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The Mother Tongues of Modernity: Modernism, Transnationalism, Translation

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The relation of modernism to immigrant literatures should not be conceived in terms of an opposition between universalistic and particularistic discourses. Rather, we should explore what can be called a modernist transnationalism based on a general universalist argument. Two examples of this transnationalism are explored side by side: Ezra Pound's and Anzia Yezierska's definitions of the aesthetic act in terms of translation. The readings show that the critical discourses of these two authors are structured by a belief in universalism while showing opposite possibilities, both generated by modernist transnationalism. The essay concludes that we now need to interpret the cultures of modernism in their variety as contesting political universalities.

Keywords: Modernism, Immigrant literature, Translation, Transnationalism

THE ACCENTS OF THE FUTURE

Over the last two decades, the increasing critical emphasis placed on the transnational constitution of the cultures of modernism has once again highlighted the central role of two fundamental motives: migration and translation. On the one hand, the geographical dislocation constitutive of modern experience highlighted the significance of different movements of migration. On the other hand, as a corollary to the physical movements, the linguistic displacements of transnational modernisms gave rise to various cultural poetics of translation.¹

Of course, we have always been aware that both the poetics and the politics of "high modernism" were influenced in an essential manner by theories and practices of migration and translation.² But our dual concern with migration and translation has also raised a series of new questions. How was it possible that modernist literary history relegated to a secondary status precisely that type of literature which was most immediately defined by these two categories: the immigrant literatures contemporaneous with high modernism? In other words, it appears that it was precisely an aesthetics of international cultural migration that rendered the cultural products of the immigrant experience almost invisible.³

What is this strange disavowal that separates the elite culture of cosmopolitan modernism from the mass experience of immigration? I speak of a disavowal here because it appears that the ideological content of modernism was embodied by the immigrant experience in the form of a real contradiction. In other words, modernism and mass migration were both products of "modernity," but they articulated

this experience in radically different aesthetic and political practices. This juxtaposition should, therefore, put us in a position to specify in more detail the ideological content of high-modernist cosmopolitanism.⁴

In this light, it should be clear that modernist cosmopolitanism was constituted by a series of exclusions whose foundation appears to have been the fundamental ideological affect of modernism: the fear of the masses.⁵ We can speak of two significant exclusions here. On the one hand, alienated artists felt excluded from society as they believed that artistic production could not be seamlessly integrated into the logic of commodity production and consumer culture. On the other hand, the production of “pure art” necessitated excluding the vulgar masses from the field of cultural production. Thus, cosmopolitanism produces “pure art” to the degree that it is simultaneously excluded from something and serves as an agent of another exclusion.

The high-modernist reaction to the phenomenon of mass immigration has been amply documented. A classic locus of this ideological reaction can be found in Henry James’s *The American Scene* (1907), in which he recorded his impressions of the country after an extended period of absence. James finds that “there is no claim to brotherhood with aliens in the first grossness of their alienism” (117). In fact, the most disturbing suspicion is that assimilation will never be complete: “You recognize in them, freely, those elements that are not elements of swift convertibility, and you lose yourself in the wonder of what becomes, as it were, of the obstinate, the unconverted residuum” (120–21). But in spite of this residuum, in place of a recognizable national influence, immigrants bring along with them the very negation of the national tradition recorded in a national literature:

Just so the East-side cafés . . . showed to my inner sense, beneath their be-dizenment, as torture-rooms of the living idiom; the piteous gasp of which at the portent of lacerations to come could reach me in any drop of the surrounding Accent of the Future. The accent of the very ultimate future, in the States, may be destined to become the most beautiful on the globe and the very music of humanity (here the “ethnic” synthesis shrouds itself thicker than ever); but whatever we shall know it for, certainly, we shall not know it for English — in any sense for which there is an existing literary measure. (135)

As the last sentence suggests, from the perspective of contemporary literary standards, this new language is inconceivable and, therefore, remains forever external to existing literary measures. So the immigrant functions here as a symbol or even as the “symptom” of the impossibility of authentic national culture. As James’s words suggest, the immigrant does not represent the invasion of America by a number of different European influences, but the universal “adulteration” or “mongrelization” of culture as such. The important point is not that these immigrants are vulgar nor that they bring with them alien cultural influences, but that they embody the very opposite of culture. As a result, their strangeness is not that of another culture. What cosmopolitan modernist sensibility finds itself up against is not so much a deplorable deficiency or even a lack of tradition (since such a lack

could still affirm the necessity thereof) but its very negation: Tradition opposed by anti-Tradition.⁶

Thus, a first answer to the question concerning the relation of modernism and immigrant literature could be formulated in terms of alienation and assimilation. It would be a comfortable starting point to assume that modernism was concerned primarily with the experience of alienation constitutive of modernity, and that immigrant literature primarily explored the possibilities of cultural assimilation. But it appears to be more appropriate to assume that high modernism was a set of cultural reactions to the alienation caused by modernity, and that it aimed to restore the possibility of aesthetic assimilation on a higher cultural level. In other words, in modernism, the fragmentation of contemporary culture ultimately led to the creation of the idea of "Culture" in the form of an international cultural "tradition" which did allow a new form of cultural assimilation. The alienated artist could find a new home in this international culture. The effect of the introduction of "new languages" into the national text was the realization of the "foreignness" of the native tongue itself. This foreignness, however, ultimately served as the foundation of a hypothetical "universal language" of poetry, which allowed for the reconstitution of alienated identity on a higher level. This is the process that Hugh Kenner called, in a classic formula, "the invention of Language": "We are to think not of babelized languages but of Language" (96).

Likewise, immigrant literature could be said to have been concerned with the impossibility of assimilation. In both their assimilationist and segregationist versions, immigrant texts reflected the modern experience of dislocation as they presented various narratives of assimilation into different national cultures (either that of the New World or of the Old World). Regardless of the actual fate of this project in particular texts, however, the general narrative formula of assimilation quite often simply reproduced the same necessity of translation that was to be avoided by assimilation: in the new home, the immigrant finds that the native is not home either. In other words, we start with an alienated immigrant seeking to enter the process of assimilation (either by recovering a national heritage or by way of Americanization). Assimilation, however, does not lead to the complete restoration of identity, but to a different form of alienation (for example, caused by the general commodification of culture in modern America). Thus, while in the case of modernism alienation established the conditions of a higher level of aesthetic assimilation, we could say that the immigrant narrative is haunted by the opposite problem: if alienation is a general condition of modernity, what if assimilation is simply a transition from one form of alienation to another?

In this regard, Malcolm Cowley's *Exile's Return* (written in 1934 and revised in 1951) remains the quintessential American text about the modernist myth of "salvation through exile" (74). What is of special interest to us in Cowley's argument is that he derives both the formalism and the internationalism of American modernism from the experience of cultural alienation. As Cowley argues, the definitive experience of his generation was cultural "deracination." Due to the loss of local traditions, even the "natives" were no longer at home in American culture and became "homeless citizens of the world" (27). Since "the position of the artist

in society" is fundamentally defined by this alienation, the artist necessarily thinks in terms of "form and matter" (100-01). As the artist's experience lacks real social substance, art itself will be emptied out of any significant content. Therefore, Cowley concludes that the alienated artist has no other choice but to affirm the primacy of form over matter. In this argument, the artist relates to the world as form relates to matter — they are both alienated. Consequently, under the alienating conditions of modernity the natural condition of art is an international formalism.

But Cowley does not stop at this point; he also narrates the unavoidable failure of this program. The motif of "return" in Cowley's title refers to the impossibility of international formalism. What "returns" in the discourse of exile is national content. For Cowley, it is a remarkable fact that the modernist creation of a "new language" is actually a nostalgic attempt to restore the "old language" of the home (14). This is why the underlying argument of Cowley's book is that both modernist formalism and internationalism are driven by a desire to reach their own opposites (national content). This formula suggests a legible relation between the international form of the modernist text and its national content. According to Cowley, it was the dream of an authentic mother tongue that drove both modernist exile and the exile's return.

While Cowley's comments identify an important tension between aesthetic internationalism and political nationalism at the heart of the modernist project, the mass experience of deracination also allowed for the rearticulation of the social position of the immigrant. In this case, however, what we find is that participation in a national culture was predicated upon a universalist political articulation. Marcus Klein, for example, argues that the immigrant literatures of the United States enjoyed a special position during the 1930s because the Depression allowed the generalization of their social position: "The ghetto was suddenly the opposite of itself. It became an American archetype." (36) We find here a perfect example of the attempt to rearticulate the position of the excluded as the very universality of the community. The underdog all of a sudden becomes the embodiment of the truth of the community. The essence of this rearticulation is captured in the proposition we all know so well: "Every American is an immigrant." In this regard, one of the important political stakes of immigrant fiction was to prove that immigrant identity is not an obstacle but a precondition of cultural and political participation in American public life.

Of course, immigrant literature did not fare any better with the political Left either, which also framed the debate in terms of the form/content opposition. In this context, it suffices to recall the Stalinist definition of socialist realism: "national in form, socialist in content."⁷ In a certain sense, we find that the cultural products of immigrant cultures were caught between the aesthetic and political attacks of both modernism and the "proletarian left."⁸ When juxtaposed with Cowley's account of modernism, this leftist slogan allows us to give shape to the debate between modernism and the immigrant experience. Accordingly, then, we could argue that high modernism was "international in form but national (if not explicitly nationalistic) in content;" while immigrant culture was "national in form and international in content." In other words, the cultural internationalism of high-modernist

cosmopolitanism could serve the purposes of various forms of political nationalisms. International aesthetic and cultural performance were the prerequisites for the justification of political nationalism: the nation is great to the degree that it can participate in the international cultural tradition. At the same time, however, immigrant cultures (in both their assimilationist and segregationist variants) sought to express within the vernaculars of a national tradition the modes of international cultural relations. Even if they were written in a national language, their aim was to present narratives of cultural transformation.

The reformulation of the problem in terms of this opposition between form and content, however, is not merely fortuitous: ultimately, it touches upon the problem of the universality of the community.⁹ What we find in the case of modernism is that the alienation of the artist established the conditions of a new cultural universality. In other words, modernity established the conditions of a new form of universality precisely through its negative effects (social alienation). The social experience of alienation was, thus, inseparable from the promise of this universality. Consequently, modernism must always be read in relation to the necessary fiction of the Tradition. Taken to its extreme, this Tradition is simultaneously a national tradition and the *lingua franca* of modernity. Even if such a universal language is never truly realized in any other form than its national monuments, modernism appears to have been driven by the hypothesis that a universal language of modernity exists.

This is why we should heed Michael North's argument that the history of modernism was marked in an essential way by the recognition of the impossibility of a universal language (58–64). At the heart of modernism, North identifies a historical move from debabelization (creation of a universal language) to (re)babelization (recognition of particular languages and local language games). While this move toward the impossibility of a universal language was indeed a historical tendency, in order to do justice to the problem we have to take North's conclusions in a slightly different direction. For it appears to be a historical fact that the modernist invention of a universal language eventually led to the discovery of the "concrete universality" of the nation.¹⁰ In other words, the relation of the universal to the particular was articulated in slightly more dialectical fashion than North seems to suggest. Within the framework of modernist thought, the rebabelization of language did not lead to the abandonment of the question of universality. Rather, the idea emerged that the particular was the only way to gain access to the universal.

Thus, returning to our opening question concerning the relation of modernism and immigrant literatures, we can now propose a thesis: it is not sufficient to rewrite the history of modernism on the basis of a rigid opposition of "high modernism" (universalistic, formalist, conservative, etc.) and various forms of "ethnic modernisms" (particularistic, programmatically anti-formalist, emancipatory). In place of an exclusive opposition of universalistic and particularistic politics or aesthetics, we have to interpret the cultures of modernism as contesting ways of formulating political universalities. As I have suggested above, high modernism assumed that the aesthetic universality of the Tradition could have political consequences (the most infamous example of which is the fascistic aestheticization of

politics). At the same time, immigrant literatures moved from the articulation of a political universality (dislocation as universal condition of modernity) towards particular cultural practices. The aesthetic universality of the Tradition and the political universality of the excluded, however, are both predicated upon the structure of concrete universality.

The problem of modernist transnationalism, therefore, has to be located at the meeting point of two “impossibilities”: the impossibility of international formalism and the impossibility of nationalist anti-formalism. Under the conditions of modernity, the idea of the nation had to be articulated in an international situation. The source of the problem, however, was that the idea of the nation was immediately cast in terms of the split between form and content. As a result, the relation of the national to the international was also framed in terms of this split. In other words, this division established the possibility of articulating alternatives to the two fundamental extreme positions: a consistent internationalism (whose discourse would have been international in both form and content) and a consistent nationalism (nationalist in both form and content). The separation of form and content thus allowed the nation to appear to be one thing and be something other according to its essence. And it is this dual impossibility that reveals the true significance of the idea of “transnationalism.” Transnationalism differs from nationalism and internationalism in that it registers both the impossibility of consistently articulating nationalism and the impossibility of abandoning the idea of the nation.

In what follows, I will juxtapose two authors whose aesthetics and politics represent seemingly irreconcilable extremes of transnational cultural production: Ezra Pound and Anzia Yezierska. The stake of these parallel readings will be to show that, in spite of all their differences, the discourses of these two authors were structured by a structurally similar universal articulation. The idea of the incomplete nation emerged in their writings to mark the real condition of a transnational discourse in such a way that this incompleteness was, first, cast in terms of the split between form and content and, then, used as the foundation of a universal articulation. Furthermore, as I will show, in both cases the figure of “translation” emerged as an ontological figure for the constitution of this transnational discursive space.

EZRA POUND: MODERNISM AS TRANSLATION

The problem of translation in Pound’s works can be approached from two fundamental perspectives. On the one hand, the fate of Pound’s controversial “creative translations” shows us that translations can aspire to become poems in their own right. In this sense, the act of translation can be invested with the kind of autonomy that previously had belonged only to “original” acts of aesthetic creation. On the other hand, however — and this is the line of thought that I will pursue here — Pound’s theory of poetry suggests that poems can strive to become translations. Hugh Kenner, for example, has argued that “Pound came to think of translation as a model for the poetic act: blood brought to ghosts” (150). As Kenner’s words suggest, translation “as a model for the poetic act” is called

upon simultaneously to “invent a new kind of English poem” (218) and to bring blood to ghosts. Arguably, this model of poetry holds that an original poetic act participates in the Tradition by way of translation. Thus, in contrast to a fashionable fetishization of the untranslatable (whose ultimate justification has long been *Finnegans Wake*), Pound’s point is that good literature is always a translation and is always translatable.

In order to examine modernist transnationalism, I want to present here a schematic outline of the way poetry is theorized in some of Pound’s critical texts as the universal language of the Tradition. My objective is to show that introducing the idea of translation into the theory of poetry has produced a zone of tension between the national and the international, not simply a pure “internationalist” discourse. While translation “internationalizes” the national canon, the universality of the Tradition cannot exist without a nationalist residue.

This is why I want to start here with Lawrence Venuti’s warning that the ideological motivations of Pound’s cultural politics were “more than a little inconsistent” (190). Discussing Pound’s translations, Venuti identifies an important contradiction. While Pound’s “foreignizing” translations did in fact signify the foreignness of the original texts, ultimately they did so in the service of a modernist poetics whose effects could easily be described as “domesticating” (191). At the same time, however, Venuti also shows that this “domestication” was not complete either: “Pound’s translation theory and practice were various enough to qualify and redirect his modernist appropriation of foreign texts, often in contradictory ways” (192). It is this same double complication that I want to examine now by transposing some of Venuti’s insights from the field of translation to that of Pound’s theory of poetry as translation.

In the following passages taken from the important essay “A Retrospect” (1918), Pound formulates a theory of poetry (and not a theory of translation), yet the discursive formulation of this theory is fully dependent on strategic references to practices of translation. Pound opens one of his most famous “don’ts” with the following instruction:

Let the candidate fill his mind with the finest cadences he can discover, preferably in a foreign language, so that the meaning of the words may be less likely to divert his attention from the movement; e.g. Saxon charms, Hebridean Folk Songs, the verse of Dante, and the lyrics of Shakespeare – if he can dissociate the vocabulary from the cadence. Let him dissect the lyrics of Goethe coldly into their component sound values, syllables long and short, stressed and unstressed, into vowels and consonants. (5)

The opening reference to a “foreign language” is appended with the following footnote: “This is for rhythm, his vocabulary must of course be found in his native tongue” (5). Of course, Pound’s most immediate objective is to break away from inherited Victorian standards of prosody (mostly, the iambic pentameter). But the point remains, that in his essay Pound explains this break by way of a reference to a foreign language. As a result, on the level of this abstract argument at least, the

“sound” of poetry becomes a foreign language even if the non-traditional form of the poem is inspired by native traditions.

In this sense, this brief imagist imperative contains two crucial problems. On the one hand, Pound examines the separation of sound and meaning. On the other hand, he opposes a foreign language to a native tongue. The relation between these terms is made equally clear: meaning is dependent on the vocabulary of the native language; while sound is associated with a foreign language. This proposition appears to be based on a sensible belief: a foreign language, in its meaninglessness, becomes a pure sequence of sounds for those who do not understand it. Similarly, the native tongue, in its semantic proximity, always seems to be on the verge of eliminating its own sounds by the overwhelming presence of meaning. As a result, first, we are led to assume that a good imagist poem will have to be native in its content and foreign in its form. Second – and this is the more philosophical interpretation – Pound’s words suggest that at the moment when language becomes pure sound, it ceases to have a meaning, and as such it will become a foreign language even if it is our native tongue. Therefore, sound is the absolutely foreign language that inhabits every meaning.

This limitation on meaning by the foreign language of sound, however, receives a slightly different treatment a few pages later, when Pound discusses the translatability of the very poem constituted by this interaction of sound and meaning: “That part of your poetry which strikes upon the imaginative eye of the reader will lose nothing by translating into a foreign tongue; that which appeals to the ear can reach only those who take it in the original” (7). This time, Pound suggests that meaning (the image intended for the imaginative eye) is translatable, while sound (which is for the ear) is untranslatable. A strange reduplication of categories occurs here. The native tongue of meaning is translatable; the foreign tongue of sound and rhythm is not. Of course, if meaning is the only thing that can be translated, it makes sense that what is alien to meaning remains alien to translation as well. What was a foreign language to meaning in the first place remains a foreign language forever. But even if the sound of the poem is a “foreign language,” this foreignness is essentially tied to the native language: what is untranslatable about the poem is the unique sound of the native language. What remains untranslatable, therefore, is simultaneously the very singularity and the foreignness of the native tongue. In the imagist poem, sound is the internal foreignness of the native tongue, which guarantees its untranslatable singularity. Interpreted in loose terms, we could paraphrase this conclusion by saying that (international) form is the internal difference of (national) content.

But translatability is more than an incidental question for Pound. In fact, the problem of translatability provides the foundation of Pound’s famous threefold definition of poetry, which distinguishes between “*melopoeia*” (sound and melody), “*phanopoeia*” (image and meaning as denotation), and “*logopoeia*” (context and meaning as connotation):

The *melopoeia* can be appreciated by a foreigner with a sensitive ear, even though he be ignorant of the language in which the poem is written. It is

practically impossible to transfer or translate it from one language to another, save perhaps by divine accident, and for half a line at that.

Phanopoeia can, on the other hand, be translated almost, or wholly, intact. When it is good enough, it is practically impossible for the translator to destroy it save by very crass bungling, and the neglect of perfectly well-known and formulative rules.

Logopoeia does not translate; though the attitude of mind it expresses may pass through a paraphrase. Or one might say, you can not translate it "logically," but having determined the original author's state of mind, you may or may not be able to find a derivative or an equivalent. (25)

In this definition, the separation of sound and meaning is expanded by another division internal to meaning itself. It is no longer meaning as such that is translatable, but a very specific form of meaning increasingly separated from the singularity of a given language. Thus the "image," the only fully translatable component of poetry, emerges between two untranslatable instances. Although melopoeia is completely untranslatable, it is nevertheless fully "comprehensible" even if one does not know the language. It is untranslatable in the sense that it does not need to be translated, since it is the mere material existence of language deprived of meaning. At the same time, although logopoeia is fully comprehensible, it nevertheless remains untranslatable. As a result, the "image" emerges between "sound" and "meaning" as the fully translatable essence of poetry produced in an untranslatable medium. Such is the trajectory of Pound's argument: untranslatability is an inalienable condition, but it is the very condition of translatability as such.¹¹

It is at this point that we can start introducing the problem of the nation into this argument about the poem and translation. We need to keep in mind that, for Pound, literature fulfills an essential function in the constitution of the community. In this regard, we could even say that the ultimate function of literature is to restore the identity of the law: the law must be translatable. Since the law is inherently dependent on its linguistic formulations, language is simultaneously the medium of its effective operation and the means of its corruption: "As language becomes the most powerful instrument of perfidy, so language alone can riddle and cut through the meshes" (77). Literature has a special role in the life of the community, since it is alone responsible for the correct functioning of the law: "We are governed by words, the laws are graven in words, and literature is the sole means of keeping these words living and accurate" (409). The tie between literature and the law becomes clearly visible here: literature is responsible for establishing the terrain of pure translatability (through the most effective use of language), which then becomes the proper field of operation for the law of the community.

This argument suggests that, for Pound, literature functions in an extralegal linguistic domain in such a way that it realizes the fundamental principle of the law. While language is the heteronomous origin of the law, literature is the law of language: literature is the way we should use language. We can recast the often-renounced aestheticization of politics that inhabits this argument in terms of translation. Politics (the life of the community) is aestheticized in the sense that the law must be translatable. Literature is the law of the community to the degree that it

can establish in an untranslatable terrain the conditions of pure translatability. This also means that Pound's point is not that "everything is always translatable" but that the function of literature is to establish the conditions of translatable communication, which is the foundation of the community.

Besides being a constitutive component of the individual poem, translation is also responsible for forging a tradition. This fact shows that in Pound's case, translation is always concerned with both cultural and historical alterity. The problem of the tradition shows that translation is necessary not only because there are other cultures, but also because the same national culture can also be alien to itself. In fact, Pound seems to suggest that the fundamental alterity that gives rise to translation is the incomplete identity of a national culture: "No one language is complete" (36). We could paraphrase this tenet by saying that there is a tradition because language is not quite itself. Pound is very explicit about this in his discussions of English literature: "After this period [of Old English poetry] English literature lives on translation, it is fed by translation; every new exuberance, every new heave is stimulated by translation, every alleged great age is an age of translations" (34-35). The important point, once again, is that the fundamental alterity that establishes the mode of existence of the poem in the register of translation is not only the otherness of foreign cultures, but the inalienable incompleteness of national culture.

We can now raise the question of universality in relation to the idea of the nation. It is a remarkable fact that Pound celebrates Henry James's cosmopolitanism in terms of James's "great labour, this labour of translation, of making America intelligible, of making it possible for individuals to meet across national borders" (296). This border crossing, however, is not an abandonment of the idea of nation. According to Pound, James's greatness lies in the fact that his cosmopolitanism uncovered the "immutable" essence of the nation: "In his books he showed race against race, immutable; the essential Americanness, or Englishness, or Frenchness" (298). Thus, as Pound insists, cosmopolitanism is not the erasure of national differences in the name of a higher level of organization but the very recognition of national differences: "And this communication is not leveling, it is not an elimination of differences. It is a recognition of differences, of the right of differences to exist, of interests in finding things different" (298). When Pound insists that these differences "are not political and executive and therefore transient, factitious, but in precisely that they are the forces of race temperaments, are major forces and are indeed as great protagonists as any author could have chosen" (301), he also argues that the nation has an essentially apolitical "natural" core that will insistently return to disturb attempts to move beyond the nation. The function of literary cosmopolitanism as a "labour of translation" is not to overcome the nation, but to bring out its immutable essence through a comparative confrontation of differences.

Similarly, Pound's readings of William Carlos Williams, James Joyce and T. S. Eliot are also centered around the question of the nation. The most interesting aspect of his essay on Williams is that Pound practically turns him into a true cosmopolitan by representing him as an immigrant: "He claims American birth, but

I strongly suspect that he emerged on shipboard just off Bedloe's Island and that his dark and serious eyes gazed up in their first sober contemplation at the Statue and its brazen and monstrous nightshirt. At any rate he has not in his ancestral endocrines the acrid curse of our nation" (390-91). This presentation is necessary in order to turn the seemingly most American, most "native" modernist programmatically tied to the native soil into a cosmopolitan: "He was able to observe national phenomena without necessity for constant vigilance over himself. . . . One might accuse him of being, blessedly, the observant foreigner, perceiving American vegetation and landscape quite differently, as something put there for him to look at; and his contemplative habit extends, also blessedly, to the fauna" (391). This is why, almost in spite of himself, Williams Carlos Williams is essentially a European poet for Pound: "One might say that Williams has but one fixed idea, as an author; i.e., he starts where an European would start if an European were about to write of America: sic: America is a subject of interest, one must inspect it, analyse it, and treat it as subject" (392). Williams is inscribed here in the cosmopolitan canon through the claim that in spite of its subject matter his art is essentially written from a European point of view. The national content receives in his poetry a fundamentally international treatment.

These two parallel movements (returning the exiled Henry James to the essence of his nation and separating Williams, the homegrown modernist, from his nation) indicate that what is at stake in these arguments is redefining the meaning of the nation in relation to an international aesthetics. In his review of Joyce's *Dubliners*, Pound performs a similar move when he insists on removing Joyce from the specificity of his national settings:

It is surprising that Mr Joyce is Irish. . . . He is not an institution for the promotion of Irish peasant industries. He accepts an international standard of prose writing and lives up to it. . . . He gives us Dublin as it presumably is. . . . these stories could be retold of any town. That is to say, the author is quite capable of dealing with things about him, and dealing directly, yet these details do not engross him, he is capable of getting *at the universal element beneath them*. . . . Good writing, good presentation can be specifically local, but it must not depend on locality. Mr Joyce does not present "types" but individuals. I mean he deals with common emotions which run through all races. (400-01)

The separation of the national and the international ultimately serves the purpose of establishing the conditions of universality. When the national content ("Irish peasant industries") receives an international form ("an international standard of prose writing"), the nation potentially becomes the terrain within which the writer can articulate universal elements. In other words, the local and the particular are not erased: as we have seen, the nation possesses an immutable essence after all. Rather, the point is that one has to get at the universal element "beneath" the national content.

Pound repeats the very same argument in his famous celebration of *Ulysses* as well:

If it be charged that he knows "that provincialism which must be forever dragging in allusions to some book or local custom," it must also be admitted that no author is more lucid or more explicit in presenting things in such a way that the imaginary Chinaman or denizen of the forty-first century could without works of reference gain a very good idea of the scene and habits portrayed. . . . But in the main, I doubt if the local allusions interfere with a *general* comprehension. Local details exist everywhere; one understands them *mutatis mutandis*, and any picture would be perhaps faulty without them. (406)

Pound obviously recognized the linguistic complexity of the text: "Joyce speaks if not with the tongue of men and angels, at least with a many-tongued and multiple language, of small boys, street preachers, of genteel and ungentleel, of bowsers and undertakers, of Gertie McDowell and Mr Deasey" (405). But this multiplication of languages is not an obstacle to understanding. On the contrary, it is the very condition of a "general understanding" that remains fully communicable and translatable. In fact, if we follow Pound, we have to conclude that Joyce's achievement in *Ulysses* was not something untranslatable, but the creation of something universally understandable in the midst of the multiplication of languages.

The clearest formulation of the thesis that the nation participates in the structure of the "concrete universal" comes from Pound's essay on T. S. Eliot:

James Joyce has written the best novel of my decade, and perhaps the best criticism of it has come from a Belgian who said, 'All this is as true of my country as of Ireland.' Eliot has a like ubiquity of application. *Art does not avoid universals, it strikes at them all the harder in that it strikes through particulars.*" (420, emphasis added)

For Pound, the fact that national identity is never complete allows two reversals. First, as the passage also shows, a properly modernist text is universal even when it appears to be national. National subject matter is a mere vehicle to more universal themes. Second, however, this reversal does not amount to a complete abandonment of the national content. Rather, it merely shows that the modernist text always speaks "if not with the tongue of men and angels, at least with a many-tongued and multiple language" (405). So the form of the modernist text is international while its content is the concrete universality of the nation. Thus, translation emerges in Pound's thought as the ontological figure that accounts for the simultaneous emergence of the poem, the law and the nation. In a fundamental sense, translation constitutes literature as such, which guarantees the consistency of the law of the community and constitutes the concrete universality of this community as an unfinished nation.

Let us then recall the terms in which Cowley has shown that modernist cosmopolitanism was incapable of formulating a consistently internationalist aesthetic program as it unavoidably retained an inalienable residue of nationalistic political content. The very same complication seems to inhabit Pound's theories of poetry as well: on the one hand, he broke away from Victorian traditions to reinvent

poetry as a fundamentally international discourse; on the other hand, however, his internationalist aesthetic program time and again foundered on the political affirmation of nationalism. The dual nature of Pound's thought manifests itself as a double impossibility: he simultaneously fails to formulate a consistent internationalist aesthetics because of his nationalist politics; yet, as the history of his reception also seems to affirm, due to his aesthetic innovations, he no longer fully controls his very own nationalism either.

ANZIA YEZIERSKA AND THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

Let us now turn to Anzia Yezierska's fiction to examine the way she formulated some of the same problems. In 1926, Alter Brody began his dismissive review of contemporary ghetto fiction with the following statement:

There arises, in the popular American fiction of the day, a new dialect, which, by analogy with Pidgin English, may be called Yidgin English. Its basis is theoretically Yiddish; in form it is ostensibly a translation of Yiddish into English. Actually, it is a purely imaginary language, logically related to neither of its parents. (205)

While for Brody the invention of a "purely imaginary language" signaled the essential failure of Yezierska's fiction, later commentators learned to approach it as her most important aesthetic achievement.¹² So the question emerges: What is really at stake in the invention of an imaginary dialect? If we follow Brody's description, we can assume that the form of immigrant fiction is merely an "ostensible" translation that has nothing to do with its actual content, the immigrant experience. In fact, for Brody the ultimate mark of the failure of this kind of fiction was an inverse relationship between its form and content: "it may be noted that Ghetto psychology is well-handled in inverse proportion to the amount of Yidgin a story contains" (206). It is precisely the attempt to formalize the immigrant experience in a distorted national language that prevents the authentic expression of this experience.

In Brody's eyes, Yezierska is a failure because she offers the mere appearance of a translation rather than an "authentic translation" that would adequately mediate between two real languages (Yiddish and English). In place of this real communication between languages, in Yezierska's fiction translation produces a new language. Thus, two conflicting models of translation emerge here: one in which translation designates a movement between two real languages and another according to which translation is the production of a new language that is no longer "logically related to either of its parents." But if we follow Brody's suggestions, we can also assume that even if immigrant fiction is *de facto* written in English, whenever we encounter an immigrant text, we must always suspect that we are reading "only" a translation. This presupposition redefines the immigrant text's mode of existence as that of a translation: even if there are no formal indicators of this fact, the fiction of translation is part of the text's very genesis. Consequently, we could also argue that a text becomes an immigrant text if we can read it as if it were a translation. But Brody's fundamental assumption appears to be that the

proper form of the immigrant text should be national (English), while its content should be defined by the immigrant experience.

Regardless of its actual value as a piece of literary criticism, Brody's review allows us to frame Yeziarska's fiction with reference to our general discussion of modernism. From this perspective, four salient issues need to be addressed. First, just as in the case of modernism, the stake of Yeziarska's fiction appears to be the production of a new language through translation. Second, this language is immediately interpreted in terms of the relation between form and content. Third, the form/content split is inscribed in the problem of the "nation" and the question of a national language's relation to a national literature. Finally, this discussion of the nation raises the issue of the universality of the community ("every American is an immigrant"). The transnational character of Yeziarska's fiction, thus, consists of the invention of a new language that embodies the internal split within the nation in such a way that it becomes the foundation of a new political articulation of Americanization as a universalist discourse.

So how does the production of this new language function in Yeziarska's world? While Yeziarska herself (unlike Pound) does not have an explicit theory of translation, her stories consistently present scenarios in which an immigrant character is desperately trying to enter the world of a foreign culture. In place of an explicit theory of translation, however, her whole fiction is based on a theory of linguistic self-expression that directly addresses the necessity of producing a new language. Her stories usually open with a character's formulation of an aesthetic demand which is then reformulated in the course of the story as a political program. But the initially "speechless" characters (who are excluded from a national language) do not simply learn a foreign language in her stories, but do so by appropriating this language and transforming it at the same time.

In this regard, we could even say that the most important underlying narrative of her whole fiction is an almost perfectly dialectical account of Americanization as an open-ended process. This narrative has three distinct stages that are mediated by two different moments of translation. The schematic version of this story can be summarized in the following terms. First, an alienated immigrant is striving for full (aesthetic) self-expression that would reaffirm his or her identity in terms of the dominant culture the immigrant is trying to enter. Therefore, the transition from the first to the second phase takes place by way of a translation that mediates between the immigrant's native tongue and American culture. At this stage, the immigrant is trying to translate herself into an already existing language. But the second stage of Americanization turns out to be equally alienating, and the immigrant cannot find a new home in American culture. This is why a second act of translation is necessary that leads us to the third stage of the narrative. The difference between the two acts of translation is that this time the immigrant realizes the new language cannot be taken for granted and has to be reinvented. The final act of translation needs to produce a new dialect rather than merely acquire an already existing language.

In order to illustrate the significance of this underlying story, first I want to point

out that Yezierska's immigrant characters (just like Cowley's alienated modernists) experience the social in terms of a split between form and content. Yezierska's first published volume, *Hungry Hearts* (1920), clearly presents this constellation of motives that will come to dominate her later works. The immigrant experience is repeatedly described on the basis of a split between a national form and its actual content. One of the most common complaints in her fiction is that the immigrant is caught between two worlds (the Old and the New) and, therefore, he or she is incapable of fully inhabiting either of them. As a result, the immigrant experience cannot be formalized on the basis of already existing "national" narratives provided by any of these worlds. For example, the protagonist of "Hunger" describes herself in the following terms: "There is something in me — I can't help — that so quickly takes on to the American taste. It's as if my outside skin only was Russian; the heart in me is everything of the new world — even eating" (26). The immigrant who is Russian on the outside and American on the inside experiences life in terms of a split between form and content. But this conflict is still between a national form (Russian appearance) and a national content (American heart). In other words, there is a conflict between form and content, because there is an exclusive relationship between national identities. The question, however, is whether the process of Americanization can be conceived beyond the constitution of the nation in terms of this split.

Therefore, this split provides the basis of the dialectic of Americanization described above. We can find the clearest presentation of this logic in the novel *Salome of the Tenements* (1923). As I have suggested, the narrative dramatizes the invention of an imaginary language that the immigrant can speak. The story narrates the allegorical romance of an immigrant girl, Sonya Vrunsky, and the American millionaire, John Manning. The first important act of translation occurs when the protagonist realizes that in order to seduce the American philanthropist millionaire she cannot simply appear as she is.¹³ She has to appear to be a poor immigrant, but she has to present a highly stylized (and in this sense aestheticized) version of herself to match the American's sanitized and romanticized fantasy of immigrant life. This is what the text reveals: the apparent simplicity of the immigrant style is not a mere fact but a strategic construction — an eminently self-reflexive moment of the text that applies equally to the character and the novel's author. To enter American life, the immigrant aestheticized her natural conditions. Of course, the text also examines the inadequacies of this strategy, but without this primary act of aestheticization, the immigrant would not have had the chance to enter the Americanization process in the first place.

The final stage of Sonya's Americanization will depend on yet another act of translation. The protagonist's first mistake is believing that after this aesthetic deception, she can return to a normal existence. What she finds, however, is that she entered the world of mere appearances: pure form without content. She feels completely alienated in mainstream American culture (which she experiences as the world of empty pretensions), because she has lost her connections with her own roots. In order to find a positive value in her aestheticized existence, she has to find her way back to authentic self-expression. To put it differently, the act of aestheticization has to be followed by a politicization of her aesthetics. Sonya discovers

that her Americanization simply led her from one form of alienation to another. In order to find authentic self-expression, she must return to her "own people" in such a way that her aesthetic activities are no longer mere deceptions but acts of genuine self-expression.

We find a similar description of the dialectical development of the artist in Yeziarska's second volume of stories, *Children of Loneliness* (1923). The volume's final story, "Song Triumphant," presents Berel Pinsky's journey, which once again consists of three stages. He begins as an impoverished immigrant artist living in the ghetto. The obvious sign of his alienation from his immediate surroundings (from his "own people") is that he is a highbrow aesthete. The second stage of his story takes him to Tin Pan Alley and commercial success. Needless to say, this part of the story represents the commercialization of his art as yet another form of alienation: "He prostituted the divine in him for the swinish applause of the mob!" (252). In other words, neither aesthetic modernism nor commercialized mass culture can provide authentic self-expression to Berel. This is why the concluding step of his development takes him back to his own people. As he renounces his financial success and becomes a factory worker, he is reabsorbed in the masses: "He had ceased to struggle. He had ceased to be an individual, a soul apart. He was a piece of mass, a cog of a machine, an ant of an ant-hill. Individually he was nothing — they were nothing. Together, they made up the shop." (257) Thus, when Berel becomes "the poet of the factories — of my own East Side" (259), he concludes the dialectic by inventing a truly "popular" form of art, which is an authentic expression of the life of the community.

As we can see, both in *Salome of the Tenements* and "Song Triumphant" the development of the artist through Americanization leads to a rediscovery of "my own people." The significance of this expression is clearly indicated by a story from Yeziarska's *Hungry Hearts* that bears the same title, "My Own People." While the story's writer protagonist Sophie Sapinsky formulates an "expressivist" theory of artistic creation (the goal of art is authentic self-expression), this objective is now mediated through the community. Expression is not simply an occasion to release psychological tension caused by alienation. Rather, self-expression is authentic only if it participates in the politics of "togetherness" (118) that the volume advocates because it constitutes a community. This is why the struggling writer comes to the following conclusion at the story's end: "'Ach! At last it writes itself in me!' she whispered triumphantly. 'It's not me — it's their cries — my own people — crying in me!'" (107).

The last sentence is simultaneously an appropriate conclusion for the story and a perfect emblem of Yeziarska's whole project. It clearly illustrates that the invention of the "Yidgin" dialect is the end of the narrator's development and the very material of the story. The climactic proclamation — "Ach! At last it writes itself in me!" — presents the moment when authentic self-expression finally becomes possible, but it communicates this content in the very language that is the only possible medium of this self-expression. In the background of the phrase "it writes itself in me," we can clearly hear the syntax of the hypothetical "original": *Es schreibt sich in mir*. While the reflexive middle voice of the "original" sounds alien

in English, it nevertheless unmistakably defines the necessary logic of formalization: the immigrant experience ("my own people") translates itself into English in such a way that the English language itself is appropriated. The linguistic mark of foreignness, however, is not simply a clumsy accent but a concrete message. The renunciation of agency (the immigrant experience writes itself) has to be taken literally so that a universalized subject (the community) can finally emerge as the subject of the utterance. This literalism is what shows us that Yidgin is not just an "accent" but an active intervention in the English language.

Rediscovering the people, however, does not signal a segregationist politics. Rather, for Yeziarska, it is the foundation of a just participation in American politics. As the title of the concluding story of *Hungry Hearts* suggests, finding your own people coincides with finding America. "How I Found America" provides a fitting closure to the volume since it establishes a split within America (the nation is not quite itself) and uses it for a new universalist articulation. As the story explains, there is a split between "America, as the oppressed of all lands have dreamed America to be, and America as it is" (116). This split legitimates the participation of the oppressed in American life, since the immigrant can now contribute to the country's betterment. The story ends with the utopian romance of an immigrant/American friendship whose foundation is the recognition that every American is an immigrant: "Weren't Pilgrim Fathers immigrants two hundred years ago?" (127) On the text's final page, a quotation from Waldo Frank appears twice: "We go forth all to seek America. And in the seeking we create her. In the quality of our search shall be the nature of the America that we create" (127). The crucial point for Yeziarska is that "finding" America involves "creating" the America one wanted to find in the first place. In other words, "America" does not fully precede the process of "Americanization" as an already given identity. Americanization does not consist of a mere inclusion of an outsider within American identity; rather, Americanization is the simultaneous transformation of the immigrant and the American.

Furthermore, the story "America and I" makes it clear that the problem is not simply that the immigrant does not speak English. In other words, the problem of expression is not simply that of a translation between two national languages. When the story's anonymous girl narrator embarks upon her journey of Americanization, she is constantly reminded that she needs to learn American English. But when she starts attending an English class, she comes to a different realization: "I know already to read and write the English language, but I can't put it into words what I want" (149). The story dramatizes the inherent impossibility of self-expression, which goes beyond the general assumption that what prevents the immigrant from participating in American life is the barrier that separates two languages. Rather, language as such becomes the barrier. This is why the story's conclusion is significant, since it redefines the process of Americanization from the perspective of the same impossibility.

At this point in the story, the idea of the "incomplete nation" emerges as the very foundation of a universal articulation. The story ends with the narrator's epiphany that America itself is an unfinished project: "But the great difference

between the first Pilgrims and me was that they expected to make America, build America, create their own world of liberty. I wanted to find it ready made" (152). This realization suggests that the narrator's ideological mistake was precisely an excess of nationalism: she expected Americanization to be a move between two complete national identities. But her true insight is not only that America is not finished, but that this state is the very enabling condition of Americanization: "Then came a light — a great revelation! I saw America — a big idea — a deathless hope — a world still in the making. I saw that it was the glory of America that it was not yet finished" (152). The impossibility of self-expression is now rendered consistent with the idea of an Americanization that no longer enforces "assimilation" in terms of a translation between two already existing languages. Rather, if translation is the invention of a new language, Americanization is the reinvention of America through the mutual participation of the native and the immigrant. This also means that the goal of Americanization is not simply transforming the foreign into the American, but the very transformation of America so that it will be finally America: "America is to be America, after all" (177).

As we can see, the universality of the immigrant's position can be interpreted in two different ways. While the "original" Anglo-Saxon immigrant did not find America already finished, the new immigrant might mistakenly assume that America is a finished project. This distinction introduces a new complication. On the one hand, every "native" Anglo-Saxon American is really an immigrant. Thus, even the natives are not fully at home. On the other hand, however, the immigrant is not truly an immigrant until he or she fully identifies with the original Anglo-Saxon immigrant. The true American is an immigrant in the sense that she "makes" rather than "finds" America. If the founding act of America was an act of immigration, America cannot preexist the act of immigration: it is forever in the process of being constituted by subsequent acts of immigration.

In Yeziarska's fiction, these two universal statements lead to the following conclusion: every American is an immigrant, but not every immigrant is an American. The difference between the "original" immigrants and the "new" immigrants is that the latter must repeat the founding act of the former: the true immigrant must not take America for granted as a fully established entity. In this sense, Yeziarska deconstructs the opposition of the native and the immigrant by way of this double universalist articulation: the native is an immigrant (since every American is an immigrant); but the immigrant is only truly an immigrant if he or she repeats the founding gesture of this native (as the original immigrant).

The repetition of the original act of foundation is not as easy as it first might appear. In fact, Yeziarska's experience resembles Cowley's conclusions about the exile's return. In a crucial text, entitled "You Can't Be an Immigrant Twice," Yeziarska records the impossibility of this repetition. On a return voyage from Europe, she tries to participate in the immigrant experience one more time by traveling in third class with the poor immigrants. But the squalid conditions make it impossible for her to stay in steerage: "Well, I felt like a failure. Here I wanted to be one of the steerage and I felt that my sense of smell and my sense of sight had hampered me from being one of them." (265–66) No doubt, a sense of nostalgia pervades

these pages, but when Yezierska tries to actually repeat her original act of immigration, she finds that she is already too Americanized for such an adventure. The Americanized cannot simply repeat the original act of immigration. Just as in the case of Cowley's exiles, we encounter here the return of a repressed national identity. The political program of Americanization as perpetual immigration (and perpetual translation) is disturbed by the unexpected return of a concrete national content. As Yezierska proves, America is not infinitely open; rather, it is a perpetual conflict between an infinite openness (the act of perpetual immigration) and an irreducible drive toward an immutable national identity.

TRANSNATIONALISM AS UNIVERSALISM

So what can we conclude about modernist transnationalism through this juxtaposition of Pound and Yezierska? In both cases, we encountered the same problem, which directly follows from the structure of "concrete universality": a universalist articulation is contaminated by the return of a repressed particular content. In Pound's case, translation was supposed to constitute the universal language of poetry, but this universality was interrupted by the reappearance of the immutable essence of the nation. For Yezierska, on the other hand, perpetual translation was supposed to constitute the political universality of Americanization, but this radical openness of American identity was interrupted by the return of national identity. To put it differently, we could say that for Pound an aesthetic universality was disturbed by political particularism; while for Yezierska, an attempt at formulating a political universality was interrupted by aesthetic particularism.

As we have also seen, both Pound's and Yezierska's discourses were predicated upon the essential incompleteness of the nation. This condition elevated the figure of "translation" to the level of an ontological figure: the very being of the "Tradition" and of "America" was constituted by translation. In other words, translation emerged not as a secondary operation applied to an already fully constituted national discourse, but as the primary activity of the very constitution of this domain. This is why the incompleteness of the nation that exists in translation was inherently tied to the question of universality. If the particularity of the nation is threatened by its incompleteness (the nation is not quite itself), it will always need a political articulation that completes this identity. This is why we should understand modernist transnationalism as a form of universalism. It differs from classic nationalism in that the latter conceived of the pure nation as universal in itself. Modernist nationalism, however, already introduced the idea that the nation is the mere representation of true universality (this is what we called the concrete universality of the nation). Transnationalism, however, goes one step further. It designates the idea that anything that relates to the idea of "the nation" comes about on a primary terrain of translations where no pure national identity exists. To put it differently, "transnationalism" is the primary universal terrain on which "nationalisms" and "internationalism" can be formulated as secondary political entities.

Notes

1. For a representative sample of this type of scholarship, see the following works: Klein, Sollors, Boelhower, *The Future of American Modernism*, Kalaidjian, Konzett, Schedler, Giles, Keresztesi, Ramazani and Williams.
2. For discussions of modernist translation, see Senn, North, Xie, Apter, Yao. Although it is concerned with an earlier period, see also Boggs.
3. In 1975, for example, Alice Kessler-Harris opened her introduction to Anzia Yezierska's *Bread Givers* with the following statement: "'There wasn't anybody who didn't know Anzia Yezierska,' commented a woman recently of the 1920s. Today, there is hardly anyone who does" (v). Furthermore, something very similar happened to Henry Roth's 1934 novel, *Call It Sleep*, which shortly after its publication disappeared from public consciousness, only to resurface as a "forgotten classic" in 1960.
4. For discussions of modernist cosmopolitanism, see Berman, Walkowitz.
5. The most influential reading of modernism from this perspective remains Andreas Huyssen's *After the Great Divide*. For a critique of Huyssen's argument from the perspective of American modernism, see North's Reading 1922.
6. Similarly, in 1933 T. S. Eliot defended the "tradition" from the "influx of foreign populations" in the following terms: "The population should be homogeneous; where two or more cultures exist in the same place they are likely either to be fiercely self-conscious or both to become adulterate. What is still more important is unity of religious background; and reasons of race and religion combine to make any large number of free-thinking Jews undesirable" (20).
7. For a discussion of how the CPUSA tried to frame the question of African-American culture precisely in these terms, see Foley 170-212.
8. Part of the problem was, of course, that the category of "immigrant literature" or generic definitions like the "immigrant novel" were not available during the first half of the twentieth century. Rather, these categories are belated constructions of literary historians. At the time of their publication, these immigrant texts were judged in terms of the available critical vocabulary ("naturalism," "proletarian novel," "ghetto fiction," etc.). Historically speaking, the very emergence of the category of "immigrant literature" seems to coincide with the demise of modernism. See for example, Boelhower, "The Immigrant Novel as Genre."
9. For a discussion of "modernist universals" in terms of metropolitan migrations and the universality of the medium of art, see Williams 37-48.
10. The canonical text of this philosophy was René Wellek and Austin Warren's *The Theory of Literature* (from 1949). Wellek and Warren relied primarily on W.K. Wimsatt's article "The Structure of the 'Concrete Universal' in Literature." In ad-

dition, for a discussion of translation in Margaret Fuller's works in terms of "particular universality," see Boggs 91–110.

11. Discussing Yeats's poetry, Pound writes: "There have always been two sorts of poetry which are, for me at least, the most 'poetic;' they are firstly, the sort of poetry which seems to be music just forcing itself into articulate speech, and secondly, that sort of poetry which seems as if sculpture or painting were just forced or forcing itself into words" (380). This claim seems to suggest that true poetry always takes place on the verge of collapse of linguistic meaning. Poetry is meaning as it is invaded by the non-linguistic.

12. See also Botshon, Xavier, Konzett, Keresztesi, North 97–106.

13. In *Hungry Hearts*, we find a similar problem in the story "Soap and Water." In this story, a major obstacle to Americanization is the simple fact that the immigrant appears to be an immigrant. Of course, this appearance is a direct reflection of the immigrant's real conditions: the protagonist is a student by day and works at a sweatshop during the night. Although she cleans clothes at a laundry, she cannot afford to be clean herself, which directly threatens her career as a teacher. What she expects from her education is self-expression ("I shall learn to express myself, to voice my thoughts" [73]), but her appearance as an immigrant prevents her from fully participating in American life. Ultimately, this is the insight that will lead to the conclusion that political participation is necessarily preceded by an aesthetic act of self-fashioning.

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