot on the other"; her final declaration completes her drama of self-revelation as she berates her family:

'You are so anxious to have this apartment to yourselves You have made yourself cheap over a peasant How would you pay the rent here without me? Don't you understand that I can't leave you?' At the same time, I wanted to run out on the balcony screaming 'Come back!' but I was afraid of knocking the flowerpots over. (166)

As is often the case in Gallant's stories, larger patterns of meaning emerge from juxtaposed details. Hilde's fear that she will knock over the flowerpots recalls an earlier scene on Christmas Eve, when her mother, distressed that her "own little knife and fork," all she has saved of her past (the rest was firebombed) is missing from the table, locks herself in the apartment. The family is forced to ask the East German refugees next door for help. Hilde instructs the little boy: "'Break the panes Use a flowerpot. Be careful not to cut yourself.' I was thinking of blood on the parquet floor" (160). In both cases Hilde wants to compartmentalize, to separate, to maintain class distinctions, to avoid messy relationships. It takes the family a year after this incident, she recalls, to reestablish the correct distance between themselves and the East Germans.

Erika, the narrator of "An Autobiography," teaches botany in a girl's school in Switzerland--neutral territory. Her story is about abandonment, dislocation, and disinheritance. She repeatedly tries to keep the narration on track, reminding us as she reminds herself that she wants to "talk about the children"--children abandoned in Swiss

finishing schools, a baby abandoned for a day by its parents, a little girl abandoned for a Swiss summer holiday. In each case, the "corruption of memory" transforms abandonment into something more acceptable to parent, child, or lover; these private accommodations are linked to the general suppression of the past which is endemic among the schoolchildren's parents:

They [the children] are ignorant and new. Everything they see and touch at home is new. Home is built on the top layer of Ur. It is no good excavating; the fragments would be without meaning. Everything within the walls was inlaid or woven or cast or put together fifteen years ago at the very earliest. 27

But finally, Erika's story is about her own sense of abandonment, her own dislocation and disinheritance. An aunt, her only surviving relative, summons her to Paris to disinherit her because she is too much like her father, a German professor of Medieval German shot by a Russian soldier. (Erika casually mentions this crucial information in an aside.)²⁸ Cut off from her own past, living in a cultural vacuum, Erika returns from Paris to bump into an abandoned lover, Peter Dobay, with his new wife. These two are an absurd pair, affectedly calling each other "Poodlie." Dobay has invented his own version of the past, including his affair with Erika, so that she feels as if she were caught up in someone else's private mythology. But she cannot tell Peter the truth, even though she resolves: "I shall write about everything, all of the truth" (128). The letter she intends to write to Peter remains a blank sheet: she closes her story with the admission that she has "wasted the sheet of paper. There has been such a waste of everything; such a waste" (129). The waste is the vanished past, personal, collective, suppressed, transformed,

distorted, mythologized. Erika casts herself in the role of a teacher who wants to "interpret between generations, between the mute and the deaf, so to speak"; but her final interpretation suggests continued "waste," isolation, and entrapment in the ironic haven of an unreal neutrality.

More than any other work in Gallant's canon, "The Pegnitz Junction" experiments instructively with mixed modes, with "polyphonic" narration, with literary parody, caricature, and extended metaphor. Its effect as a title story is instructively to disorient readers, to force us, more than any other Gallant story does, to read "information" and "interference" on several wavelengths at once.²⁹ "The Pegnitz Junction" simultaneously enacts all of the separate individual and cultural dislocations recreated in the constellation of stories which comprise the book; it transfigures the displacements of postwar culture--literary, political, historical--and of postwar native exiles, postwar soldiers, civilians, lovers, and children--into a train ride which takes readers towards the whole book's destination without end, the stammering moment in which Christine's, Herbert's and Little Bert's train stops them out of time at the Pegnitz Junction.

More critical commentary has focussed on "The Pegnitz Junction" than on any other Gallant story. Grazia Merler devotes a large part of a chapter to the "polyphonic narration" she finds in "The Pegnitz Junction"; Geoff Hancock calls it a "parody of Brecht, Kafka, and Thomas Mann"; George Woodcock describes the story as "a work of much complexity, which

deserves an essay on its own."³⁰ William New takes "The Pegnitz Junction" to represent Gallant's contemplation of "Germans trying to find Germany again in a divided postwar land"; Ronald Hatch comments that "what we discover in "The Pegnitz Junction" is that none of the characters can use his knowledge of the past to enlighten the present or direct the future."³¹ Robertson Davies sees Christine and Herbert as "wanting in communication and sympathy," and lacking "any real will to achieve these things"; he calls them "strangers of the worst kind--strangers caught in a pretence of intimacy."³² "The Pegnitz Junction" is also the finest example of Gallant's ability to make the structure of a relationship illuminate the structure of a culture.

"The Pegnitz Junction" explores the strained relationships between Christine, twenty-one (like the latehomecomer's, her coming of age will be an ironic rite of passage), her older lover, Herbert, and his son, little Bert. These three have gone to Paris for a week's holiday, which was meant to be an "emancipation" for Christine but has proved a debacle. They are returning to Germany by train because a strike has closed the Paris airport--one of the first of the story's many signals of social breakdown. The train trip, as several critics have pointed out, is, for Gallant, an atypical excursion into symbolism. The train's meandering course across France and into Germany epitomizes the general aimlessness of contemporary German culture, an aimlessness which has perhaps subverted Germany's determination to carry on with its "economic miracle"; the journey's "end" at the Pegnitz junction is less a homecoming than the fullest development of Gallant's theme of paralyzed bewilderment, a theme which has surfaced in all of the German stories. Images from the past, specifically of the war, intrude everywhere into the present.

Aboard one of the trains, the feeling is of "glossed-over poverty"; Christine thinks that the trains "sounded sad, as if they were used to ferry poor and weary passengers--refugees perhaps."³³ The trains are running off-schedule, with scant services aboard, and the uniformed figures of authority, like the customs man, are loutish (16).

Christine, poised uncertainly between Herbert, the progressive, liberal, "pacifist, anti-state" (and yet also ominously passive, "sleep-walking, dreaming") engineer, and her fiancé, an unnamed theology student, can never bring herself to choose between the two men or to direct her life. Her failures to act reflect a general cultural inertia, most fully realized in the story's crucial moment at the Pegnitz junction. Christine is also eerily sensitive: she both picks up and creates "information," stories and scenes "transmitted" to her by other passengers, or suggested to her by scenes and people she gazes at from the train window. She constructs a story about a German family picnicking by an old family castle they mistake for a museum; she constructs another fiction about a man she spots walking near the East German border at one of their many stops. She also "tunes in" to a letter from one American soldier to another, as a pregnant woman, abandoned by one of the soldiers, mulls over its contents. As she receives and transmits this "information," the oppressive aimlessness and confusion of the train ride heighten; the landscape (it is "baked and blind"; this is the hottest July since 1873 [21]) becomes surreal, intensely suggestive to Christine. But Gallant's point is not that Christine is mentally unbalanced. Gallant comments:

She [Christine] is not inventing or making up stories. Everything that the young woman sees when she looks out the train window, she really does see. A kind of

magic, if you like. To my mind, a short circuit.
 She really does know all these stories. She
 really does know what has happened to everyone.
 Someone wondered if she was schizophrenic. No.
 There is a German expression, "I can hear him
 thinking." I've always liked that. I could
 hear him thinking. Because one does very often.³⁴
 (emphasis mine)

Gallant tells Geoff Hancock that "a great deal of conversation in it ["The Pegnitz Junction"] is cut off, short-circuited."³⁵ Christine's "short-circuits" replace the conversations she never has with Herbert; instead of dialogue between characters, we read a series of monologues transmitted through Christine.

The story opens with an expository passage which does not describe Christine, even though she will be the most important figure; "she" is not even named for over a page. Instead, the opening locates her birth-place, a city destroyed in the war: "She was a bony slow-moving girl from a small bombed baroque German city, where all that was worthwhile keeping had been rebuilt and which now looked as pink and golden as a pretty child and as new as morning" (3). The ironic alliteration of "bombed" and "baroque" (these adjectives qualify the city the "bony" girl is from) sets in motion the recurring tensions between the suppression of wartime destruction (by superficial, cosmetic restoration) and the continual emergence, in memory and in tangible forms, of reminders of the war. Seen from a contemporary perspective, the town is "baroque," bombed into antiquity, quaint, historical. Its restoration has made it innocent, "pink and golden," but its freshness, that of a "pretty child," is suspect. We recall Gallant's use of "pretty" in "The Other Paris" and elsewhere to suggest superficial attractiveness; the

city can only appear "as new as morning" if the destruction of (night-time) bombing has been erased from sight, and so from memory.

Christine herself has a "striking density of expression in photographs, though she seemed unchanging and passive in life, and had caught sight of her own face looking totally empty-minded when, in fact, her thoughts and feelings were pushing her in some wild direction" (4). This description prepares readers for Christine's unnoticed mental activity on the train; because the narrator locates her "at one of those turnings in a young life where no one can lead, but where someone for the sake of love might follow," readers anticipate her "turning" to reach a decision or a new point of departure. When she does not decide anything, when instead she ends up in the nightmarish confusion which pervades the Pegnitz junction, this early description becomes another ironic comment on the general failure to decide or "turn."

Before setting the journey proper in motion, the narrator draws a telling distinction between Herbert and the theology student:

Unlike the student of theology, he [Herbert] had not put up barriers such as too much talk, self-analysis, or second thoughts. In fact, he tended to limit the number of subjects he would discuss. He had no hold on her mind, and no interest in gaining one He often said he thought he could not live without her, but a few minutes after making such a declaration he seemed unable to remember what he had just said, or to imagine how his voice must have sounded to her. (4)

Herbert's inability to remember, his dislike of "barriers" such as introspection or "too much talk," effectively estrange him from his own past, personal and social, and make him incapable of simply "declaring" anything. He cannot "think" anything personal: he can only say he thinks he cannot live without Christine, and then forget what he has just said.

Yet Christine admires "Herbert-the-amiable" for his smooth, pleasant manner of living on the surface, untroubled by the implications of events or of the past. The story teaches readers how Herbert's "amiable" nature masks unresolved ambiguities; Herbert is so "pleasant," so ambiguous, that he often confounds people he speaks to.

The story's narrative present begins in Paris, where Christine, Herbert and Little Bert are staying in an old hotel. The view from "every window" announces the toppling of religious and natural orders as the contemporary secular age advances: "The view from every window was of a church covered with scaffolding from top to bottom, the statue of a cardinal lying on its side, and a chestnut tree sawed in pieces" (5). A new car park is to be built under the church, and the chestnut tree is to be "replaced by something more suited to the gassy air of cities" (5).

From the beginning, Herbert tries to shield Little Bert from history--particularly from anything having to do with soldiers or war--and from Christine's sexuality. But every night in Paris, Bert creeps into their room and carefully inspects Christine's body, after which he tells his father that he is afraid of the dark. While Christine is dressing on the last morning, Herbert turns Little Bert's head away, but by this time Bert "had certainly seen all he wanted to night after night" (9). Herbert also turns Little Bert's head away from the plaque at the Paris railway station commemorating "a time of ancient misery"--the last war--"so ancient that two of the three travellers had not been born then, and Herbert, the eldest, had been about the age of Little Bert" (11). Throughout, we read this disparity between the relatively recent war and the way it is perceived as an "ancient" historical event.

The stay at the Paris hotel is the scene of the first of a series of confrontations with authority, confrontations which reveal the sharp differences between Herbert's and Christine's reactions to displays of power, to threats, orders, and Fascism's "small possibilities in people." When the night porter bursts into the bathroom and screams at Christine for drawing a bath so early (he tells Christine it is "too late Too late for noise" [7]), Herbert's response is passive, "extraordinarily calm"; "without standing his ground for a second," Herbert reacts "as if he were under arrest, or as though the porter's old pajama top masked his badge of office, his secret credentials. The look on Herbert's face was abstract and soft, as if he had already lived this, or always had thought that he might" (7--emphasis mine). The suggestion here is that Herbert's docility is a habitual response to displays of authority; his quiescence is that of one accommodated, acculturated to totalitarian displays of authority, one who has always expected to be "arrested." Later, Christine describes Herbert's reaction: "it wasn't a reaction at all. You were sleepwalking" (12). But Christine, born after the war, has inherited a different attitude, and her own reaction, ineffective though it may be, is articulate and vehement. She tells the porter he is "a filthy little swine of a dog of a bully" (7). Little Bert "look[s] up at their dazed, wild faces" and adopts a large bath sponge, christened Bruno, which will be his imaginary friend for the rest of the journey (7). By setting all of these developments in motion in France, before the trio board the train, Gallant comments not only on Germany's relationship with its past, but also on French perspectives on the war and on the "Dirty Boches," as the porter calls them. Christine's sensitivity surfaces for the first time here, too: she reacts to the porter's parting

shot by crying at the window, where she "sees" "larches pressing at the frame" (8). But although she reports on them in detail, they belong in a private landscape from the past:

Through tears she did not wish the child to observe, Christine stared at larches pressing against the frame of the window. They had the look they often have, of seeming to be wringing wet. She noticed every detail of their bedraggled branches and red cones. The sky behind them was too bright for comfort. She took a step nearer and the larches were not there. They belonged to her schooldays and to mountain holidays with a score of little girls--a long time ago now. (8)³⁶

The sky is "too bright for comfort" because it is in the past, in childhood, while she is in an adult world in which French porters vilify "Les Boches" and so destroy her innocence. But the larches and schoolgirls recur. At one of the stations they stop at, their carriage is "overrun by a horde of fierce little girls who had been lined up in squads on a station platform" (20). The horde is a "commando," taking over Christine's compartment, leaning out windows and trailing streamers "past miles of larches with bedraggled branches, past a landscape baked and blind" (20, 21). Here and at other points, Christine's innocent, schoolgirl past merges with a more charged present. The girls are no longer schoolgirls, but more warlike, more military, and they are also curiously adult, so that Herbert "appraise[s]" the "bossy blonde" who leads them "as though she were twenty" (21). When the horde gets off the train, Christine watches the bossy blonde's toughness dissolve as she is absorbed into her family's theatrics, a melodrama similar to that of the family in "About Geneva." For Christine, everything signifies; every event evokes a memory, or a story, or a reaction, so that her own past and the culture's history blend in tableaux such as the scene with the "fierce little girls."

As the train travels across France and crosses the Rhine into Germany, reminders and suggestions of the war and the past multiply. There are "shell-pocked grey hangars" across the Rhine (16); at a stop very near the East German border, there is barbed wire, and soldiers at observation posts. The conductor issues orders on every possible occasion; when he warns Christine to keep the train windows closed because of brush-fires, she imagines "the holocaust they might become" (36); past and present merge again when the narrator comments, following Christine's plea to the conductor to let her open the window: "It was true that there were no signs of trouble except for burned-out patches of grass. Not even a trace of ash remained on the sky, not even a cinder" (36). Straggling troops of soldiers appear at crossings; at one "unknown station," the train, as if it had a mind of its own, pauses long enough for them to see one of these detachments, as if this display were one version, one incarnation of the past, one possible station toward the future:

Their train slowed at an unknown station, then changed its mind and picked up speed, but not before they'd been given a chance to see a detachment of conscripts of the army of the Federal Republic in their crumpled uniforms and dusty boots and with their long hair hanging in strings. She saw them as she imagined Herbert must be seeing them: small, round-shouldered, rather dark. Blond, blue-eyed genes were on the wane in Europe. (50)

Christine registers Herbert's ambivalence toward the past as she watches him "brooding" over the spectacle of these "untidy soldiers," even though he is a pacifist (51).

At the stop before Pegnitz, portents of disorder begin to mount. Christine listens to a "cultural group leader" placating his group of theatre-goers, stranded at the station, by listing a series of great

German cultural figures. Significantly, the cultural leader is linked with the buffoon-like (but also loutish) figure of the conductor: he sits "not quite . . . [like] a cultured person, more the way a train conductor might perch between rounds" (69). After lulling his group by listing about "one hundred familiar names," the leader "suddenly said, 'The Adolf-time . . .'" [sic] (69-70).³⁷ Christine picks up the group's sudden "creaking thoughts": "Oh, God, where is this kind of talk taking us?" (70). All of these allusions, direct and indirect, to the "Adolf time" form an increasingly ominous background for the train ride, which ends in Pegnitz in a flurry of soldiers, of posturing authority and terrified passengers.

Herbert and Christine continue to respond differently to authority, even though they (like the horde of little girls) recognize that the conductor is a mere caricature of power. Herbert's response is to compose a mental letter of complaint to the proper authorities; he imagines mailing it to a range of media outlets, "but not to any part of the opposition press. He wanted to throw rocks at official bungling, but the same rocks must not strike the elected government" (55). Again readers realize that Herbert's style is to conform amiably, to maintain the status quo no matter how severely provoked; when all of the passengers in the compartment are suffocating in the heat, he sits "as calm as an incarnation of Buddha," even though he is suffering as much as anyone else (27). Yet the figures in power are consistently presented as clownish impostors, acting their roles out; in fact, Herbert himself is an expert mimic. Christine thinks that the conductor's voice is very much like Herbert's, imitating a "celebrated Bavarian politician addressing a crowd of peasants" (20). Herbert's amiable passivity constitutes

an invitation for authority to impose itself. The conductor, however, repeats his orders "quite hopelessly," "for who could possibly be afraid of such a jolly little person?" (21) The question proves rhetorical, as we see during the course of the train ride; the conductor, like the French porter, like the group cultural leader, is both comically harmless and a potentially terrifying figure. The empty posturing of authority--the "small possibility" of Fascism in individuals--appears sufficient to inspire obedience, "sleepwalking," and terror.

The divisions between Herbert and Christine run deeper than their different responses to authority. When Herbert explains his work to the Norwegian who is sharing their compartment, we learn that Herbert is "scrupulous about providing correct information but did not feel obliged to answer for pictures raised in the imagination" (23). He is another in the line of "commissioner" figures in these stories, allowing only one meaning for each word; even in his conversations with Little Bert, he carefully slants his information, speaking like the modern technocrat that he is. The narrator is careful to point out this quality in Herbert's language: describing Herbert's explanation to Bert about the train ride, the narrator transcribes Herbert's language word for word: "because the German train would not have a restaurant car, Herbert went on calmly. His actual words were, 'Because there will be no facilities for eating on the second transport'" (9). In both cases, Christine distinguishes between her view of "information" and Herbert's: "Christine thought that she knew what 'information' truly was, and had known for some time. She could see it plainly, in fact; it consisted of fine silver crystals forming a pattern, dancing, separating, dissolving in a glittering trail along the window" (23). But because Herbert cannot (or will not) respond

to Christine's suggestions that events signify, that their individual discomforts are linked, perhaps, to a more general disorientation, communication between them is, as Gallant puts it, "short circuited." The gap between Herbert and Christine is clearest when Christine speaks figuratively, violating Herbert's categories of acceptable discourse. When she tries, for example, to expand the significance of their individual discomfort, to make it into a reflection of a more general condition, Herbert refuses to respond:

'But sometimes . . . one feels more. More than just one's irritation, I mean. Everything opens, like a pomegranate. More things have gone wrong than one imagined. You begin to see that too.'
 'Little Bert has never seen a pomegranate,' said Herbert. There were forms of conversation he simply refused to accept. (26)

But we can read Christine's remarks on at least three levels. First, she is alluding to the discomfort and irritation of the actual train ride; second, she is suggesting that their relationship has gone wrong; third, she is reflecting on the direction of the whole culture, symbolized by the train's errant wanderings.

Following on this, her first intimation of a general breakdown of order, Christine begins to receive the first, and longest of the stories she "picks up"--this one from the old woman sharing their compartment. Christine's "information" functions on several levels: she calls it "interference" because it distracts her from her own problems with Herbert and Little Bert, but it also provides her with insight (often comic, often banal) into individuals' wartime experience.

The two characters who share their compartment bring with them the two things Herbert dislikes most while travelling--the smell of food, and

singing.³⁸ The comically spare descriptions of these two figures announce their functions as caricatures. The old woman's entrance, for example, is comically, dramatically compressed: she is "carrying bags and parcels and a heavy-looking case that she lifted like a feather to the rack before Herbert could help"; she has "sparse orange-blond hair done up in a matted beehive, a long nose, small grey eyes, and [wears] a printed dress and thick black shoes" (17). Her story is of her forty-seven year sojourn in America, one of a quartet of first cousins who paired off and married. Her tale is a comical, never-ending list of the food she cooked for all of them; she is now a diabetic, munching endlessly on an assortment of candy and fruit. Interspersed with her lists of dishes is the story of the families' isolation in America, particularly during the war, and the story of the next generation's assimilation. She has come back to tend her husband's grave in Germany so that she can inherit his money. Her reminiscences "interfere" sporadically with Christine's own musings, while her compulsive eating nauseates her fellow-passengers. The other passenger is equally improbable: he is a Norwegian "as tall as Herbert, wearing a blond beard. He had a thick nose, eyes as blue as a doll's, and bald spot like a tonsure" (16). He has come to Germany to teach a summer course on his special use of Yoga in singing. Egged on by Christine, who is annoyed at Herbert's infatuation with a little girl he sees at a crossing, the Norwegian fills the compartment with his singing, adding to everyone's discomfort. More importantly, he serves as a foil for Herbert's pleasant ironies on the issue of Germany's payment of war reparations. Both Herbert and the Norwegian (both are "amiable") profess to be open-minded on the subject; each is anxious not to offend the other. Herbert's tone is so pleasant, so neutral that it is "impossible for the

two strangers [the Norwegian and the old lady] to tell if [he] was glad or sorry" at the fact that beneficiaries, according to actuarial studies, died earlier than normal. Herbert's refusal to be held accountable for these debts--and the Norwegian's belief that he should--are conveyed politely:

'It is only right that you pay,' said the Norwegian, though not aggressively.

'Of course it is right,' said Herbert, smiling.

'However, I object to your use of "you".' (49)

Herbert's attitude to the past is more sharply ambivalent than his politeness conveys. His ambivalence centres on his family's wartime experience. Herbert has had "bad luck with women": his wife ran off, and his mother was put in a prison camp when he was three for holding to her religious convictions. Her camp experience erodes all of her former faith in people and God. She leaves Herbert twice, "once under arrest, and once to die" (14-15). Herbert's ambivalent attitudes combine his mother's warped vision of humanity with his own enlightened, amiable veneer of liberalism. His mother's life and death "gave him such mixed feelings, made him so sad and uncomfortable, that he would say nothing except 'Oh, a Christian sermon?' when something reminded him of it" (14).

Like many other couples in Gallant's fiction, Christine and Herbert do come together for a very brief moment; this contact contains all the tensions and contradictions that have emerged on the train. Herbert takes Christine to an empty compartment and draws the curtains closed; the first thing he must know is why Christine is reading Dietrich Bonhoeffer's essays. Bonhoeffer was martyred by the Nazis for his resistance; his Letters and Papers From Prison are exhortations to individuals to assume

responsibility for their actions, to take courage in their Christian faith.³⁹ Bonhoeffer's response to history threatens Herbert, in that it counters Herbert's accommodation with the past. So, earlier, Herbert remarks disparagingly to Little Bert, "The book is supposed to tell Christine how to think" (37-38). When Christine explains to Herbert that she is reading the book for an examination, the theology student's test becomes hers, and Herbert's, and Germany's. And when Christine explains that this test is for those who have "failed their year," her comment resonates beyond the particular situation, extending to a general failure to "pass" Bonhoeffer's rigorous test. Herbert, typically, only understands Christine on one level. He responds: "'That accounts for the Bonhoeffer. Well. Our Little Christian. What good does it do him if you read?'" Christine's response takes in more meanings than the literal: "'It may do me good, and what is good for me is good for both of you. Isn't that so?' For the second time that day her vision was shaken by tears" (45). The first time she cries is over the scene with the French porter, gazing out the hotel window at a vision of her innocent, remote childhood. Now she despairs at reconciling Bonhoeffer's claims for an ethical, moral response to life with Herbert's demands for a relationship liberated from the past. So she tells him that she loves him, but that there has been too much "interference"--too much information from sources like Bonhoeffer, sources which would ruffle Herbert's equanimity.

Herbert cannot understand Christine on this level, and Christine becomes annoyed with Herbert for "veering off into talk and analysis," like her fiancé; but talk and analysis are avenues of communication which

might lead to a reconciliation between them and with their shared past (46). Suddenly Herbert begs her to marry him--"tomorrow, today" (46). But as the narrator points out in the opening description of Herbert, he is incapable of remembering anything that he says about love or commitment: "Herbert did not hear what he was saying and his words did not come back to him, not even as an echo. He did not forget the promise; he had not heard it. Seconds later it was as if nothing had been said" (46). If Christine picks up "interference" and "information" from the atmosphere, then Herbert counterpoints her extraordinary sensitivity with his blank inscrutability: Christine picks up signals from strangers, while Herbert cannot even remember his own. Now Christine arrives at a perception which many Gallant characters share as they contemplate other figures: she realizes that she "knew nothing about him" (47). At the same time, she recognizes, again, Herbert's talents as a mimic, which do not square with her image of him as a "busy and practical man" (47). The point of this recognition is that Herbert's practicality stops short of a talent for communication: he can ape authority as well as submit to it (by "sleepwalking") but he cannot enter into relationship with Christine, or himself, or the past. So, for Christine, "the landscape was hopeless" at the end of this interrogation (47); the only thing that Herbert is concerned about is "this train, which is running all over the map" (47). Another level of meaning (which Herbert again refuses to acknowledge) accrues to this encounter (and to the whole journey) when Christine wonders whether she should repeat the story about Lenin and the sealed train to Herbert; when she does tell him the story, "he smile[s], no more" (47).⁴⁰

The closing episode at Pegnitz brings together all of the motifs which have coloured the journey from its beginning. Past and present merge as the dialogue continually echoes beyond the literal level, re-creating a wartime atmosphere charged with menace and confusion. So, for example, when little Bert asks Christine to take him to the bathroom, her exchange with Herbert is ominous: "'Is there time?' she asked Herbert. She saw him nod before a new wave of soldiers pushed him back" (78).

Throughout, little Bert has pestered Christine to read him stories about Bruno the sponge from the Bonhoeffer essay collection. But each time she begins to read, Herbert has cut her off, complaining that her inventions are too silly, too military, too imaginary, all potentially harmful to little Bert. Now little Bert has gravitated to Christine's sphere of influence. She reads a line of Bonhoeffer: "'Shame and remorse are generally mistaken for one another'"; she concludes that "'it's no good reading that'" (80). Bonhoeffer is alluding to a broader area of experience than Christine's relationship with Herbert. At this point Christine looks to little Bert for support and for human contact, looking to the future rather than the past. Here as elsewhere, Gallant reverses an earlier "tableau" to convey a character's transformation. Soon after they board the train, Christine opens Bonhoeffer to read, and "little Bert [is] beside her in a second. He [stands] leaning, breathing unpleasantly on her bare arm, commanding her to read about Bruno" (12). At Pegnitz, the roles are reversed. Now, after reading Bonhoeffer, Christine "leaned against the child and felt his comforting breath on her

arm" (80). The reversal communicates little Bert's metamorphosis into a "child" from a "little (Her)Bert" for Christine, and it also conveys Christine's need for human contact, for "comforting breath" (80).

True to form, the conductor appears and performs a final characterization of authority. "Being something of a comedian," he does an "excellent impersonation of someone throwing a silent tantrum" (80). Little Bert can see that he is playing, but the women sitting in the waiting room, who resemble refugees ("grouped by nationality" [79]) are terrified. Christine is "surprised to feel the panic--stronger than mere disapproval--that the other women were signalling now" (80). Christine faces down the conductor, who immediately begins to plead his case to her, as if he were about to be put on trial for war crimes: "'But I was kind on the train. I let you keep the window open when we went through the fire zone You'll testify for me, then?'" (81). Like the unmasked conductor, the group cultural leader has also been stripped of his authority in the pandemonium: Christine spots him with his group in the middle of a crowd; he has "lost his spectacles and was barely recognizable without them. His eyes were small and blue, and he looked insane" (78).

As the confusion in the station mounts, Christine cleaves to little Bert, telling him that "'whatever happens . . . we must not become separated. We must never leave each other'" (79). Her own confusion is apparent; when little Bert asks her to read again, demanding "what happens?" she confesses, "'I don't know anymore'" (81). The story moves to its unresolved close in a commotion suggesting the imminent departure of prisoner transports, while Christine, characteristically, is "wondering and weighing, as reluctant as ever to make up her mind" (87). The

other women in the waiting room respond to the "great stir" in the yards "as if they knew what this animation meant and had been waiting for it": "Lights blazed, voices bawled in dialect, a dog barked . . . the women picked up their parcels and filed out without haste and without looking back" (87). Christine, perhaps more confident at the new bond established between her and little Bert, "relaxe[s] her grip on the child, as if he were someone she loved but was not afraid of losing" (87). Her final response to his demand that she read is to start again on a story which Herbert had interrupted earlier, a tale about five brothers with the same name:

She had been hoping all day to have the last word, without interference. She held little Bert and said aloud, "Bruno had five brothers, all named Georg. But Georg was pronounced five different ways in the family, so there was no confusion. They were called the Goysh, the Yursh, the Shorsh . . ." [sic] (88)

Ronald Hatch comments that the story Christine tells little Bert "suggests the brotherhood of man":

For a moment, the reader wonders whether Christine is not reaching out to the child in a rare gesture of kindness. Then one realizes she does this at the very moment when action is needed to catch the train. From a liberal viewpoint, it might be seen as a positive gesture, but the story, I suggest, has radicalized us well beyond such liberal, utopian possibilities. Most readers will see Christine's action as a retreat to the abstract realm of mind, of reason, when the requirement is a confrontation with the present moment. 41

Christine's final posture is as ambiguous as Herbert's "sleepwalking" pose earlier; clearly, she and little Bert have reached a momentary respite from the confusion surrounding them. Christine is not docile enough, not meek enough to file onto another train. Nor is it clear at the end

of the story whether their next train is at the Pegnitz junction; Christine hears Herbert in the distance, trying to get information, she imagines. She does confront the conductor when he tries to intimidate little Bert, and her appeals to the child are positive gestures toward relationship. Fittingly, the ending is the most ambiguous, the most open-ended of all in this book; nevertheless, the fact that Christine's "last word" is a story about brotherhood and community, told to a child, indicates at least the possibility of a new direction, out of the destructive and repetitive cycles suggested throughout the story.

Gallant comments in an interview on the dilemma of German adolescents growing up in "the Hitler time":

Try to put yourself in the place of an adolescent who had sworn personal allegiance to Hitler. The German drama, the drama of that generation, was of inner displacement. You can't tear up your personality and begin again, any more than you can tear up the history of your country. The lucky people are the thoughtless ones. They just slip through. As for guilt--who can assume guilt for a government? People are more apt to remember what was done to them rather than what was done in their name to others. To wrench your life and beliefs in a new direction you have to be a saint or a schizophrenic. 42 (emphasis mine)

One of her German stories, "One Aspect of a Rainy Day," specifically takes up this question of personal allegiance to Hitler; but "dramas of inner displacement" are in one way or another at the core of all the stories in The Pegnitz Junction. The title novella is only the most radical, the fullest treatment of the book's common theme--that recent history has swamped individual experience, distorting characters'

sense of the present, because the past has been suppressed, misinterpreted, or "buried." The "inner displacement" results from the impasse characters arrive at when they try to realize the past. If they "tear up their personality" (as Ernst, for example, tries to do), they destroy any private sense of self out of uniform, in civilian clothes, aside from attested facts, stamped documents, official dossiers. If on the other hand a character tries to forget the history of his country (a history universally condemned, but one in which individuals who have lived through it cannot find the "stain of evil" the rest of the world perceives), then he suffers a cultural disinheritance. Inner displacement troubles most of the characters: Helena's identity has been obliterated by her experience in the camps, while the commissioner is a bewildered "orphan." Erika lives a "wasted" life in neutral territory, disinherited, telling stories of abandonment; Helga's past has been "purified, swept clean" of associations, so that she lives a displaced life in the house Julius has given her, telling Bibi's story, which is the story of another displaced person. Because experience is depersonalized, any private basis for identity is threatened; when memory tries to recreate a sense of the past, it confronts the destruction which is a part of everyone's history in these stories.

Having arrived at this moment of ironic "junction," where neither memory nor history can direct individuals or a culture on to the right track, readers might well wonder where Gallant's fiction can go from here. From The Other Paris to My Heart Is Broken to The Pegnitz Junction, she has continually expanded and developed the discontinuities between self and world, taking in larger areas of experience with each successive book. The distance between Carol Frazier and Christine or between Jeannie

Thompson and Helena is the distance between individuals confronted by social and political forces, and individuals who themselves become expressions or manifestations of a cultural condition, submerged in history, so that readers are never sure where personal and social experience separate.⁴³ None of the characters in The Pegnitz Junction can articulate the cry for recognition which ends many of the stories in My Heart Is Broken. Instead, stories close with quiet acknowledgements of resignation, or disclaimers (Hilde's "I have forgotten why I wanted to mention this," for example), or ironic resolutions like Ernst's. In her next book, From the Fifteenth District, Gallant continues to write stories dramatizing sterile, melodramatic lives touched in moments with the illumination of a significant gesture, a telling insight, or with the "light of imagination," and she also continues to write stories which are "intensely political." But at the same time, she returns in the Linnet Muir stories to another kind of fiction, as "Proustian" as the Pegnitz stories are anti-Proustian--stories in which memory makes history into home.

Notes

¹ George Woodcock takes a different view. He comments:

In my view what Mavis Gallant really discovered, and what she presents in these stories is not where "Fascism" (I would prefer the exacter with Nazism [sic]) came from, since that world of Nazi origins hardly exists in the memories of Germans who are not historians, but rather the emerging world of modern Germany which the Nazi age has cut off like a black curtain from the traditional past, so that only men in their eighties talk of "the good old Kaiserzeit" and nobody talks of the Weimar age.

"Memory, Imagination, Artifice: The Late Short Fiction of Mavis Gallant," CFM No. 28 (1978), p. 83.

² A number of Standard articles published in 1945 deal with Germany and the war. The tone of most of these pieces is shrilly and self-righteously anti-German. See, for example, "Hitler's Children: German Civilians Make Vain Attempt to Befriend Canadian Troops" (Photostory by Lawrence Earl, The Standard, 24 March 1945, pp. 1-3); "The Fehme Rides Again: The German 'werewolf' threat sounds ludicrous but murder isn't a laughing matter--as the Nazis have demonstrated" (Joachim Joesten, The Standard, 21 May 1945, p. 3); "Germany's Lost Generation: The slow process of re-educating twisted young minds gets underway" (Gerald Clark, The Standard, 30 June 1945, p. 9).

Gallant's articles on the war in the same period reflect a different perspective. She wrote two pieces on Canadian soldiers returning to Canada: "Report on a Repat: Canadian Army Private Makes an Easy Transition to Civilian Life" (The Standard, 28 July 1945, pp. 2-6, 8-9); this piece was followed up with one of the last articles Gallant wrote for the Standard before leaving for Europe--"Report on a Repat," Part II, Rotogravure, 29 July 1950, pp. 16-17) and "Stalag Diary: Captured Canadian Airman Recorded Life in German Prison Camp" (The Standard, 14 July 1945, pp. 2-6).

³ CFM interview, pp. 39-41.

⁴ CFM interview, p. 40. The covering article Gallant mentions appeared in The Standard (Rotogravure section), 19 May 1945, p. 26. The whole seven-page section is prefaced by a warning on a covering page:

"Special Section on the Atrocities in German Concentration Camps"

These important news pictures have been printed in a special section so that readers with children may remove it if they wish. It is suggested that it be kept for future reference. In time to come it may be a necessary antidote to pleas by sentimentalists and pro-Nazis that Germany is suffering hardship as a result of her defeat. Though Germans will have to work hard to rebuild their shattered cities, may well go hungry till after the rest of Europe is fed, their lot will be paradise compared with the hell they inflicted on others.

The captioned photographs are prefaced by the following covering piece:

"This Is FASCISM: From Mussolini's Italy It Spread to Germany--And It Is Still a Threat"

Over a hundred photos of German concentration camps have come to The Standard from various picture services. They were taken by Canadian, British and American photographers. We are publishing only a few and not by any means the worst. But we believe it important for Canadians far from the terrors of war, to see and understand the nature of the enemy. This could have happened here. Our soldiers died to save us from it.

It would be tragedy indeed if they had died in vain. It is up to us, the living, to make sure that the Nazi-Fascist spirit which stifles free speech, incites race hatred, encourages intolerance and cruelty, despises humanity and peace, glorifies tyranny and war, is finally eradicated. These ideas are not yet dead in Germany, still live in every land. Till they too are defeated everywhere there can be no lasting peace.

Look at the photos. Thousands of Canadian soldiers have seen these things. The British have seen them; the Americans have seen them. General Patton forced German civilians to go and see what their army had done. Eisenhower went himself to look. He wired to Prime Minister Churchill suggesting that members of the British Parliament should come and see. U.S. Congressmen flew across the ocean to look as did a delegation of American newspapermen. All agreed that no word or picture could ever convey the full horror of the reality.

Here in Canada we can see all around us the peace and freedom we are fighting for. These photos show what we are fighting against.

⁵ Gallant tells Geoff Hancock that "a great deal of conversation in it ["The Pegnitz Junction"] is cut off, short circuited." CFM interview, p. 65.

⁶ "Memory, Imagination, Artifice," p. 86. Woodcock also comments: "They [the Pegnitz stories] are stories about people whose memories have become atrophied; stories about people who have drawn blinds over the past." "Memory, Imagination, Artifice," CFM, p. 82.

⁷ "The Old Friends," in The Pegnitz Junction (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 89. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

⁸ "Willi" (1963), "Ernst in Civilian Clothes" (1963), and "A Report" (1966), all "German stories," are narrated in the simple present tense; "An Autobiography" (1964) begins and ends in the present; "O Lasting Peace" (1972) begins in the present.

⁹ The son's origins are a matter of conjecture for the commissioner; he is too delicate to pry into Helena's affairs:

It would have been a violation of their friendship to have pried. The rumor is that the father was an American but not a common drunken one, an Occupation leftover--no, it was someone highly placed, worthy of her. (91)

¹⁰ See, for example, Jean Price's certainties about Isobel and Frank, or Puss's certainties about Louise, Sylvie and Patrick. (Ch. II)

¹¹ Gallant comments: "All the references in Pegnitz are to German History, German Literature." (CFM interview, p. 64). The commissioner is probably referring to Hans Holbein the younger, (1497-1543), a painter who emigrated to England, where he painted many portraits of eminent political and religious figures (Sir Thomas More, for example), and where he became attached to Henry VIII's court after 1537.

¹² The nasturtium, significantly, is a flower "symbolic of patriotism." Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore and Symbols, ed. Gertrude Jobes (New York: The Scarecrow Press, 1961), Vol. II, pp. 1156-1157.

¹³ The line means "And how he beckoned with his finger." "The Glove, A Tale" is Schiller's parodic account of a knight's trial of courage to win the hand and heart of fair Cunigonde. King Francis signals imperiously with "raised finger" several times, ordering lions, tigers, and leopards into a ring. Cunigonde tosses her glove into the ring and challenges the knight Delorges to retrieve it. He does, but when Cunigonde is ready to surrender herself to him as promised, he tosses the glove in her face, spurning her love. See "The Glove, A Tale," in Complete Works: Schiller, ed. Charles Hempl, M.D. (Philadelphia: I. Kohler, 1861), Vol. 1, pp. 84-85.

¹⁴ For another example of Gallant's use of repetition in different contexts, compare the uses of "crumb," literal and figurative, to describe the commissioner's reaction to Helena's reference to her grandmother's Yiddish accent (92-93).

¹⁵ "Ernst in Civilian Clothes" is the only one of these stories which is republished in The Pegnitz Junction. The others all appeared in The New Yorker. (See bibliography)

¹⁶ Gallant, CFM interview, p. 37.

¹⁷ "Ernst in Civilian Clothes," in The Pegnitz Junction, p. 141. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

¹⁸ Compare Willi's list with the list which the "cultural group leader" reels off to comfort his opera party, a list of "perhaps one hundred familiar names" which terminates abruptly with his mention of "The Adolf-time" ("The Pegnitz Junction," in The Pegnitz Junction: A Novella and Five Short Stories [New York: Random House, 1973], pp. 69-70).

¹⁹ The opening paragraph of the story contains several suggestions of paralysis:

Opening a window in Willi's room to clear the room of cigarette smoke, Ernst observes that the afternoon sky has not changed since he last glanced at it a day or two ago. It is a thick winter blanket, white and grey. Nothing moves. The black cobbles down in the courtyard give up a design of wet light. More light behind the windows now, and the curtains become glassy and clear. The life behind them is implicit in its privacy. Forms are poised at stove and table, before mirrors, insolently unconcerned with Ernst (131)

²⁰ "A Report," The New Yorker, 3 December 1966, p. 65. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

²¹ "One Aspect of a Rainy Day," The New Yorker, 14 April 1962, p. 38. The story opens:

He had seen his older brother, Günther, swear personal allegiance to Hitler when Günther was fifteen and he, Stefan, only six. Actually Günther promised nothing aloud, but stood with his lips tight.

²² "Willi," The New Yorker, 5 January 1963, p. 30. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

²³ "The Latehomecomer," in From the Fifteenth District (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979), p. 134. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

²⁴ This same immunity to the past is an important theme in "An Autobiography"; see Ronald Hatch's discussion of "An Autobiography" in his article "Mavis Gallant and the expatriate character," Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Kanada-Studien, No. 1 (January 1981), pp. 133-143. See in particular pp. 139-141.

²⁵ "O Lasting Peace," in The Pegnitz Junction, p. 163. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

²⁶ Ironically, the only phrase that Theo can say in a foreign language is "Pro domo sua"--the title of one of Cicero's orations, meaning "In Defense of His Home." Cicero was seeking damages for his house, which was destroyed by enemies after he went into exile. See Dictionary of Foreign Phrases and Abbreviations, p. 230.

²⁷ "An Autobiography," in The Pegnitz Junction, p. 103. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

²⁸ See Hatch's discussion of this point in "Mavis Gallant and the expatriate character," p. 141.

²⁹ Christine uses the term "interference" to refer to messages transmitted from sources like Dietrich Bonhoeffer. "The Pegnitz Junction," pp. 45, 48.

³⁰ Grazia Merler, Mavis Gallant, pp. 57-63; Geoff Hancock, "Mavis Gallant: Counterweight in Europe," CFM No. 28, p. 6; George Woodcock, "Memory, Imagination, Artifice," p. 86.

³¹ William New, "Fiction," in Literary History of Canada (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1976), p. 254; Ronald Hatch, "The Three Stages of Mavis Gallant's Short Fiction," CFM No. 28, p. 102.

³² Robertson Davies, "The Novels of Mavis Gallant," CFM No. 28, p. 72.

³³ "The Pegnitz Junction," in The Pegnitz Junction, pp. 15, 16. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

³⁴ CFM interview, p. 65.

³⁵ CFM, p. 65.

³⁶ Significantly, the larch conventionally symbolizes "audacity, boldness, impregnability, independence, stability"--qualities which are latent in Christine. Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore and Symbols, p. 974.

³⁷ See note 18.

³⁸ Grazia Merler points out this irony in her discussion of "The Pegnitz Junction" in Mavis Gallant: Narrative Patterns and Devices, p. 62.

³⁹ See Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters & Papers From Prison (Enlarged Edition), ed. Eberhard Bethge (New York: Macmillan, 1972, rpt. 1973).

⁴⁰ The reference is to the "sealed train" which Lenin travelled in on his return to Russia through Germany when the Russian revolution broke out in 1917. See Michael Pearson, The Sealed Train (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1975) for an account of the train ride and its important political implications. Lenin was accused by many Russians of betraying the cause by travelling through enemy territory; Pearson advances the theory that Lenin revamped his whole timetable for the revolution because he was promised funds by the Germans at a secret conference while the train was at a German station stop.

⁴¹ Ronald Hatch, "The Three Stages," p. 103.

⁴² CFM interview, p. 51.

⁴³ Ronald Hatch suggests that Gallant's "later sense of character is one in which people seem to 'float' in a pond of historical forces." "Three Stages," p. 99.

CHAPTER V

"The Light of Imagination":
History's Moment, Memory's Home

In the seventies, Gallant's fiction developed in two related directions. Her fourth book of stories, From the Fifteenth District, appeared in 1979, while five of the interlocking "Linnet Muir" stories were published in The New Yorker between 1975 and 1977.¹ The unity of these "Montreal stories" is not simply the result of Gallant's use of a common, first-person, semi-autobiographical narrator.² In fact, by completing the dialogue between history and memory which is first interrupted in "The Other Paris," the Linnet Muir stories provide us with a unifying grammar with which to structure a chronological reading of Gallant's fiction. Reading From the Fifteenth District and the Linnet Muir stories, we rediscover "The Other Paris" as Gallant's most important, most representative early story, rediscovering at the same time the patterns of development which have linked The Other Paris, My Heart Is Broken, and The Pegnitz Junction.

Throughout Gallant's fiction, characters have tried to structure the past through memory's subjective, synchronic patterns, while history--particularly the war experience--has opposed and dispersed memory's "helical patterns." Structurally, formally, thematically, Gallant's stories have taken shape around a fundamental dialogue of the deaf--a stuttering of the self at the world of time.

The interruptions, the ruptures, gaps and ellipses in Gallant's stories--in relationships, in families, in cultures, between continents--proceed from failures, on several levels, to integrate past with present. Read in this context, Gallant's fiction in the seventies arrives at two formulations of memory's dance towards and away from history. Reading the Linnet Muir stories, we arrive at a fusion of subject with object, memory with history, self with world, reversing the direction which Carol Frazier sets out on in "The Other Paris." We can understand the Linnet Muir stories in this context as a result of reading "The Other Paris": Linnet Muir is a consequence of Carol Frazier.

The implications of the cycle we read through, from "The Other Paris" to the Linnet Muir stories, qualify our understanding of Gallant's narrative techniques--her uses of irony and point of view, for example. We can also interpret her rendering of setting and her recurring focus on exiles and expatriates in the context of this cycle. First, we can read irony as Gallant's lens, through which she teaches us to see two related "triumphs" as defeats. The earliest and most ironic triumph of memory over history, self over world, romance over reality, comes in "The Other Paris." Carol Frazier reifies history by shaping her experience into a cocoon of sequestered selfhood, excluding the "disappointments," the "shabby" actuality of history in postwar Paris. But while Carol may affirm a false sense of history, reverse her "pretty" reverie (a reverence enacted in the dreamy rhythms of the story's ending), Gallant frees her narrator to instruct the reader in interpreting Carol's form of fictionalizing as a "pretty" evasion, an ironic escape into a North American marriage from the contingency of historical Europe. "The Other Paris" begins to instruct the reader in reading the language all

of Gallant's stories speak. Reading "out," we begin to decode a fiction which refers North American experience to a nexus of untried, ahistorical values. But history exists in a realm beyond the classroom, beyond the helpful college lectures which teach Carol about the nature of love. History's lessons, as we see most clearly in The Pegnitz Junction, are more radically present in European experience: history is so contingent that characters are overwhelmed, obliterated in its sweep. Reading "in," we begin to glimpse a reflexive comment on the nature of fictions formed through various arts of memory, recovering or forgetting the past. In "The Other Paris," the comment is ironic. Carol's art is unconscious, unaware; her fictions are made from memory in flight from history, allowing her to retreat from history (and from the present moment with Felix) rather than encounter herself in it. She "frees" herself into the prison of an image of selfhood very much like a comfortable North American apartment, furnished with delusive memories of what "had never been at all."³

The stories in My Heart Is Broken bring memory into inescapable encounters with history. The fictions which memory would formulate in order to preserve the dream of a privileged, private self, free of world, are broken into by history, which has become much more contingent. During the war, Jean Price must "wake up," as she puts it, forgetting her dreams; Carol was able to "free" herself into dreams, forgetting the world. The characters in My Heart Is Broken cannot make memory larger than history, and so they suffer "heartbreak" and cry out for recognition. This cry, unheard or misunderstood, is as far as they can go.

Arriving at The Pegnitz Junction, we read (in Gallant's most "anti-Proustian" stories) the most ironic triumph of history over memory.

History destroys memory in these stories, swamping the individual, obliterating the sense of continuity between past and present, so that neither characters nor cultures can articulate presence. The war--which results, in Gallant's stories, from the ascendance of Fascism's small possibilities in people--destroys the individual's means to make sense of the past, leaving psychological scars which are harder to heal than the more material scars left all over Europe. Cosmetic repairs can restore Christine's "bombed, baroque" city more easily than individuals can recover what has been annihilated in memory. Fascism's "small possibilities" are displayed as much by Mrs. Thompson in "My Heart Is Broken" as by the conductors, commissioners, and corporate "Generals" in the Pegnitz stories, or by Mrs. Blackley in "The Moslem Wife." In the German stories, fiction again comments ironically on itself. If memory, stripped of a home ground, cannot fictionalize a space for self within history, then individuals will "transmit" trivial stories in an attenuated present. The stories Christine "receives" and "broadcasts" are flat, banal commentaries on lives lived on history's margins. The late-homecomer's questions about home thus become the questions at the heart of all of the German stories, anticipating Linnet Muir's "latehomecoming" to Montreal. His is an ironic first-person account of home as the most alien space of all, since "home" is the origin of his exile from the past. "Home" for Carol Frazier exiles her from history, too, but Gallant's narrator, rather than Carol, comments on this condition. The characters in The Pegnitz Junction have reached a standstill, moving into the space, the junction at which the dialogue between memory and history has broken down.

From the Fifteenth District is Gallant's finest book of stories to date. In choosing to study "The Moslem Wife" as the story most clearly in the central line of development, I have had to exclude several other powerful stories from consideration. "The Four Seasons" is among the best of Gallant's political stories;⁴ "The Remission" is her fullest, most complex treatment of the English middle-class postwar drift into "remission" and then oblivion. "Baum, Gabriel, 1935- ()" is the finest and funniest of all the stories which use actors and films to comment on melodramatic recreations of the past, especially of the war. The title story comically completes Gallant's ghostly mirror-reversals (which begin, in a more serious treatment, with "Its Image on the Mirror"); Ronald Hatch locates "Irina" as a key turning point in the development of Gallant's fiction.⁵ No other book has the range of this collection; it is her warmest, most engaging group of stories because beneath much of the irony there is wry humour. Gallant's control over her characters is less censorious than before; they are freer to fumble their own way through their stories.

"The Moslem Wife" is the finest and the most important story in the book. In it, Gallant recreates, in its most powerful version, the telling moment which teaches us how to read related moments in other stories, points at which an image of possible convergence arises. This point of convergence, "the light of imagination," plays an important part in "The Moslem Wife" and directs us to the focus of all of these moments in Gallant's fiction.

In "The Moslem Wife" (1976), Netta Asher confronts memory's paradox. She discovers memory's potential to realize the self within history, but she is also imprisoned by memory's passive function as a repository--a vault which entombs the individual within an ossified tradition of exile, isolated from history, oblivious to the present moment. Netta Asher and Jack Ross are first cousins, children of English hotelkeepers on the Ligurian coast whose families have become "plaited like hair" over the years.⁶ They marry in the early 1930's, separate during the war, and reunite when Jack returns to France from America. In place of a conventional plot, Gallant stretches a fabric of recurring detail over the framework of their relationship, knitting up these details in a pattern of opposed images of light and darkness, sunlight and shadow. She sets the "light-drenched" landscape of history over against the shaded, "deeply mirrored" hotel room Jack and Netta live in (44, 43): as long as the glare of history is dispersed by the "pure white awning" which shades the hotel room, Netta can watch the peaceful reflection of sunlight in the room's mirrors; she can remain "unnaturally happy," watching her image in the mirror rather than seeing herself as a "Moslem wife" (37, 43).⁷ But Netta is exposed to the direct glare of history--the war. Netta survives the war alone, but she finally assents, like a "Moslem wife" once again, to a reunion with Jack when he returns after the war. Their reunion denies what Netta senses--the reality of history and of memory's ghosts, the presence of the past in both public and private worlds. "The Moslem Wife" stands at a point between the stories of The Pegnitz Junction and the Linnet Muir stories. Unlike Christine, Netta gains insight into the meanings of memory; unlike Linnet Muir,

however, she is not yet able to proclaim a self quick with memory and alive within history.

In the opening allusion to Katherine Mansfield's story, "The Daughters of the Late Colonel," we can see how Gallant focuses on history at a double remove to structure her fiction:

In the south of French, in the business room of a hotel quite near to the house where Katherine Mansfield (whom no one in this hotel had ever heard of) was writing "The Daughters of the Late Colonel," Netta Asher's father announced that there would never be a man-made catastrophe in Europe again. The dead of that recent war, the doomed nonsense of the Russian Bolsheviks had finally knocked sense into European heads. What people wanted now was to get on with life. When he said "life," he meant its commercial business.

Who would have contradicted Mr. Asher? Certainly not Netta. (36)

Gallant frames her story in Mansfield's fiction, which is about the fall of Empire, among other things; this fall is projected in both stories through its effects on families living within an outworn tradition. Mansfield's story deals with two daughters' lifelong subservience to their father, the (late) Colonel. Constantia and Josephine are incapable of assuming independent lives, even after the Colonel's death, because they have lived in his shadow for so long--the same shadow cast by the sun setting on Empire. They are fixed in this shadow, outside of history. Netta appears to be nominally more independent, but she, too, lives as a "Moslem wife" in Jack's shadow and in the shadow of the late Mr. Asher and his one-hundred-year lease on the hotel, which would deny Netta an ordinary life span and deny history its more problematic evolution. Netta's marriage to Jack, like her reunion with him, depends upon her muffling memory's voice and assuming her role as a "Moslem wife."

Beyond broad thematic parallels, the stories share related images. Both narrators present the captive daughters with a glimmer of insight, imaged near the end of both stories as a ray of sunlight. This flicker of natural light from the historical world might illuminate the shadows of their private lives, freeing them from the "pastness" of the past--the traditions which have bound them in exile from themselves. Mansfield's sunlight "pressed through the windows, thieved its way in, flashed its light over the furniture and photographs" in the late Colonel's bedroom.⁸ The sunlight sets both daughters dreaming, remembering their mother's death in Ceylon (outpost of Empire), wondering "[I]f mother had lived, might they have married? But there had been nobody for them to marry. There had been father's Anglo-Indian friends before he quarrelled with them."⁹ But their moment of illumination, like so many similar moments in Gallant's fiction, passes without issue. Constantia, imprisoned once again in her "constancy," forgets what she had been about to say to Josephine; Josephine stares "at a big cloud where the sun had been," and says that she has forgotten, too.¹⁰ Netta's last, troubling flash of insight takes place in the "last light of the long afternoon," which "strikes" a mirror in a café. This sunlight is a "flash in a tunnel, hands juggling with fire"; its "play" on the mirror will tell "anyone who could stare without blinking" a "complete story" (73). Gallant's sunlight is harsher than Mansfield's, more explicitly a historical light, and Netta is in a more public place--a café in a square--although she wishes she were in her hotel room. Gallant, more than Mansfield, calls attention to the process of transformation from sunlight to insight. Netta cannot be sure which light, which version of reality, is "real"--

the sunlight from the square, or its image on the mirror. Gallant's image raises the issue, more than Mansfield's, of where the light is coming from; Gallant's image also resolves this issue momentarily, evoking the fusion of memory with history, converging in the "light of imagination." Mansfield's image transforms sunlight (and the natural chirping of baby sparrows, which Josephine interiorizes as the cries of her fledgeling self) without comment, while Gallant frees Netta momentarily to seek the implications of a double vision. Netta is inquiring into the nature of imagination--and of fictions--preparing us for one of Linnet Muir's formulations, of fiction as a "variety of exile." But Netta cannot free herself into history, out of exile in an expatriate tradition, by articulating the "reliable counter-event" in memory which would oppose Jack's recollection of their reunion as the happiest moment in his life.

As the narrator makes clear, Netta, like her father, does not know who Katherine Mansfield is, and she will not read "Daughters of the Late Colonel." Therefore she is fated to act out a similar story and suffer similar consequences. Because history will prove Mr. Asher's confident "announcement" to be wishful thinking, Netta, who "certainly" cannot contradict her father, will live through history's contradiction. Commenting on "The Moslem Wife," Grazia Merler suggests that the importance of the story's opening passage lies here, in Gallant's establishment of this bond between reader and narrator:

The reader from the very first paragraph becomes an accomplice of the narrator. He has the illusion of clairvoyance. Reader and narrator know more than the character presented and they know better. The opening paragraph of "The Moslem Wife" pays the reader this

compliment

The reader knows about Katherine Mansfield and also about the Second World War. The years which separate the narration supposedly from the present have made the reader wise, but also the reader secretly believes himself to be intellectually superior to Netta's father. 11

This is fair enough, but it does not go very far. Constrained here as elsewhere by her methodology, through which she seeks to systematize Gallant's fiction into a purely formal grid of recurring "situations" and narrative patterns, Merler does not have time to comment on the significance of the Mansfield story or on the implications of Mr. Asher's announcement. Merler's analysis points out the reversals which take place in Netta and Jack's attitudes; the significance of these reversals, Merler suggests, is that our sympathy shifts from one character to the other.¹² To suggest that the significance of the allusion to Mansfield is that it establishes a bond between reader and narrator is a good point of departure, but there is more to be said about the bond.¹³

The hotel which Netta inherits is more English than England itself. Its name, the "Prince Albert and Albion," announces its status as a monolith of Empire, but Gallant does not stop at this level of irony. Through style and sentence structure, as well as through detail, she places the hotel as a monument to an English leisured class of another era. The grounds are ordered into a landscape of formalized tranquillity ("tennis courts, a lily pond, a sheltered winter garden, a formal rose garden, and trees full of nightingales" [37]), while Netta and Jack's life at the hotel moves in rhythms of leisurely repose: "[F]rom the rose garden one might have seen the twin pulse of cigarettes on a balcony, where

Jack and Netta sat drinking a last brandy-and-soda before turning in" (37). Victorian mirrors in the dining room reflect "glossy walls and blown curtains and nineteenth-century views of the Ligurian coast, the work of an Asher great-uncle"; the hotel's upkeep is described in a sentence that itemizes the work of refurbishing in an unbroken monotony, enacting the repetitive nature of Netta's off-season tasks in the face of "next year's sun": "Netta also had the boiler overhauled and the linen mended and new monograms embroidered and the looking glasses re-silvered and the shutters taken off their hinges and scraped and made spruce green for next year's sun to fade" (38).¹⁴

Because they have been raised in hotels rather than in real homes, Jack and Netta's cultural milieu is perpetually expatriate, adopted rather than inherited. They are swaddled in tradition, English at a remove from themselves. "Born abroad, they worked hard at an Englishness that was innocently inaccurate, rooted mostly in attitudes" (39); Netta "talk[s] the English of expatriate children, as if reading aloud," and she and Jack use a "spoken shorthand" with each other (39). Death itself is a stilted formality in the hotel, a gentlemanly exit from life, so that Netta remembers the dead as "cold, heavy furniture" (39). The hotel is a shuttered sanctuary, a shaded mortuary; but the important point is that for Netta, as for Jack, it is also "home."

Within this ambience her relationship with Jack forms a second, more intimate enclosure. Their uniformity of manner, their "spoken shorthand," masks important differences. Netta, unlike Jack, has no feeling that she belongs to a culture that extends beyond the hotel grounds; Jack, unlike Netta, has no sense of their relationship defined

by anything but her physical presence. As the narrator remarks in a comment which reverberates in the story's ending, but also echoes beyond this story to redefine our sense of memory and relationships throughout Gallant's fiction: "Love was memory, and he [Jack] was no good at the memory game; he needed Netta there. The instant he saw her he knew all he had missed" (42). Netta has no idea whether the two families are related to the Italian poet, Montale, while Jack wishes that they were (40); when she hears Jack playing some "deeply alien music (alien even when her memory automatically gave her a composer's name), she [is] reminded that here the dead had never been allowed to corrupt the living" (38). The important point here is to distinguish between Netta's "automatic" memory, which throws up disembodied bits of information (a memory which is the individual incarnation of a culturally expatriate, "automatic" history), from Jack's more vital memory at this stage of the story. Jack, the "fighter," reaches out to try to make connections, however flimsy and dilettantish, with the larger world beyond the hotel; Netta, without knowing the reason for her action, kicks him savagely, unbalancing him for life (40-41). In the early years of their marriage, Jack tries to translate pages of St. John Perse's verse; to Netta, poetry is "as blank as the garage wall . . . in any tongue" (38).¹⁵ As Grazia Merler points out, these attitudes reverse themselves as the story develops. The significance of these reversals is that they show us the effects of the hotel's occupation during the war, the effects of Netta's direct encounter with history. They are reversals which result from Netta's learning the meaning of memory. In Gallant's stories, the impact of history, particularly of the war, often sweeps away characters' traditions and values along with their past. In the Pegnitz stories,

many of the characters experience this impact as destruction, as obliteration. But through her depiction of Netta, Gallant explores the war's destruction in different terms from those in the German stories, suggesting that there is a certain value, a certain freedom for Netta in the insights which she gains from her passage through history. For Netta, it is a release to be freed from her image as a Moslem wife; Netta is one of the first of Gallant's characters to act on her sense that there is a possible value in independence.

The story's title comes from a remark Netta overhears from one of her hotel guests, Dr. Blackley. She hears him refer to her as the "little Moslem wife"; the phrase is "collected and passed from mouth to mouth in the idle English colony" (43). This characterization, suggesting humble servitude, takes on different meanings as Netta reflects on her status at different points in the story. Gallant's technique of repeating, with subtle alterations, details, phrases, descriptions, and images, continues in this story--not only with Netta's "name," but also with the contexts in which she repeats certain phrases. When Dr. Blackley propositions her early in the story, for example, Netta replies "Not a hope," which becomes her refrain to men's advances until just before the occupation. We can trace Netta's evolution out of her condition as a "Moslem wife" (and back into it) by tracing the evolution of her response's meanings.

Beyond the recurring details which advance Netta's transformation, there are longer scenes which frame her evolution. In the episode at Roquebrune, for example, when Netta begins to think about the confines of her language, we also see her beginning to emerge from the hotel and from her marriage, finding herself in an expatriate colony which shows

her an absurd mirror-image of her own condition. The episode is one of Gallant's funniest set pieces of social comment; parties and gatherings in Gallant's fiction are more often than not occasions for parody and satire. Iris Cordier, a friend of Jack's mother ("dotty" Vera), invites Jack and Netta to her father's house at Roquebrune; Netta goes unwillingly. There, she meets Sandy and Sandra Braunschweig, Anglo-Swiss twins who are unwitting caricatures, absurd images of Netta and Jack. They are more aggressively, more artificially English than Netta and Jack. Sandra is trying to pummel a young American into respectable anglophilia; she kicks him for asking where the "toilet" is in London, and she forces him to wear clothes which will "harmonize" with her car on a visit to her "undeniably excellent" English school, "Mitten Todd" (52-53). The American puzzles Netta; he is trying to be a writer (an occupation which makes no sense to her at this point), living on money his father is sending him. But this scene at Roquebrune has another function beyond parody. It shows Netta evolving a language, looking for words which will define her sense of the Roquebrune set's artificiality. When she responds to Iris Cordier's melodramatic announcement to Jack, for example, we also see her beginning to define one sense of the past as imprisonment in tradition:

"I've got no time for women," said Iris "Shall I tell you why? Because women don't tick over. They just simply don't tick over." No one disputed this Women were underinformed. One could have virile conversations only with men. Women were attached to the past through fear, whereas men had a fearless sense of history. "Men tick," she said, glaring at Jack.
 "I am not attached to a past," said Netta, slowly.
 "The past holds no attractions Nothing could be worse than the way we children were dressed. And our mothers--the hard waves of their hair, the white

lips. I think of those pale profiles and I wonder if those women were ever young." (52)

It is Netta, not Jack, who will begin to "tick," in time, by living within history; Jack will flee to timeless America, to a continent which experiences the war at a remove. Netta, unlike Iris, is not "attached to the past through fear," and she is about to acquire a sense of history. In this sense Netta is a central figure among Gallant's expatriates, showing that Gallant's characters are expatriated and repatriated in time, always working toward the imaginative fusion of memory and history.

Netta's response at this point is evidence of her sloughing off reticence; at the same time, she is also responding internally to Sandra Braunschweig, seeking to define her appearance. The narrator tells us that Netta cannot arrive at a word for Sandra: "Netta had never in her life thought a word like 'pretty'" (53). Now she uses the new word, "pretty," in her conversation with Jack on the way home from Roquebrune. "Pretty," an important word in Gallant's fiction from the beginning (as in "The Other Paris"), next becomes a word Netta will use to suggest the superficiality of her affair with the American. First, she turns aside his double request for money and sex with her characteristic "Not a hope"; the second time he asks, just before the occupation, Netta tells him, "no more than affectionately," that she's "going to show [him] a very pretty room" (60).

An incident which occurs before the occupation prepares for one of Netta's central insights into the flaw in the structure of "everyday living" which Gallant says she was looking for in writing the Pegnitz stories. Three sisters--East Indians, part of what Dr. Blackley calls

the "maharaja trade"--arrive at the hotel, shepherded by a governess and chauffeur. Because they dress in blue for tennis lessons, Mrs. Blackley proclaims with obvious satisfaction that they will not be able to play on the tennis club courts. "They can't go on the courts except in white. It is a private club. Entirely white" (48). Jack teaches them instead, on the hotel courts. When the middle daughter returns after the war with gifts for Netta, she tells her that she had "hated her father, her mother, her sisters, and most of all the Dutch governess"; she hopes the governess is dead (66). Netta's reflections should be read as her own discovery of what Gallant calls the "worm" in the structure of everyday living, the flaw which brought on the general cultural collapse: "Every calamitous season between then and now," Netta thinks, "seemed to descend directly from Georgina Blackley's having said 'white' just to keep three children in their places" (66). As a corollary to this insight, Netta muses on the irony by which the girl's personal grievances can be more important to her than the impact of the war itself: "Death made death casual: she [Netta] had always known. Neither the vanquished in their flight nor the victors returning to pick over rubble seemed half so vindictive as a tragic girl who had disliked her governess" (66). In Netta's analysis, history's currents seem to flow from the convergence of particular, individual attitudes like Mrs. Blackley's; when the war is over, the tidal ebb leaves "tragic" individuals still caught up in their personal grievances. In "The Moslem Wife," Gallant allows these kinds of reflections to become her characters' insights--not only the narrator's or the reader's. This is an important development, because it moves toward creating what I am calling "presence" as characters live

more fully, and more often, in the moments of discovery which Gallant creates in her fiction.

The hotel's occupation, first by the Italians and then by the Germans, stands as the scene of Netta's first transformation. We can best understand the meaning of this transformation by attending to the recurring descriptions of Netta, first as a watcher, an observer of her own reflection in mirrors, and then, during the occupation, as a reader, by candlelight, in the hotel cellar. At the beginning of the story Netta is "no reader," while Jack reads too many books, she thinks (46). She is an observer until Jack leaves: then, she finds that "the looking glasses still held their blue-and-silver-water shadows, but they lost the habit of giving back the moods and gestures of a Moslem wife" (61). After the war, Netta begins to read, leaning against the bar in Jack's habitual pre-war pose, when he had become "exhausted . . . by trying to make a world out of reading and sense out of life," Netta felt (59). Reading one of the books which Dr. Blackley has sent her, she comes to a description of two fascists in London:

" . . . [sic] two Fascists came in, one of them tall and thin and tough looking; the other smaller, with only one arm and an empty sleeve pinned up to his shoulder. Both of them were quite young and wore black shirts." (68)

Netta responds to this description more emotionally than she ever responds to other characters:

Oh, thought Netta, I am the only one who knows all this. No one will ever realize how much I know of the truth, the truth, the truth, and she put her head on her hands, her elbows on the scarred bar, and let the first tears of her after-war run down her wrists. (68)

Books which fictionalize recent history have become terribly relevant to Netta, because she has just lived through something she cannot account for as a "Moslem wife." She can no longer shade herself from history's "sunlight" by speaking "shorthand" to Jack or by tacitly accepting her father's announcements. She discovers that fiction can enact experience, that "reading" life is also living life. Her "true" experience of the war does not conform to one of the fundamental laws governing realism in fiction: it is too "implausible," she decides, after trying to write a letter to Jack about her experience during the occupation (64--emphasis mine). In the letter she does not send, Netta writes: "I suppose that you already have the fiction of all this. The fiction must be different, oh very different, from Italians sobbing with homesickness in the night" (63). But we do read this letter, in which Netta describes her true but implausible experience, while Netta sends Jack "a sensible letter asking for sugar and rice and for new books; nothing must be older than 1940" (64). Netta's own story of the war is both expressed and silent, articulate and mute. Unlike Jack, the reader is privileged to see both sides of Netta's experience; Netta herself is finally confounded in her attempt to decide which experience--her own implausible, haunted, historical experience, or her relationship with Jack, who would deny that memory links past with present--is "real." Unlike Carol Frazier, who closes her story by inventing a "coherent picture, accurate but untrue," Netta tries to express the incoherent experience of the occupation, to convey its truth.

Commenting on how her stories begin for her, Gallant tells Geoff Hancock about their common structure:

I wouldn't choose a theme and write about it. A story usually begins, for me, with people seen in a situation, like that. (Locks fingers together.) The knot either relaxes or becomes locked in another way. Why that should be I can't tell you. But that's what occurs to me. The situation has a beginning and as much ending as any situation has in life. The story builds around its centre, rather like a snail. 17

The structure of "The Moslem Wife" is a good later example of Gallant's "locked situation," just as "The Other Paris" is a good early one. In "The Moslem Wife," the knot "relaxes" as Jack goes off to America, and Netta encounters history. But the closing scene reties the knot in another way, locking Netta once again into her situation, despite the lessons she has learned in Jack's absence.

This knot begins to tighten around Netta again as her guests return from their dispersal during the war. Jack is the last to come back, although he "should have been first" (69); the middle sister, Dr. Blackley, and Iris Cordier return before him. Netta turns down Dr. Blackley's proposal that she divorce Jack and either marry or live with him; more importantly, she tells him that she has learned how memory means. Netta has more to say about the meanings of memory than any character before her; Netta, and not the narrator, tells Dr. Blackley that memory is what binds her to Jack, not sex or "faithfulness":

"What you are talking about [her purely sexual relationship with Jack] is something of which one has no specific memory Only of seasons. Places. Rooms. It is as abstract to remember as to read about. That is why it is boring in talk except as a joke, and boring in books except for poetry" (67).

For Netta, memory itself (and we recall the narrator's earlier remark, that Jack is "no good at the memory game") not sex, and not a relation-

ship conducted in a private code (a "spoken shorthand"), has become the creative act, the imaginative sustaining of a sense of the past. But in the same breath Netta tells Dr. Blackley that memory is also a terribly binding, constraining force, imposing rigid interpretations on events: memory also reduces experience to rigid patterns. So when Netta sees "closed shutters," she knows "there are lovers behind them. That is how the memory works. The rest is just convention and small talk" (67). She overrides all of Dr. Blackley's objections, which are intended to force Netta to see that she cannot interpret everyone's experience by using her own memory's code. But such are the twists and turns of dialogue in the story that, just as Dr. Blackley is trying to educate Netta, she tells him that she survived the occupation by sleeping with the Italian commander billeted at the hotel. He was "not a guest," and so she was "not breaking a rule" (68). Memory will trap Netta into subservience to Jack, and yet she has survived alone; she tells Dr. Blackley that Jack's absence "was like a cancer which I am sure has taken root, and of which I am bound to die" (68). She will die psychologically, in the sense that she will have to surrender her independence and her memory's ghosts.

In depicting Netta's and Jack's reunion in the Place Masséna, Gallant completes Netta's return to her earlier status, but not before confronting her with "the light of imagination." It is worth studying this closing scene in some detail to see how Gallant suggests the inevitability of the reunion.¹⁸ By working a web of correspondences between early and late detail, Gallant evokes the inevitably recurrent patterns of a life governed by memory, uninspired by history. "Memory," Netta muses in this scene, "is what ought to prevent you from buying a

dog after the first dog dies, but it never does. It should at least keep you from saying yes twice to the same person" (73). Netta shows how memory molds her life into patterns which reflect earlier configurations, so that her renewed relationship becomes "the same voyage, at the same rate of speed" (73).

The Place Masséna recalls--for Netta--the earlier setting of her marriage, the hotel. But the similarities are crucially qualified. In the Place, "[T]here was a deep-blue late-afternoon sky and pale sunlight. She could hear birds from the public gardens nearby. The Place was as she had always seen it, like an elegant drawing room with a blue ceiling" (69--emphasis mine). Jack and Netta are meeting out in the historical, public world, near a public garden where unnamed birds sing, rather than in their hotel room, in the shade and near the hotel's private gardens and its trees "full of nightingales" (37). The Place is sunlit (although the sunlight is "pale"); it is part of that "light-drenched" landscape which, earlier in the story, the narrator had told us was outside the "fenced area" of their relationship, and so "too open" for "serious talk" (44). But now history has become an unavoidable part of their landscape. The Place may seem as Netta had always seen it, as an extension of the hotel, an "elegant drawing room" with a "ceiling," but it is not that drawing room: Netta and Jack walk across a square haunted by historical ghosts, "under the arches where partisans had been hanged" (70). History is uncomfortably immediate for Netta: "[I]t seemed to Netta the bodies had been taken down only a day or so before" (70). Jack is at a more comfortable remove from history; he knows "about this way of dying only from hearsay," and he chooses a table "nearly under a

poor lad's bound, dangling feet" (70). Netta is haunted by both history and memory in the square; just as she "sees" (another word which, as we have already noted, is a key term in Gallant's language) the partisan's bound feet, she also "feels" the clasp of an "invisible" hand from the past when Jack takes her wrist. Netta is vulnerable, transparent, blessed and cursed with the life of memory. Her memory, she thinks, is "dark . . . accurate . . . deadly"; Jack has a "short memory," and so a "comfortable" imagination (72). Netta's memory no longer yields up "automatic bits of information"; it has become more visceral and more painful. Netta (not only the narrator and reader) now understands that for Jack, there is simply no past. Netta herself looks like "a burnt-out child who has been told a ghost-story"; the ghost story is the spectral past, haunting the present. Alive to memory, Netta is subject to history.

It is at this point, when she is in despair over Jack's obliviousness to the past (and over her own acute sense of being "haunted" by it) that Netta sees the sunlight "strike" the mirror behind them in the café. Earlier in the story, the sunlight in her "deeply mirrored" hotel room had become a "play of light . . . as green as a forest on the walls, and as blue as seawater on the glass" (43). Now, the sunlight is far more active and its play is more "unexpected":

Desperately seeking the waiter, she turned to the café behind them and saw the last light of the long afternoon strike the mirror above the bar--a flash in a tunnel; hands juggling with fire. That unexpected play, at a remove, borne indoors, displayed to anyone who could stare without blinking, was a complete story. It was the brightness on the looking glass, the only part of a life, or a love, or a promise, that could never be concealed, changed, or corrupted. (73)

This image is the "light of imagination," fusing sunlight with insight, history with memory. It is a "brightness on the looking glass," rather than a flat image on a mirror. This light could tell Netta a "complete story" if she could stare at it without blinking, but Netta does not quite understand what she sees. She still insists on separating memory from history, self from world, shade from sunlight, despite the flash of illumination she sees before her. She insists that only her own experience is "real": "[T]he dark, the ghosts, the candlelight, her tears on the scarred bar--they were real" (73). But "[S]till, whether she wanted to see it or not, the light of imagination danced all over the square" (73). If "The Moslem Wife" is a key story in Gallant's canon, then this "light of imagination" is a crucial phrase in her fiction's language. The moment of this light is a moment of illumination, of self in sunlight, a more resonant, expanded version of Carol's moment with Felix in the Métro station. Natural light (sunlight, light in the world, historical light) reflects--"strikes"--at the mirror of self; it is "borne indoors" to re-emerge in a fusion of self in world. The "light of imagination" could resolve the apparent dualities of self against world, subject against object, by fusing history with memory, sunlight with insight, diachronic with synchronic time. Early in the story, the narrator tells us that Netta "knew about the difference between darkness and brightness, but neither affected her" (39). Now she learns much more about "darkness" and "brightness," but she finds that she cannot stare into history's brightness with memory's naked eye. Netta perceives herself to be caught between two realities, each denying the other. Her yearning for a simpler metaphysics reveals itself when she thinks that "a pure white awning on a cross street seemed . . . to be of indestruct-

ible beauty. The window it sheltered was hollowed with sadness and shadow" (73). This is the kind of detail from which meaning emerges in Gallant's stories. The image of the awning occurs twice earlier: their hotel room has "white awnings," and Netta orders "new white awnings" for the hotel when everyone else is fleeing the war (37, 59). From the Place, she is looking back at the fenced area of her marriage, recognizing its "sadness and shadow" even as she thinks that it seems to be of "indestructible beauty." She is looking at the hotel window from the outside now, from the sunlit square; earlier, she had looked out onto the "light-drenched" landscape from within the shuttered, "deeply mirrored" hotel room. Now, with the "same deep sadness" that she sees in the window, she tells Jack that she believes his statement--"announced [like Mr. Asher's opening announcement] in a new voice which stated nothing but facts"--that he loves her (73). Her belief is a response to a "wave" of feeling, a "powerful adolescent craving for something simple, such as true love" (73). This wave, a tidal flow of feeling rather than a cutting edge of insight, succeeds the original "wave" of revulsion she had felt when Jack stepped down from the bus at the beginning of this scene. Gallant suggests here the strength of Netta's attachment to Jack at the same time as she defines its meaning.

Netta's reunion with Jack is inevitable because she does not have the resources to live with her insights. She needs the "shade" of a relationship, the shadow provided by the white awning. But Netta, more than any Gallant character before her, lives a double life, one within the shaded area, one in the sunlight. Gallant shows us Netta exploring these two lives, and she also shows us the process through which Netta returns to Jack and to her original "situation." Jack's "buoyant" atti-

tude supervenes, but language alerts us to the nature of his victory. Jack, the "practical romantic," is "dying to get Netta to bed right away"; all he hears is the "blood in his veins and his loud, happy thought" (73). When Netta says, for the last time, "Not a hope," the phrase's meaning has reversed itself. There isn't a hope that she will be able to live with "the brightness on the looking glass," the "complete story." With the relationship re-established, Jack is "as buoyant as morning. This was his morning--the first light on the mirror, the first cigarette" (74).¹⁹ But we know, with Netta, that in fact it is late afternoon, and that the war and their separation have taken place. Jack's "first light on the mirror" is his saving delusion, an escape from the late afternoon sunlight. Since Netta cannot articulate a "reliable counter-event" to Jack's memory of this reunion as "the happiest event of his life," she must let his memory stand (74--emphasis mine).

The light of imagination which confounds Netta is the light in which Linnet Muir tells her stories. Linnet is a gifted reporter on memory: by reconstructing a city, she recreates its history, but she also moves beyond these reports to explore the working of memory itself. Linnet needs to "re-member" herself; unlike many Gallant characters before her, however, she realizes that to do so she must start with the world, not the self. Her memories take shape around the most prominent "character" in all her stories, the Montreal of her childhood and adolescence.

Before focussing on two of the Linnet Muir stories, "In Youth Is Pleasure" and "Varieties of Exile," it is helpful to look back at the outlines of "The Other Paris" to establish the general connections between the beginning and (for the time being) the "end" of the Gallant canon.²⁰ In "The Other Paris," the narrator encloses Carol's experience in a third-person middle distance; reader and narrator alike watch Carol's fictions clash with facts. The story's ending confirms that Carol's is an ironic initiation and that we should read her "coherent pictures," her fictions, as evasions of her encounter with foreign ground--the possibility of love in a "shabby" postwar setting. Gallant's settings, from "The Other Paris" to the Linnet Muir stories, remain twin settings. But Linnet is the first character to recognize that she cannot have both settings, both her "memorial" Montreal and the historical Montreal she has come home to. Unlike Carol, who is faced with the same choice, Linnet chooses the historical world.

"In Youth Is Pleasure" opens the Montreal cycle with a first-person narrator returning to Montreal, home ground, from New York; she is also travelling into the past toward childhood in order to gain her independence. Linnet Muir is an articulate, politicized reporter on her past. She returns to Montreal armed with her own texts, which are leftist, not liberal, about socialism, not love. Carol affirms her romantic conception of love by sentimentalizing her experience; Linnet affirms her independence by imagining it as a political revolution. Linnet breaks into the historical world, rebelling from her family and remembering a "dream past." "The Other Paris" closes with Carol making fiction, while "Varieties of Exile" ends with Linnet's insight into the meaning of

writing fiction. Linnet, looking down a receding row of younger selves, reports on memory's inventions. She demythologizes her past, deconstructs memory's fictions, in order to name herself. It is as if, by remembering what she had remembered as a child, Linnet the narrator can indeed "re-member" herself. Her stories are reports from an observer entering into the world, rather than from an observer distancing herself from the world, like the first-person narrator/reporters discussed in Chapter II.²¹

It is probably more than coincidence that the recovered memories which form the Linnet Muir stories should have come to Gallant when she was doing research for the project she is now completing, a history of the Dreyfus affair. In her important introduction to Home Truths, Gallant writes that, contrary to her usual experience with her fiction, she knows "exactly how the [Linnet Muir] stories came to be written, and why."²² She explains that in the mid-seventies she had been doing research for the Dreyfus book, "reading virtually nothing for two years except documents and books about the Dreyfus case" (xx). She describes the enormous differences between herself and Dreyfus, but she finishes by establishing their one common bond: they "had both resolved upon a way of life at an early age and had pursued [their] aims with overwhelming singlemindedness" (xxii). Having recognized her bond with Dreyfus, Gallant "moved with greater sureness into the book [she] wanted to write" (xxii). She had been working on the Dreyfus book by "restoring" "his Paris, his life" (the city first, in order to "restore" an individual's life), walking the route Dreyfus walked on the morning of his betrayal, looking at "all the paintings and photographs [she] could find of that particular

Paris" (xxii). She began, at that same time, to recover a "lost Montreal"; in order to explore her own "singular resolve," Gallant restores a lost city, the Montreal of her childhood. As with her history of Dreyfus, so with her Linnet Muir stories: Gallant restores cities to evoke personalities and characters. Gallant begins by describing the image of Montreal she recovered, and she ends by describing the function of memory--a progression paralleled by Linnet Muir's stories:

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.

The character I called Linnet Muir is not an exact reflection. I saw her as quite another person, but it would be untrue to say that I invented everything. I can vouch for the city: my Montreal is as accurate as memory can make it. I looked nothing up, feeling that if I made a mistake with a street name it had to stand. Memory can spell a name wrong and still convey the truth. (xxii)

Gallant's language often resembles her characters' language; here, she uses a word which recurs in her fiction, "invented," to signify "imagined" rather than "reported." Linnet is not an exact "reflection" (a usage which recalls Gallant's repeated use of mirrors, images, and reflections in her fiction),²³ but she is semi-autobiographical, as Gallant has said elsewhere. But what most concerns Gallant here is that we understand that her Montreal is "as accurate as memory can make it," and that therefore this kind of accuracy has less to do with facts than with fictions. The "spelling" of a name does not have that much to do with the kind of truth which memory, like fiction, conveys.

"In Youth Is Pleasure" (1975), the first of the Linnet Muir stories, presents Linnet remembering her break from her mother in a successful bid for independence.²⁴ Returning to Montreal from New York, she stays with her old French-Canadian governess, Olivia, gets a job, and tries to discover the truth about her father's death; he had died in unexplained circumstances when she was a child. As she asks his old Montreal friends about his death, she remembers how she had remembered Montreal when she was that child. She discovers that the Montreal she lives in is and is not the place she remembers: this discovery, which frees her out of adolescence into adulthood, involves her in resituating her memory within history. Linnet learns that memory makes necessary fictions, and that it then becomes necessary to understand that these are fictions, just as they are necessary.

Linnet leaves New York as a politicized romantic. She has taken her politics to heart via literature, and they are passionately personal ideals, more important to her than her mother's obsession--"the entirely private and possibly trivial matter of [her] virginity."²⁵ She is pursuing a concretely economic independence, and yet this quest sets her searching into her memories of the Montreal of her childhood. The fusion of her objective odyssey with its subjective counterpart begins to complete Gallant's interrupted dialogues between self and world by immersing one in the other. Linnet's journey is at once "into a new life and a dream past" (228).

Linnet goes from one of her father's old friends to the next, frustrated each time by their inability (or refusal) to give her straight answers to her questions about his death. This line of the plot par-

ticularizes Linnet's general critique of Canadian impassivity and reticence, contrasted with the more openly emotional behaviour she had seen in America. While she tries to discover the truth about her father, a subterranean process of recollection begins to take place. She recounts that she had lived the first ten years of her life in Montreal before moving to a city in Ontario, "a place full of mean judgments and grudging minds, of paranoid Protestants and slovenly Catholics" (223). In Ontario, her memory of Montreal "took shape":

It was not a random jumble of rooms and summers and my mother singing "We've Come to See Miss Jenny Jones," but the faithful record of the true survivor. I retained, I rebuilt a superior civilization. In that drowned world, Sherbrooke Street seemed to be glittering and white; the vision of a house upon that street was so painful that I was obliged to banish it from the memorial. The small hot rooms of a summer cottage became enormous and cool. If I say that Cleopatra floated down the Chateauguay River, that the Winter Palace was stormed on Sherbrooke Street, that Trafalgar was fought on Lake St. Louis, I mean it naturally; they were the natural backgrounds of my exile and fidelity. (223)

Linnet has a double perspective on her memory. She remembers the raw "content" of her experience (the "random jumble of rooms and summers," for example) and also the formed "memorial" which "took shape" once she had left Montreal and moved to Ontario. The work of memory, to "retain" and "rebuild," goes on in exile from its object, and the "fidelity" of the narrator's efforts (which recalls Netta's equation of memory with faith, a connection which Linnet will make at the end of this story), attests to her aim: to build a work of art, a memorial, a fiction. Her literary and historical lore (Cleopatra, the Winter Palace, the Battle of Trafalgar) becomes the "natural" background of her subject-

ive sense of exile and fidelity.

But at the same time as she goes through this reflexive process, remembering what she had remembered, Linnet also begins to demythologize, to deconstruct memory--and to affirm, by the very force of her naming its parts, her "fidelity" to memory. Standing in Windsor Station, just off the train from New York, Linnet sees a statue of Lord Mount Stephen, founder of the Canadian Pacific: everyone in her childhood had taken the statue to be a monument to Edward VII. This is a cutting, comic moment, a moment depicting how Canadians' allegiance to Empire has blinded them to the identity of one of their own national figures. But it is also a moment in which Linnet sees "true" evidence, in the world as well as in memory, of her past: "Angus, Charlotte and the smaller Linnet had truly been: this was my proof; once upon a time my instructions had been to make my way to the Windsor Station should I ever be lost and to stand at the foot of Edward VII and wait for someone to find me" (224).

In the stories before the Montreal sequence, Gallant's characters had generally been passive, acted upon rather than acting: this is especially, but not exclusively true of Gallant's women. Linnet gathers strength by acting. She leaves New York and enters her "dream past"; it does not immobilize her, as fragments from the past immobilize characters like Christine in "The Pegnitz Junction." Her memory is an active force which recreates the past by investing it with shape and meaning. This shaping force is ongoing: "[E]ven now," remarks Linnet the narrator--even as she remembers her sensations at eighteen--she forms her present memory with imagery suggesting her militancy, her march toward independence. She remembers the June morning of her arrival in Montreal "like a roll of drums in the mind" (225). Like Gallant, Linnet makes fiction by

remembering, and like Gallant, as she remembers she becomes, necessarily, involved in the process itself, asking herself how memory means. Linnet does not mimetically "copy" her past: she "sees" it rather than "watching" it, expresses it rather than reflecting it. She embodies her past as insight rather than observing herself in it at a distance, as if the past were a mirror which stopped time. In the same way that her "memorial" Montreal was fashioned from images taken from history, so her memories of herself at eighteen are structured upon images of revolution and rebellion (225-226).

When Linnet closes her inquiry into her father's death, her dream past begins to "evaporate," and she finds herself standing on the street corner of a purely historical Montreal. Even this discovery, that the only "real" Montreal is the one she sees before her eyes, is one that she must balance against the insistent images of the Montreal she lived in as a child. She insists that there can be only one Montreal, but she remembers another at the same time: "[O]ne day, standing at a corner, waiting for the light to change, I understood that the Sherbrooke Street of my exile--my Mecca, my Jerusalem--was this. It had to be: there could not be two. It was only this" (235). She then goes through the same process she went through earlier, remembering twin Montreals; she sees that she will have to give up one of the chief pleasures of youth, the "natural" fidelity to images in memory. Montreal can no longer be a holy city because her pilgrimage has become time-bound, secular, historical. Linnet's closing thought, as she watches a "crocodile" of little girls coming out of her old school, plays upon the ambiguity of time's faithfulness to youth; looking at the children, she thinks:

I should have felt pity, but at eighteen all that came to me was thankfulness that I had been correct about one thing throughout my youth, which I now considered ended: time had been on my side, faithfully, and unless you died you were always bound to escape. (236-237)

Linnet escapes childhood by realizing the nature of time; the "crocodile" of little girls she sees will have to split up into individuals, each of whom will have to create herself by remembering herself in time, by being active with her memory. Unlike those whom God loves, Linnet will not die young, and so she is indeed "bound" by time to "escape" her youth.²⁶ This is the ironic sense in which time is faithful to her in her drive to independence. The pleasure of youth for Linnet was not in the days, months and years of childhood, in which she felt herself imprisoned, but in the capacious memorials she could retain and rebuild, structures in which, as in fiction, time is fluid, history at her disposal. But even as the historical world becomes inexorably more contingent, and Linnet perceives that reality, "as always, [is] narrow and dull," she discovers the way in which memory, like fiction, can "spell a name wrong and still convey the truth." "Bound to escape" from youth into adulthood, Linnet "remembers" Linnet by calling the past into being.

In "Varieties of Exile" (1976), Linnet repatriates herself from her exile in various romances to a home as a writer of realist fiction by telling a story about the nature of romance. In doing so, she invites us to read "out" from her story to two worlds--the historical world to which all of Gallant's fiction refers, and the imaginative world of Gallant's fiction. This second world's autonomous structure forms itself upon those moments at which Gallant's characters "see" in the "light

of imagination." By the time Gallant writes "Varieties of Exiles," these moments of insight--into the world's "natural" historical sunlight, as it is reflected in fiction's "natural" mirrors ("looking glasses")--have developed from slim possibilities, through perplexing impasses, into verifying perceptions. Both "In Youth Is Pleasure" and "Varieties of Exile" close with Linnet's clear-sighted descriptions of such a moment. The "situation" Linnet is locked into is principally a dialogue with her own powers of perception, with memory and imagination. Linnet's "situation" evolves into insight, in other words.

Briefly, the story's plot is as follows: Linnet, working in an office in wartime Montreal, is fascinated with refugees. She romanticizes them and writes stories "about people in exile" in her spare time. She's "entirely at home with foreigners" because "the home [is] all in [her] head."²⁷ She meets Frank Cairns, a special kind of refugee--a "remittance man"; Linnet writes a devastating chapter-by-chapter account of the standard "RM" story (she calls this a "romance") and then debunks it in favour of a simpler story, the "classic struggle for dominance" between "strong father, pliant son" (267). Cairns, a "Socialist RM" as she calls him in notes she makes for a story, personifies a type. But when he enlists and then is killed in action in Italy, Linnet's reaction to his death leads her to her moment of insight into writing certain kinds of fiction as a variety of exile. Linnet moves through several varieties of exile as she romanticizes and then realizes her experience. She self-consciously subverts her own efforts--her romances about exiles, her recital of the standard "RM" essay (this is "a load of codswallop" [267]), and finally a novel about an "RM" which she can't remember having written.

Frank Cairns' variety of exile is knit up with Linnet's variety. Cairns lives a romance, while Linnet writes romances. Both romanticizations cover over realities which Linnet presents during the course of the story, instructing us in the connections between romance and romanticized reality. Both romances are shattered into historical fragments by Cairns' death. "Varieties of Exile" is a fiction about fiction: its subject is a writer's progress and the literary imagination's encounter with the literal world. For Linnet, fiction begins as a way of decoding experience. As she says early in the story, "Anything I could not decipher I turned into fiction, which was my way of untangling knots" (261). Looking back at herself, Linnet sees that she was living in her head, in a romance: she populated her imagination with refugees, believing them to be incarnations "straight out of the twilit Socialist-literary landscape of [her] reading and . . . desires" (261).

By debunking her report on remittance men, Linnet takes a step out of her "twilit" literary landscape; she reports the conventional romance first, and then, as if she were a Freudian critic, explicates the story by referring us to the conflict between father and son. When Frank Cairns enlists, Linnet is forced into a more direct encounter with her romanticized "Socialist RM." By this time, Linnet is engaged to another man, but her engagements, unlike Carol's, are peripheral to the central impetus of her stories, which is her drive toward independence through insight into fiction. Linnet is constantly engaged and constantly breaking engagements in these stories; in "Varieties," she does marry, but her husband is never an important figure. Marriage has been a variety of exile throughout Gallant's fiction, a variety which Linnet brushes up

against just once.

Linnet's shock at reading Frank Cairns' name among the war dead precipitates her destruction of the novel she finds in her picnic hamper. Here is her moment of insight, which closes the story:

In the picnic hamper I also found a brief novel I had no memory of having written, about a Scot from Aberdeen, a left-wing civil servant in Ceylon--a man from somewhere, living elsewhere, confident that another world was entirely possible, since he had got it all down. It had shape, density, voice, but I destroyed it too. I never felt guilty about forgetting the dead or the living, but I minded about that one manuscript for a time. All this business of putting life through a sieve and then discarding it was another variety of exile: I knew that even then, but it seemed quite right and perfectly natural. (281)

Like "Varieties of Exile," the novel is a first-person fiction with "shape, density, voice," which realizes a world by "getting it all down." The civil servant's voice articulates Frank Cairns' and Linnet's socialist dream, making it an "entirely possible" world.

As she destroys the manuscript, Linnet imagines the imagination as a "sieve," a filter. Passing life through this filter is a variety of exile, and yet to a writer, this process, like the process of building memorial Montreals in memory, seems "perfectly natural." It is "quite right" because this process is necessary to convey the kind of truth Gallant is after, a truth which documents her imaginative, subjective report on the way she "sees." Gallant's "showing" is "telling," to synthesize Wayne Booth's enshrined distinction, because her eye turns inward to "see" the variety of lights, mirrors, reflections, and shadows through which the imagination conveys its truths.²⁸ Gallant's focus is

not on Linnet's self-consciousness per se, but on her growing awareness of how she sees, an awareness reflected in the details of what she sees. In "Varieties of Exile," Linnet sees romantic types, then real figures, and finally the relation between the two, a relation most fully established in the novel she destroys.

Linnet's progress in this story completes one orbit in the journey of Gallant's characters around her fictional world. Linnet returns to the "home" at the heart of all of Gallant's homes, a home which is a process: for a writer, the "natural," ongoing process of imagining a home and then "discarding" it is home. The imagination "naturally" turns reality into that "other reality called fiction."²⁹

Gallant's images of imagination are moments of synthesis, of convergence. They illuminate the relations, the dialogues between the various subjective and objective constituents we have noted throughout her fiction: self and world, memory and history, romance and reality, invention and report, insight and sunlight, image and mirror. When these moments, in all their variety, "take place" (it is difficult to ignore how we spatialize time--and so texts--to discuss them), Gallant's figures live in Netta's "light of imagination." Linnet's insight into fiction as a variety of exile is another of these moments, but it is also the moment of all of Gallant's fiction. As we learn that it is "quite right and perfectly natural" for Linnet to humanize her world by remembering her past, we also learn how to read other characters' excursions into history in all their variety.

The Linnet Muir stories, it should be noted, constitute the third and final group of stories collected in Home Truths; this most recent group of stories, more than any other in Gallant's

canon, affirms the home truths about time, memory, history, and voice at the heart of Gallant's fiction. Throughout Gallant's fiction, we have read the broken dialogue between history and memory in the stuttering of voice. These failures of voice have called attention to themselves when inarticulate characters have stammered at time and at each other out of time. Their assertions have been suspect, their disclaimers disingenuous; their stories, particularly the first-person narrations, have often ended with the awkward silence which follows on bewildered defeat. Many of Gallant's characters speak languages defeated by time, unable to tell their stories in time. To tell time's stories, Linnet Muir must learn memory's place in history by returning home. Her homecoming confers upon her that most elusive of qualities, in Gallant's fiction as in life, the sound of a voice with its own timbre. Linnet's timbre resonates within human time, which is time measured by memory's pulse and heartbeat, time placed in history's districts, in a reconstructed Montreal whose historical ambience is as tangible as weather. An imagination which realizes history in memory gives voice to the Linnet who haunts the Mavis who remembers her.³⁰ Linnet sees the past in the light of imagination and sings home truths in history's moment, memory's home. Listening to the clear cadences of her voice, readers find themselves at home in the districts of Gallant's imagination, its streets scarred with history, its houses haunted with memory.

The pattern which begins with Carol Frazier and then "ends" by beginning again with Linnet Muir shapes our reading of the development in

Gallant's fiction. First Gallant writes stories in which expatriates are defined in terms of what they have lost, where they have exiled themselves from, what they were in another time and place. "Home" is variously a set of values, a class context, a pitch of voice, a manner of speech; or again, an encircling family or relationship. As Gallant's characters begin to explore European settings, their sense of being on alien ground strikes their domestic codes into sharp relief; in exile, finally, from full identity, even her European characters live at a remove from history and culture, in memory and manners.

With Linnet Muir, Gallant begins with a character self-consciously journeying home from exile into identity, rather than the other way around. The journey is a return, and the past--which Gallant has up to this point imagined as a trap, or an absence, or a vacuum, or a historical nightmare--becomes a potentially more fertile presence in an "underground river" in Gallant's mind, as well as in Linnet Muir's. Behind this image, Gallant "sees" a "whole fictional structure." Recreating the past becomes a route into history, into Linnet's independence in the world. Reading Gallant's stories, we can see that the "light of imagination" which perplexes Netta is a version of Gallant's synthesis of memory and history in a moment of presence. Linnet Muir, through her art of remembering herself, brings Netta's moment, and the moment of all of Gallant's fiction, into clearer focus. As readers, we pass Linnet's fiction through the "sieve" of our previous reading; "naturally," we imagine her to be another "variety" of Netta, Christine ("The Pegnitz Junction"), Erika ("An Autobiography"), Jean Price ("Its Image on the Mirror"), "Puss" ("The Cost of Living"), or Carol Frazier. To relate her to these other

figures does not, however, restrict her to a reincarnative function as a Gallant "type." Gallant's characters, like her stories, vary as much as they recur; the lines of development we read begin to curve into elliptical orbits of expatriation and repatriation. Linnet does not stand at the head of one of these lines as much as she completes a cycle, by taking a direction, through memory, from the ironic "junction" at which history and memory stand still in the Pegnitz stories. Linnet's explorations of memory and fiction illuminate Netta's missed moment of inspiration; Linnet speaks from within the historical world that Carol Frazier flees from. Linnet's reportorial eye enables her to speak as a revelatory "I," because she looks and articulates in two directions--toward "revolutionary" independence and back into her "dream past." Her discovery of where these directions converge teaches her how and why she writes fiction, and teaches us how and why to read Gallant's stories.

Notes

¹ From the Fifteenth District: A Novella and Eight Short Stories (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979). The five Linnet Muir stories appeared in The New Yorker as follows: "In Youth Is Pleasure," 24 November 1975; "Between Zero and One," 8 December 1975; "Varieties of Exile," 19 January 1976; "Voices Lost In Snow," 5 April 1976; "The Doctor," 20 June 1977. A sixth Linnet Muir story, "With A Capital T," appears in Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978), pp. 8-17. All six Linnet Muir stories are collected in Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories (Toronto: Macmillan, 1981).

² Gallant comments on Linnet Muir: "The girl (Linnet Muir) is obviously close to me. She isn't myself, but a kind of summary of some of the things I once was Straight autobiography would be boring. It would bore me. It would bore the reader. The stories are a kind of reality necessarily transformed. (CFM interview, p. 28).

³ "The Other Paris," p. 30.

⁴ "The Four Seasons" is one of the few stories which Gallant talks about at any length. She tells Geoff Hancock:

I started that [the story] in the sixties and then put it away

The story of the little servant girl had been told to me by the girl herself, by then a woman. She had been employed when she was eleven or twelve by an English family in the south of France. I set the story in Italy, for a number of reasons. The child was Italian. She had something the matter with one hip and one shoulder all her life, as the result of carrying the children of this couple around when she herself was still quite small. They paid her very little at first, and then nothing at all. When the war broke out the family went back to England. They told her they had no money and would pay her after the war. She told me about how she had cried, and how her mother had beaten her because she did not believe this story. The family came back to their villa after the war and paid the girl in pre-war francs. Do you know what that meant? A few cents. And there they sat, in their charming villa, comfortable, respected. I used to look at them and think, "You bloody hypocrites." CFM, p. 53.

5 Hatch writes:

"Irina" [is] a story that in many ways marks a transition in Gallant's focus. Whereas many of the previous stories had only hinted at Gallant's unhappiness with the reigning outlook of liberal humanism--with its basically romantic notions of the natural goodness of man in an evolving providential universe--in "Irina" Gallant attacks the ideal outright." ("The Three Stages," p. 104)

6 "The Moslem Wife," in From the Fifteenth District, p. 39. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

7 "Watching" is opposed to "seeing" in this and other Gallant stories, always distinguishing between passive contemplation and active encounter.

8 "The Daughters of the Late Colonel," in Katherine Mansfield: Selected Stories, ed. Dan Davin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969, rpt. 1978), p. 270.

9 "Daughters of the Late Colonel," pp. 270-271.

10 "Daughters of the Late Colonel," p. 272.

11 Grazia Merler, Mavis Gallant, p. 65.

12 Merler compares this reversal to the reversal she finds in "Potter": "In 'The Moslem Wife' the reader experiences the same reversal of sympathies:

Netta: stolid → suffering → lighthearted
 Jack: lighthearted → unreliable → stolid "

(Mavis Gallant, p. 66).

13 Merler summarizes "The Moslem Wife" as follows:

In "The Moslem Wife" the central situation is Jack and Netta's marriage. The reader sees the parade of guests who come to stay at the hotel the couple owns. We are informed of the fluctuations in the relationship of the couple. The Second World War constitutes the crisis: Jack is abroad at the start of the war and the hotel guests stop coming. Netta, who was

always well versed in the laws of survival but in a rather stolid way, suddenly, without Jack, acquires a sense of humour and some imagination. At the end of the war the same guests and acquaintances gradually come back, bringing news about their own survivals. Jack is the last to return and Netta accepts him. It is he who now becomes the stolid character void of imagination and with no memory for the past. The two characters have exchanged roles and the plot has reached its point of departure. (Mavis Gallant, pp. 63-64).

Here and elsewhere, Merler leaves herself very little time to explore the implications of the patterns she traces.

¹⁴ This kind of construction recurs. See, for example, the list of Louise's "useful objects" in "The Cost of Living" (Chapter II, note 35).

¹⁵ Both allusions are to modern poets. Eugenio Montale (1896-) is an Italian poet who won the Nobel prize for literature in 1975; Saint-John Perse (1887-1975) was a French diplomat and poet who won the Nobel in 1960. Saint-John Perse was the name under which Alexis Léger wrote.

¹⁶ Better Than A Kick in the Pants is a book of short stories and sketches by J. MacLaren Ross (London: Lawson & Dunn, 1945). The story Netta reads from is entitled "Action Nineteen Thirty-Eight," which is included in a section of the book subtitled "Part One: The "I" in these stories is not Me." The style of the story is imitation Hemingway; its plot is an account of two Englishmen's reactions to two militant fascists who are convinced that the Jews are gaining control of the British Press.

¹⁷ CFM interview, p. 45.

¹⁸ Merler comments: "In both stories ["The Moslem Wife" and "Potter"] the resolution of the plot is open-ended; Netta takes back her husband, but she could as easily not" (Mavis Gallant, p. 63).

¹⁹ Jack's sense of renewal compares with the renewal of Christine's birthplace in "The Pegnitz Junction": her city, after its restoration, looks "as pink and golden as a pretty child and as new as morning." ("The Pegnitz Junction," p. 3).

²⁰ As of April 1982, seven Gallant stories have appeared after the Linnet Muir stories and From the Fifteenth District. Three are slight, brittle, parodic stories poking fun at literary hangers-on ("From Gamut to Yalta," "A Painful Affair," "Siegfried's Memoirs"); one, "The Burgundy Weekend," is part of a longer work which was written before the Linnet Muir stories; "The Assembly" and "Larry" are short, arch stories set in Paris, neither of which is particularly strong. "Speck's Idea," the best of this group, explores an art gallery curator's scheme to revive interest in a forgotten painter and to promote his gallery. None of the stories points in a new direction for Gallant. (See bibliography for details.)

²¹ See the discussions of "Wing's Chips," "Deceptions of Marie-Blanche," "Señor Pinedo," "When We Were Nearly Young," for example.

²² "An Introduction," in Home Truths, p. xx. All subsequent references to this essay appear in the text.

²³ Gallant was interviewed by Fletcher Markle for Telescope (CBC TV) on January 22 and 29, 1969. Responding to Markle's invitation to free-associate to selected cues, Gallant responds to "mirrors": "Love mirrors . . . I have a book about them."

²⁴ The first three Linnet Muir stories are roughly chronological; Linnet is eighteen or a few years older and working in Montreal just before and then during the war. The last two stories to appear in The New Yorker double back to focus on Linnet as a child, while "With a Capital T" returns to Linnet working as a reporter in Montreal.

²⁵ "In Youth Is Pleasure," in Home Truths, p. 219. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

²⁶ Ronald Hatch also discusses this pun in "The Three Stages," p. 110.

²⁷ "Varieties of Exile," in Home Truths, pp. 261-262. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

²⁸ I am aware that whether this "imagination" is Gallant's (or the writer's), the reader's (ideal or otherwise), Linnet's, or God's is the critical question of questions in some quarters--and further, that to suggest that a phenomenon named "imagination" has any ontological validity is the cardinal humanist heresy, the subjective fallacy supreme. However, that is my critical bias, and the stories (as I "misread" them, as Harold Bloom would say) are my evidence.

²⁹ Gallant discusses the relation between reality and fiction using imagery similar to Linnet's: "Once you have put reality through the filter and turned it into that other reality called fiction, the original ingredient ceases to exist. Ceases to exist in memory, that is." (CFM interview, p. 28).

³⁰ As George Woodcock points out: "Linnet Muir is about as near to Mavis Gallant as her namesake bird (a modest British singing bird) is to the Mavis, which is the Scottish name for the magnificent European song thrush." "Memory, Imagination, Artifice: The Late Short Fiction of Mavis Gallant," Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978), p. 88.

CHAPTER VI

Home Truths: The Districts of Imagination

From the beginning, Gallant's stories have sustained and developed her fundamental exploration of history as time's facts and memory as time's fictions. Home Truths (1981) provides readers with four complementary perspectives on Gallant's exploration of time, reestablishing the main points of reference we have located in studying the development of her art. We gain these perspectives by considering the implications of Gallant's introduction to Home Truths and by a reading of three stories: "Bonaventure" (1966), "Virus X" (1965), and "Saturday" (1968). "Bonaventure" teaches readers about time's relations to life and to art in Gallant's fiction; "Virus X" depicts, in one of its most radical forms, the distance between Gallant's postwar North American and European senses of history; and "Saturday" invites readers to consider once again the vital connections between memory, language, and voice which so much of Gallant's fiction brings to light. These evocations of time's lives and deaths, its fits and starts and stops, confirm our reading of Gallant's stories as broken dialogues between memory and history, dialogues which tell the story of memory's speechless flight from history and of memory's articulation of a home in history.

In a 1982 CBC interview, Gallant refers to literary criticism as "another voice. It's like a window flung open in another landscape."¹ The first voice in Home Truths is Gallant's own voice, and the first

window onto her fiction is Gallant's own vision. She opens "An Introduction" with her reflections on Canadian art, on what is expected of Canadian writers and writing, on Canadian readers and their distrust of imagination, and on that most sacred of Canadian conundrums, our most pervasive national myth, the Lost Canadian Identity.² Prefaced by Boris Pasternak's observation that "only personal independence matters," Gallant's introduction undercuts any assumption that the "Selected Canadian Stories" of Home Truths differ (in content, in form, in style, in anything other than setting, if setting is understood in the narrowest senses of time and place) from her other ("American"? "European"? "French"? "Italian"? "Rivieran"?) stories. Home Truths is important, not because its stories are "Canadian," but because among them are some of Gallant's finest and most representative stories. The German stories of The Pegnitz Junction are most important for their exploration of Fascism's small possibilities in people--possibilities which Gallant explores in German settings and characters, with all the unsettling resonances and associations that postwar German literary, historical, political, and cultural contexts carry with them. One important function of the Canadian material in Home Truths, particularly in the section entitled "Canadians Abroad," is that it adds a density of allusion to Gallant's "Canada" (a distinct part of Gallant's "North America") and Gallant's "Europe." But the most important emphases in Gallant's introduction--and in the stories themselves--fall on memory's manners of conveying the truth, on the districts of a writer's imagination. The importance of the stories' Canadian setting is secondary, subsumed as it should be in the issue of the development of a writer's form.

"An Introduction" closes with Gallant's detailed recollection of how she came to write the Linnet Muir stories, an account which suggests important connections between a city's history (and that history's reconstruction in fiction) and a character's memory (and memory's recreative, formal impulse). Ending as it does with Cocteau's enigmatic formulation of the writer's calling ("Je suis un mensonge qui dit la vérité"), "An Introduction" reminds us that fiction lies to tell truths, and that even in the case of a writer like Gallant, so meticulously concerned with accurate representation, it is the powers of invention which finally shape her fiction; as Gallant puts it, "memory can spell a name wrong and still convey the truth."³ "An Introduction" comprises, along with "What Is Style?" and sections of the Canadian Fiction Magazine interview, Gallant's most important reflections on the practice and purpose of writing fiction.

"Bonaventure" and "Virus X" are included in the section of Home Truths subtitled "Canadians Abroad." But the fact that these are stories about young Canadians adrift in Europe is of secondary importance to their place in Gallant's canon as stories about ambiguous or ironic initiations, stories which set North American varieties of innocence over against European versions of experience. "Bonaventure" deserves more consideration than a passing comment, but it should at least be pointed out that it constitutes Gallant's most powerful exploration of time in relation to life and art. Douglas Ramsay, a twenty-one-year-old Canadian on a music scholarship in Europe, tells his Swiss host and confessor, Katharine Moser, that everything her famous husband did "was intellectual. He was divorced from nature by intention."⁴ He explains his view of art to her:

Painters learn to paint by looking at pictures, not at hills and valleys, and musicians listen to music, not the wind in the trees. Everything Moser said and wrote was unnatural. It was unnatural because he was sophisticated. (152)

Gallant juxtaposes Ramsay's home in art with Katharine Moser's home in the natural world, whose parts she names and whose laws, particularly the laws of time, sexuality, and mortality, she lives by. Douglas Ramsay's initiation (which he flees from, as Carol Frazier flees from hers) is an initiation into the world of time and so into the meaning of the past--particularly his father's past, which resurfaces at several points and gives the story its title. The father's return from the war to Bonaventure station in Montreal is a set scene whose significance Douglas Ramsay cannot quite make out.⁵

Ramsay's understanding of art has a limited resemblance to Northrop Frye's theory of the autonomous imagination; Ramsay believes that artists learn their art from other art, not from life. But Ramsay also believes that through art he can escape time and the past altogether; the relevance of Ramsay's theory of art to our reading of Gallant's fiction is that his frame of reference establishes an ironic division, an antithesis between natural and civilized worlds (between "raw" and "cooked," "earth" and "world," nature and culture) and between time and eternity, mortality and immortality, life and art. But these are Ramsay's dualities, not Gallant's: the fact that Ramsay's views of art and time are treated ironically in this story is consistent with Gallant's treatment of nature throughout her fiction. Although nature makes only very brief appearances in her stories, it serves important allusive and symbolic functions.

Netta Asher's historical sunlight in "The Moslem Wife" is as important as the perpetual drizzle Carol Frazier encounters in "The Other Paris"; Gallant repeatedly uses flowers (irises, anemones, nasturtiums, lilacs, lilies, the orchis in this story) and trees (Christine's larches, for example) as well as wasps like the one which threatens the commissioner in "The Old Friends" to allude to the significance of individual gestures, to nuances of dialogue; in this story, Ramsay's attitude to nature reveals his ignorance of the nature of time.

Identifying as he does with Adrian Moser, Douglas Ramsay imagines that art, the most refined expression of culture, is completely self-referential, a home divorced from nature and free from time. Art may be timeless, but artists' lives are not, and Ramsay cannot make this distinction. So it is fitting that the story closes with Ramsay imagining that he too has freed himself from time, from sexuality and from change. He imagines that he has freed himself from the effects of the "weather . . . outside" (172). But Gallant shows readers that his liberation is spurious. Ramsay, who has fled from the Moser chalet, addresses "the remains of Katharine's letter" in one of the telling interior monologues typical in Gallant's stories. He remembers driving with Katharine:

We drove slowly, crawling, because Katharine had seen a white orchis somewhere. Did anyone dare say this was a waste of time? The orchis was a straggly poor thing with sparse anemic flowers Surely he had passed a test safely and shown he was immune to the inherited blight? (172)

But Katharine Moser's love for flowers is in reality no waste of time, but a celebration of time; if Douglas Ramsay knew as much about flowers as Katharine does, he would recognize that the orchis (named from the

Greek for the testicle, which it resembles), is a natural fertility symbol; he would not be so certain that he had "passed a test safely and was immune to the inherited blight." This inherited blight is the human susceptibility to the disease of time, a disease which Ramsay imagines he has escaped. But the story closes by instructing readers to read Ramsay's escape as ironic; he cannot flee from time through art any more than Carol Frazier can flee history's facts through memory's fictions. As Katharine Moser tells him, "Nothing can be divorced from nature and survive" (152). The closing paragraph shows that Ramsay's triumph depends on him keeping his back turned to the window:

Only afterward did he think that he might be mistaken, but that day, the day he arrived in Berlin, he was triumphant because he sat with his back to the window and did not know or care what the weather was like outside. (172)

That Douglas Ramsay is one of Gallant's "Canadians Abroad" should not distract us from the story's relevance as an exploration of a character's attempt to escape time and the past. "Bonaventure" is more important as a story of ironic initiation than as a story about a young Canadian away from home.

"Virus X" articulates more particularly the double-pull that Canadians (ex-Europeans themselves--in Lottie Benz' case, only one generation out of Germany) feel returning after the war to an Old World which no longer exists anywhere except in their minds. Yet "Virus X," like "Bonaventure," is finally best read as an ironic initiation, or a failed initiation. Through her depiction of Lottie Benz, Gallant plays upon the same false sense of history which Carol Frazier brings to Paris. Lottie, a bookish Canadian sociology student comically adrift in a postwar

Europe she cannot place, is set over against "Vera," a Ukrainian classmate from Winnipeg. Lottie, on a Royal Society scholarship, is less successful at reading actual European sociology than is Vera, who, having flunked out of high school, has a vision unimpeded by the pages of sociology texts or the theories of Lottie's supervisor, Dr. Keller. The story is rich with comical sendups of "Canadian problems of national identity," developed mainly at the expense of Lottie's prim theoretical excursions into the issue of ethnic minorities' comparative assimilation in Canada, the United States, and Europe.⁶

"Virus X" also calls readers' attention to homes in and exiles from language. In Strasbourg, Lottie speaks German, her "secret language"; she thinks the words will "remain, engraven, to condemn her" (189). Her ambivalent attitude toward languages and native tongues coalesces with her attraction to and repulsion from her parents' birthplace: "So this was the place she loathed and craved, and never mentioned. It was the place where her mother and father had been born, and which they seemed unable to imagine, forgive, or describe" (195). Through Lottie and Vera, Gallant recreates the North American ambiguity towards what European post-war reality entails--towards its immediately visible historical scars, towards half-forgotten, half-suppressed native tongues, cultures, and countries, towards the inexplicably civilized contours (to a Canadian eye) of the European natural landscape. This ambiguity constitutes a major theme in Gallant's fiction from the early fifties onward; "Virus X" marks one of its funniest incarnations.

In "Virus X" as in "The Other Paris," larger social themes find expression through the structure of a relationship. In this story, Lottie's long-distance engagement to Kevin, her Canadian fiancé, counter-

points Vera's more clandestine affair with the peripatetic Al Wiczinski, "sort of a Canadian," who has been offered a hazily defined teaching job in Strasbourg: Vera calls it "politics, in a way, . . . but mostly the culture racket. After all, teaching Slav lit to a bunch of Slavs was what, culture or politics?" (190) Like Carol Frazier, Lottie returns to North America with her North American fiancé; like Netta Asher, Lottie stops composing letters in her head--letters to Kevin which we read but she never sends. Like Carol's and like Netta's, her return to her relationship represents a defeat, a turn away from initiation. "Virus X" takes its title from an epidemic which European newspapers report is sweeping across Europe, an epidemic to which hypochondriac Lottie has evidently succumbed. In a minor key, and with less extensively developed implications, this metaphor for Europe's postwar malaise anticipates the much more fully developed metaphor of the aimless train ride in "The Pegnitz Junction." Lottie recovers from her illness without quite graduating from her fevered sociological theorizing. Even though she discovers that most of what her thesis advisor has told her about cultural patterns--in Europe as well as in Canada--bears little resemblance to what she encounters in her actual field research, she is finally unable to translate her insights into vision, and so she returns to Canada with Kevin.

"Virus X" also anticipates "The Pegnitz Junction" in its tongue-in-cheek sallies into literary history. Vera drags Lottie to Katherine Mansfield's grave for a commemorative Christmas visit; in the ensuing spoof of the Katherine Mansfield legend on the thirtieth anniversary of her death (while Lottie worries over her consumptive symptoms in a nearby

hotel room), the story anticipates the play with literary figures and traditions in "The Pegnitz Junction," as well as the use of Mansfield's "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" in "The Moslem Wife." As is the case with most of Gallant's literary allusions, this play is also serious. Mansfield represents the legendary expatriate literary tradition, and her story also figures as a ghostly mirror-image, as a literary and historical (and more sombre) version of Lottie's European education. Unlike Mansfield's (and unlike Gallant's), Lottie's attempts to articulate what she actually finds in Europe never make it out of her mental notebooks. We read one of her "composed" descriptions as she recovers from "Virus X" toward the end of the story; the passage teaches us how clearly she has come to see the realities which so disappointed her at the story's opening, and it also shows us that she has some promise as a writer:

Last night, just at the end of the night, the sky and the air were white as milk. Snow had fallen and a thick low fog lay in the streets and on the water, filling every crack between the houses. The cathedral bells were iron and muffled in snow. I heard drunks up and down the sidewalks most of the night. (216)

But Lottie's clear-eyed report on the Europe she sees before her eyes does not instill in her enough of a sense of "personal independence," the independence gained from a more clear-eyed vision of what postwar European cities really look like, with their new Arab quarters, their bombed railway stations, their ubiquitous (and unpopular) American soldiers, and above all, their distinctive light--an unromantic, iron, wintry gray.⁷ Her return to Canada with Kevin is a consequence of her thinking that her composition "was not a letter to anyone. There was no sense to what she was doing. She would never do it again. That was the first of many

changes" (216). Lottie cannot live with her vision any more than Carol Frazier, or Christine, or Netta Asher can. She cannot live in the space she clears, the moment she inhabits by describing what she has learned to see, and so she returns to Canada in retreat from education, in retreat from an initiation into history's moment.

As a story which extends the implications of reading the discontinuities between Gallant's postwar European and North American worlds, "Virus X" instructs readers principally by calling attention to the depiction of European settings as historical foregrounds which refute North American characters' naive worldviews. "Virus X" stands in the line of development which begins with "The Other Paris" and ends with Linnet Muir's militant return to a home city, a home in history and a home in memory.

"Saturday," more than any other story in Gallant's canon, invites readers to consider the relations between memory, language, and voice. In "An Introduction," Gallant comments: "Memory is something that cannot be subsidized or ordained. It can, however, be destroyed; and it is inseparable from language."⁸ We have already read memory's expatriation in history in the German stories; in "Saturday" (1968), we read a more particular exploration of the kind of loss suffered by a character who has lost his home language. "Gérard's hatred of English in 'Saturday,'" writes Gallant, "is not blind and irrational. Deprived of the all-important first language, he is intellectually maimed. The most his mind can do is to hobble along." She goes on to say that, re-reading "Saturday," she "see[s] that it is not about a family or a society in conflict, but

about language; or so it seems to [her] now."⁹ Gallant leads up to this crucial statement by making the same point about reading "Saturday" that she makes in her letter to Robert Weaver about reading "The Other Paris": "Like every story in this collection, "Saturday" needs to be read against its own time--the Montreal of about 1960."¹⁰ The point is that finally the story's primary focus is on language and loss--as seen in the 1960's Montreal setting, and not the other way around. In fact, "Saturday," with its depiction of a French Canadian mother determined to wrest her family free from their roots in French and in Catholicism, illustrates all too well Gallant's thesis that "to wrench your life and beliefs in a new direction you have to be a saint or a schizophrenic."¹¹ She is referring specifically to the German stories, but her comment applies to "Saturday" as well. Gérard lives in a schizophrenic reality, half-dream, half-nightmare, in a confusion of languages through which he cannot find direction. "Saturday" is one of the few stories Gallant revised between its first appearance in the New Yorker and its republication thirteen years later; significantly, virtually all of her revisions consist of cutting the expository passages which had clarified the distinctions between Gérard's dreams and his waking reality.¹² The revised "Saturday" in Home Truths dramatizes more acutely Gérard's exile from a home in language in order to prevent readers from deciding too quickly which events really "happen" in the story as opposed to those which happen only in Gérard's mind. The revised story immerses readers in the same disorientation as Gérard's; the distinctions between dream and reality blur, much as do the distinctions in "Jorinda and Jorindel" between fairy tales and adults' rules of conduct.

"Saturday" also clarifies an important word in Gallant's fictional idiom. "Invention," as we saw in "About Geneva," is a key word for Gallant's narrators and characters, a word whose meaning shades into connotations such as "made up," "created," and "untruthful."¹³ When Gallant herself uses the word in discussing her fiction, it usually means "made up" as opposed to "actual," or "composed" as distinguished from "reported."¹⁴ In "Saturday," "invention" is linked explicitly with acts of imagination which realize the past, creative acts which momentarily free two characters from their isolation in English into communion in French. Léopold, Gérard's nine-year-old brother, and his aging father are the family's twin eccentrics; the five sisters have all married identical Anglo-Protestant husbands with interchangeable faces and names, and their marriages have produced interchangeable grandchildren. The mother's dream of saving her family from a traditional French Canadian fate has been shattered into banality. Only Léopold and his father live beyond this exile in banality, an exile predicated on the loss of a home language: Léopold can, "if he likes, say anything in a French more limpid and accurate than anything they are used to hearing."¹⁵ The story gravitates away from Gérard's expatriation in English towards Léopold's and his father's homecoming in French. We read this moment of homecoming in the story's ending as a moment created by the father's realization that he, too, can "invent": walking the family basset, the father experiences "a sudden absence of fear" brought on by a sudden drop in the wind:

He could dream as well as Gérard. He invented: he and Don Carlos went through the gap of a fence and were in a large sloping pasture. He trod on wildflowers. From the spongy spring soil grew crab apple trees and choke cherries, and a hedge of something he no longer remembered, that was sweet and white. Presently they--he and the

dog--looked down on a village and the two silvery spires of a church. He saw the date over the door: 1885. The hills on the other side of the water were green and black with shadows. He had never seen such a blue and green day. But he was still here, on the street, and had not forgotten it for a second. Imagination was as good as sleepwalking any day. (47-48--emphasis mine)

In memory, that fertile district of the imagination, the father realizes the past, filling the present with memory's moment. This moment of recovery does not displace the narrative present; the father (unlike Gérard) knows exactly where he is. The father's arrival, through invention, in this moment counterpoints Léopold's arrival in the same time and place. Léopold has been purposefully playing with a camera he has been given that day for his birthday. Now Léopold, who decides earlier that none of his nieces and nephews is "worth an inch of film," focusses on his father walking towards him on the porch: "He seemed to be walking straight into Léopold's camera, magically reduced in size" (48). The ambiguities of a camera-eye vision which stops time, frames it in order to capture a telling moment, are appropriate to this moment in "Saturday." The moment is framed for readers as it is for Léo and his father; it is a moment focussed in time, a moment prefiguring loss but also announcing communion. Léo has refused to go to his sister Pauline's for supper, and so he and his father are left alone, much to his father's pleasure. The narrator teaches readers that memory's living moments, moments in which the past touches the present alive, consist of these kinds of meetings: "One day he [Léo] would have the assurance of a real street, a real father, a real afternoon" (48). Finally, this moment's life is translated from vision into utterance, into language given voice--Léopold's voice. Léopold closes

the story by telling his father that the others are gone: "All gone. Il n'y a que moi" (48). English is "all gone"--all of its incursions, all of its inflections, gone--all gone. Gérard tries vainly to dream in French but his mind bedevils him with allusions to English literary exiles, to poetic love and illness in a foreign country, casting "Elizabeth Barrett" up to the surface (31, 33). Léopold banishes English and affirms himself, nobody but himself, no one but a French voice. "There is nothing but me," no-one but me, nothing but the French tongue; there are no other words. In this moment, a moment Léo will remember, he touches his father's hand. It is a moment Léo has created: time becomes his subject; momentarily he is not subject, not subjected to time. Within this moment of affirmation, Léo is free to touch, to affirm someone else's existence. Thus memory's inventions give birth to imaginative vision, and vision gives birth to voice. Giving voice to the only home he can live in, it is only natural for Léopold to touch his father's hand. Reading "Saturday," we learn how memory is inseparable from language. In Gallant's stories, memory humanizes time when voice gives language life.

The stories collected in Home Truths were originally published over a twenty-two year span, from 1956 to 1978.¹⁶ With the exception of The End of the World (1974), each of Gallant's other books has consisted of stories selected from a span of less than ten years; and yet reading Home Truths, which collects "Jorinda and Jorindel" (1959) and the Linnet Muir stories (1975-78); "Up North" (1959) and "Saturday" (1968), "Thank You For the Lovely Tea" (1956) and "In the Tunnel" (1971), we arrive at a

sense of the book's unity similar to the unity sensed in The Other Paris, My Heart Is Broken, The Pegnitz Junction, and From the Fifteenth District. This sense of unity does not emerge from the stories' common settings or characters (save for the obvious exception of Linnet Muir, and the unity of this group of stories results from the consistent manner in which Linnet uses her memory); nor is it the explicit result of a writer's intention to write books of interlocking short stories, books like Margaret Laurence's A Bird in the House or Alice Munro's Lives of Girls and Women. The unity of Gallant's short fiction--a unity which makes the stories of Home Truths cohere at a formal level--emerges from consistencies of style, structure, and theme.

Gallant's stylistic, structural, and thematic signatures are not separate qualities. They form the manner and the matter of her stories into the "conformation of whatever the author has to say," as Gallant puts it.¹⁷ Her style, arguably the first quality to strike Gallant's readers, is marked by precision, by reliance on simile rather than metaphor, and by its effectiveness as a vehicle for irony. Its precision is the result of Gallant's concern for rendering the details of setting and atmosphere as concisely as possible; the reliance on simile results from her fiction's realist bias towards verisimilitude; and her style's effectiveness as a transparent medium for irony reflects Gallant's concern to write fiction that is "more than meets the eye," that communicates through indirection, through suggestive silences, abrupt but oblique observations, and sudden, sharp, tonal variations. Gallant's style demands that readers believe in the world it so faithfully renders--hence its precision and the concern with verisimilitude--but it also calls attention to itself, to the ordering of words which forms the language of Gallant's fiction. This language

has its recurring pairs of words ("pretty" and "shabby," "watching" and "seeing," and cognates of "reporting" and "inventing," for example) as well as its recurring structures. The most obvious of these is the insistent series of "ands" linking lists which mean more than the sum of their constituent parts; the most powerful example of this structure comes in the ending of "The Other Paris."

These aspects of language refer readers not only "out" to the worlds which Gallant's words render so tangibly, but also "in" to the structures which characterize Gallant's stories. The most significant structural unity in Gallant's fiction is her stories' consistent evocation of returns--returns via juxtaposed details, repeated phrases with opposed meanings; scenes set over against each other, situations reversed. These returns are structural figurations of Gallant's fundamental concern with time. They do not quite imply a cyclical repetition of history; rather, they imply subtle alteration, changes within each repetition, each return to a "locked situation." The structure of Gallant's stories tells readers that because neither memory nor history proceeds along straight narrative lines, from a beginning through a middle to an end, the repetitions implied in her stories' returns to crucial moments must be studied for their variation. These variations constitute what amounts to change for Gallant's characters: crucial changes in perception, in attitude, in manner, in relationships with other characters. Returns to a "locked situation," be it a moment in history or in a relationship, imply both inertia and the search for a new direction, paralysis and the possibility of reconstituting moments stopped in time.

The structures of Gallant's stories, through their insistent reference to the forms of characters' and cultures' returns to moments in

memory and history, teach readers to articulate the variations of Gallant's major theme, variations we read in Home Truths as well as in the books of stories previously considered. Gallant's central theme is the paradoxical nature of time. In Gallant's stories, the past threatens the present with the ironic revelation that time has faltered and stopped--that characters and cultures have been arrested in memory, frozen in history--that there is no direction home because there is insufficient sense of where home was. The most cataclysmic rupture of the present from the past (and of North America from Europe) results from the upheavals of the war; but history's violence is also evident on a smaller and more intimate scale in Gallant's fiction, in the essentially private bewilderment of characters who return to a continent, or a city, or a family which history has rendered alien ground. Gallant's characters must learn to live on this alien ground, to make it into home ground by reconstructing memory's intersections with history in the districts of imagination. Imaginative returns to the past in Gallant's stories give birth to voices capable of inventing the present, of declaring, like Léopold, "Il n'y a que moi," or affirming, like Linnet, that the variety of exile called writing is "quite right and perfectly natural" because writing memorializes the past. Gallant's stories teach readers that time is both a fact and an invention, and that fact and invention can converge in acts of imagination which realize history's moments in memory's fictional homes.

Gallant opens her 1973 essay on the life of Paul Léautaud, obscure and quirky French journalist, diarist, misanthrope, and lover, with a comment which could serve as the lead entry in a book of maxims for

aspiring writers of realist fiction: "All lives are interesting; no one life is more interesting than another. Its fascination depends on how much is revealed, and in what manner."¹⁸ The manner in which Gallant's fiction reveals ordinary lives to be fascinating is to quicken still moments with sudden light. Meaning in Gallant's stories is always an elusive spark, flashing out from tiny collisions of details, flickering quickly over nuances, lighting up a phrase, a state of mind, a landscape for a moment--and then subsiding into the steady glimmer of her fiction's style and surface. The illumination of the "complete story" which eludes Netta Asher--a "flash in a tunnel," "displayed to anyone who could stare without blinking"--finds its analogue in the complete illumination which necessarily eludes Gallant's readers. We cannot read texts without blinking; Gallant's fiction demands that readers recognize how significance plays over her stories in quick flashes and sparks, and that we develop the agility to respond to these moments of light. Netta Asher's light of imagination "danced all over the square": reading in the light of imagination, seeing its inventions, its dance of illumination across the moments of Gallant's fiction, we hear voices keeping time in memory's histories of home.

Notes

¹ Interview with Susan Leslie, Audience, CBC Radio, 6 Feb. 1982. In another interview, Gallant comments that "every language is a window." Interview with Earl Beattie, Anthology, CBC Radio, 24 May 1969.

² Gallant writes:

I take it for granted that "Canadian stories" has a specific meaning. In contradiction to everything said above, I am constantly assured that Canadians no longer know what they are, or what to be Canadian should mean; for want of a satisfactory definition, a national identity has been mislaid. The most polite thing I can say about this is that I don't believe it. A Canadian who did not know what it was to be Canadian would not know anything else: he would have to be told his own name.

"An Introduction," in Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories (Toronto: Macmillan, 1981), p. xiii. Gallant also comments in her CFM interview: "I have no identity problem concerning Canada In fact, I don't believe anyone has. It's something people like to imagine about themselves because it sounds tense and stormy and romantic." Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978), p. 26.

³ "An Introduction," p. xxii.

⁴ "Bonaventure," in Home Truths, p. 151. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

⁵ This scene, set in Bonaventure station, recalls Gallant's description of Bonaventure station in her Standard article, "Report on a Repat," Rotogravure, 28 July 1945, pp. 2-6, 8-9.

⁶ Kevin, Lottie's Canadian fiancé, has a cousin in Paris who begins "bemoaning his own Canadian problems of national identity, which Lottie thought a sign of weakness in a man. Moreover, she learned nothing new. What he was telling her was part of Dr. Keller's course in Winnipeg Culture Patterns." "Virus X," in Home Truths, p. 181. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

⁷ This is a similar light to the light Puss sees in Paris in "The Cost of Living," and to the light of Carol Frazier's Paris.

⁸ "An Introduction," p. xv.

⁹ "An Introduction," p. xviii

¹⁰ "An Introduction," p. xviii. See Note 7, Chapter II.

¹¹ CFM interview, p. 51.

¹² Compare, for example, the two versions of the passage which follows Gérard's opening "dream." The first is the New Yorker version, the second the Home Truths version:

Jazz from an all-night program invaded the house until Gérard's mother, discovering its source in the kitchen, turned the radio off. She supposed Gérard had walked in his sleep. What else could she think when she found him kneeling, in the dark, with his head against the refrigerator door? He had gone out, earlier, to see the girl his mother hated. He had promised he would tell this girl it was finished; that he was too young to be deeply involved. His parents had not heard him when he came in. Beside him was a smashed plate and the leftover ham that had been on it, and an overturned stool. His mother knelt too, and drew his head on her shoulder. "I ran into this funeral," he whispered. "In the East End. Some very rich English guy being buried in a cardboard box. Somebody's father." His own father stood in the doorway. The long underwear he wore at all times and in every season showed at his wrists and ankles, where the pajamas stopped.

The New Yorker, 8 June 1968, p. 33.

Jazz from an all-night program invaded the house until Gérard's mother, discovering its source in the kitchen, turned the radio off. She supposed Gérard had walked in his sleep. What else could she think when she found him kneeling, in the dark, with his head against the refrigerator door? Beside him was a smashed plate and the leftover ham that had been on it, and an overturned stool. She knelt too, and drew his head on her shoulder. His father stood in the doorway. The long underwear he wore at all times and in every season showed at his wrists and ankles,

where the pajamas stopped.

Home Truths, pp. 31-32.

¹³ See Chapter II, p. 67.

¹⁴ Consider, for example, Gallant's use of the word in "An Introduction": "The character I called Linnet Muir is not an exact reflection. I saw her as quite another person, but it would be untrue to say that I invented everything" (p. xxii). Again, she comments to Earl Beattie on Canada as a country where there was a large gap "between reality and dream":

The people's lives didn't match up to what they seem to think they were and the people invent things or they invent backgrounds or they invent families I'm not talking about lies, which is something else . . . everybody lies . . . I mean inventions . . . invention of reality, fabrication of history.

Anthology, CBC Radio, 24 May 1969.

¹⁵ "Saturday," in Home Truths, p. 39. All subsequent references to this story appear in the text.

¹⁶ See bibliography for details.

¹⁷ "What Is Style?" in Canadian Forum, Vol. 62, No. 721 (September 1982), 6.

¹⁸ "Paul Léautaud, 1872-1956." The New York Times Book Review, 9 Sept. 1973, p. 6.

APPENDIX

Bibliography of Works By and About Mavis Gallant

This bibliography is comprehensive in its listings of Gallant's fiction and nonfiction, and of critical articles on her work. It is selective in its listings of interviews with Gallant, of anthologies in which her fiction appears, and of reviews of her work. The terminus ad quem is December 1, 1982; to date, there have been three bibliographies of Gallant's work. Douglas Malcolm's first bibliography, "An Annotated Bibliography of Works By and About Mavis Gallant," which appeared in Essays in Canadian Writing in 1977, was "revised to [the] end of 1977" and published in Canadian Fiction Magazine in 1978. Grazia Merler's book, Mavis Gallant: Narrative Patterns and Devices, includes a nine-page bibliography of Gallant's fiction and nonfiction. Although Malcolm's and Merler's bibliographies are valuable reference tools for students of Gallant's work and were extremely useful in my preliminary research, each has a number of inaccuracies and omissions, particularly in the listings of Gallant's Montreal Standard journalism. A fourth bibliography, compiled by Douglas Malcolm and Judith Skelton Grant, (to be published as part of the fifth volume of the ABCMA series of bibliographies), is currently in preparation. I have seen the proofs of this bibliography and wish to acknowledge that it alerted me to several items I had not been aware of; I have given the editors several leads to further Gallant material. In their listing of Gallant's short fiction, Malcolm and Skelton

Grant draw no distinction between Gallant's short stories and a number of related works, most of which have appeared in The New Yorker since February 1980; I have listed these works in a section entitled "Parodies, Satires, and Sketches." I have separated them to indicate that they constitute a small but distinct body of work which might be worth studying on its own or in relation to other areas of Gallant's canon.

I Works By Mavis Gallant

A Novels

- A1 Green Water, Green Sky. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959. London: Andre Deutsch, 1960. [Planned as a novel; first three chapters are slightly revised versions of three short stories which first appeared in The New Yorker: "Green Water, Green Sky"; "August"; and "Travellers Must Be Content."]
- A2 A Fairly Good Time. New York: Random House, 1970. [Includes, with slight revisions, "The Accident," a short story which first appeared in The New Yorker.]

B Short Story Collections

- B1 The Other Paris. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1956. London: Andre Deutsch, 1957. Rpt. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1970.
- Includes: "The Other Paris"; "Autumn Day"; "Poor Franz"; "Going Ashore"; "The Picnic"; "The Deceptions of Marie-Blanche"; "Wing's Chips"; "The Legacy"; "One Morning in June"; "About Geneva"; "Señor Pinedo"; "A Day Like Any Other."
- B2 My Heart Is Broken: Eight Stories and a Short Novel. New York: Random House, 1964. London: Heineman, 1965 (Title: An Unmarried Man's Summer). Rpt. Paperjacks, 1974. Rpt. New Press Canadian Classics, 1982.
- Includes: "Acceptance of Their Ways"; "Bernadette"; "The Moabite"; "Its Image on the Mirror"--a short novel; "The Cost of Living"; "My Heart Is Broken"; "Sunday Afternoon"; "An Unmarried Man's Summer"; "The Ice Wagon Going Down The Street."
- B3 The Pegnitz Junction: A Novella and Five Short Stories. New York: Random House, 1973. London: Jonathan Cape, 1974. Rpt. Macmillan (Laurentian Library No. 69), 1982.
- Includes: "The Pegnitz Junction"; "The Old Friends"; "An Autobiography"; "Ernst in Civilian Clothes"; "O Lasting Peace"; "An Alien Flower."

- B4 The End of the World and Other Stories. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974 (NEL 91). [Introduction by Robert Weaver.]

Includes: "The Other Paris"; "The Picnic"; "About Geneva"; "Acceptance of Their Ways"; "My Heart Is Broken"; "An Unmarried Man's Summer"; "The End of the World"; "The Accident"; "Malcolm and Bea"; "The Prodigal Parent"; "The Wedding Ring"; "New Year's Eve"; "In the Tunnel."

- B5 From the Fifteenth District: A Novella and Eight Short Stories. Toronto: Macmillan, 1979. London: Jonathan Cape, 1980. Rpt. Macmillan (Laurentian Library No. 67), 1980.

Includes: "The Four Seasons"; "The Moslem Wife"; "The Remission"; "The Latehomecomer"; "Baum, Gabriel, 1935-()"; "From the Fifteenth District"; "Potter"; "His Mother"; "Irina."

- B6 Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories. Toronto: Macmillan, 1981. Rpt. Macmillan (Laurentian Library No. 71), 1982. ["An Introduction" by Gallant.]

Includes: ["At Home"]: "Thank You for the Lovely Tea"; "Jorinda and Jorindel"; "Saturday"; "Up North"; "Orphan's Progress"; "The Prodigal Parent." ["Canadians Abroad"]: "In the Tunnel"; "Bonaventure"; "Virus X." ["Linnet Muir"]: "In Youth Is Pleasure"; "Between Zero and One"; "Varieties of Exile"; "Voices Lost in Snow"; "The Doctor"; "With a Capital T."

C Short Stories

The following abbreviations indicate a story's appearance in one or more of the novels and collections cited in sections A and B:

<u>OP</u>	<u>The Other Paris</u>
<u>GWGS</u>	<u>Green Water, Green Sky</u>
<u>MHB</u>	<u>My Heart Is Broken</u>
<u>FGT</u>	<u>A Fairly Good Time</u>
<u>PJ</u>	<u>The Pegnitz Junction</u>
<u>EW</u>	<u>The End of the World</u>
<u>FFD</u>	<u>From the Fifteenth District</u>
<u>HT</u>	<u>Home Truths</u>

- C1 "Good Morning and Goodbye." Preview, No. 22 (Dec. 1944), pp. 1-3.
- C2 "Three Brick Walls." Preview, No. 22 (Dec. 1944), pp. 4-6.

- C3 "A Wonderful Country." Standard Magazine, 14 Dec. 1946, pp. 4, 8.
- C4 "The Flowers of Spring." Northern Review, Vol. 3, No. 5 (June-July 1950), 31-39.
- C5 "Madeline's Birthday." The New Yorker, 1 Sept. 1951, pp. 20-24.
- C6 "One Morning in June." The New Yorker, 7 June 1952, pp. 27-31. OP.
- C7 "The Picnic." The New Yorker, 9 Aug. 1952, pp. 23-28. OP, EW.
- C8 "The Deceptions of Marie-Blanche." Charm, No. 83 (March 1953), pp. 90-91, 146-155. OP.
- C9 "The Other Paris." The New Yorker, 11 April 1953, pp. 27-36. OP, EW.
- C10 "A Day Like Any Other." The New Yorker, 7 Nov. 1953, pp. 37-44. OP.
- C11 "Señor Pinedo." The New Yorker, 9 Jan. 1954, pp. 23-28. OP.
- C12 "Wing's Chips." The New Yorker, 17 April 1954, pp. 35-38. OP.
- C13 "The Legacy." The New Yorker, 26 June 1954, pp. 22-29. OP.
- C14 "By the Sea." The New Yorker, 17 Jul. 1954, pp. 27-30.
- C15 "Poor Franz." Harper's Bazaar, Oct. 1954, pp. 153, 239, 241-243. OP.
- C16 "Going Ashore." The New Yorker, 18 Dec. 1954, pp. 32-42, 44, 46, 48-50, 53. OP.
- C17 "About Geneva." Charm, No. 85 (June 1955), pp. 94, 146-47. OP, EW.
- C18 "Autumn Day." The New Yorker, 29 Oct. 1955, pp. 31-38. OP.
- C19 "In Italy." The New Yorker, 25 Feb. 1956, pp. 32-36.
- C20 "Thank You for the Lovely Tea." The New Yorker, 9 June 1956, pp. 36-40, 42, 44, 47, 48. HT.
- C21 "Thieves and Rascals." Esquire, 46, No. 1 (July 1956), pp. 82, 85-86.
- C22 "Bernadette." The New Yorker, 12 Jan. 1957, pp. 24-34. MHB.

- C23 "An Emergency Case." The New Yorker, 16 Feb. 1957, pp. 34-36.
- C24 "Jeux D'Ete." The New Yorker, 27 July 1957, pp. 30-34.
- C25 "The Moabites." The New Yorker, 2 Nov. 1957, pp. 42-46. MHB.
- C26 "The Old Place." Texas Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Spring 1958), 66-80.
- C27 "Green Water, Green Sky." The New Yorker, 27 June 1959, pp. 22-29. GWGS.
- C28 "Travellers Must be Content." The New Yorker, 11 July 1959, pp. 27-34, 36, 38, 43-46, 48-49, 52. GWGS.
- C29 "August." The New Yorker, 29 Aug. 1959, pp. 26-36, 38, 41-42, 44, 46, 51, 52, 54, 56, 59-60, 62-63. GWGS.
- C30 "Jorinda and Jorindel." The New Yorker, 19 Sept. 1959, pp. 38-42. HT.
- C31 "Up North." The New Yorker. 21 Nov. 1959, pp. 46-48. HT.
- C32 "Acceptance of Their Ways." The New Yorker, 31 Jan. 1960, pp. 25-28. MHB, EW.
- C33 "When We Were Nearly Young." The New Yorker, 15 Oct. 1960, pp. 38-42.
- C34 "Better Times." The New Yorker, 3 Dec. 1960, pp. 59-65.
- C35 "Rose." The New Yorker, 17 Dec. 1960, pp. 34-37.
- C36 "Two Questions." The New Yorker, 10 June 1961, pp. 30-36.
- C37 "My Heart Is Broken." The New Yorker, 12 Aug. 1961, pp. 32-34. MHB, EW.
- C38 "The Cost of Living." The New Yorker, 3 March 1962, pp. 34-40, 42, 45, 48, 51, 52, 54, 59, 60, 62, 67, 68, 70, 75-76, 78, 81, 83, 84, 87, 88, 90. MHB.
- C39 "Night and Day." The New Yorker, 17 March 1962, pp. 48-50.
- C40 "One Aspect of a Rainy Day." The New Yorker, 14 April 1962, pp. 38-39.
- C41 "The Hunter's Waking Thoughts." The New Yorker, 29 Sept. 1962, pp. 34-35.
- C42 "Sunday Afternoon." The New Yorker, 24 Nov. 1962, pp. 52-58. MHB.

- C43 "Willi." The New Yorker, 5 Jan. 1963, pp. 29-31.
- C44 "Careless Talk." The New Yorker, 28 Sept. 1963, pp. 41-47.
- C45 "An Unmarried Man's Summer." The New Yorker, 12 Oct. 1963, pp. 54-60, 62, 64, 67, 68, 70, 72, 74, 77, 78, 80, 82, 84. MHB, EW.
- C46 "Ernst in Civilian Clothes." The New Yorker, 16 Nov. 1963, pp. 54-58. PJ.
- C47 "The Ice Wagon Going Down the Street." The New Yorker, 14 Dec. 1963, pp. 54-62, 64, 66, 69-70, 72, 74-76, 79. MHB, HT.
- C48 "An Autobiography." The New Yorker, 1 Feb. 1964, pp. 31-38, 40, 42, 45-46, 48, 53-54, 57-58. PJ.
- C49 "The Circus." The New Yorker, 20 June 1964, pp. 38-40.
- C50 "Paola and Renata." The Southern Review, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Winter 1965), 199-209.
- C51 "Virus X." The New Yorker, 31 Jan. 1965, pp. 29-40, 42, 44, 47-48, 50, 53-54, 56, 59-61. HT.
- C52 "Orphans' Progress." The New Yorker, 3 April 1965, pp. 49-51. HT.
- C53 "In Transit." The New Yorker, 14 Aug. 1965, pp. 24-25.
- C54 "The Statues Taken Down." The New Yorker, 9 Oct. 1965, pp. 53-56.
- C55 "Questions and Answers." The New Yorker, 28 May 1966, pp. 33-38.
- C56 "Vacances Pax." The New Yorker, 16 July 1966, pp. 26-29.
- C57 "Bonaventure." The New Yorker, 30 July 1966, pp. 34-38, 40, 45, 48, 50-51, 54, 56-63. HT.
- C58 "A Report." The New Yorker, 3 Dec. 1966, pp. 62-65.
- C59 "The End of the World." The New Yorker, 10 June 1967, pp. 36-39. EW.
- C60 "The Accident." The New Yorker, 28 Oct. 1967, pp. 55-59. FGT, EW.
- C61 "The Sunday After Christmas." The New Yorker, 31 Dec. 1967, pp. 35-36.

- C62 "April Fish." The New Yorker, 10 Feb. 1968, pp. 27-28.
- C63 "Malcolm and Bea." The New Yorker, 23 March 1968, pp. 35-43.
EW.
- C64 "Saturday." The New Yorker, 8 June 1968, pp. 32-40. HT.
- C65 "The Captive Niece." The New Yorker, 4 Jan. 1969, pp. 28-32.
- C66 "Good Deed." The New Yorker, 22 Feb. 1969, pp. 35-41.
- C67 "The Rejection." The New Yorker, 12 April 1969, pp. 42-44.
- C68 "The Prodigal Parent." The New Yorker, 7 June 1969, pp. 42-44. EW, HT.
- C69 "The Wedding Ring." The New Yorker, 28 June 1969, pp. 41-42.
EW.
- C70 "The Old Friends." The New Yorker, 30 Aug. 1969, pp. 27-30.
PJ.
- C71 "New Year's Eve." The New Yorker, 10 Jan. 1970, pp. 25-30.
EW.
- C72 "In the Tunnel." The New Yorker, 18 Sept. 1971, pp. 34-47.
EW, HT.
- C73 "O Lasting Peace." The New Yorker, 8 Jan. 1972, pp. 34-40. PJ.
- C74 "An Alien Flower." The New Yorker, 7 Oct. 1972, pp. 34-44. PJ.
- C75 "His Mother." The New Yorker, 13 Aug. 1973, pp. 28-33. FFD.
Rpt. in Montreal Star, 15 Sept. 1979, pp. H1, H4.
- C76 "The Latehomecomer." The New Yorker, 8 July 1974, pp. 31-40.
FFD.
- C77 "Irina." The New Yorker, 2 Dec. 1974, pp. 44-52. FFD.
- C78 "The Four Seasons." The New Yorker, 16 June 1975, pp. 32-40,
43-46, 49. FFD.
- C79 "In Youth is Pleasure." The New Yorker, 24 Nov. 1975, pp. 46-54. HT.
- C80 "Between Zero and One." The New Yorker, 8 Dec. 1975, pp. 38-47. HT.
- C81 "Varieties of Exile." The New Yorker, 19 Jan. 1976, pp. 26-35. HT.

- C82 "Voices Lost In Snow." The New Yorker, 5 April 1976, pp. 38-43. HT.
- C83 "Moslem Wife." The New Yorker, 23 Aug. 1976, pp. 28-42, 44-45. FFD.
- C84 "Potter." The New Yorker, 21 March 1977, pp. 36-44, 47, 48, 50, 53, 54, 56, 61, 62, 64, 66, 67-68, 73-75. FFD.
- C85 "The Doctor." The New Yorker, 20 June 1977, pp. 33-42. HT.
- C86 "With a Capital T." Canadian Fiction Magazine, No. 28 (1978), pp. 8-17. HT.
- C87 "From the Fifteenth District." The New Yorker, 30 Oct. 1978, pp. 36-38. FFD.
- C88 "The Burgundy Weekend." The Tamarack Review, No. 76 (Winter 1979), pp. 3-39.
- C89 "Baum, Gabriel 1935-()." The New Yorker, 12 Feb. 1979, pp. 30-40, 43-44. FFD.
- C90 "The Remission." The New Yorker, 13 Aug. 1979, pp. 28-38, 41-42, 44, 47-48, 50, 52-56, 58-59. FFD.
- C91 "Speck's Idea." The New Yorker, 19 Nov. 1979, pp. 44-54, 57-58, 60, 63, 64, 66, 69-70, 72, 75-76, 78, 83-84, 86, 91-95, 98-99.
- C92 "The Assembly." Harper's, Vol. 260, No. 1560 (May 1980), 75-78.
- C93 "A Painful Affair." The New Yorker, 16 March 1981, pp. 39-43.
- C94 "Larry." The New Yorker, 16 Nov. 1981, pp. 50-52.
- C95 "Luc and His Father." The New Yorker, 4 Oct. 1982, pp. 40-50, 55-56, 58, 63-64, 68, 73-74.
- C96. "Grippes and Poche." The New Yorker, 29 Nov. 1982, pp. 42-50.

D Stories Appearing in Anthologies: A Selection

- D1 "August." In Best American Short Stories and the Yearbook of the American Short Story, 1960. Ed. M. Foley and D. Burnett. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960, pp. 64-101.
- D2 "Bernadette." In Stories from The New Yorker 1950-1960., New York: Simon & Schuster, 1960, pp. 96-118.

- D3 "The Legacy." In Canadian Short Stories. Ed. Robert Weaver. Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1960, pp. 350-70.
- D4 "Bernadette" and "My Heart Is Broken." In Canadian Short Stories. 2nd. ser. Ed. Robert Weaver. Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968, pp. 60-93, 94-104.
- D5 "The End of the World." In Canadian Winter's Tales. Ed. Norman Levine. Toronto: Macmillan, 1968, pp. 103-13.
- D6 "The Accident." In Canadian Writing Today. Ed. Mordecai Richler. Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1970, pp. 260-72.
- D7 "Acceptance of Their Ways." In Great Canadian Short Stories: An Anthology. Ed. Alec Lucas. New York: Dell, 1971, pp. 203-11.
- D8 "My Heart Is Broken." In Four Hemispheres: An Anthology of English Stories from Around the World. Ed. William H. New. Toronto: Copp Clark, 1971, pp. 162-68.
- D9 "My Heart Is Broken." In Contemporary Voices: The Short Story in Canada. Ed. Donald Stephens. Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall, 1972, pp. 8-13.
- D10 "The Accident." In Modern Canadian Stories. Ed. John Stevens. Toronto: Bantam, 1975, pp. 126-40.
- D11 "An Autobiography." In Here and Now: Best Canadian Stories. Ed. Clark Blaise and John Metcalf. Ottawa: Oberon, 1977, pp. 19-38.
- D12 "Irina." In Canadian Short Stories. 3rd. ser. Ed. Robert Weaver. Toronto: Oxford. Univ. Press, 1978, pp. 82-104.
- D13 "With a Capital T." In 79: Best Canadian Short Stories. Ed. Clark Blaise and John Metcalf. Ottawa: Oberon, 1979, pp. 38-51.
- D14 "Bernadette." In The Penguin Book of Canadian Short Stories. Ed. Wayne Grady. Markham, Ont.: Penguin, 1980, pp. 206-29.
- D15 "The Remission" and "Speck's Idea." In The Best American Short Stories, 1980. Ed. Stanley Elkin with Shannon Ravenel. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980, pp. 80-118, 119-29.
- D16 "Saturday." In Stories of Quebec. Ed. Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman. Ottawa: Oberon, 1980, pp. 80-100.

- D17 "Speck's Idea." In 80: Best Canadian Short Stories. Ed. Clark Blaise and John Metcalf. Ottawa: Oberon, 1980, pp. 47-98.
- D18 "The Assembly." In The Best American Short Stories, 1981. Ed. Hortense Calisher with Shannon Ravenel. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981, pp. 150-57.
- D19 "The Assembly." In 81: Best Canadian Short Stories. Ed. Clark Blaise and John Metcalf. Ottawa: Oberon, 1981, pp. 36-44.
- D20 "The Accident." In Introduction to Fiction. Ed. Jack David and Robert Lecker. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982, pp. 217-22.
- D21 "Baum, Gabriel, 1935-()" and "His Mother." In Making It New: Contemporary Canadian Stories. Ed. John Metcalf. Toronto: Methuen, 1982, pp. 39-60, 61-71.
- D22 "The Ice Wagon Going Down the Street" and "In Youth Is Pleasure." In The Penguin Book of Modern Canadian Short Stories. Ed. Wayne Grady. Markham, Ont.: Penguin, 1982, pp. 267-89, 319-34.

E Parodies, Satires, and Sketches

- E1 "A Revised Guide to Paris." The New Yorker, 11 Feb. 1980, pp. 30-32.
- E2 "From Sunrise to Daybreak." The New Yorker, 17 March 1980, pp. 34-36.
- E3 "Dido Flute, Spouse to Europe (Addenda to a Major Biography)." The New Yorker, 12 May 1980, p. 37.
- E4 "From Gamut to Yalta." The New Yorker, 15 Sept. 1980, pp. 40-41.
- E5 "Europe By Satellite." The New Yorker, 3 Nov. 1980, p. 47.
- E6 "Mousse." The New Yorker, 22 Dec. 1980, p. 31.
- E7 "Mau to Lew: The Maurice Ravel-Lewis Carroll Friendship." Exile, 7, Nos. 3-4 (1981), 220-30.
- E8 "French Crenellation." The New Yorker, 9 Feb. 1981, p. 33.
- E9 "This Space." The New Yorker, 6 July 1981, p. 35.

- E10 "On With The New In France." The New Yorker, 10 Aug. 1981, p. 31.
- E11 "La Vie Parisienne." The New Yorker, 19 Oct. 1981, p. 41.
- E12 "Siegfried's Memoirs." The New Yorker, 5 April 1982, pp. 42-43.
- E13 "Treading Water." The New Yorker, 24 May 1982, p. 33.
- E14 "A Flying Start." The New Yorker, 13 Sept. 1982, pp. 39-44.

F Plays

- F1 What Is To Be Done? Dir. Paul Bettis. With Donna Goodhand and Margot Dionne. Tarragon Theatre, Toronto. 11 Nov. 1982.

G Montreal Standard Journalism

Gallant worked as a reporter for the Montreal Standard from September 1944 to August 1950. She wrote photo-stories, feature articles, "On the Air," a weekly column about radio (see G52), and reviews of books, movies, and theatre. Gallant's work appears in four sections of the newspaper: Rotogravure (renamed Photonews in July 1949); Standard Magazine; the Standard (the newspaper proper); and the Standard Review. The page numbers in parentheses following the Rotogravure and Photonews entries indicate pages of photographs for which Gallant wrote captions.

- G1 "Meet Johnny." Rotogravure, 2 Sept. 1944, pp. 12 [13-15].
- G2 "Seven Montreal Kids Get Out of Town for First Time." Rotogravure, 16 Sept. 1944, pp. 20 [21-23].
- G3 "Opening Night." Rotogravure, 14 Oct. 1944, pp. 8-9 [10-11].
- G4 "Master Jeweller." Rotogravure, 28 Oct. 1944, pp. 8-9.
- G5 "Claire Gagnier." Rotogravure, 4 Nov. 1944, pp. 8 [10-11].
- G6 "Signal Flags." Rotogravure, 18 Nov. 1944, pp. 12 [13].
- G7 "Radio Finds Its Voice." Standard Magazine, 9 Dec. 1944, pp. 3, 19.
- G8 "Maria Chapdelaine." Rotogravure, 13 Jan. 1945, pp. 6, 8-11.
- G9 "Family Allowances." Rotogravure, 5 May 1945, pp. 13-14 [15-18].

- G10 "Duncan & MacLennan: Writers." Rotogravure, 9 June 1945, pp. 16 [17-19].
- G11 "Dilemma In The Shipyards." Standard Magazine, 9 June 1945, pp. 6, 19.
- G12 "St. Jean-Baptiste Day." Rotogravure, 7 July 1945, pp. 13 [14].
- G13 "Stalag Diary." Rotogravure, 14 July 1945, pp. 2 [3], 4 [5], 6.
- G14 "Report On a Repat." Rotogravure, 28 July 1945, pp. 2 [3], 4-5 [6, 8-9].
- G15 "'Un Homme et Son Péché.'" Rotogravure, 8 Sept. 1945, pp. 18-19 [20].
- G16 "Camp Macdonald." Rotogravure, 15 Sept 1945, pp. 13 [14-16].
- G17 "These Are the First Impressions the War Brides Formed of Canada." Rotogravure, 13 Oct. 1945, pp. 4 [5-6, 8-9].
- G18 "'The Bright Star.'" Rotogravure, 22 Dec. 1945, pp. 13 [14-15].
- G19 "The Class of '39." Rotogravure, 12 Jan. 1946, pp. 2-6, 8.
- G20 "Canadian Story." Rotogravure, 2 March 1946, pp. 3 [4-6, 8-9].
- G21 "Don't Call Me War Bride." Standard Magazine, 2 March 1946, pp. 5, 13.
- G22 "What Is This Thing Called Jazz?" Standard Magazine, 23 March 1946, pp. 12-13.
- G23 "Why Are We Canadians So Dull?" Standard Magazine, 30 March 1946, pp. 2-3.
- G24 "Where Are Canada's Libraries?" Standard Magazine, 11 May 1946, pp. 3, 8.
- G25 "Progressive School." Rotogravure, 22 June 1946, pp. 12 [13-15, 17].
- G26 "Give the Kid a Gory Story." Standard Magazine, 29 June 1946, pp. 9, 15.
- G27 "Hillside Homes." Standard Magazine, 13 July 1946, pp. 12-13.
- G28 "Traders in Fear." Standard Magazine, 24 Aug. 1946, pp. 9-10.
- G29 "Which Do You Want?" Standard Magazine, 14 Sept. 1946, pp. 12-13.

- G30 "Pottery." Standard Magazine, 5 Oct. 1946, pp. 14-15.
- G31 "French Canada's Dorothy Dix." Standard Magazine, 19 Oct. 1946, p. 11.
- G32 "Fresco Class." Rotogravure, 9 Nov. 1946, pp. 12 [13].
- G33 "Look-and-See Method." Rotogravure, 23 Nov. 1946, pp. 12 [13].
- G34 "Why Are Book Prices So High?" Standard Magazine, 23 Nov. 1946, pp. 3, 20.
- G35 "Mining is a Tough Job." Standard Magazine, 30 Nov. 1946, pp. 12-13.
- G36 "Turning On The Waterworks." Standard Magazine, 25 Jan. 1947, pp. 3, 8.
- G37 "Fear in Children." Rotogravure, 8 Feb. 1947, pp. 2-6.
- G38 "Bringing Up Baby." Standard Magazine, 8 Feb. 1947, pp. 4-5.
- G39 "The Joke's On Us." Standard Magazine, 1 March 1947, pp. 11, 14, 17.
- G40 "Freud or Double Talk?" Standard Magazine, 29 March 1947, pp. 3, 14.
- G41 "Words, Thrills and Arpeggios." Standard Magazine, 5 April 1947, pp. 8-9.
- G42 "Is Yours a Childless Marriage?" Standard Magazine, 17 May 1947, pp. 3, 14.
- G43 "Court Chronicler." Standard Magazine, 24 May 1947, pp. 9, 22.
- G44 "Veteran Show." Rotogravure, 7 June 1947, pp. 20 [21-22].
- G45 "Casavant Factory: Famous Church Organs Made in Canada." Rotogravure, 19 July 1947, pp. 10 [12-14].
- G46 "Social Workers." Standard Magazine, 26 July 1947, pp. 4, 15.
- G47 "Hey, Lee-roy!" Standard Magazine, 9 Aug. 1947, p. 6.
- G48 "Felix's Uncles." Standard Magazine, 30 Aug. 1947, p. 22.
- G49 "Is Romance Killing Your Marriage?" Standard Magazine, 6 Sept. 1947, pp. 3, 22.
- G50 "Frontier Farmers." Standard Magazine, 27 Sept 1947, pp. 7, 10.

- G51 "Are They Canadians?" Standard Magazine, 11 Oct. 1947, pp. 6-7.
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III Gallant Papers

Gallant has donated a collection of typescripts, taped interviews, page-proofs, and reviews to the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto. Most of the corrected typescripts come from The New Yorker, so that there is little or no variation between type-script and printed version. Gallant continues to send material to the Library; the Mavis Gallant Collection is open to inspection. Upon request, the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library will send readers a "Finding Aid" to the Gallant Collection.

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