NOSTALGIC LANDSCAPES OF LITERARY PARIS:
THE IMAGINATIVE STRUCTURES OF EXPATRIATE APPRENTICESHIP

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Michael Walsh, B.A.

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NOSTALGIC LANDSCAPES OF LITERARY PARIS:
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Michael J. Walsh, B.A.

Thesis Advisor: Joseph Fruscione, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Over the course of this thesis, I argue that the American expatriates in 1920s Paris constructed an imaginative landscape of the city that is conducive to artistic apprenticeship for the literary personae of their memoirs. My study focuses on Gertrude Stein’s *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Malcolm Cowley’s *Exile’s Return*, Sylvia Beach’s *Shakespeare and Company*, and Ernest Hemingway’s *A Moveable Feast*, demonstrating how they cognitively map Paris as a land of indeterminacy beyond the threshold. Although often perceived as the aesthetic culmination of romantic individualism, the modernists and their texts are indebted to and affected by one another’s output and the rhetorical network from which they emerged. As a result, without privileging any one subjective memory of this era, I seek to uncover how these private cartographies collectively form a chôratic constellation of narratives, which survives discursively and reinstates the modernist mythology of the expatriate artist-hero.
TO
MY MOTHER AND FATHER
The lives of the very few who survived have now become barely recognizable in the distortion of time and memory, and constitute the fragile substance of myth.

—Kay Boyle
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CHAPTER I: DREAM LANDSCAPES
The Mythic Other in the Künstlerroman

American Psychological Projections onto Paris

Ernest Hemingway once wrote, “To have come on all this new world of writing, with time to read in a city like Paris where there was a way of living well and working, no matter how poor you were, was like having a great treasure given to you” (A Moveable Feast 2009 102). For the American expatriates of Hemingway’s era, Paris and this new world of writing were almost synonymous. Late in his life, Hemingway projected the necessary plot elements for an engaging life story onto Paris. It became the treasure that Hemingway found, the treasure that enabled his literary rise—at least according to his memory and late-life nostalgia.

Paris in the 1920s has come to symbolize a golden age for the arts. The American expatriates contributed some of the world’s finest modern literature to this scene. Many writers served their apprenticeships in Paris and portrayed the city of lights as a nurturing environment for one’s formative years. The image perpetuated by modernist memoirs continually draws American aspiring writers to Paris, as Jamie Cox Robertson demonstrates in the introduction to the collection A Literary Paris:

The first time I went to Paris I was…. quite certain that I would sit in a café and write a great novel….I thought I might even meet some fellow aspiring writers and together we would achieve literary greatness. Well, this didn’t happen—except for the part about going to Paris and sitting in cafes. (vii)
The images of Paris in the 1910s and 1930s do not resonate quite like the 1920s. “The American twenties in Paris,” Adam Gopnik writes, “was the decade when the idea of the American in Paris got fixed in the American imagination” (Americans in Paris xxi). There is a long history of Americans living in and writing of Paris, beginning with the founding fathers: Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Gouverneur Morris, and Thomas Paine, for instance. Prominent American writers traveled to Paris throughout the 19th century, from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Ralph Waldo Emerson to Harriet Beecher Stowe and Mark Twain. After the so-called Lost Generation, Americans continued to live in self-imposed exile in Paris—this time modeling themselves self-consciously after the 1920s paradigm of the expatriate artist. So why have the 1920s survived in the public’s consciousness?

We can pinpoint a few particularly important elements. One was the contemporary awareness that the western world was changing profoundly. Charles Peguy declared in 1913 that “the world has changed less since Jesus Christ than it has in the last thirty years” (qtd. in Kennedy 186). Diverse fields such as technology, physics, painting, film, and philosophy—as well as the technological efficiency leading to massive death tolls in World War I—were advancing at an alarming rate in the early twentieth century, and writers documented this acceleration. The 1920s was a decade of fruition. A cultural shift had taken place akin to what would come later in the 1960s. American First-wave feminists turned women’s suffrage into a reality when Congress ratified the nineteenth amendment in 1920. But not all reform was progressive; the Volstead Act ushered in an era of prohibition, which lasted in the United States
throughout the twenties. Literature changed with the times and the innovative modernist writers became figureheads for this world in transition.

Collectively American society crossed a threshold. But many of the writers crossed physical thresholds—namely, national borders—living in self-imposed exile. The old world became the new version of the American frontier in the modernist artist narrative. As Michael Soto writes in *The Modernist Nation*:

> If bohemian artist narratives owe much to the French romanticization of the artist’s lifestyle, then the rise of the genre in the United States indicates a step away from English influence. (99)

Similarly, Malcolm Cowley writes, “no city is intellectually so far from London as is Paris” (*ER* 99). Many modernists traded the Anglo-American tradition of their education for the Parisian Bohemia. Since these writers documented what was to them a different and strange land, given the conventions of narrative structures, Paris became what lies beyond the boundary—the land of indeterminate forms, rules, morals, conventions—and it fell upon the homegrown American hero to traverse this new terrain. In *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway describes his relationship with this new land of uncertainty: “Paris was a very old city and we were young and nothing was simple there, not even poverty, nor sudden money, nor moonlight, nor right and wrong” (2009 49).

In texts such as this, the hero is an artist. In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, comparative mythologist Joseph Campbell outlines what he calls the monomyth, a term he borrows from James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*. The monomyth is a seemingly
universal narrative structure of the hero that exists in many mythologies and cultures. He writes of the ubiquitous threshold-crossing motif and what awaits past the familiar: “Once having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials” (81). Campbell considers myths to be public dreams and dreams to be private myths. Through Jungian psychology Campbell explains various archetypes that have survived across cultures and eras, maintaining a pull over the collective unconscious. This land of fluid, ambiguous forms is often infused with projections of the unconscious.

Insisting upon the importance of these issues, Susan Rowland writes that if “meta-narratives such as those of Freud and Marx are tested, reconfigured and reinscribed for the postmodern era” (9), Jung’s meta-narrative can be reinscribed—taking into account the shortcomings of traditional Jungian criticism as revealed by contemporary critical theory—as what Rowland names archetypal psychology: one form of post-Jungian psychology allied with poststructuralism (24). Although none of the memoirs in this study conform exactly to Campbell’s scholarship, they do present heroes in an unknown and curious land. Paris becomes the city for their road of trials, a place Othered by the writers who infuse it with their own unconscious fears and hopes. This analysis will focus primarily on the following four memoirs: Exile’s Return by Malcolm Cowley, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas by Gertrude Stein, Shakespeare and Company by Sylvia Beach, and A Moveable Feast by Ernest Hemingway, which is particularly apt because they all engage with a dreamscape of Paris yet they do so in varied ways, all suitable to their particular autobiographical
projects. The generative appeal of this grouping lies in both their similarities and their differences.

These writers look back upon their lives with a certain vanity of the present—a perspective that views previous events in light of how they affect the author at the moment of composition, sometimes decades later. If Cowley, Stein, Beach, or Hemingway had written their memoirs at different times in their lives, they would have interpreted events differently. In this way, the time in which the author writes is as important as the era about which she or he writes. This theory owes a considerable debt to Arthur Schopenhauer’s essay “Transcendent Speculation on the Apparent Deliberateness in the Fate of the Individual,” in which he argues that as one looks back on one’s life the diverse, seemingly random or insignificant elements, appear to follow a unified plot. The frequent occurrence of events particular to an individual that seem external and accidental in nature,

gradually leads to the view, often becoming a conviction, that the course of an individual’s life, however confused it appears to be, is a complete whole, in harmony with itself and having a definite tendency and didactic meaning, as profoundly conceived as is the finest epic. (204)

In this sense, the expatriates attempt to transfer this fine epic from their minds to the page, from the page to the public consciousness. The protagonists’ objectives are predicated upon the accomplishments of the memoirist. They craft memoirs that stress their accomplishments but under-represent their indebtedness to others—such as Stein overstating the Making of Americans’ impact on literary modernism or Hemingway
omitting Sherwood Anderson’s letters of introduction to imply his own self-reliance. This study does not aim to correct these distortions. I do not seek to elucidate their actual lives, but rather the *story* of their lives as constructed and perpetuated by these memoirs. Similarly, the epigraph with which Michael Reynolds begins his biography *Hemingway: The Paris Years* is the John Barth quote, “The story of your life is not your life. It is your story.”

**Memoir and the Künstlerroman**

In *Writing the Lost Generation*, Craig Monk discusses the genre of autobiography as a framing discourse and each autobiography as a critical act. He bases this claim on the works of Anita Grossman and Paul de Man. Grossman considers autobiography’s defining characteristic the writer’s “selection, interpretation, and imaginative re-creation” of its subject matter (qtd. in Monk 9). Similarly, de Man argues that “the self” in autobiography is nothing more than a “linguistic structure [created once an] author declares himself the subject of his own understanding.” De Man considers this “self-knowledge” a “tropological structure” (Monk 10); tropology refers to the interpretation of figurative language. Given de Man’s deconstructive worldview predicated upon free-floating signifiers, if self-knowledge is tropological, it has already been interpreted; furthermore, when a writer recalls past moments, the “self-knowledge” passes through another figurative reader. Therefore, the defining feature of autobiography, for de Man, is the writer’s “frantic attempt to assert an elusive authority” (qtd. in Monk 10). The expatriate writers I study imaginatively re-create scenes and attempt to assert authority because their autobiographies compete with each
other for the definitive take on history—an *agon* not with their precursors, but with their contemporaries or with a definitive construct of Paris. Monk writes, “it is the accumulated impression of that time created by these autobiographies—impressions of the time that gave rise to its fiction and that shape our responses to it—that remains today most formidable” (11). The memories become books, which accumulate into myth.

Concerning this myth, Adam Gopnik writes, “there is no circumstance quite so neatly mythological, no American tone so suggestive of its poem, no situation so neatly a *situation*, as that of the American in Paris” (xiii). Gopnik’s phrase “neatly mythological” accounts for both the imaginative element and feasibility inherent in this situation. Since many “American in Paris” stories have been recorded, a particular tone has developed akin to the development of a genre. Gopnik claims that whereas an American in London would require an occasion such as a royal wedding, “An American in Paris is…. a story in itself: one need merely posit it to have the idea of a narrative spring up, even if there is no narrative to tell” (xiii). Many expatriate memoirs lack solid plots because, as Gopnik notes, an American in Paris is a sufficient storyline to captivate American audiences—this appeal predates the modernists but they greatly contributed to our contemporary understanding of this “storyline.”

Scholars have been analyzing this American expatriate myth for almost a century. For my purposes, three scholars have significantly contributed to this critical conversation within the past two decades: in *Writing the Lost Generation*, Craig Monk uses autobiography as a framing discourse for studying expatriation; in *Imagining*
Paris. J. Gerald Kennedy considers the function of place in expatriate writing; and in American Expatriate Writing and the Paris Moment, Donald Pizer focuses on instances of creation. Pizer writes,

the expatriate or self-exile state of mind is compounded out of the interrelated conditions of the rejection of a homeland and the desire for and acceptance of an alternative place. The world one has been bred in is perceived to suffer from intolerable inadequacies and limitations; another world seems to be free of these failings and to offer a more fruitful way of life. (1)

Pizer isolates a consciousness that rejects the homeland. Many expatriates certainly had conflicted relationships with their home countries. Joyce, for instance, fled Ireland, but it fascinated him and pervaded through his writing until his death. Pizer’s diction that the world one is born into is perceived to suffer intolerable inadequacies and limitations is important. The United States did suffer intolerable inadequacies just as every country did, but the writers who were raised on literary classics from Europe understood that there were other ways of being than those offered in the United States. Perception matters greatly in understanding the ways people structure and record their lives. Pizer uses “the Paris moment” to describe when a writer allows this new place to move her or him to creativity. His study culminates with the realization of the hero-artist in Henry Miller’s Tropic of Cancer (1934). He calls this controversial text a synthesis of the various themes he notes throughout his book. This synthesis resembles James Joyce’s A
*Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1917), a text that fundamentally shaped the way expatriate writers constructed their identities.

With *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Joyce consciously constructed his own mythology by writing a thinly veiled autobiographical novel that documents his alter ego’s transformation from a common person to an artist with a finely tuned aesthetic theory. It became the prototypical modern Künstlerroman. Since Joyce blurred the distinction between autobiography and fiction, when some of the next generation of modernists started to write they did so under a tremendous anxiety of influence. Joyce, Eliot, and Pound established a formidable set of aesthetic philosophies by which young writers could either fashion themselves or be judged, but were hard to ignore.¹

Joyce uses a mythological hero narrative to structure *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Heavily influenced by Joyce, Joseph Campbell writes about the modern hero:

> The modern hero, the modern individual…. cannot, indeed must not, wait for his community to cast off its slough of pride, fear, rationalized avarice, and sanctified misunderstanding…. It is not society that is to guide and save the creative hero, but precisely the reverse….not in the bright moments of his tribe’s great victories, but in the silences of his personal despair. (*Hero* 337)

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¹ Joyce propounds his Thomistic aesthetic philosophy in Chapter V of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; Eliot insists upon the importance of canonical knowledge for artistic creation in “Tradition and the Individual Talent” (1919); and Pound offers his idea of what comprises an artist in “The Serious Artist” (1913).
Joyce’s Stephen Dedalus truly epitomizes the modern artist-hero. As stated earlier, Grossman and de Man claim that autobiography is characterized by imaginative re-creation and an attempt to assert elusive authority. By telling a version of his story through fiction, Joyce allows himself imaginative re-creation by forfeiting any supposition of authority. When the subsequent modernists write, they too, I will argue, allow themselves the luxury of imaginative re-creation and self-editing. However, this imaginative re-creation also extends to when they write autobiography, thus attempting to assert their authority as well. Simply stated: fiction obviously allows for invention whereas autobiography, by definition, should not; however, like the authors of fiction that they were, many of the expatriate memoirists used the creative liberties usually afforded to fiction writers and withheld from memoirists.

Although the memoir and Künstlerroman share many attributes they are not synonymous. Roberta Seret explains how they can be distinguished:

The memoir, an autobiographical account of personal experience, is usually anecdotal in style, similar to an informal *causerie* between the author and reader. Emphasis is directed toward depicting a period or recreating important relationships in the life of the author—not necessarily related to his development as an artist. (5)

Though important to keep in mind, this distinction blurs often. For instance, in *A Moveable Feast* Hemingway shares many anecdotes about other writers but he also documents his own artistic development. Also, though the text is a memoir, Hemingway writes in the preface to the 1964 edition, “If the reader prefers, this book may be
regarded as fiction.” The 2009 version has restored many false starts for this preface from the Hemingway Collection at the John F. Kennedy library; these reveal the extent to which Hemingway understood the problematic nature of representing truth:

All remembrance of things past is fiction…. This book is fiction and many things have been changed in fact to try to make it a picture of a true time…. This book is fiction and should be read as such. (230-32)

Hemingway’s suggestion that his memoir may be considered fiction raises a fundamental issue with these autobiographical projects: they value certain elements over historical accuracy. Hemingway and Stein value engaging prose and the cultivation of an impressive literary persona. Cowley concerns himself with grand structures and universally-applicable narratives. Beach, on the other hand, writes warm remembrances of those closest to her. These memoirs fluctuate between fact and fiction, memoir and Künstlerroman, memory and invention. But the common thread throughout is the conscious representation of the self and the depiction/invention of an environment conducive to that self—1920s Paris—within a particular narrative structure.

In bohemian artist narratives of the modernist era, the artist-hero emerges as a central figure. Michael Soto writes of modernist bohemians specifically, in a similar way to Campbell’s quote above on the creative hero:

an artist is born into a philistine society that refuses to accommodate artists and is then symbolically reborn into a bohemian one that will.

Bohemian artist narratives continually return to birth and rebirth motifs, including the symbolic erasure of genealogical lines of descent; the
equation of reading and sex; the birth of books; and the strategic
conflation of fiction and reality, of biological and cultural evolution,
which…. achieves material status in the roman à clef. (98)
The fashioning of one’s identity and the cultivation of one’s myth became central to the
modernist writers’ output whether as fiction or memoir. Marc Dolan claims that
expatriate writers “sought to elucidate the historical significance of their own lives”
(Monk 2). This self-fashioning continued after the Second World War, as Monk
observes:

as the idea of the Lost Generation emerged and persisted in the popular
imagination, self-conscious critical responses from expatriates were
inevitable, especially as fictional portraits placed Americans abroad in an
unflattering light. (5)

One writer’s unfavorable portrayal of another writer would prompt the latter to compose
her or his own book to correct the perceived distortions thus creating a chôratic network
of texts. Verna Kale adds: “Like modernism itself, Paris of the 1920s resists definition,
and memorializing their own version of Paris was something of a cottage industry for
the aging Left Bank writers who survived the 1920s” (127). With so many texts it has
proved difficult, as Kale notes, to define Paris in the 1920s, suggesting a lack in critical
consensus about this milieu.

Gertrude Stein, *Shakespeare and Company* by Sylvia Beach, and *A Moveable Feast* by
Ernest Hemingway paradoxically represent the plurality of expatriate experience and
demonstrate its semblance of unity. These writers represent two sides of various binaries: marginalized and canonical, female and male, humble and narcissistic. For instance, *A Moveable Feast* has consistently sold so well since its initial publication that it warranted the release of a revised edition, which is now the subject of much critical commentary; on the other hand, *Shakespeare and Company* has not shared similar popularity. Concerning humility and self-aggrandizement, Sylvia Beach is refreshingly humble in this period of embattled egos, whereas Gertrude Stein frequently refers to herself as a genius, indicating the diversity of characters and thinking in this era.

Marc Dolan writes that the Lost Generation is “a surprisingly influential nexus of historical discourse” (5). He also mentions how odd it is that we define American culture of the time by its writers and artists, since American historiography tends to focus on homesteaders, businesspeople, or soldiers as symbols for eras. (5) This period greatly influenced the remaining twentieth century; these texts help contextualize how this era has been contextualized.

The protagonists of these memoirs—the authors’ literary personae—project their own psyches onto Paris, cognitively mapping private cartographies by which they come to understand the unfamiliar landscape. When this symbolic space is described in their texts, it tells more about their conceptions of Paris in the 1920s than the historical and temporal referent. With numerous perspectives vying for the definitive version of events, the memoirists influenced each other’s works through competition and camaraderie, concerned (to varying degrees) with encouraging positive representations of themselves. Since these literary personae grew from a rhetorical network of
connections, within which an ultimate origin (or transcendental signifier) cannot be located, my project seeks to explicate the many versions of Paris and its inhabitants as they persist discursively—not giving preference to any one memoir’s presuppositions, but rather, exploring how they engage with and alter one another, and how this affects 1920s literary Paris as an imaginative construct.
CHAPTER II: IMAGINATIVE GEOGRAPHY
Cognitive Mapping and Private Cartographies

The Writer’s Relationship with Symbolic Space

Every person develops idiosyncratic symbolic cartographies of his or her environment. Roger M. Downs and David Stea call this process cognitive mapping and offer this formal definition: “a process composed of a series of psychological transformations by which an individual acquires, codes, stores, recalls, and decodes information about the relative locations and attributes of phenomena in his everyday spatial environment” (9). They claim that underlying this definition is the view that “human behavior is dependent on the individual’s cognitive map of the spatial environment” (9). In Imagining Paris, J. Gerald Kennedy elaborates upon this process with literary rather than scientific writing:

Cognitive mapping describes the assimilation of sensory information about the places we inhabit or traverse not as raw impressions but as a ‘code’ of meaningful signs which collectively produce a mental map. This cartography enables us to function by providing a sense of distance and relation and by schematizing our experiential world in terms of valued or significant sites. (13-14)

Cognitive mapping, in a literary context, underlies much of my argument. In particular, this process enables writers to make sense of their environments but it also sets limits upon the knowledge they can have. While discussing Anaïs Nin’s diaries of Paris,
Kennedy explains the inability of writing to capture one’s cognitive map and the inability of a cognitive map to completely represent a location:

we cannot reconstruct Nin’s response to Paris in its full complexity; what remains is at best a partial, residual image of the city she had internalized, suggesting certain reference points in a private, symbolic cartography. (21)

We cannot reconstruct any writer’s response to Paris in full; however, the internalized private, symbolic cartography reveals phenomenological relationships with the city and its significant locations. By understanding how a writer imbues places with importance, we understand her cognitive map and in doing so, we understand an important aspect of the artist’s psychology.

Since these private cartographies serve as psychological codes and schemas, they construct a symbolic space with a historical referent rather than a historical space. Every time a writer recalls a memory, she or he re-encodes it with new meaning, as Verna Kale explains, “These encodings and re-encodings of experience necessarily become increasingly subjective. Memoir, then is less about relating the past than editing it” (131).

Writers situate their literary personae within the imaginative geographies their memoirs generate. These symbolic spaces serve various ends for the representation of the self, the hero, the writer. For instance, Stein’s selective memory allows for an obscure depiction of Paris as well as her accomplishments, which conflates with masters of the painting world and positions her as the founder of literary modernism—
the hazy landscape taken for truth affords hazy claims taken for the same. Cowley infuses Paris with the exhilaration of creative energy, which artists must tap into in order to enliven their worlds, writing more of Paris as an energy than a location. Beach presents Paris as a new frontier in the tradition of American outcast literature, lighting out for new territory in defiance of normative American ethics and reverentially embarking on an aesthetic pilgrimage to a city of great literature. Since Hemingway’s memoir resembles a novel in structure, he can present himself in a way that resembles his heroic protagonists, such as Robert Jordan from *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, as a consummate professional in another country—although Hemingway’s literary persona is “less a man of action” and “more a reflective hero” (Raeburn 195). Similarly, to the other expatriates, Paris represents a symbolic land of hope and freedom just beyond the threshold, far from what they perceive to be the ossified and restrictive attitudes prevailing at home. The Paris they formulate serves as the setting for their fictional selves; their accounts of Paris tell more about their psychological makeup and worldview than they do Paris itself. Evolutionary psychologist Anthony Stevens’s writing on environmental adaptation illuminates how these writers understand Paris: “We assess things in terms of their significance for us and the behavioral opportunities they provide according to the motivational or psychological state we happen to be in at the time” (100). In a sense, they project onto Paris their own neuroses and understandings of themselves, which suggests that these texts document idiosyncratic relationships with Paris, problematizing the privileged position of first-hand accounts.
According to Stein’s lecture “An American and Paris” (1936), “the city affords the ideal situation for an American writer because its ‘romantic’ ambience exerts no influence and holds no meaning… the writing self might arbitrarily dissociate itself from the world in which writing occurs” (qtd. in Kennedy 41). Stein’s topographical indifference makes her paradoxically like and unlike her coeval James Joyce. Hemingway comments on her feelings toward Joyce in *A Moveable Feast*: “If you brought up Joyce twice, you would not be invited back. It was like mentioning one general favorably to another general” (2009 60) Similarly, Bravig Imbs writes, “To talk about James Joyce in Gertrude Stein’s salon was rushing in where angels feared to tread” (*CM* 154). The lack of geographic references in Stein’s work differs drastically from the abundance of references in Joyce’s. He once boasted that if Dublin were destroyed that it could be rebuilt from the pages of *Ulysses* (qtd. In Fargnoli 223). If Paris were destroyed one might be able to rebuild Gertrude Stein’s salon at 27 rue de Fleurus, but not much else of Paris, suggesting that Stein’s self-centeredness enables her to explore the individual experience in profound ways distinct from Joyce’s innovations. In *Novels, Maps, Modernity*, Eric Bulson asks, “Why does the abundance, some may say overabundance, of topographical details in so many modernist novels have the effect of disorienting readers?” (14) In novels like *Ulysses*, the reader must process a challenging amount of geographic details. The *Autobiography*’s lack of significant topographical details prevents such confusion, instead focusing lucidly on the thought processes of an individual.
Since her daily cognitive mapping does not manifest itself much in her text, Paris remains an ambiguous region in the *Autobiography*. Though Stein writes about Paris she usually does so in vague and romantic terms. When Alice suggests the couple live in Avila, Spain, Stein describes her frustration: “Gertrude Stein was very upset, Avila was alright but, she insisted, she needed Paris” (115-16). The simple and general diction can be partly attributed to Stein’s emulation of Toklas’s informal conversation. But in Stein’s later memoir *Paris France* (1940), she professes that a writer must have a second and romantic country:

> After all, everybody, that is, everybody who writes is interested in living inside themselves in order to tell what is inside themselves. That is why writers have to have two countries, the one where they belong and the one in which they live really. The second one is romantic, it is separate from themselves, it is not real but it is really there (2).

Stein’s second, “romantic” country is France. Stein famously pronounced, “Paris was where the twentieth century was” (qtd. in Kennedy 185). In this saying she crosses the spatial with the temporal. Like some of her more experimental early fiction, Stein’s Paris is difficult to pin down because it is the central point of action and receives glowing praise but is rarely described with considerable attention to physical detail. The impressionistic cadences of Stein’s prose maintain a relatively clean picture of Paris onto which the reader can project his or her own ideas for the specifics of the city. Sentences like this in *the Autobiography*—“It was the first year of the autumn salon, the first autumn salon that had ever existed in Paris and they, very eager and excited, went...”
are far more regular than in-depth documentation of street names or detailed descriptions of neighborhood scenes, suggesting that Stein’s principal concern is with art responding to art rather than art responding to the exterior world.

Stein is an American in France writing in English. France is in many ways an unknown region. Stein opens chapter five by appropriating an adage about Rome for her purposes with Paris: “And so life in Paris began and as all roads lead to Paris, all of us are now there” (86). This device elevates Stein’s Paris to the mythical level of ancient Rome. Campbell writes about the psychological relationship with the mythic unknown: “The regions of the unknown (desert, jungle, deep sea, alien land, etc.) are free fields for the projection of unconscious content” (Hero 65). Important external events never subsume Stein’s more symbolic Paris. Later in the novel, when the Germans are “getting nearer and nearer Paris,” Stein writes, “She loved Paris, she thought neither of manuscripts nor of pictures, she thought only of Paris and she was desolate” (Autobiography 149). Although Stein claims to not even think of her manuscripts or pictures, this negation simply verifies an unconscious actuality. One might not assume that Stein would value her writing over the fate of Paris but she assures us that at this moment, it is so. The very mention of her manuscripts at such a horrific moment signals that she was actually thinking about them. The First World War—though given its own chapter—never fully penetrates Stein’s psyche; the most significant threat is to her Romantic city in which she can flourish as an artist and reach eudaemonia.

Stein’s thinking influences and enlightens the men and women that surround her. During the war when Bertrand Russell visits, she, not the war, continues to
challenge the characters: “Gertrude Stein… gave a long discourse on the value of greek to the english…. proving that they did not need greek, in a way that fussied Russell more and more and kept everybody occupied until everybody went to bed” (152). This passage reveals that Stein’s literary persona can converse productively with great analytic philosophers as well as continental or more artistic types. For the Autobiography’s purposes, Russell represents the greater scientific and logical positivist communities; this inclusion extends Stein’s intellectual proficiency to more areas. In debunking the value of Greek, Stein uses the participle “proving,” which is derived from the Middle English proven (late 12c); Anglo-Norman and Old French prover (11c.) (Oxford English Dictionary); and finally, Latin probāre, meaning to test or prove worthy (Online Etymology Dictionary). The etymology of “prove” does not trace back to Ancient Greek but Latin, arguably proving her point. The Latin denotation of testing conforms to Russell’s scientific methods. In modern usage, to prove is to establish something as true. This passage proves the sophistication of Stein’s literary persona in intellectual discussion, and by extension her broader worth, signifying that she is not “just” a writer.

As mentioned earlier, Stein constructs a Paris in which her literary persona can thrive; therefore, the descriptions of place do not outweigh the descriptions of Stein. However, in order to contextualize Stein’s progress and abilities, some scenery—albeit reserved—is necessary. Some sections of the book describe the streets in greater depth, such as the second paragraph of chapter 3:
Vollard was a huge dark man who lisped a little. His shop was on the rue Laffitte not far from the boulevard. Further along this short street was Durand-Ruel and still further on almost at the church of the Martyrs was Sagot the ex-clown. Higher up in Montmartre on the rue Victor-Massé was Mademoiselle Weill who sold a mixture of pictures, books and bric-à-brac and in entirely another part of Paris on the rue Faubourg-Saint-Honoré was the ex-café keeper and photographer Druet. Also on the rue Laffitte was the confectioner Fouquet where one could console oneself with delicious honey cakes and nut candies and once in a while instead of a picture buy oneself strawberry jam in a glass bowl. (29-30)

This rapid-fire overview of Paris names quite a few streets and what happens on them; however, she does not dwell on any long enough for them to truly come into view. Instead, the quick succession communicates the vast number of people and places in Paris, incorporating more from the era into the narrative. This inclusion heightens the degree to which Stein succeeds both as an artist and intellectual. When Toklas finally focuses on Stein and 27 rue de Fleurus, the comparative exposure emphasizes the importance of each. Once we get a glimpse, we continue along until we reach an interior scene, which constitutes a large portion of the Autobiography’s narrative.

In the Autobiography, place sets the stage for mentioning famous artists, which in turn reminds Toklas of Stein’s artistic accomplishments. In the paragraph following the one quoted above, Stein writes, “The first visit to Vollard has left an indelible
impression on Gertrude Stein. It was an incredible place” (30). Vollard and Stein
discuss Cézanne, which reminds Toklas of Gertrude’s first publication:

Later on Gertrude Stein wrote a poem called Vollard and Cézanne, and
Henry McBride printed it in the New York Sun. This was the first
fugitive piece of Gertrude Stein’s to be so printed and it gave both her
and Vollard a great deal of pleasure. (30)

Although the reader learns of Stein’s accomplishment by way of an aside, it serves as
the primary function of this passage. Stein creates an indistinct environment from which
she reveals her burgeoning writing career with surface level descriptions of Parisian
streets and artists. When Stein describes anything in detail it stands out, emphasized and
integral to her development as a writer. Just as Stein conflates time and space, she
conflates her writing accomplishments with the painting accomplishments of
acknowledged masters. The indistinct yet romanticized city allows for such associations
to bleed into one another, especially Stein’s writing and modernist painting. This
approach effectively supports Stein’s literary persona, insofar as it conflates Stein’s
accomplishments with those of recognized artists.

The version of Paris Stein designs mainly centers on art studios. As Kennedy
writes, “Stein’s Paris emerges as a scene of discovery: she defines her identity by
recounting her delving into the galleries, studios, and exhibition halls of Paris in search
of modern art” (60). For instance, when summer turns to fall, Toklas immediately
describes their trip to “the first autumn salon that had ever existed in Paris” (34). These
vague descriptions of Paris at large emphasize Stein’s connections with the artists she seeks to associate herself with in her readers’ minds.

But clearly the most important place on Stein’s cognitive map is 27 rue de Fleurus, which became a destination of literary soujourns for young American writers in the 1920s. Sara Blair argues that with 27 rue de Fleurus,

Stein participates in a revision of the salon, with its historical role in the formation of the modern public sphere. The space, or life-world, she creates in collaboration with Alice B. Toklas is both indebted to the salon and quite distinct from it (419-20)

Blair’s understanding of 27 rue de Fleurus as a life-world underscores the importance of the salon in its historical context, which in turn, illuminates its representation in the *Autobiography*. Upon first entering the now-famous home, Toklas narrates,

The home at 27 rue de Fleurus consisted then as it does now of a tiny pavillon of two stories with four small rooms, a kitchen and bath, and a very large atelier adjoining. Now the atelier is attached to the pavillon by a tiny hall passage added in 1914 but at that time the atelier had its own entrance, one rang the bell of the pavillon or knocked at the door of the atelier, and a great many people did both, but more knocked at the atelier. (7)

This domestic space is significant to the Stein persona because it places artistic production in a traditionally feminine location. That it is referred to as the atelier confirms its work-oriented function. Stein granted young writers access to 27 rue de
Fleurus based upon their admiration for her. As Shari Benstock notes, “she accepted as callers to 27, rue de Fleurus, only those who swore absolute loyalty to her, men who agreed to become followers” (15). 27 rue de Fleurus then became both a place of production and appreciation of Stein’s work, as well as a place enabling Stein to become a literary matriarch.

But scenes of artistic production are vacuous, allowing for a level of mystery and indeterminacy. When people started to frequent Stein’s home to the point that it distracted from her writing she took to writing at night. After eleven o’clock she would compose *The Making of Americans* at 27 rue de Fleurus, struggling with long sentences (41). She presents herself as the lone artist struggling against tradition. By composing at night, outside the regimented logic of the daytime, Stein can seize *kairos*, the right moment for creation. 27 rue de Fleurus is the mythical location, just as Paris is throughout the *Autobiography*, and the memoir’s lack of geographical description allows for the projection of the reader’s artist-genius-creation notions primarily onto Stein. So, Stein trumps Paris, in a way.

Likewise, Stein does not describe Pablo Picasso’s creation of Stein’s portrait (1905-06). By doing so she allows for a Romantic mystery to surround its composition and a Romantic aura to surround the finished product. She writes about how neither she nor Picasso remember much of the painting except that it took place at rue Ravignan: “they can remember the first time Gertrude Stein posed for her portrait at rue Ravignan but in between there is a blank. How it came about they do not know” (45). Belief in artistic genius is contingent upon the mystery of creation; when art can be reduced to
craft, to a knowable and teachable skill, the image of the artist as codified by the
Romantics and exemplified by the Modernists fades. The rue Ravignan functions as the
mythic location of creation but no further description of the location or process comes.
The rue Ravignan registers on Stein’s cognitive map as the ground for Picasso’s genius
and the rue de Fleurus registers as the ground for hers. The broader importance of these
locations, and of Paris more generally, as artistic symbols is that the impressions of
them as such are perpetuated by Stein’s and others’ memoirs. Every time a writer
specifies the rue Ravignan, the rue de Fleurus, or Paris in a novel, memoir, or history of
literary or artistic people, the text strengthens the discourse that defines these places as
hubs of cultural activity.

Just as the salon is a fixture on most expatriates’ cognitive maps, so is Sylvia
Beach’s bookstore Shakespeare and Company for Stein. She describes herself as one of
Beach’s first annual subscribers, signaling, just as she had in the previous four chapters,
that she is ahead of the trends:

    Some one told us, I have forgotten who, that an american woman had
 started a lending library of english books in our quarter…. Sylvia Beach
 was very enthusiastic about Gertrude Stein and they became friends. She
 was Sylvia Beach’s first annual subscriber and Sylvia Beach was
 proportionately proud and grateful. Her little place was in a little street
 near the Ecole de Médecine. It was not then much frequented by
 americans. (195-96)
She never calls Shakespeare and Company by its name but rather as “a lending library,” and the topographical details are, yet again, lacking. Shakespeare and Company is a competitor for the literary heart of Paris so the omission of the bookstore’s name downplays its importance. In 1920, when Stein and Beach were friendly—before Beach published *Ulysses*—Stein wrote a poem in honor of the bookstore entitled “Rich and Poor in English” but Beach claimed, “Gertrude’s subscription was merely a friendly gesture. She took little interest, of course, in any but her own books” (qtd. in Fitch 55). Stein privileges herself by including her early relationship with Shakespeare and Company in the *Autobiography*. Stein mentions the street on which Beach founds the bookstore and two paragraphs later mentions the street to which Beach moves the bookstore—“Adrienne Monnier wanted Sylvia to move to the rue de l’Odéon and Sylvia hesitated but finally she did so and as a matter of fact we did not see her very often afterward” (196). After the move to the rue de l’Odéon is when most of the expatriates in Paris saw Beach very often. Stein’s literary persona anticipates the connection others would have with Shakespeare and Company afterward, just as she anticipates literary movements. The insistence upon Stein meeting Beach and others first naturalizes her early arrivals, making her anticipation of literary modernism and claims to be its progenitor more palatable within the *Autobiography*’s narrative.

Stein cleverly structures the *Autobiography* so that she relegates the 1920s to one chapter. This allows the narrative to deal primarily with Stein’s formative years; in the 1920s the younger generation’s literary fame, especially Ernest Hemingway’s and F. Scott Fitzgerald’s, surpassed her moderate recognition. By focusing so slightly on what
many would argue is the pivotal decade for innovation and achievement in modernist literature, and focusing on her own innovations and achievements in the preceding decades, Stein creates the impression that literary modernism grew from her writing, which she elsewhere states explicitly:

he, Hemingway, wanted The Making of Americans to be run in it as a serial…it was printed in the next number of the Transatlantic. So for the first time a piece of the monumental work which was the beginning, really the beginning of modern writing, was printed, and we were very happy. (215; emphasis added)

Stein’s accomplishments, as demonstrated above, end with communal celebration. Stein, Toklas, and her artistic friends celebrate when her career progresses (i.e., her genius is finally recognized). The bitterness over her lack of recognition reveals itself obliquely when Mildred Aldrich says, “I hate to look at Who’s Who in America…when I see all those insignificant people and Gertrude’s name not in” (194-95). Other times she states her self-absorbed resentment clearly: “Gertrude Stein was in those days a little bitter, all her unpublished manuscripts, and no hope of publication or serious recognition” (197). But she takes this obscurity and uses it to her own purposes; even in the case of her own fame, once more, she anticipates the majority opinion.

In the final chapter, “After the War: 1919-1932,” Stein appears as the wise sage to whom aspiring writers flock for insight. Just as Picasso captures the daringly innovative Stein in his oil on canvass (1905-06), which figures so prominently in the Autobiography, Jo Davidson captures the sensible and wise guru Stein with his terra
cotta sculpture (1922-23)—both perceptions reinforced by the Autobiography. This chapter lists all the bright young literary talents that visit 27 rue de Fleurus and attributes their artistic growth to Stein. Now Stein, like Picasso earlier, has a location for her genius to perform. As Kennedy points out, “In the spatial dynamic of the narrative, this pattern marks a fundamental reversal of Stein’s earlier quests into the workplaces of contemporary male painters” (69). But she also mentions her influence over the younger generation more generally. When she attends one of Sylvia Beach’s parties, she writes, “There were several young Oxford men there and they were awfully pleased to meet her” (196). Later she mentions, “It was in Saint-Rémy and during this winter that she wrote the poetry that has so greatly influenced the younger generation” (209). That Stein assumes such an important role as an artistic matriarch suggests that she was among those who broke the ground of literary modernism, allowing subsequent writers to follow her lead. Stein’s literary persona revolutionized the medium and truly crossed the proverbial threshold of the hero’s journey. After Stein’s accomplishments, Paris and literary modernist experimentation are no longer the untapped areas that they were when Stein was writing arguably her greatest and most daring work, emphasizing the impact of Stein’s self-proclaimed genius. This Romantic conception of genius, as Barbara Will explains, coincides with the “high modernist emphasis upon the genius as the great individual who must transcend the social in order to engage in the process of cultural revitalization” (Will 8). Stein, therefore, must transcend the writers of her milieu and implicitly weakens any claims of groundbreaking work from Joyce, Eliot,
and others, but especially those writing after Stein. In Stein’s Paris, there is only one genius of literary modernism.

*Exile’s Return*

But not all writers were seeking to establish themselves as changing the world the way Stein did; Malcolm Cowley, for instance, sought to document the world as it changed. The Paris of Cowley’s memoir is “the Paris of the international revelers and refugees…. It was the Paris of drugs and sexual perversions” (262). More explicitly than the other memoirs in this study, Cowley’s Paris is the land of indeterminate forms and unknown lifestyles, which is indicative of a larger set of texts such as Fitzgerald’s “Babylon Revisited” wherein 1920s Paris is described as a “place of excess, endless parties, and lurid decadence” (2009 13). Since Cowley’s memoir deals with the entire journey from the United States to Europe and back again, he deals with the overarching threshold-crossing narrative that contextualizes the other memoirs.

*Exile’s Return* does not deal exclusively, or almost exclusively, with Paris as many other expatriate memoirs do; rather, Cowley chronicles the collective journey taken by the Lost Generation to American universities, service in World War I, and New York City, among other places. Cowley focuses on the generation’s experiences and his memoir fundamentally affected the constitution of the Lost Generation in the minds of Americans. Faulkner writes, “Indeed, *Exile’s Return* is not so much about Paris in the 1920s as it is about the exemplary revolt of one generation against its predecessors in the effort to establish itself” (ix).
Cowley writes often in the first person plural, echoing the manifesto rhetoric of his communist politics. He sees himself and his generation as members of a private society, tied together by literature:

Literature, our profession, was living in the shadow of its own great past. The symbols that moved us, the great themes of love and death and parting, had been used and exhausted. Where could we find new themes when everything, so it seemed, had been said already? (19)

This passage reads like a literary re-imagining of the final lines from F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *This Side of Paradise*, another generation-defining text by a generation-defining writer:

Here was a new generation, shouting the old cries, learning the old creeds, through a revery of long days and nights; destined finally to go out into that dirty gray turmoil to follow love and pride; a new generation dedicated more than the last to the fear of poverty and the worship of success; grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken. . . . (304)

But the world cannot remain this barren wasteland. Someone needs to bring it to life. For Cowley this person is the artist. Cowley writes of the great writers from the generation preceding his own as leaving the world cold and sterile: “These were the great literary men of our age and they resembled one another in proposing a future as cold as the touch of cold hands” (131). James Joyce “had achieved genius…. but there was something about the genius as cold as the touch at parting of his long, smooth, cold, wet-marble fingers” (199). And for Eliot, “the past was a landscape nourished by living
fountains; now the fountains of spiritual grace are dry” (113). Cowley explains that the true role of the artist is to revive this dead landscape:

first transform the objects about him by connecting them with human emotions…. by perceiving in it architectural and musical forms, unity and rhythm, by giving it a history, and chiefly by transfusing it with myth. (328)

This is what Cowley does for his generation and he transfuses Paris with myth. In “Malcolm Cowley and the American Writer,” Lewis P. Simpson builds on Cowley’s ideas of this mythic imperative as it applies to Cowley’s generation more broadly:

[The Lost Generation] placed their heroes in “larger patterns of myth.” Hemingway and Faulkner notably, though others as well, seemed to want to give their stories a dimension of depth in a far past: “to recover a prehistoric and prelogical fashion of looking at the world.” (223)

This “depth in a far past” that Simpson identifies in both Faulkner and Hemingway manifests itself in Faulkner’s obsession with the faded institutions of the Antebellum era and Hemingway’s passion for physical traditions in Europe, such as boxing, horse races, and bullfighting. Cowley was interested in European traditions as well, but the literary and philosophical rather than the physical. Reynolds writes of Hemingway’s distaste for discussions of literary pretension: “He hated discussions of literary theory, and no one ever caught him quoting Plato, Kant or Nietzsche…. Hemingway learned that he could disarm the college-trained by making the playing field less intellectual and more physical” (PY 64). Cowley, on the other hand, valued the literary heritage and his romanticized picture of Paris was predicated upon its literary heritage. The image of
bohemian France looms large in his mind: “France was the birthplace of our creed. It was in France that poets had labored for days over a single stanza, while bailiffs hammered at the door” (102). But it was not just a sentimental remembrance of an early time in books; for Cowley France enabled personal freedom disallowed in the United States: “By expatriating himself, by living in Paris, Capri or the South of France, the artist can break the puritan shackles, drink, live freely and be wholly creative” (61). Just as the artist brings Paris to life, Paris brings the artist to life: “Paris is a city one enters with elation and leaves without regret” (136). Cowley’s Paris is one of artistic stimulants, which is significant to the mythic project of Exile’s Return since Paris, the land beyond threshold, is in the realm of Dionysus, which other writers, such as Hart Crane, reiterate: “Paris is really a test for an American. Dinners, soirees, poets, erratic millionaires, painters, translations, lobsters, absinthe, music, promenades, oysters, sherry, aspirins, pictures, Sapphic heiresses, editors, books, sailors and how!” (qtd. in Mann 15).

When Cowley crosses the threshold from the United States to France, he leaves behind what he considers a barren world and enters a world of personal adventure. From the moment he leaves the train station and ventures into the Parisian streets, Cowley is overcome by the exhilaration of Paris:

Those Paris ventures were periods of unexampled mental activity….

Paris! You leaped into the first empty taxicab outside the station and ordered the driver to hurry. In Paris the subways were impossibly slow, and the taxis never drove fast enough as you raced from one appointment
to another, from an art gallery to a bookshop where you had no time to linger, and thence to a concert you could never quite sit through—faster, faster, there was always something waiting that might be forever missed unless you hammered on the glass and told the driver to go faster. (135)

In Paris Cowley encounters an almost sublime abundance of stimuli. Modern travel technology cannot move him from one cultural experience to the next quickly enough. By listing the many attractions of Paris and immediately lamenting his inability to experiencing each one, Cowley implies there are so many pleasures in Paris that his memoir only captures a portion. The text communicates signification that transcends the ability of text to communicate truly and wholly in exacting language. This carries over to his depiction of geography as well.

Cowley is less topographically precise than Hemingway but more topographically aware than Stein. In a similar manner to his treatment of people, Cowley focuses on general particularities of place. John Downtown Hazlett calls *Exile’s Return* a “collective autobiography” (qtd. in Monk 65), which is evident in Cowley’s general diction. He writes of the intense rush Paris stirs up in a visitor, not by specific land-markers such as addresses or street names but by cultural markers such as nonspecific flower markets, cafés, shops, or art galleries:

Paris was a great machine for stimulating the nerves and sharpening the senses. Paintings and music, street noises, shops, flower markets, modes, fabrics, poems, ideas, everything seemed to lead toward a half-sensual, half-intellectual swoon. Inside the cafés, color, perfume, taste and
delirium could be poured together from one bottle or many bottles, from square, cylindrical, conical, tall, squat, brown, green or crimson bottles—but you drank black coffee by choice, believing that Paris itself was sufficient alcohol. (135)

Cowley offers general and relatable geographical details. If the reader has not been to Paris, she or he can still imagine the look of shops and the sound of street noises. By conflating places with sensuality, Cowley brings the Parisian landscape to life both intellectually and bodily. Not an indifferent location, Cowley’s Paris rushes forth and stimulates its visitors.²

At times Cowley names particular locations but, considering the scope of his project, cannot go into much detail beyond that. He mentions being packed at a table at the Dôme in Montparnasse (ER 164) and arguing with the Rotonde’s owner (167); these locations resonate partially because Hemingway already popularized these cafes in The Sun Also Rises (1926) when Jake Barnes says:

No matter what café in Montparnasse you ask a taxi-driver to bring you to from the right bank of the river, they always take you to the Rotonde.

Ten years from now it will probably be the Dome. (49)

By seldom listing a location with which his reader might not be familiar, Cowley keeps his memoir relatable throughout, even when the characters engage in behavior or

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² Cowley is not alone in constructing Paris this way in his memoir. In Confessions of Another Young Man, Bravig Imbs writes, “Paris is the only city I know which acts like a drug. Either Paris illuminates or excites you as it did me the first time I visited it, or it makes you incredible drowsy, so that its streets seem like streets in a dream” (274).
actions that the readers may have never experienced, such as discussing whether Dada could be revived with Tristan Tzara. According to Trysh Travis, Cowley matters insofar as he stands for one of the commonly acknowledged “vectors in the field of cultural production: artistry, activism, scholarship, criticism” (Man of Letters 2). Cowley successfully merges these literary endeavors in Exile’s Return, suggesting the generalizing imperative of his project. Correspondingly, his Paris, like his memoir, is accordingly generalized to account for many experiences within the same narrative.

Cowley understands that the version of Paris he presents is one of many possibilities. When discussing Harry Crosby, Cowley explains that Crosby’s Paris was one infused with illusory beauty and philosophy by its creator, Crosby himself: “In truth the Paris in which he had chosen to live was not the only Paris. It was among many cities that bore the same name and were built one inside the other like Harry’s castles of philosophy and beauty” (262). Furthermore, Cowley’s version of Paris is as much temporal as it is geographical; his Paris of the 1930s does not retain the magical exhilaration that it once did. “The postwar era had definitely ended,” Cowley writes, “and people were saying that it had given way to another prewar era. Paris was no longer the center of everything ‘modern’ and aesthetically ambitious in American literature” (284).

Although Cowley is attuned to the subjective nature of remembrance and linguistic constructions, scholars have suggested that by focusing on the generation as a whole he attempts to posit disinterestedness. Monk explains that “by distancing himself from much of the central action of his narrative, Cowley also hopes to posit an
objectivity that marks the early autobiographies” (16). By analyzing others instead of himself, he validates the analytic aspects of his project and reinstates the collective aspects as well.

Cowley claims that Paris in 1920 was “the place where every writer wanted to be, the capital of the literary world” (300). His memoir about this collective journey to Paris, in his own estimation, follows the same structure as many European myths from the past: “the story they [the chapters of Exile’s Return] tell seems to follow the old pattern of alienation and reintegration, or departure and return, that is repeated in scores of European myths and continually re-embodied in life” (289). What Cowley identifies in this quote as the reoccurring structure from European myth assists in making Exile’s Return so relatable. By tapping into mythic literary structures, Cowley both comments upon and tries to contribute to the literature of his era. Donald Faulkner sees this as a new medium that seeks to frame and “be part of American literature” (xvi). By and large, his project in the text, unlike Stein’s (which attempts to elude structures), situates itself within the grand structures of the past, sublimating his experience to a general generational experience, and sublimating that to a general human experience.

Shakespeare and Company

Similarly to Cowley, Sylvia Beach focuses on others more than herself. But similarly to Stein, she does not shape her generation’s experience to fit metanarratives of the past. Although Beach’s memoir does not follow mythological structures as closely as Cowley’s, she does start her memoir with a mythological image. Sylvia Beach was born and raised in Princeton, New Jersey, to a reverend for a father and a
mother who “like some character in mythology, sprang from a spring” (3). It is fitting that the publisher of *Ulysses* should introduce herself in the beginning of her memoir *Shakespeare and Company* as a child of mythology since she was central in introducing Joyce’s new modern mythology to the world. But *Ulysses’* obscenity trial and banning in the United States were not expected from a reverend’s daughter. Beach, like her fellow expatriates, found new freedom in Paris to live as she pleased, love whom she loved, and publish what she deemed worthy. She lived among artists, loved Adrienne Monnier, and published arguably the most important novel of the twentieth century—none of which would have happened had she not crossed the threshold to Paris.

Although Paris afforded Beach great freedom and she had tremendous affection for the city, she did not sentimentalize it or her experiences. She loved literature and owned her key bookshop but, refreshingly, did not fancy herself an artist. Perhaps because of her lack of pretension, her memoir captures aspects of the conversational, anecdotal charm of *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* without the references to genius; the selfless demonstration of others’ accomplishments of *Exile’s Return* without slipping into problematic totalities; and the touching remembrances of *A Moveable Feast* without the vitriolic caricatures. *Shakespeare and Company* presents a less strategic narrative, more interested in approximating her memories of Paris than cropping her memories to accommodate an idealized version of herself. As such, we can see its construction of Paris as more reliable than the other three.

The center of Beach’s Paris is clearly *Shakespeare and Company*, the bookshop she founded at 8 rue Dupuytren in 1919 and moved to 12 rue de l’Odéon in 1921 where
it remained until the Nazi occupation of Paris in 1941. But rather than serve as microcosm for Paris as a whole, the bookshop serves as a lighthouse for Anglophone “literary pilgrims.” It was the first English-language bookshop and lending library in Paris (Fitch 42). Hemingway called Beach “the gatekeeper” and she went to great lengths to help her customers: “She collected and forwarded mail for steady customers on vacation, loaned books and money to those in need, helped the helpless to find rooms, mediated arguments and kept track of where her customers were and what they were doing” (Reynolds PY 12).

Beach and her artistic milieu, in truly American fashion, must find their own idea of America, a land of possibilities and personal freedom, elsewhere. Similarly, Cowley writes of the general attitude aspiring authors felt for both the United States and Europe: “I’m sick of this country. I’m going abroad to write one good novel” (79). Beach dubs her fellow artistic brethren “literary pilgrims,” as Noel Riley Fitch explains:

These literary pilgrims (the term was Sylvia’s) were not, in a personal or artistic sense, a “lost” generation. Sylvia and Adrienne and Joyce—and the Company they kept—were not wanderers but seekers. Like true pilgrims, they were in quest of salvation. Shakespeare and Company was their house of worship, consecrated to the cult of Art which was their common bond of faith. (12)

Although the above quote explicitly lists one Frenchwoman, one Irishman and no Americans other than Beach, it applies to many of the other literary Americans as well. The “cult of Art” was their common bond of faith. They arrived in Paris on a
pilgrimage. In *Paris Was Our Mistress*, Samuel Putnam describes Shakespeare and Company as “Miss Beach’s incense-filled little chapel” (235). The identity of Beach’s bookstore became tied to the identities of the great English language writers at the time partially because she was the only Paris outlet for it; Michael Reynolds explains, “Shakespeare and Company kept a good stock of all Joyce’s works on the shelves, for winter friends and summer tourists depended on the shop for the Irish author’s work largely unavailable elsewhere” (13). Beach also stocked Shakespeare and Company with the intellectual and literary magazines of the time: *Vanity Fair, Broom, The English Review, Chap Book, Little Review, the Times Literary Supplement, Gargoyle, Tyro, S4N, The Double Dealer, Dial, Contact, Nation, Criterion*, and the often-banned *Birth Control Review* (Reynolds 13). These periodicals and “little magazines” were significant because they contributed to English language modernism, consciously revolutionizing it with innovative techniques, with names like *Broom*, which implies a sweeping away of the old. Beach was one of the sole providers of these publications in Paris. Beach writes, “The best way of following the literary movement in the twenties is through the little reviews… Shakespeare and Company never published one. We have enough to do taking care of those published by our friends” (137). She became the main lifeline to English language literature for many writers in Paris.

The American outpost Beach sets up, however, cannot be confused with mainstream American values or the government of the era, against which Shakespeare and Company struggles throughout the memoir. As Beach reminds the reader, “*Ulysses* was not protected by copyright in the United States” (179) and substantial portions of
the book document Beach’s troubles with the censorship and piracy of Joyce’s novel in
the United States. Rather, Shakespeare and Company and Beach embody the American
spirit of discovery. She presents herself as engaging in a literary life hitherto unknown
to other Americans: “I believe that I was the only American to discover the rue de
l’Odéon and participate in its exciting literary life at that time” (14). She also prides
herself on establishing the nexus for American literary activity: “The news of my
bookshop, to my surprise, soon spread all over the United States, and it was the first
thing the pilgrims looked up in Paris” (23). The memoir recurrently reminds the reader
of the bookshop’s American spirit. Monnier claimed that the lending library was run on
“le plan américain” (SC 21). And Beach understood how her bookshop changed its
environment. “So Shakespeare and Company in 1921 moved to the rue de l’Odéon and
Americanized it,” Beach writes, “and very very French though Adrienne was, we did
our best to annex her, too” (61). As a dealer of English language literature, Shakespeare
and Company attracted the increasing number of American expatriates. This success did
not cause Stein to resent Shakespeare and Company; rather, Beach’s publication of
_Ulysses_ incurred Stein’s ridicule. As Fitch explains, Stein “looked upon the publication
of Joyce as a breach of friendship with Sylvia” (127) and did not wait for her yearly
subscription to run out before transferring to another bookshop (126). Beach writes of
this incident, “She was disappointed in me when I published _Ulysses_; she even came
with Alice to my bookshop to announce that they had transferred their membership to
the American library on the Right Bank” (32). Perhaps owing to the evident cattiness of
such an action, the _Autobiography_ does not include Beach’s alleged “breach of
friendship” but does dismiss Joyce as an incomprehensible “whom anybody can understand” (212). Unlike Stein, Beach focuses more on what other writers are contributing to things greater than themselves. For instance when praising the “mysterious power” of Hemingway’s book titles, she claims that they have “enriched the American vocabulary” (83). By facilitating the achievements of American writers, she contributes to enrichment of American letters.

The American spirit of Shakespeare and Company reaches its apex when Beach runs an exhibition in honor of Walt Whitman. She writes,

The exhibition was ready. All that was lacking was an American flag of suitable dimensions, which I needed to screen off the bookshelves—and to add a patriotic note. Walt Whitman always brings out my patriotism…. I just happened to possess what was perhaps the largest American flag in Paris…. It was a great-building-size flag, a leftover from World War I. It was very effective at Walt Whitman’s exhibition (129).

Beach’s conception of her cohort as a group of pilgrims carries Whitmanian overtones, not in writing style but in conception and vision. Beach’s vision of her circle finds precedence in Walt Whitman’s famed poem “Pioneers! O Pioneers!”: “All the past we leave behind; / We debouch upon a newer, mightier world, varied world, / Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the march, Pioneers! O pioneers!” (183) Beach leaves behind her past life in the United States and enters a new and varied world. Although Whitman writes about America and militaristic movement—
“debouch” and “march”—the sentiment and tone applies to Beach’s American endeavors abroad. Paris serves as the location for Beach’s emergence from the past into a new world, supporting the project of her text by honoring literary innovators.

Beach’s relationship with Paris as a whole, though affectionate, is not sentimental. She does not rhapsodize on Paris as some sort of ethereal muse, but she does, with common words, express her appreciation. Early in the memoir she writes, “Paris was paradise to Mother; an Impressionist painting” (5)—this is perhaps the most romantic interpretation of Paris in the text, and she attributes it to her mother. Beach’s own desire to live in Paris stems from her appreciation of French literature: “In 1917, I went to Paris. For some time, I had had a particular interest in contemporary French writing. Now I wanted to pursue my studies at the source” (9)—a reasonable explanation for living in Paris. She appreciates the exciting literary scene in Paris. She explains that Miss Ethel Moorhead and Ernest Walsh “brought out several lively numbers; No. 2 contained the piece about ‘Shem’ from Joyce’s ‘Work in Progress,’ and contributions from many other writers who were about in that exciting ‘Paris period’ of America’s literary history” (SC 140). The “Paris period” of American literature excites her; she is grateful for the practical benefits of Parisian living, such as the affordable rent: “Rents in Paris were small, and there were only myself and Myrsine, so, as far as overhead expenses went, there was nothing to worry about” (74).

Just as she does not romanticize the city, she does not romanticize herself within it. Whereas Hemingway exaggerates his status as provider, Beach admits to initially receiving financial assistance from her parents. She writes a cable to her mother in

Furthermore, unlike the other expatriates in this study, Beach does not present herself heroically. Shari Benstock writes, “Beach’s memoir is disappointing, most particularly because it is so successfully self-effacing that we are left with little sense of the woman who played such a pivotal role in Modernism” (221). “Disappointing” is an understatement; at a time of such hetero-normativity and patriarchy, as a lesbian, Beach’s integration into the history of American literature marks a watershed moment. Benstock also adds that the title *Shakespeare and Company* suggests patriarchal literary heritage rather than “a woman’s contribution to an American expatriate enterprise” (221), which is unfortunately accurate. Beach appears as the Nick Carraway to James Joyce’s Jay Gatsby; though she narrates her own story, she is not the memoir’s star. The scarcity of mainstream female memoirs about this period substantially limits “our view of the women” male authors “invoke frequently in their stories” (Monk 117).

*Shakespeare and Company* does not account for this limitation because Beach, like Cowley, emphasizes the community over the individual, effacing her own experience. The Nazis sent Beach to an internment camp but Beach mentions it only in passing, when she writes “After six months in an internment camp” (216)—this is not even a complete sentence and points immediate to her life after internment. One can only imagine the heroic narrative into which other writers would transform such an experience, which is key to Beach’s autobiographical self because it demonstrates Beach’s propriety and humility. She does not construct a martyr persona for herself even though her life story—from Joyce’s abandonment after helping him for years to
being sent to a concentration camp—would lend itself easily to one. As such, *Shakespeare and Company* is a book of absences—some of the most telling details are those the author omits.

Beach’s memoir is far kinder in spirit and tone than many others. Noel Riley Fitch writes in *Sylvia Beach and the Lost Generation*, “[her memoir] presented her public diplomacy and goodwill and not her private, occasionally bristling wit. Her friends agree that contrary to the star-struck attitude that her memoirs convey, her genius lay in knowing precisely how to choose and discriminate” (412). This is key to Beach’s memoir because she could have written a highly critical book, akin to Stein’s or Hemingway’s, but she chose to focus on the positive traits of those she encountered in life.

Her love of Paris parallels her love of art. Beach lived most of her life in Paris and devoted most of her life to art. But in *Shakespeare and Company*, she admits, “Great as was my admiration for *Ulysses*, human beings were more to me than works of art” (75-76). Likewise, great as was her admiration for Paris, she focused more on the artists. Although ostensibly about literature and Paris, *Shakespeare and Company* is about the people who touched Beach’s life. “Sylvia was kind to me from the beginning,” recalls Allen Tate, “I never knew why, except that true kindness needs no reason” (qtd. in Fitch 273). This selfless kindness characterizes *Shakespeare and Company*’s project—the kind memories, the absence of cattiness, and the honest humility marks a significant accomplishment in this era of embattled egos and self-aggrandizement.
A Moveable Feast

Ernest Hemingway was born in 1899 in Oak Park, Illinois—a town about which he never wrote a story. Hemingway biographer Michael Reynolds writes, “Nowhere in his fiction did he tell us about the chickens in the back yard, the family horse and buggy, the gas lights in the house, or the winter odors of apple barrels and coal” (YH 5). For Reynolds, Oak Park would have lent itself well to Hemingway’s style of writing. But most Hemingway heroes adventure in foreign lands: Paris, Pamplona, Milan, Key West, Segovia, the Great Rift Valley, and Havana. His Midwestern upbringing shapes the ways in which his protagonists encounter these places, particularly Paris. Three months after arriving in Paris in 1921 Hemingway wrote the scornful article “American Bohemians in Paris” for The Toronto Star Weekly in 1922: “The scum of Greenwich Village, New York, has been skimmed off and deposited in large ladles on that section of Paris adjacent to the Café Rotonde” (16). His relationship with the American bohemians would fluctuate throughout his life—from endearment to derision. He achieved fame from capturing the decadence and aimlessness of their lifestyles in The Sun Also Rises and, thereafter, was linked in the public’s consciousness with the American bohemians in Paris. He became the quintessential icon for the enclave he had purported to detest in his Toronto Star piece—his identity linked to Paris, and Paris’s identity, for Hemingway fans and scholars, linked to his.

A Moveable Feast is the most famous American expatriate memoir of the 1920s and, therefore, has contributed greatly to the common perception of that literary era. Given Hemingway’s critical and popular attention, his impact—in both shaping and
revising—the topographical construct of Paris is significant. With *A Moveable Feast* Hemingway presents two vying visions of Paris: one of the city as an artist’s haven, one of the pernicious literary network that slowly contaminates the first—though Hemingway’s work ethic persists throughout both. *A Moveable Feast*, then, serves a dual purpose as an act of atonement for leaving his first wife Hadley Richardson for his second wife Pauline Pfeiffer and as a depiction of Hemingway’s transformation into an artist. Paris enabled both his romantic loss and artistic gain. The rose-colored vision of Paris stems from both nostalgic longing and suppression of less pleasant memories. Michael Reynolds explains the subjective nature of memory: “What old men remember is not what young men taste and touch. Memory is its own country outside of time where old men remake their lives unencumbered with remembering right” (94-95). It is important to keep in mind that *A Moveable Feast* presents a vision of young Hemingway as remembered by old Hemingway who, despite his confident public image, was inside “a shaken, worried man, his self-confidence badly eroded, his memory playing tracks on him, and his nervous system clearly in trouble” (Reynolds *FY* 347). In “A Farewell to Spring and Paris,” an early review of *A Moveable Feast,* Marvin Mudrick contrasts the old and young Hemingway: “The old writer is at last coming at the truth of his experience directly, not, as the young one did, obliquely and implicitly, not evading it by bluster and tricks as Life Magazine’s champion bull-thrower learned to do” (574). Mudrick’s point is that the writer of *A Moveable Feast* wrote about the experiences he wanted to convey to the reader more directly than the writer of “Indian Camp” or “Hills Like White Elephants.” There is precision in his
descriptions of himself and in his surroundings, despite the flaws and bias in the elder Hemingway’s memory.

Hemingway is far more conscious of topographical details than many of the other expatriates. As a journalist he had to be specific about events, times, and places. Stein, Cowley, and Beach did not have the same training in or desire for exactitude. A few of the chapter titles convey the importance of place in *A Moveable Feast*: “A Good Café on the Place St.-Michel,” “Shakespeare and Company,” “People of the Seine,” “With Pascin at the Dome,” “Evan Shipman at the Lilas,” and “Winters in Schruns” all highlight the importance place plays in Hemingway’s recollection of events in Paris—this topographical awareness saturates the text.

Hemingway builds the scenery much like he does in his fiction, with precise locations and activities. Hemingway once described the essential quality of a good book:

> All good books are alike in that they are truer than if they had really happened and after you are finished reading one you will feel that all that happened to you and afterwards it all belongs to you; the good and the bad, the ecstasy, the remorse and sorrow, the people and the places and how the weather was. (*By-Line* 184)

*A Moveable Feast* fits Hemingway’s criterion. From the first lines of the memoir Hemingway presents the reader with the narrator’s perspective, describes the weather, names specific locations, and provides specific details about all three:
Then there was the bad weather. It would come in one day when the fall was over. You would have to shut the windows in the night against the rain and the cold wind would strip the leaves from the trees in the Place Contrescarpe. The leaves lay sodden in the rain and the wind drove the rain against the big green autobus at the terminal and the Café des Amateurs was crowded and the windows misted over from the heat and the smoke inside. (2009 15)

Hemingway recollects the sodden leaves, the green autobus at the terminal, and the misted windows of the Café des Amateurs—all precise details. Hemingway also locates the café geographically in the following paragraph: “The Café des Amateurs was the cesspool of the rue Mouffetard, that wonderful narrow crowded market street which led into the Place Contrescarpe” (2009 15). When he walks to the good café on the Place St.-Michel, he details his route:

I walked down past the Lycée Henri Quatre and the ancient church of St.-Étienne-du-Mont and the windswept Place du Panthéon and cut in for shelter to the right and finally came out on the lee side of the Boulevard St.-Michel and worked on down it past the Cluny and the Boulevard St.-Germain until I came to a good café that I knew on the Place St.-Michel. (2009 16-17)

This geographic attentiveness runs throughout the memoir—from the Luxembourg gardens, where one cannot smell or see food from the Place de l’Observatoire to the rue de Vaugirard (2009 65), to the shortest route from the rue Cardinal Lemoine to the
Seine (2009 35); from the Closerie des Lilas, the best café near 113 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs where Hemingway and Hadley lived above the sawmill (2009 73), to Michaud’s restaurant on the corner of the rue Jacob and the rue des Saints-Peres, where Hemingway ate lunch with Fitzgerald (2009 161). Such mappable geography allows the reader to imagine Hemingway’s literary persona in precise locations. *A Moveable Feast*’s physical meticulousness creates a semblance of certainty, which is transferred from the geography to the characters of the memoir, most importantly to Hemingway’s portrayal of himself; further corroborating Matthew J. Bruccoli’s claim that “Ernest Hemingway’s best-invented fictional character was Ernest Hemingway” (xviii-xix).

Along with his attention to details, the older Hemingway constructs a Romanticized version of Paris as a whole that is conducive to his growth as an artist—that fulfills the narrative requirements for his apprenticeship. He blends his writing with the city. When a pretty black-haired young woman enters the café on the Place St. Michel, Hemingway thinks to himself, “You belong to me and all Paris belongs to me and I belong to this notebook and this pencil” (2009 18). Hemingway’s ambition resonates clearly in this sentence—connecting his muse to himself, the city to himself, and finally, him to his craft. This sort of ambition coincides with the typical American Horatio Alger success story, the young man with talent and a yearning for success. Reynolds explains the costs of such a story:

Like an Alger story, it was all coming true: hard-working kid rises in the world through pluck and luck. Add a few good friends. Add much talent and the ability to lie when he had to. It was contemporary Alger, where
steps up the ladder were not without grave costs: burned bridges and broken promises which he preferred not to think about. (355)

*A Moveable Feast* is the Alger story in which he suppresses those “burned bridges and broken promises”; what Hemingway prefers not to think about recedes as hard work advances to prominence. When struggling with the difficulties of writing truly, Hemingway achieves grace-under-literary-pressure while surveying the Parisian skyline: “I would stand and look out over the roofs of Paris and think, ‘Do not worry. You have always written before and you will write now. All you have to do is write one true sentence. Write the truest sentence you know.’ So finally I would write one true sentence, and then go on from there” (2009 22). This adage, of writing one true sentence, is requisite in any analysis of Hemingway’s writing process, but he does not think it to himself at an unspecified moment—he thinks it while looking over Paris.

When Hemingway succeeds in creating art, through luck and discipline—two necessities for *kairos*—he may explore the city: “Going down the stairs when you had worked well, and that needed luck as well as discipline, was a wonderful feeling and I was free then to walk anywhere in Paris” (23). Both his inspiration and his reward, the Paris of *A Moveable Feast* is “clear and cold and lovely” (2009 22). But, as William Van O’Connor writes,

> It is sad to imagine Hemingway, in Ketchum, Idaho, and in Cuba, writing these memoirs. Papa Hemingway, ill and near death, reconstructed his youth and relived it. Hemingway the champ dominates the book…. the main image is clear. Hemingway is lucid, non-
fraudulent, muscular, and the coming writer (“great” is his own word)…

The Hemingway of A Moveable Feast is the persona Hemingway tried to live. (789)

A Moveable Feast is about an old man romanticizing his past just as much as it is about a young writer making his way in the world. O’Connor’s perspective that the writing of A Moveable Feast is essentially a sad thought proves persuasive and is corroborated by his lifestyle at the time of composition. Hemingway took “tranquilizers, antidepressants, heart medicine, testosterone steroids, and large doses of vitamins” daily—many of these drugs forbid drinking (Reynolds FY 309); nevertheless, Hemingway drank an average of four to six bottles of whiskey and two to three cases of wine per month, indicating that in addition to the complications of memory, A Moveable Feast is mediated by bad health and impaired judgment as well. Jacqueline Tavernier-Courbin notes, “A Moveable Feast is a book written by a man who was psychologically sick, but it is perfectly in line with his life and work, and it is the logical product of his personality” (107). In this drug and alcohol obscured remembrance, Hemingway—defying his code of personal responsibility—attempts to cast blame onto others.

Hemingway projects the blame for abandoning Hadley primarily onto the new friends they made in France. At times, he attributes his weakening Midwestern morality onto the corrupting influence of others, most notably “the rich” and, more unjustly, Pauline in “The Pilot Fish and the Rich.” Hemingway successfully projects a sympathetic version of himself despite his flaws because of what he leaves out of the memoir, suggesting that the text is constituted by two processes of remembrance: (1)
the revision of events after they have been recalled and (2) the revision of events through subjective memory. Some of the misleading sections in *A Moveable Feast* were the result of Hemingway crafting his own image and others were the result of faithfulness to poorly recollected, thought seemingly accurate, events.

Hemingway is well known for his iceberg theory that “you could omit anything if you knew that you omitted and the omitted part would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they understood” (2009 71). But he omitted much from *A Moveable Feast* that readers cannot feel because Hemingway left them out entirely. The undetectable iceberg of *A Moveable Feast* is how grueling the city could be. As J. Gerald Kennedy explains, Hemingway suppresses that it “rained nearly every day”; that he rented the top-floor writing room only briefly; that journalistic chores stalled literary projects; that he had but sporadic contact with Pound and Joyce and saw Stein less than the narrative implies; that he worked in cafes to escape the cramped apartment with Hadley; that his wife’s trust fund provided a steady income which spared the couple that poverty and hunger which figure so prominently in the memoir (*Imagining Paris* 131). But Hemingway’s actual experiences in Paris are comparatively negligible since his experiences as they appear in *A Moveable Feast* are what persist as his later discursive construction. As Aaron Hotchner writes in *Papa Hemingway*, “in Ernest’s lexicon, Paris and happiness were synonymous” (58).
CHAPTER III: COMPETITIVE NOSTALGIA
Intertextuality and Fluidity of the Construct

The Anxiety of Contemporary Influence

Imaginative geography does not deal solely with a writer’s connection to places, but also with people. Just as writers discursively construct relationships with streets or cafés to which they attribute essentialist qualities, so too do writers discursively construct relationships with other writers to which they attribute essentialist qualities. And although many writers depict their milieu as an impediment for them to transcend aesthetically, emotionally, morally, or geographically, a close study of these expatriate memoirs reveals how indebted they are to one another, how the very milieu they sought to transcend in fact enabled their literary feats.

The modernists have been viewed as the culmination of Romantic individualism. Barbara Will, building upon Peter Bürger’s ideas in Theory of the Avant-Garde, writes, “the myth of the high modernist genius working in splendid though isolated freedom is inseparable from the formalist idea of modern art as autonomous, hermetic, and self-referential” (4-5). Similarly, Sidonie Smith argues that male autobiographies attempt to discredit “personal and communal interdependency” by celebrating an “adversarial stance toward the world” (39). Although this adversarial stance is an important element to some memoirs, her essentialist language is problematic since this description can most aptly be applied to Hemingway and Stein, but certainly not Cowley. Regardless of whether the writers embrace their peers like Beach and Cowley or slander their peers like Hemingway and Stein, the contemporary
influences and connections in their works reveal the rhetorical network from which these works grew—a network that the concept chôra helps to illuminate.

Stein, Hemingway, Beach, and Cowley knew, influenced, and responded to one another in and out of their memoirs. Marilyn Cooper claims that language and texts are not simply ways to communicate information but that they are “essentially social activities” (366). The social aspect of this autobiographical project means that no author will have the final and uncontested word. Schopenhauer writes that “one man’s fate is always in keeping with another’s, and everyone is the hero of his own drama, but at the same time figures also in that of another” (220). Since the expatriates were not the only authors of their life stories, a kind of competitive nostalgia for the authoritative version of events emerged. But each firsthand account offers a productive perspective that enriches the larger collection of texts.

Stein’s writing influenced Ernest Hemingway’s during his early years in Paris. In A Moveable Feast, Hemingway writes, “She had also discovered many things about rhythms and the uses of words in repetition that were valid and valuable and she talked well about them” (2009 27). The opening of Hemingway’s short story “Mr and Mrs Elliot” from In Our Time (1925) partly demonstrates Hemingway’s adoption of Stein’s rhythm and repetition: “Mr. and Mrs. Elliot tried very hard to have a baby…. They did not try very often on the boat because Mrs. Elliot was quite sick. She was sick and when she was sick she was sick as Southern women are sick” (85). However, Stein exaggerates the extent to which she influenced Hemingway. In the Autobiography, Stein’s construction of Alice B. Toklas claims that “Hemingway had been formed by
the two of them [Stein and Sherwood Anderson] and they were both a little proud and a little ashamed of the work of their minds” (216). And she recounts some advice she gave to Hemingway: “It was then that Gertrude Stein said, Hemingway, remarks are not literature” (219). She even goes so far as to attribute two of Hemingway’s greatest preoccupations to Anderson and Toklas, by having Toklas narrate, “He [Hemingway] was also a shadow-boxer, thanks to Sherwood, and he heard about bull-fighting from me” (217). Hemingway fought against this interpretation of his work early in his career. Many early reviews of In Our Time attributed Hemingway’s literary debt to Stein and Anderson. The New York Herald Tribune, for instance, published the following: “He shows the influence of Gertrude Stein very strongly, that of Joyce almost not at all; he is also very strongly under the influence of Sherwood Anderson” (qtd. in Reynolds PY 329).

All three of the writers mentioned in this review influenced Hemingway, though Joyce may have been the greatest influence out of the three—especially Joyce’s Dubliners on Hemingway’s early short stories. In “Dubliners in Michigan: Joyce’s Presence in Hemingway’s In Our Time,” Robert E. Gajdusek explicates how influential Joyce’s work was on Hemingway’s:

Exile, escape from one’s society, or movement toward expatriation from it appear as central themes in most of their stories. Most of them record repressed or real violence, and in almost all by both writers the focus is on men who are ineffectual, defeated or lacking in the control they sought to have; in many, fathers are absent or ineffective. (50)
Hemingway’s friendship with Joyce also outlived his with either Stein or Anderson and lasted until the end of their lives. Joyce is one of the few literary figures that Hemingway represents positively in *A Moveable Feast*; this demonstrates that Hemingway did not cut ties with all his friends from the Paris days. He never denied Joyce’s influence. Joyce appears at the end of “The Man Who Was Marked for Death” chapter at the Deux-Magots realizing with Hemingway that they were both promised the same prize by Ernest Walsh and toward the end of “A False Spring,” speaking Italian with his family at Michaud’s. The positive portrayal of Joyce is reinforced by Hemingway’s genuine enthusiasm for the author before meeting him when he asks Beach eagerly in *Shakespeare and Company*, “When does Joyce come in?” (2009 32) Hemingway’s admiration, respect, and kindness for Joyce remained steady throughout his life; he often recalled drunken fun with Joyce, such as the following passage from *Green Hills of Africa* (1935):

> The last night Joyce and his wife came to dinner and we had a pheasant and a quarter of the chevreuil with the saddle and Joyce and I got drunk because we were off for Africa the next day. God, we had a night. (195)

In typical Hemingway style, Hemingway’s understated “we had a night” demonstrates warmth without sentimentality. According to Hotchner’s *Papa Hemingway*, Hemingway claims that after bringing Joyce home to his partner Nora Barnacle, she would say, “Well, here come James Joyce the author, drunk again with Ernest Hemingway” (54). Hotchner’s depiction of Hemingway and Joyce’s friendship is problematic because Hotchner misrepresented and/or revised some of Hemingway’s
words throughout the biography. Despite this drawback, the biography’s popularity influenced the imaginative construction of their social life in Paris, contributing to the image of Joyce and Hemingway wandering around Paris drunk—similarly to the passage above from Green Hills of Africa.

But the friendship between Stein and Hemingway deteriorated after Hemingway parodied Sherwood Anderson’s Dark Laughter (1925) with his novella The Torrents of Spring (1926), which he wrote to break his contract with Boni & Liveright so Charles Scribner’s Sons—who published Fitzgerald’s writing—could publish The Sun Also Rises (1926). Fitzgerald, later in life, claimed, “Ernest would always give a helping hand to a man on a ledge a little higher up” (qtd. in Donaldson 217), which provides one perspective to look at Hemingway’s burned bridges. Stein took the attack upon Anderson personally and her unflattering depiction of Hemingway in the Autobiography demonstrates her resentment. Unlike Hemingway’s own heroic depictions of himself, Stein portrays him as a coward: “When Sherwood came to Paris Hemingway naturally was afraid. Sherwood as naturally was not…. They admitted that Hemingway was yellow” (216). When Stein published the Autobiography (1933) Hemingway had just published Death in the Afternoon (1932) and was on the safari expedition that would be the basis for Green Hills of Africa. Stein’s depiction of Hemingway was inimical to his cultivation of machismo. But Stein betrays Hemingway when she divulges private matters that may or may not have happened, such as when Hemingway laments impregnating Hadley: “he announced that his wife was enceinte and then with great bitterness, and I, I am too young to be a father” (213). In Stein and Hemingway: The
Story of a Turbulent Friendship, Lyle Larsen writes that “Stein saw Hemingway as a deeply sensitive individual whose sensitivity embarrassed him because it made him feel weak and vulnerable” (5). This sensitive Hemingway endeared Stein, but what she perceived to be Hemingway performative toughness prompted him to attack Anderson and many others. Although Stein’s portrayal of Hemingway is harsh, he was the first to commit disparaging remarks to print. Still, neither could ignore the initial kindness of the other.

Hemingway helped get The Making of Americans, arguably Stein’s greatest work, printed. In A Moveable Feast Hemingway both admits admiration and critiques the novel:

This book began magnificently, went on very well for a long way with stretches of great brilliance and then went on endlessly in repetitions that a more conscientious and less lazy writer would have put in the waste basket. I came to know it very well as I got Ford Madox Ford to publish it in The Transatlantic Review serially…I had to read all of Miss Stein’s proof for her as this was a work which gave her no happiness. (27)

In Stein’s unflattering portrait of Hemingway, she must account for Hemingway doing such a kind favor for her, but she does with a reservation about his intentions. Larsen points out that Stein’s “weakness for Hemingway and her sense of gratitude still did not cloud her perceptions or bridle her tongue” (95). Stein writes:

Later on when things were difficult between Gertrude Stein and Hemingway, she always remembered with gratitude that after all it was
Hemingway who first caused to be printed a piece of The Making of Americans. She always says, yes sure I have a weakness for Hemingway. After all he was the first of the young men to knock at my door and he did make Ford print the first piece of The Making of Americans. (215)

Then, still in Toklas’s voice, she undermines Hemingway’s benevolent action:

I myself have not so much confidence that Hemingway did do this. I have never known what the story is but I have always been certain that there was some other story behind it all. That is the way I feel about it.

(215-16)

By concluding this passage with “That is the way I feel about it,” she does not need to substantiate her argument at all. In fact, like the rest of the book, since she attributes the words to Toklas it is presumably already sourced. Stein deflects responsibility by dissociating herself from the ideas she presents. Hemingway clearly did not think highly of the Autobiography and said that her former talent degenerated into “malice and self-praise” (qtd. in Souhami 193).

When Hemingway decided to write his own memoir of Paris, he consequently depicted Stein harshly, which critics have responded to with sympathy and disgust. Larsen writes that in the three chapters dealing with Stein, “he showed Stein to be outspoken and domineering” (178). Michael J. Hoffman describes the chapters on Stein as “cattily malicious” (15). Jamie Hovey argues that Hemingway’s portrayal of “lazy lesbians [who] decline into viciousness and obscurity and die, unremembered and alone,” serves as the control for “hardworking, clean, normal young men [who] become
famous and live happily ever after with their fame and their families” (111). In the chapter “Miss Stein Instructs” from *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway shows her his recently written short story “Up in Michigan,” the writing of which he portrays in the opening chapter “A Good Café on the Place St.-Michel.” Stein criticizes the story for being “inaccrochable,” which means “it is like a picture that a painter paints and then he cannot hang it when he has a show and nobody will buy it because they cannot hang it either” (2009 25). To this criticism, Hemingway lucidly and logically replies, “But what if it is not dirty but it is only that you are trying to use words that people would actually use? That are the only words that can make the story come true and that you must use them? You have to use them” (2009 25). Stein does not rationally present opposing points but rather says, “But you don’t get the point at all” (2009 25). To Stein, Hemingway simply does not get it. Hemingway writes that even though he did not agree with what Stein said, “it was a point of view and I did not believe in arguing with my elders” (2009 25). As the narrator, Hemingway can maintain a literary persona of quiet dignity while informing the reader of his thoughts. The older Hemingway who wrote *A Moveable Feast* probably had more concern for the young respecting their elders than the young Hemingway—as hinted at by the contrasting visions of the aged in the young Hemingway’s “My Old Man” and the mature Hemingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea*. But the genre of memoir affords Hemingway the last word, particularly because Stein had died in 1946. Much like the tension between Hemingway and Stein in the *Autobiography*, the tension in *A Moveable Feast* casts the author as the logical, clearheaded one, while the former mentor is dogmatic, arrogant, and adverse to logic.
That both authors offer complementary and contrasting portrayals of their relationship suggests that they both knew their literary legacies were inextricably linked and that the popularity of the other would result in negative responses from that writer’s audience. Their anxiety of contemporary influence—as embodied by their memoirs—compelled them to testify against the other, in an attempt to convince the audience, and perhaps themselves, of their innocence and amiability.

The Reassurance of Contemporary Influence

Sylvia Beach, on the other hand, did not need to demonstrate her own kindness or disparage others. Considering her significant influence, she is underrepresented by the other memoirs of this project. She is mentioned briefly in the Autobiography, absent in Exile’s Return, and glowingly represented in A Moveable Feast. When Hemingway enters Shakespeare and Company for the first time, he describes Beach positively:

Sylvia had a lively, very sharply cut face, brown eyes that were as alive as a small animal’s and as gay as a young girl’s… she was kind, cheerful and interested, and loved to make jokes and gossip. No one that I ever knew was nicer to me. (29)

This introduction of Beach stands in stark contrast to the rest of the largely negative portrayals throughout the memoir. Hemingway does not write with his typical reserved language of understatement in the final line and attributes a superlative to Beach for her support. Later on, in the chapter “Hunger Was Good Discipline,” Beach demonstrates maternal concern for Hemingway when she tells him, “You’re too thin, Hemingway….
Are you eating enough?” (2009 66), and then says, “Get home now before it’s too late for lunch…. Don’t eat cold food either. Eat a good hot lunch” (2009 67).

In Shakespeare and Company, Beach’s portrayal of Hemingway is overwhelmingly positive as well. She describes when Hemingway first walked into Shakespeare and Company: “I looked up and saw a tall, dark young fellow with a small mustache, and heard him say, in a deep, deep voice, that he was Ernest Hemingway” (78); Hemingway goes on to share his war experience: “he told me apologetically, like a boy confessing he had been in a scrap, he had got wounded in the knee, fighting in Italy” (78). Although he was genuinely injured, the fighting part of this story is a fabrication since Hemingway was an ambulance driver. In The Young Hemingway, Reynolds notes,

It was not enough to have been a myopic Red Cross ambulance driver blown up while distributing chocolate. Pressured by his peers and local expectations, Ernest Hemingway kept right on inventing his fantasy war, the war he would have fought if only he had been given the chance. (55)

Here and throughout his early life, Hemingway appears as a raconteur, creating stories and representations of himself orally; nevertheless, Beach’s text preserves these oral tales in print. But Beach does not question or challenge Hemingway’s image of himself and, in fact, creates, at times, a highly flattering portrait of Hemingway. She depicts Hemingway as a self-reliant autodidact:

Hemingway was a widely educated young man, who knew many countries and several languages; and he had learned it all first hand, not
in universities. He seemed to me to have gone a great deal farther and faster than any of the young writers I knew. In spite of a certain boyishness, he was exceptionally wise and self-reliant. (79)

This flattering portrayal of Hemingway’s intellect tells just as much about Beach’s good nature and fondness for Hemingway as it does about Hemingway himself. In contrast, Reynolds writes, “Only a high-school graduate with no reading command of a foreign language, he [Hemingway] was sometimes uncomfortable around his newly found Paris friends” (63); Reynolds then lists the eclectic erudition of Pound, Stein, Joyce, “Chink” Dorman-Smith, and Beach, in order to elucidate Hemingway more accurately and fully—flaws and strengths.

Beach, unlike Stein, recalls Hemingway’s help without backhanded insults. She writes, “it was due to Hemingway that my copies of Ulysses penetrated into the United States” (SC 87). And her memoir concludes with Hemingway heroically liberating the Rue de l’Odéon from the Nazis. She writes, “I flew downstairs; we met with a crash; he picked me up and swung me around and kissed me while people on the street and in the windows cheered” (220). This conclusion reiterates Beach’s idealistic American worldview, which runs throughout Shakespeare and Company—strengthened by the inclusion of one of the most “American” of writers, on top off Beach’s own worth to the expatriate moment.

Cowley’s Outsider Perspective

In juxtaposition to Beach’s central position in literary Paris, Cowley’s relationship with the other writers is peripheral at best. He was not part of the inner
circle of great writers the way Stein, Beach, and Hemingway were. Since Beach was the owner of a bookstore rather than an author, she does not appear in Cowley’s memoir. Stein and Hemingway, however, appear in the memoir owing to their status as formidable literary figures. For instance, *Exile’s Return* quotes Hemingway’s fiction as emblematic of its times. His prominence is implicit in the amount of times Cowley’s references him to explain the actions of the generation more generally—most productively, perhaps, in reference to his experience as an ambulance driver on the Italian front in World War I. Cowley even quotes and analyzes a lengthy passage from *A Farewell to Arms* as evidence of Hemingway’s embodiment of the generation’s activities (44-45).

Cowley details an outsider’s perspective on Hemingway’s reputation: “A big young man with intent eyes and a toothbrush mustache was there when I arrived, and Pound introduced him as Ernest Hemingway; I said that I had heard about him. Hemingway gave a slow Midwestern grin” (120). These lines indicate that people are talking about this new writer’s potential; Hemingway is the object of speculation and expectation—one reinforced by the support of acknowledged great writers, such as Pound who had spoken of Hemingway as “something new in American literature” (120). Cowley writes that when Hemingway left he was “walking on the balls of his feet like a boxer” (120). This description imbues Hemingway with the mannerisms of his characters, suggesting his dual writer-sportsman persona. He encouraged this persona; as John Raeburn explains in *Fame Became of Him,* “No writer has ever been so public a
sportsman as Hemingway” (25) and Hemingway “wanted very much to be known as a champion sportsman” (52).

After Hemingway’s success, this outsider’s perspective focuses on the way Hemingway’s audience acts, extending the reach of Hemingway’s influence:

I remember being taken to an unfamiliar saloon—it was in the winter of 1925-26—and finding that the back room was full of young writers and their wives just home from Paris. They were all telling stories about Hemingway, whose first book had just appeared, and the were talking in what I afterward came to recognize as the Hemingway dialect—tough, matter-of-fact and confidential. In the middle of the evening one of them rose, took off his jacket and used it to show how he would dominate a bull. (223)

This only hints at the extent to which Hemingway’s idiom would influence the twentieth-century, as Philip Young explains: “He helped to purify our writing of sentimentality, literary embellishment, padding and a superficial artfulness. Almost singlehanded he vitalized the writing of dialogue” (203). Hemingway’s reputation continued to grow until Cowley witnessed two strangers fighting over an interpretation of Hemingway’s work. He explains,

By that time Hemingway’s influence had spread far beyond the circle of those who had known him in Paris. The Smith College girls in New York were modeling themselves after Lady Brett in *The Sun Also Rises*. Hundreds of bright young men from the Middle West were trying to be
Hemingway heroes, talking in tough understatements from the sides of their mouths. (225-26)

Cowley does not appear in Hemingway’s memoir. He did not have the same level of influence as Hemingway and, therefore, is not discussed as often as Hemingway in other memoirs. But Cowley’s project dealt not with capturing his experience but with the generation’s experience as a whole. As Robert M. Crunden explains, “Cowley took it as a given that sensitive writers felt alienated by the philistia of a progressive world that had exhausted itself in the futilities of sexual, alcoholic, and military repressions” (415). This universalizing makes Exile’s Return an empathetic yet assuming text, insofar as it renders the text relatable and inclusive at the cost of exactitude—he often generalizes specific experiences for his entire generation.

Cowley considers Stein’s label “the Lost Generation” to be accurate: “It was lost, first of all, because it was uprooted, schooled away and always wrenched away from its attachment to any region or tradition” (9). Although Hemingway popularized the term by including it as an epigraph to The Sun Also Rises, he apparently did not support it; in A Moveable Feast he writes, “the hell with her lost-generation talk and all the dirty, easy labels” (2009 62). But Hemingway was not the only writer to construct a negative portrayal of Stein. Cowley writes, “she liked to have young men sit at her feet and was not above being jealous of Pound’s influence on the younger writers” (119). Cowley’s depiction of Stein, thought not sustained, perpetuates the common themes of her egotism and resentment toward more successful writers. But he also frequently aligns her with the acknowledged great writers of the era. For instance, in chapter IV,
“Paris Pilgrimages,” Cowley composes an examination paper for aspiring writers, which includes a question about figuring out how previous great writers have solved certain problems they have suggested: “What is the Joyce solution to these problems (or the Eliot, the Pound, the Gertrude Stein, the Paul Valéry solution)?” (110). But, like the other accomplished figures, by the end of the memoir, Stein does not maintain the influence that she had earlier. Stein (and Joyce) became bestsellers, “no longer venerated by an esoteric cult. The new young men weren’t planning to follow in their footsteps” (286). Later, in 1956 Cowley would write, “Gertrude’s principal subject was herself” (qtd. in Franken 81). Cowley’s Stein demonstrates little interest in the outside world; consequently, the outside world demonstrates little interest in her.

But the lack of outside interest is part of Cowley’s narrative of Stein, not her own, nor Hemingway’s or Beach’s. This begs the question of “correctness.” This question rises repeatedly when dealing with contradictory narratives of the same experiences. The answer is more nuanced and complicated than the response that any one writer is right. In fact, each writer is correct at different times, and sometimes the subjectivity of personal experiences proves problematic when attempting to document the truth. But there are ways to, not reconcile, but account for these varied narratives productively without blotting out the differences.

Chôra

So far, I have demonstrated how the modernists constructed various versions of Paris, all of which persist through the same signifier, “Paris.” Chôra provides a way of linking these disparate presentations of Paris. Rather than ask what these places are,
chôra helps us understand what these places do. These places come together to form a matrix of energies that change the identities of both author and location. Chôragraphy is the idea of not giving primacy to one argument over another but to consider all arguments at once; as Hemingway writes in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, “There’s no one thing that’s true. It’s all true” (486). By looking at the versions of Paris presented by Stein, Cowley, Beach and Hemingway not as mutually exclusive histories, but as a constantly shifting constellation of narratives, a more complete and dynamic picture of Paris emerges.

E.V. Walter writes that chôra is “the active receptacle of shapes, powers, feelings, and meanings, organizing the qualities within it, energizing experience” (qtd. in Kennedy 24). For Plato, chôra provides the connection between place and an idea reaching fruition; in *The Timaeus* he writes, “It is the receptacle, and it were the nurse of all becoming” (para. XVIII). This nurturing receptacle chôra is etymologically linked with the Greek *khoros*, meaning movement or band of dancers. This shares similarities with the way Indra McEwen sees a connection between “dancing and having a place to dance: to give something a place means to see it in action, and vice versa (Rickert 258). Just as having a place to dance enables dancing, having a place to write enables writing. But one cannot pinpoint an absolute creative origin that informs the atmosphere of expatriate memoirs. But we can use chôra as an analogy for the un-locatable origin for these authors’ versions of Paris: “A ‘beginning’ as a singular, locatable moment is missing; what emerges instead is a distribution (or matrix) of beginnings” (Rickert 257). The multiplicity of environments presented as “Paris” in these memoirs facilitates
writing. Paris operates in a chôratic way, allowing the writers to reach the point of creative generation.

For Stein and Cowley the point of creative generation is predicated upon chôratic imperative. Cowley’s project of “recover[ing] a prehistoric and prelogical fashion of looking at the world” (qtd. in Simpson 223) relates to Julia Kristeva’s recent work on chôra as a theoretical preverbal realm. She writes that chôra denotes a “mobile and extremely provisional articulation constituted by movements and their ephemeral stases” (25). Similarly, Stein’s notion of invention builds upon a similar chôratic conception of creation that can be traced back to Gorgias’ kairos. She explains why so few intelligent people ever create while speaking:

Although they are clearly saying something they are not clearly creating something, because they always are remembering, they are not at the same time talking and listening. (Stein, Lectures in America 180)

In Kaironomia, Eric Charles White explains what this means for genuine novelty and imitation:

the impulse to repeat, which ratifies the comfortable notion that knowledge is in principle finite, encourages us to speak not to the present occasion (the locus of genuine novelty) but from (in imitation of) the purely ideal constructs of our memories. (18)

To achieve genuine novelty, Stein’s more experimental work challenges many literary conventions that rely upon the imitation of memory, which is suggestive of the Kristevan chôra as “an ‘archaic origin’ counter to the phallogocentrism of both John
and Hegel, one that reincludes repressed aspects of environmental, bodily, and relational experience” (Rickert 261). This process can be seen in her poem “If I Told Him: A Completed Portrait of Picasso,” she continually reinstates the present moment: “Presently. / Exactly as they do. / First exactly. / Exactly as they do too. / First exactly” (191). This repetitious section extends for seventeen lines and resembles the other lines in the poem, which can be separated into similar rhythmic sections. Cowley notes that Stein seemed “to be writing pure “nonsense,” and yet it was not quite pure: one felt uneasily that much of it could be deciphered if only one had the key” (148). The key may be, in fact, the way Stein, conceives of herself as an origin of creation. Although no absolute creative origin can be affirmed, Stein can be said to embody a node in the network from which this chôratic Paris emerges.

Stein personifies the constructed creative energies of Paris but subverts its accompanying passivity. Stein invites aspiring writers into her salon, a locatable, specific place where they might grow as writers but Stein is ultimately, in her estimation, the creative matriarch—she is both the source of inspiration for others and is better than those she inspires. Kennedy writes that as Stein “projects the complex relation of self and place, the city emerges as both a symbolic landscape mirroring her preoccupations and as a creative ambience, or chora infusing her work” (IP 60). A case in point is when Stein’s Toklas narrates, “Gertrude Stein worked a great deal… She was particularly fond in these days of working in the automobile while it stood in the crowded streets” (206). Stein’s environment is crowded, she is located in the streets, a place of movement and action, yet she is the only person whose actions are described by
Toklas. This passage exemplifies Stein’s preoccupation with herself, rising above the city but feeding off its creative ambience, and is thoroughly chôratic in its portrayal of an environment nurturing creativity.

Furthermore, Stein embraces the undecidability and indeterminacy that such a constellation of narratives presupposes. Her fluid gender performance embodies the third genus elements of chôra, which Derrida calls “above all beyond categorical oppositions” (90). Although Cynthia Secor claims that Stein was “truly radical in her belief that gender is meaningless” and that Stein was convinced that the “human mind is without gender” (30), Stein privately claimed a “maleness” to her “genius” (qtd. in Monk 59). In A Moveable Feast, Hemingway mocks Stein’s androgynous look: “She got to look like a Roman emperor and that was fine if you liked your women to look like Roman emperors” (2009 93). Stein’s performance of a “third gender” that indeterminately expresses both male and female qualities, though derided by Hemingway, deconstructs a gender binary, problematizing the firm logic of the era’s episteme. Maries Louise Roberts explains, “In this age of social and cultural transformation, issues of gender roles and identity concerned, worried, and even traumatized French men and women” (68). Stein’s imprecise gender performance coincides with her literary philosophy that “cat was only a word and never a real cat,” which prompted Robert Paul Lamb to call Stein “a deconstructionist before there was deconstruction” (117).

Similarly, traditional gender roles were challenged by the modern woman of the 1920s: “The figure of the ‘emancipated’ modern woman became to interwar Parisian
modernity what the figure of the dandy/flâneur had been to modernity in Baudelaire’s era” (Chadwick and Latimer 3). Although the modern woman became a symbol for Paris, this new paradigm required the imaginative possibilities granted by expatriation. As Whitney Chadwick and Tirza True Latimer note,

If these women were at home anywhere, it was in the space of expatriation itself. This space was an imagined and imaginary territory that that “women of the Left Bank” (and others) went to great lengths to cultivate. The literary salon, the artistic salon, the bookstore, the maison d’édition, the nightclub, the theater number among its manifestations. (14)

In this sense, Beach was central in providing a space for these expatriates to network and form the connections necessary in constructing this chôratic community. Kristeva writes, “the very practice of art necessitates reinvesting the maternal chôra so that it transgresses the symbolic order… this practice easily lends itself to so-called perverse subjective structures” (Revolution 65). Beach is the female embodiment of her bookshop, which is the geographic embodiment of her—she and her shop are inextricably linked for the purposes of art and scholarship. Benstock writes that the rue de l’Odeon became “the hub of expatriate literary life from which all other activities radiated and to which all participants…. were drawn” (230). Beach writes of her bookshop’s draw, “Every day someone whose work I had seen in the Little Review or the Dial would appear. Every boat from the other shore brought more customers for Shakespeare and Company” (23), suggesting that it coincides with Rickert’s
explanation that “while the chôra thereby designates a kind of beginning, it has no real qualities itself; its odd passivity marks it as fundamentally indeterminate” (256).

Chôra will always be a location of tension and multiple meanings, origins, and assumptions; however, as Gregory Ulmer maintains in The Chôra Collaborations, these many incarnations of chôra are all productive. “Paris” (the signifier) operates as a network of energies that produce modernist literature and art. The meaning of “Paris” is never fully present in the sign; meaning is dispersed across these various texts. The “transcendental signified” that grounds the logic of this grouping of texts is the historical Paris of the 1920s, prior to being depicted in language. Once represented in language, “Paris” becomes the previously described network. E.V. Walter summarizes Plato’s thoughts on place and interdependence: “People and things in a place participate in one another’s natures. Place is a location of mutual immanence, a unity of effective presences abiding together” (qtd. in Kennedy 24), suggesting that the imaginative construct of Paris is mutable, as these selected memoirs show.

*The Afterlife and Perpetual Reception of Expatriate Memoirs*

Through canon-expanding histories, revisions of older texts, posthumous disputes, and new releases, the American expatriate myth continues to change. The exilic condition within which these memoirs were written reinforces the fluidity of this constellation of narratives. Kennedy writes that “exile…makes literal one’s existential displacement, and it is this consciousness which impels the writer’s effort to construct a city of words which may be inhabited by a textual self” (28). Since what survives discursively is not the historical Paris of the 1920s or its historical inhabitants during
that era, but the city of words and textual self that Kennedy identifies, they are particularly susceptible to reconsideration, by—among other things—feminist scholars and copyright inheritors.

Shari Benstock’s canon-expanding *Women of the Left Bank* (1986) provided a hitherto neglected comprehensive history and analysis of female contributions to the early twentieth century literary life of Paris. Benstock writes,

> To retrace the literary history of a period is to open inevitably that history to question. The impetus for this study of expatriate women was the desire to replace them in the Paris context from which they had been removed by the standard literary histories of Modernism…. Most of them have appeared in supporting roles, their contributions cataloged in footnotes to biographies of James Joyce, T.S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound. (ix-x)

Benstock’s project changed the history it called into question. As for the cognitive mapping of a hero’s journey, Benstock divides *Women of the Left Bank* into three parts: Discoveries, Settlements, and Crossroads. This arc follows the journey I identified earlier; Benstock concerns herself with a distinct heroine’s journey of women discovering “themselves as *women* and as *writers* in Paris, charting experiences that were significantly different from those of their husbands, brothers, and male Modernist colleagues” (ix). In Part II especially, Benstock reinstates the importance of various locations in Paris—Rue de Fleurus, Rue de l’Odéon, Rue St.-Romain, and Rue Jacob—but stresses their connections to Stein, Toklas, Beach, Monnier, Barnes, and Barney.
rather than the male writers who passed through. Benstock documents the female writers’ “effort to establish a female culture on the landscape of a city that had been feminized and sexualized by a masculine literary poetic” (448). By challenging the traditional ways Paris has been gendered, Benstock’s work continually opens up new avenues for critical exploration that accentuate female contributions.

Typically, the symbolic geography of Paris has been gendered female as a temptress. Andrea Weiss writes, “Paris has often been imagined as a mysterious, seductive woman, both mistress and muse to generations of male poets” (25). This mystery and seduction of Paris correlates to the land of the Other, the foreign land onto which these writers could project their hopes. For instance, Louis Aragon envisioned Paris as a woman stretched out along the Seine, and e.e. cummings thought of Paris as a whore (447). In *Paris Was Our Mistress*, Samuel Putnam claims that Paris was a “wise and beautiful” woman when America turned “strumpet” (7). Writers such as Putnam attribute the origin of their circumstances and *being* to their environments. Putnam puts one allegorical woman on a pedestal and disparages the other allegorical woman—a move that narrows, rather than broadens, the imaginative possibilities of his rhetoric. By gendering Paris female he perpetuates a traditional metaphor. Cherrie Moraga points out that “The earth is female. Whether myth, metaphor, or memory, she is called ‘Mother’ by all peoples of all times” (172). Women writers also gendered Paris female and were similarly drawn to Paris’ feminine charms. Andrea Weiss writes in *Paris Was a Woman* that for the female expatriates,
Paris was neither a fantasized young cocotte, clichéd old mistress, nor
the idealized muse of the male poet’s imagination. For nearly half a
century, she became a fascinating, creative, intelligent woman. (25)

Similarly, in their memoirs, Stein and Beach describe themselves and others as
fascinating, creative, and intelligent women. The depiction of Paris by Stein, Beach,
Natalie Barney, Djuna Barnes, and others allow a female perspective to shape the
imaginative construct, ultimately resulting in a more fruitful and encompassing
discourse. The long overdue multimedia project Paris Was a Woman—which includes
Andrea Weiss’s as well as Greta Schiller’s documentary (both 1995) —documents the
underappreciated achievements of women. Weiss writes that the recent scholarly work
on women in Paris questions “the myths and clichés which have become enshrined in
the popular imagination…which emphasize the bars and brothels inhabited by the
macho, hard-drinking artists” (18). The scholarship on profound female artists and
publishers is a tremendous service to the humanities. Unfortunately, the repeated attacks
on “macho, hard-drinking artists” has given Hemingway a “bad rap” according to
novelist Paula McLain (2:15). Similarly, Margaret D. Bauer writes that the “image
[many students have] of Hemingway as some macho hunter, drinker, womanizer, and
misogynist often blinds them to any positive reading of his female characters” (125).

Hadley in A Moveable Feast is certainly one of his positive female characters.3

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3 In 2011 Paula McLain released the bestseller The Paris Wife, which tells the story of Hemingway’s first
marriage to Hadley from her perspective. Although Alice Hunt Sokoloff released her biography Hadley:
The First Mrs. Hemingway in 1973, The Paris Wife provides an accessible fictional telling of Hadley’s
early years with Ernest—a novel that encourages non-academic circles to explore this era in literature
from a female perspective.
With the 1982 article “Are We Going to Hemingway’s Feast,” Gerry Brenner sparked a debate over how faithfully the posthumous publication of *A Moveable Feast* reproduces Hemingway’s manuscript. Brenner contends that any careful study of Items 121-189 at John F. Kennedy Library show that Mary Hemingway “cut and added significant material” (528). Twenty-seven years later, Ernest’s grandson Seán Hemingway “restored” *A Moveable Feast* to “a truer representation of the book my [his] grandfather intended to publish” (3, emphasis added). Similarly in its foreword, Ernest’s son Patrick Hemingway writes that the restored edition provides, “a less edited and more comprehensive version of the original manuscript material the author intended as a memoir” (xii, emphasis added). Patrick and Seán attempt to restore Hemingway’s “intended” meaning, a problematic gesture that presupposes a platonic state to which *A Moveable Feast* can return. However, upon Hemingway’s death, there was not a definitive version, as Reynolds explains: “Hemingway wrote Charles Scribner, Jr., that the Paris sketches could not be published in their present condition. For a month he had worked on the ending without success” (*FY* 354). Nevertheless, scholars such as Robert W. Trogdon endorse the new publication despite such issues: “The restored edition of *A Moveable Feast* is not ideal, but it is the best handled of the posthumous Hemingway books that Scribner had published” (25).

In the introduction to the restored edition of *A Moveable Feast*, Seán Hemingway writes, “During the nearly three years between the author’s death and the first publication of *A Moveable Feast* in the spring of 1964, significant changes were made to the manuscript by the editors, Mary Hemingway and Harry Brague of
Scribner’s” (2-3). But Hemingway’s negative portrayal of Pauline Pfeiffer, Seán’s grandmother, also concerns Seán greatly:

The extensive edits Mary Hemingway made to this text seem to have served her own personal relationship with the writer as his fourth and final wife, rather than the interests of the book or of the author, who comes across in the posthumous first edition as something of an unknowing victim, which he clearly was not. (9)

This passage demonstrates the bias Seán has in restoring the text. In the foreword, Patrick Hemingway writes, “When my father was free to marry my mother, Pauline, he agreed to convert to Roman Catholicism and undergo a course of religious instruction in Paris… he knew that Pauline was worth a mass” (xiii). By emphasizing the religious nature of the ceremony Patrick reinforces the validity of Hemingway’s second marriage. Alternately, the foreword does not mention Hadley whom Hemingway repeatedly calls the heroine of the book in the false starts for the introduction. Trogdon notes, “By far the biggest change is in the way the new version depicts Hemingway, a change affected by the presence of Pauline in the restored text” (27). Hemingway’s literary persona, the heroic center around which his Paris has been constructed, is altered. By presenting Pauline in more detail, the environment and the protagonist change. As evidenced by this text, as long as discourse surrounds these texts, the writers’ literary personae and their constructions of Paris will continue to evolve.
“There is never any ending to Paris...”

In the final moments of A Moveable Feast Hemingway writes, “There is never any ending to Paris and the memory of each person who has lived in it differs from that of any other” (2009 236). These differing memories have been continually written as memoirs over the years. In 1959 Harold Loeb released The Way It Was: A Memoir in part to offer a more flattering image of himself than Hemingway did—he was the basis for the pitiful Robert Cohn from The Sun Also Rises. More recently, the publications of The Awakening Twenties (1985) by Gorham Munson, On the Left Bank (1987) by Wambly Bald, The Paris Edition (1987) by Waverly Root, Man From Babel (1998) by Eugene Jolas, and Woman of Action (2004) by Maria Jolas all attest to what Monk describes as “the faith readers continue to place in the truth of the narrated firsthand experiences of Americans abroad” (162). However, as this study sought to explicate, memoir is a subjective genre, owing as much to selection and editing as to remembrance.

The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, Exile’s Return, Shakespeare and Company, and A Moveable Feast are representative of a broader collection of texts that I have viewed through a Parisian lens. The threshold-crossing motif has appeared in tales of adventure for thousands of years. This project sought to explore how this classic theme that has developed organically around the world in many different cultures operates in modernist works. How these writers made sense of and represented this dream landscape across the threshold is indicative of a larger tradition and its continued
appeal suggests a certain basic yet implicit narrative structure by which many stories connect with their audiences.
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