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**Canadian Cultural Identity and Institutions:
The Banff School (1933)**

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A Thesis in the
Department of Communication Studies

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts (Media Studies) at
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ABSTRACT

Canadian Cultural Identity and Institutions:

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Catherine S. Callary

This study uses the case of the Banff School for the Arts Related to the Theatre (1933) to observe ways in which the institution as a location of performance practice and as a repository of (selected) knowledge can work to foster and assemble a national cultural identity. During the 1930s, several cultural institutions with *national* mandates were arriving on the scene; meanwhile Canadian artists were being heralded as representatives of a national cultural heritage. This time period seemed to bring in a shift in the perception of the role of the cultural producer as pedagogue and expressive agent of a widespread identity. The Banff School began as a summer school for theatre, where leaders of Alberta's rural communities could be taught in standards of appreciation and taste, and where Canadian plays were prepared in a school of theatre that was distinctly Canadian. The School, as a site of education, cultural practice, and community builder, is constantly negotiating between its mandates of regional attention and builder of a national sense of citizenship, and its own identity as a model of international influences. And yet, the story being told here is more *consistent* than contradictory with the stories of other national cultural institutions of this time because it is part of a grander narrative: a forming landscape of Canadian cultural identity.

Acknowledgements

A few words of gratitude are in order when one completes a piece of research work of this size, for there were many people who opened the doors of knowledge to me in different capacities. It is difficult to decide how to structure this message of gratitude, because I am not intending to establish a ranking of my appreciation by thanking certain people first or last. Therefore, I will move in a more or less chronological fashion.

First, I believe that thanks is due to Isobel Moore Rolston (Artistic Director, Music and Sound), Lynne Huras (Program Coordinator, Music and Sound), and the other people at Music and Sound at The Banff Centre who welcomed me to the winter residency program as a pianist in January-March 2000. It was during my residency that I discovered this place—a veritable Grand Central Station of creative minds and artistic projects from all over the world. The *Music Makers Tour* that I was a part of made me consider the role of cultural practice as outreach, the responsibility of the performer as educator, and spurred on my curiosity about the place of art in a national identity.

My work at the National Arts Centre the following summer also worked to solidify the ideas that were forming along these lines, and pushed me to pursue a Masters at Concordia University in Communications. At this institution, I owe thanks to the bold and daring Kelly Beaton (Director, Communications) and my colleagues in that department, and especially to David Leighton (Chair of the Board) who acted as mentor on several occasions (and with whom I seem to cross paths often: he was President of The Banff Centre from 1970-1982, and wrote a beautiful book on this institution, which I read voraciously).

I returned to The Banff Centre in the summer of 2001 in order to do research for my thesis. On this occasion I was granted a work-study position in the Marketing department under director Helen Moore-Parkhouse. I owe a thank you to this dynamic and energetic supervisor for her support of my project and her guidance. But I believe that the person behind my work-study position was none other than Joanne Morrow herself (Senior Vice-President, Arts Programming), with whom I had brazenly requested a meeting one February day. From Joanne I have learned that the path I chose for academic research would also lead to meeting people who would inspire me to combine my understanding of the historical institution of the Banff School with a creative curiosity about the contemporary Banff Centre.

My archival research taught me that archivists are deep wells of information and insight. The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at The Banff Centre is graced with one such person. Jane Parkinson (Archivist) tirelessly unearths all the information one might be looking for, and I owe her an equally deep gratitude. Elizabeth Kundert-Cameron and Lena Goon are archivists with the Rocky Mountain Archives at the Whyte Museum in Banff, and for their hard work and helpful spirits I owe them a thank you. I am also indebted to archivists at the University of Alberta Archives, and the Glenbow Archives in Calgary, all of whom have been most knowledgeable and kind.

Now to the wise and resourceful professors at Concordia, especially my thesis committee, all of whom are true scholars and mentors. For his thorough and meticulous editing, his dedicated availability to his students, and for his sensitive directness and gentle persuasiveness in academic coaching, my appreciation and gratitude to my thesis supervisor Charles Acland are not adequately captured in these words. I also thank Marty Allor and Bill Buxton for being on my committee. Their expertise in the area of

cultural practice and national identity, as well as their strong backgrounds in archival/historical research, methodology, and historical analysis were intentionally chosen to compliment this study. Their expertise and input are invaluable.

Now to my loved-ones. There are several people who are very close to me to whom I owe thanks for often putting their needs aside to give me space and time for the completion of this project. Naming them all here would be an arduous task, but I am confident that my sisters and friends know how thankful I am to them in my heart. There is one person, however, whose support and care often carried me over the times when my energy was low. Derek Frechette is my sweetheart, my friend, and my moral encouragement, and my appreciation for his contribution to this project is vast.

Most significantly I would like to take this occasion to thank my parents for their support and encouragement of my academic studies. Both of my parents have academic backgrounds that inspire admiration (and not a little competitiveness): my mother has a medical degree and a Masters in Medicine, and my father has degrees in History, Law, and has completed his studies toward a Dr. jur. in Private International Law at the University of Cologne Germany. Even this description does not do justice to the level at which my family prioritises academics. They have always been my primary editors, advisors, and academic role models.

Whenever I felt frustrated, tired, or impatient with this thesis, I would pick up the bound copy of my mother's medical thesis (knowing full well that I couldn't even read the first sentence) and just reflect on the time she must have had working on it. With a new-born infant to care for (Catherine Stefanie), starting a life in a new country (having emigrated from Germany) where she had to learn the language well enough to rewrite all of her medical exams to satisfy Canadian authorities, studying for those

exams, gathering a network of friends, and having to type eight copies of her thesis by typewriter (in English and German), it strikes me that she must have felt frustrated and tired at times too. She was exactly the same age I am now when she completed that study—a thought that never fails to baffle and confound me. For these reasons, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents. Their strength, intelligence, and love has been perhaps the strongest influencing factor on my thesis, and this is a gratitude that runs deeper than language can express.

Catherine S. Callary

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Foreword

The term “culture” is, as Raymond Williams point out, “one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language, ” (Williams, 1988: 87). Indeed, no single definition of this term is possible, for the face of culture is fluid, time-bound, and multi-discursive. It used within a number of discourses, reflecting a variety of meanings, where discourse can be understood as “a set of words and things, practices, beliefs and values that provide contexts of use for the construction of meaning,” (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000: 13). Scholars who study cultural policy and practices come from a wide scope of disciplines: from linguistics, sociology, anthropology, theatre, folklore, cultural studies, and communication studies, to name a few (Fine and Speer, 1992: 3).

Interdisciplinarity is a theme of this study at a variety of levels. From the point of view of a researcher whose background is in both Communications Studies and Performance studies, I approach the historical texts with the curiosity of an artist looking for clues about the roots of Canadian cultural identity, and yet, with the probing caution of the student who is careful to mind the theoretical writings of influential cultural theorists.

Personally, the question of cultural identity intrigues me because it is so elusive. As a German-born Canadian citizen (with both passports) I have grown up equally comfortable in both countries, and yet always conscious of the differences in the “German” and the “Canadian” sides of that identity. Chapter 1 will discuss how a cultural identity (or as Stuart Hall would suggest, *identities*) is transmitted within a nationalist discourse in a territory’s civil society. This raises a network of other issues to be examined, for the term nationalism conjures a complex and at times contradictory set

of associations that are informed by the (hi)stories of the nation-states I feel rooted within.

It is my objective with this study to assess the intangible social effects (both positive and negative) that performance culture has on its audience and society (Chapters 2 and 3—respectively for a theoretical and historical analysis). To complete this objective, it will be necessary to investigate how practices of education are closely related to cultural practices of performance (discussed in Chapter 4). A key element to this chapter will be to examine the ways in which the community can be fostered and linked to a national grand narrative by means of pedagogical tools that entertain, bring together an audience (collective), and relay underpinning messages about the society in which we live.

Chapter 5 will complete the historical analysis with discussion of the apparatuses that forge a sense of citizenship on a national scale: technologies (both old and new for the 1930s) and locations of national communication (such as Canada-wide institutions). Here, the notions discussed in previous chapters (nationalism, cultural practice as transmitted or facilitated by these technologies, civil society, citizenship, and identity) will resurface like pieces of a puzzle so that I might present a landscape for the interaction of themes of past chapters. With this study, I am attempting to gather a snapshot of a specific group of people in a specific place and time. The case study of the first years of (and the prelude to) the Banff School zooms in on western, English-speaking, primarily Caucasian Canadians of rural areas. While Canada has such a broad range of vibrant cultural backgrounds from which to choose, it was necessary to focus on only one story, in order to manage this already unwieldy subject. With this study, it is my intention to probe into the factors of how culture (which has a performative element,

but also performance culture) is inextricable from the pulse of the world in which we live, in the sense that this form of culture informs audience behaviour, social mores, citizenship values, and even nationalism.

There are some key definitions which I must lay out from the onset—definitions that will form a springboard from which I intend to start. Culture, as I have already pointed out, is an elusive and shifting concept, for which I will turn to Raymond Williams for a grounding definition. Raymond Williams has identified four major categories of “culture” in his broad-based and inclusive conception of the slippery term, which will serve as the base for our present discussion.

Williams begins by showing how one of the earliest uses of the word “culture” was a noun of process—“the culture (cultivation) of crops of (rearing and breeding) of animals, and by extension the culture (active cultivation) of the human mind,” (Williams, 1981: 10). This early use is the starting point for his first definition of culture: that “culture” can be acquired; that it is the pursuit of the spiritual rather than the material; that it is a state of mind that is attained by education, family upbringing, and through participation in the arts and higher education. In other words, “culture” is training in discrimination and taste, based on a knowledge and responsiveness to the highest standards of society (Williams, 1981: 11-13).

The second category of culture, as Williams sees it, is closely related to the first. In the second definition, “culture” consists of specific products along with their associated practices (such as painting, sculpture, music, literature, and drama). Most will recognize this definition as the dominant understanding of culture in the western world today. Related to this conception of culture are a variety of key institutions that support these practices. In both of these categories of culture, a set of subjective assumptions are

nascent: common “universal” understandings about what is standard, about cultural value, and about judgements of what constitutes “high quality”, are factors of these two definitions. That the cultural sphere is separate from the economic and political spheres, remains an unsaid assumption here.

In the third category of culture, Williams moves to correct the direction his first two categories have taken. The third definition describes culture as a “way of life” of groups, subcultures, or ethnicities. Within this definition, each society (ethnic or linguistic group) has common customs or ways of perceiving the world. This approach moves away from the elitist assumptions of what constitutes “high” and “low” culture as set out in the first two definitions; it is a more inclusive perspective that defers judgments about worth and value. However, for the purposes of this discussion, this definition is too broad and removed from the discourse of performance practice.

Finally, the fourth conception of culture suggested by Williams is a middle-ground, where culture is neither a domain comprised of elite people and artefacts, nor an all-inclusive common denominator of ways of life, but rather a set of practices (institutionally based) that construct meaning, values, and subjectivities. Culture, in this category, is a “realized signifying system,” (Williams, 1981: 207). In other words, culture is removed from the level of material, tangible things; removed from the level of individual value; and placed in the realm of policy, practices, and processes of creation. This definition is the most useful understanding of the term “culture” for the purposes of this study, and will be the primary concept of culture on which this study on performance practices will rely. The assumption here is that a “realized signifying system” is one in which symbolic practices (artefacts and other performance mechanisms) convey meaning around actual lived experience, collective and individual,

that the audience decodes on a conscious and unconscious level. This definition (of culture as policy, institution, and practice) facilitates the analysis of the relationship between culture and education, culture and citizenship (or civil society), and culture and nationalism that are the stakes to be raised in this study.

The methods of gathering and organizing the information into this thesis, range from theoretical to archival information, to an arrival at my own account of the roles and impacts that the early Banff School has had on the levels of regional life, national identity, and international reach. I have researched theoretical accounts on the nature of nationalism, education, citizenship, and locations and roles of performance culture by a range of theorists from Foucault to Baudrillard, to Anthony Smith and Ernest Gellner (although primarily post-modern writers such as Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha, Arjun Appadurai, Jim McGuigan, and Elizabeth Fine and Jean Haskell Speer, to name a few). Finally, I also rely on historical documentation from archival sources about the selected case study—archival research on the impact of performance culture on social life in western Canada (for the wide picture I am presenting), and on the impact, popularity, objectives, and context of the early Banff School for the Arts Related to the Theatre in 1933.

Most significantly, however, I wish to come to an understanding the complexities and intangibilities that performance culture practices offer to the forging of a nation's cultural identity. There is a common street perception of performance culture and artistic creation as superfluous to a society¹—indeed, of “high art” as slothful, unproductive, high-brow, and even immoral—which has always been an irksome and

¹ This is not as much the case with popular cultural practices as it is with the type of art often referred to as “high art”. This perception seems to be closely tied with the consumer market: although consumers are

uncomfortable social misconception in my mind. I hope that this thesis will contribute to a body of work that chips away at this utilitarian and bleak mindset.

In the quest I undertook to consider the above-mentioned matters, I discovered a history that I was not expecting to find. Initially, I had envisioned that I would arrive at a linear and congruous narrative about a fulfilment of a Canadian need—what I unravelled was quite the opposite. The inception of the Banff School (1933) and the five years (or so) that surround it (1929-1934) is far from a linear history. In the face of adversity and Depression, I found creativity and expression. Where I thought I would find a grassroots summer camp, I found a semi-professional (if not professional *tout court*) self-proclaimed national educational institution. Just when I was hoping to find a site of inclusiveness for the People, I found an outlet for a Canadianness that favoured a cultural elite of intellectuals and community leaders. And in looking for evidence of the national mandate that fuelled the initiative, I found a populist, regional community base, nationalist motives, and international faculty, funding bodies, and templates from which the School took its formation. What I found was that the Banff School was not an isolated phenomenon in Canadian history, but that it was in fact consistent with other confounding elements and fragmented identities of the *institution* in the 1930s.

And yet I feel that there is a story told here. It is in those incongruencies, those mismatched narratives, those seeming contradictions, that the intrigue unfolds. I will not (and should not) find the linear reconciliation within this discourse, for the School's identity is in the gaps of what cannot be reconciled. What I hope I have done is to have provided as theoretically complete and as historically accurate a stage as I could, in

impulse buyers with low cost popular culture, will be frugal or even apprehensive of "high art" products that have not entered the consumer conscience as "a necessity".

order to allow the key concepts and elements involved to enter stage left and right, and to play out their roles. Lights dim. Curtain rises. The setting is the Rocky Mountains in the 1930s, and the play concerns the formation of one of Canada's first and longest-lasting national cultural institutions, and the forging and excavation of a Canadian cultural identity.

Chapter One – Nationalism and The Banff School

Donald Cameron, second Director of the Banff School [Banff School of Fine Arts, as it was called under him] remarked that the institution was “distinctively Canadian” and “dedicated to the encouragement of the arts in Canada” (Cameron, 1950). He goes on to muse that, “the Banff School has taken firm root in Canadian soil. It has done this under very difficult circumstances which included five years of depression and six years of war. It has done so because, in a modest way, it has filled a need and satisfied a hunger in Canadian life,” (Cameron, 1950). Within a few short lines, one cannot fail to notice the frequent use of the words Canada and Canadian—a remarkable statement about the constitution of the school as an apparatus of the nation, and a site for the formation of what is Canadian.

Nationalism involves the emotional attachment generated by the understood cultural similarities shared by a group of people within a region, one might be tempted to say. However, this would be to add yet another elusive term to the equation. With Williams’s definition of the term “culture”, the relationship between culture and nationalism becomes clearer. Culture, in this sense, is a whole way of life, a familiarity shared by citizens of a nation; culture informs the identity of a group of people, which carries the consequence of solidifying the self-awareness of the collective. As a nation’s self-awareness grows, so to do the conditions for the ignition of sentiments of fervour for the perceived “traditional” ways of that Nation – thus, culture also becomes the vehicle of identity.

The nature of the identity of a people is not as fixed as this equation suggests. The generation of cultural identity is not a matter of promoting certain intellectual styles and activities; nor does the scope of nationalism stay rigid within the borders of a

region. These terms carry a subjectivity and a malleability that render the task of characterizing them unwieldy.

The Finnish theorist Kimmo Jokinen (among several other theorists who have spoken of this transformation, from Harold Innis to Alvin Toffler) presents a map which may be used to navigate the changing nature of cultural identities' waters (1994). While this outline may be criticized for its reductive and determinist vision, one can also recognize the usefulness of this theory to understanding the grand scheme of the evolving nature of the social milieu. He borrows from Finnish sociologist, Erik Allardt, who speaks of a tripartite scheme of three social formats, each of which brought with it cultural changes as it succeeded the social format which preceded it. Jokinen begins with a classification of the *agrarian* society, where there are no uniform "rules" for regulating working life: culture is non-distinct and locally specific. (It is important to note here, that we are using Raymond Williams's conception of "culture" as a term to describe the everyday customs and readings of the world that make up a people's "way of life" [Williams, 1981: 11-13].)

In contrast to this, the social format of the industrial society (which succeeded the former) demanded a strict cultural conformity and uniformity in order to produce standardized commodities. In this society, roles are limited and specific as a method of reaching a maximum of production efficiency, work ethic is regulated and education supports these values. It is within this society that nationalism burst into being, as citizens' secure and fixed definitions of their belongingness enflamed their convictions in the empirical rightness of their (invented) cultural heritage.

The industrial society is succeeded by the *information* society within which we now situate ourselves. Again, a shift in format is observed in that the onslaught of mass

communication produces a compression of spatial obstacles. "In this age of simultaneity, in which speed dominates transactions, territorial space gives way increasingly to [what Paul Virilio terms as] 'chronospace'" (Shapiro, 2000: 83). This society sees an internationalisation of culture, an embrace of diversity, and a broad range of code and meaning systems for interpreting the world (Jokinen, 1994: 211-212). Thus, we see the loosening of rigid cultural identities, and a mingling of customs. In this way, the old definition of nationalism becomes eroded and supplanted by both transnationalism and celebration of diversity. (Of course, several recent global events have shown that nationalism is no less a force than in the past, but this model does not mean to deny the existence of nationalism in favour of a transnational order and regional allegiances. What is being said here is that the old definitions of nationalism have been eroded to incorporate a loosening of the monopoly of nationalism.)

A more detailed take on the evolution we are observing here is offered by Stuart Hall, when he observes that one result of the present intensified phase of globalization has been "a slow, if uneven, erosion of the 'centred' nationalisms of the Western European nation-state and the strengthening of both transnational relations and local identities – as it were, simultaneously 'above' and 'below' the level of the nation-state" (Hall, 1993: 354). He notes a trend toward pushing nation-states into a supranational integration causing the weakening of the sovereignty of the nation-state; but alongside this move toward transnationalism, he also notes the strengthening of 'local' allegiances, or identities within nation-states. If a revival in the nationalisms of nation-states is evident, then this is a defensive reaction by national cultures who feel threatened by their peripheries.

This account is very different from the cautions of the other side of this debate: those who condemn the trend toward globalization, fearing its inauthenticity. This camp warns against the empty driving force behind transnationalism: a facilitation of corporate affairs within a capitalist system of transaction, as opposed to any real, authentic ethno-history. Anthony D. Smith is among those who bemoan the fate of national cultures whose memories, myths, and artefacts are being effectively stolen, taken out of context, and re-contextualized within a global discourse. He sees this tendency as an erosion of difference and diversity, in favour of a diluted and bland hotch-potch of cultural references that have lost their meaning and history (Smith, 1990: 179).

Yet another stance in this debate acknowledges the cultural borrowing and influence of national cultures that have formed cross-border trade relations. While recognizing that cultures regularly import and export their national identities in the form of cultural commodities, this side of the debate doesn't perceive a nascent threat to national cultural sovereignty within this process, but rather a creation of new elements to the existing national identity. The argument here is that citizens of a nation-state have their own culturally-specific ways of decoding the environment around them, such that when any new commodity or artifact is introduced into their sphere, it is simply recontextualized and integrated into this new nation's way of life.

In the case of Canada's cultural history, circumstances that reflect this general theoretical account seem to indicate an alignment of history and theory. In The History of Prairie Theatre, E. Ross Stuart exposes an example of a common situation in which one can see this rationale at work. Interestingly, this historical evidence ties together the notions of the cultural institution as a vehicle for citizenship and cultural identity, as

well as that of the recontextualization of disparate ethnic traditions into a new nation's "way of life".

The formation of the Winnipeg Players Guild in 1934 with Lady Tupper as president reaffirmed the importance and prevalence of ethnic theatre in the West. This umbrella organization had as one of its primary objectives 'To draw together the outstanding talent amongst our 'New Canadian' citizens, many of whom, among the French, Ukrainian, Scandinavian, Hungarian, and Polish populace, are doing work to be found in no other city in Canada.' In a 1930 *Canadian Forum* article, Robert Ayres argued: 'There is a rich field in the soil of Manitoba that is the soil of Iceland in Canada: how could Canadian drama be complete, ignoring the Icelanders of Gimli?' A national theatre in Canada must be as much 'a group from Arborg playing *Sword and Crozier* as only an Icelandic group (can) play it' as anything else. However, Ayres cautioned, ethnic groups cannot present only dramas of their homelands: 'The Icelanders must give us plays of the coming to Gimli fifty years ago.' Harry Green showed the way with his *The Miracle Play of Manitoba*, 1926, which explored 'a piece of contemporary Manitoba life, Ukrainian and Canadian at the same time.'" (Stuart, 1984: 88-89).

Here, then, one can see the extent to which "new Canadians" are permitted to express the characteristics of the cultural heritages of their origins. While diversity seems to be well-received by Ayres, it is evident that the essential element to the diversity is its recontextualization into a Canadian theatre.

Ulf Hannerz and Orvar Löfgren discuss the exportation of Swedishness through IKEA, just as there is an importation of American products to Sweden, seemingly eroding Swedish national identity. However, the authors point to a very important distinction between Americanization and internationalization when they note, "Sweden was spoken of as 'the most Americanized nation in the world', but in retrospect we can see how Swedes Americanized themselves in a very Swedish way" (Hannerz and Löfgren, 1994: 204). They point out that there is a tendency to equate Americanization with consumerism, when what is meant by this former term is a representation of modernity, informality, efficiency, but also Hollywood vulgarity and low taste. In other words, Hannerz and Löfgren point out that while America is entering a Swedish way of

life, Sweden is also exporting their way of life to the United States. Here, we see that globalization, or transnationalism, is not as simple as one nation infiltrating another, but rather that in the exchange, cultures may be borrowing from other cultures, taking them out of context, but they are recycling them, creating new memories from these artifacts, understanding them in their own culturally-specific ways.

This process of negotiating between cultural references is common on an individual level as well as on a structural level. Stuart Hall describes this process as “cultural hybridity”, wherein individuals with mixed cultural backgrounds are in constant dialogue between those identities but perceive these contradictions to make up one distinct and specific identity. However, one might see how this concept can be applied to a broader, nation-state scale, rather than resting simply with the individual. One might look to the nationalism of “Britishness” as an example of a larger-scale cultural hybridity, for it includes nationalisms on various locally-specific levels: Welshness, Irishness, Scottishness, etc. This is only contentiously so, of course, because not everybody participates in this form of nationalism, and some are vehemently opposed to it. All of these cultures emerged from different pasts and histories, from victories and defeats, and from ruptured chronologies. In a multi-national society, it is vital to look past ethno-specific ties, because, as Hobsbawm warns, there is a never-ending list of sub-categories within which to place oneself:

Yet even today it is perfectly possible for a person living in Slough to think of himself...as a British citizen, or (faced with other citizens of a different colour) as an Indian, or (faced with other Indians) as Gujarati, or (faced with Hindus or Muslims) as a Jain, or as a member of a particular caste, or kinship connection, or as one who, at home, speaks Hindi rather than Gujarati, or doubtless in other ways (Hobsbawm, 1990: 8).

Here, the fragmented nature of cultural identity is made abundantly clear. It is hardly possible, given these examples, to speak of a truly homogeneous national culture. Instead, fractured identities are layered upon one another to compose a unified set of contradictions and negotiated differences.

For the purposes of this study, we shall return to the phenomenon of nationalism before the slide into an “*information society*”, because it is at this stage that the relationship between cultural identity and nationalism is critical, and walks the fine-line between inspiration and fanaticism. Indeed, one cannot afford not to take a cautionary stance when discussing the concept of nationalism, and yet, the danger in this position is to overlook the healthy and creative processes which accompany such a sentiment.

An influential book on the qualities of nationalism and national identity is Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (1983). Here, Anderson puts forth his notions of the nation as an imagined political community, imagined both in finite and sovereign terms. He sees this entity as imagined, because one will never meet all the members of the community to which one belongs so zealously, and yet, there is a bond implicit. Anderson like Ernest Gellner, displays a modernist approach to the study of nationalism, in that he holds the view that nationalism is a concept born of the conditions of modernity (the catalyst, specifically, being the American Revolution). Thus, as a variation to Gellner’s emphatic and often quoted phrase: “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist” (Gellner, 1964: 169), Anderson also argues for the nation as a construct, but one contingent on print capitalism. In this account, then,

print capitalism is one agent responsible for the spread of nationalism from America to Europe and then to the colonies.

There are three reasons for the centrality of print capitalism to the cause of nationalism. First, print media has the ability to disperse a specific, constructed identity in *fixed* terms. Second, print media has the side-effect of acting as a promoter of mass literacy and thereby solidifying a vernacular language (we shall return to the importance of the vernacular lingua franca shortly). Finally, print provides the readers with a sense of simultaneity, where one becomes a part of a story whose cast (both of other readers and of the subjects about whom one reads) involves other members of the “community”, acting as a reinforcing agent of the imagined bond. As Arjun Appadurai astutely notes, Anderson links nation to narration (in Goldmann et al., 2000: 131).

This point is particularly integral where the present study is concerned, for one can extend this notion to include not only the written word, but the spoken word as well. The art of performance theatre demonstrates Benedict Anderson’s suggestion that the printed word (here brought to life) creates a sense of simultaneity, allowing audiences to experience the passing of time in at least two distinct and parallel courses. The experience of simultaneity in this form is vital to the strengthening of an imagined community, or sense of national bond. Furthermore, the promotion of this form of social gathering generates unspoken (although sometimes vocalized) rules around performance etiquette, social behaviour, self-censorship, and audience protocol. In other words, audiences are being taught how to be audiences, how to be Canadian, how to uphold reigning social mores and civility.

In a case study on the formation of a cultural identity in Finland, Kimmo Jokinen echoes Anderson’s view of the importance of print as a source of identity education.

One of the most important cultural fields in Finland is literature. It has played a vital role in defining the national culture and identity. The establishment of Finnish literature was an important part of national awakening in the nineteenth century, because it was considered to provide a means of allaying the rootlessness felt by intellectuals and the nation as a whole. [...] It is also possible to claim that Finnish authors compare favourably with sociologists and historians in their interpretations of the turning points in our nation's history... (Jokinen, 1994: 213).

Jokinen continues his article by outlining the essentially Finnish characteristics that are propagated by Finnish authors. Certain tastes, values, and ideals are prominent in Finnish literature, both because authors know that their readership will identify with these characteristics, and because the readership demands this of their authors time and time again. Furthermore, one can see in Jokinen's phrase "allaying the rootlessness felt by intellectuals and the nation as a whole", that literature has the power to create an imaginary bond between people who will never meet, because of the creation of a sense of commonality and shared character of a people.

The importance of language in supporting of nationalism cannot be underestimated in Anderson's view. He outlines a series of connecting assumptions that form a strong argument for the pivotal role of language. It creates a community of intercommunicating élite who coincide with a particular territory or vernacular zone, providing a spatial limit to a nation. Furthermore, a common language, which is not naturally evolved but constructed, is granted fixity and the appearance of permanence through print. This fixity (or sense of eternity) grants language a temporal quality that can be transferred to the cause of nationalism. Finally, this official/cultural language of the ruling class becomes the actual language of the modern state via public education and other administrative mechanisms.

This, according to Anderson, is how the conditions of modernity co-operate with the tool of language to promote the relatively new concept of nationalism. The focus on language as a nationalist instrument is also a central argument in Anthony D. Smith's account of nationalism. Here, however, the logic is rather different: lingua franca is a mechanism to promote what Smith terms as pan-nationalisms which transcend strictly national borders and may eventually lead to a global cultural identity (Smith, 1990: 172).

The Norwegian cultural theorist, Jostein Gripsrud (1994) provides a case for the pivotal importance of a vernacular language to the construction of nationalism. He proposes the case study of the construction of a Norwegian identity. When Norway separated from Denmark in 1814, and became its own sovereign state in 1905, there was much work to be done in the construction of Norwegian-ness by the intellectual élite. The central trouble here was the lack of a vernacular tongue of its own. This project was undertaken by two avenues of thought: a radical movement (the "New Norse Movement") which favoured the establishment of a well-preserved Norse spoken by isolated mountainous communities; and on the other hand, the more reformist movement that favoured a gradual transformation of spelling and vocabulary of an already spoken dialect of Danish.

Eventually the reformist movement for a vernacular was adopted by Norway as the more viable alternative. However, it is the Old Norse Movement which interests Gripsrud in his article "Intellectuals as Constructors of Cultural Identities" (Gripsrud, 1994). In this article, he brings to the fore the inextricable relationship between language and myth, for the campaign for this old, "authentic" Norse was spearheaded by the belief that this vernacular tongue could link a new and sovereign Norway to its great Mediaeval past. Interestingly, there can be found in this movement an irreconcilable

paradox in that the “New Norse movement came to play the very modern double role of agency for the defence of traditional culture – mostly in the form of refined, more or less constructed versions of popular arts – on the one hand, and an agency for socio-economic and socio-psychological modernization on the other” (Gripsrud, 1994: 225).

Another leading authority on the topic of nationalism and national identity is Eric Hobsbawm, whose 1990 book *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* attempts to trace the shifts in the make-up of nationalism since the French Revolution. Here, Hobsbawm suggests that the concepts of nations and nationalism are falling out of popularity in the late 20th century and early 21st century, making room for supra-national restructuring. He holds that a sign of the decline of nationalism is the fact that historians are now conducting studies of the phenomenon².

Hobsbawm, sometimes labelled a “constructionist” in his approach to nationalism, locates three phases in the development of nationalism since its emergence in the aftermath of the French Revolution (Hobsbawm, 1990: 12). Thus, 19th century European nationalism is in “Phase A” of its development: it is purely cultural, literary, and folkloric. In this phase, Hobsbawm sees a congruence between nation and state. The relationship between the two concepts is seen as stronger than the relationship between nation and ethnicity or nation and language, because the early forms of nationalism (Jacobin and Chartist nationalisms) were distinctly anti-French and exclusive to the working classes. Therefore, there is inherent in this phase a populist consciousness that is easily mistaken for patriotism: a demonstration of a state-based nationalism (Hobsbawm, 1990: 87). Yet, Hobsbawm holds that Phase A does not entail

² Hobsbawm concludes his book with the observation that “After all, the very fact that historians are at least beginning to make some progress in the study and analysis of nations and nationalism suggests that, as so

any political implications. The advent of political campaigning around this subject by the early pioneers and militants of a “national idea” constitutes “Phase B” in the development of the phenomenon. Finally, “Phase C” is nationalism’s acquisition of mass support. This phase is apparent both before and/or after the creation of an independent state – contrarily to the “primordialist” account of nationalism as entailing a shared history and territory, and pre-dating the creation of a state.

There is a fine line being tread here when speaking of “creation of the state”: Hobsbawm is quick to qualify that he does not advocate the top-down approach Gellner takes when talking about the “creation” of a nation where there was none. Rather, Hobsbawm holds that intellectuals foster *unofficial* nationalisms (Hobsbawm, 1990: 11) which then become mobilized.

This brings us to Ernest Gellner’s quintessential modernist perspective. In this version of nationalism, the political and national unit must be congruent. Gellner is of the opinion that the nation is deliberately socially engineered: it is an invention and a construct of artefacts. He is vehemently opposed to the notion that the nation has a *primordial* quality (the argument embodied by his own student, Anthony D. Smith), that it is a natural, inherent political destiny. Instead, for Gellner, nationalists do three things: they transform pre-existing cultures into nations through social engineering; they invent nations; or they obliterate pre-existing cultures (these options are not mutually exclusive). For this reason, Gellner believes nationalism to precede nations/states, in that it is the former which makes the latter (Gellner, 1995: 35).

often, the phenomenon is past its peak. The owl of Minerva which brings wisdom, said Hegel, flies out at dusk. It is a good sign that it is now circling round nations and nationalism.” (Hobsbawm, 183.)

Furthermore, Gellner holds that national conflicts are inherent to the modern world. In his view, a world of equal nations cannot exist, but rather, a world where certain potential nationalist groups exclude others. This exclusion is a way for cultures to define themselves as they define what is “Other”, so that in this account, membership to a nation is defined *from the outside*, such that it is not a common identity that marks membership to a nation, but a collective difference from something Other that reflects back on that membership.

Thus, the nation is a product of modern conditions such as early industrialism, social mobility, a need for mass literacy, and public education. Through these mechanisms, nationalism emerged along with the transformation of society from non-literate and “low” to a cultivated, “high” culture. Here is where Smith takes issue with his mentor, for he sees this as describing only half of the story (Gellner, 1995: 37). Gellner typifies the need felt by academics to compartmentalize an emotionally charged term such as nationalism into neat, tidy categories, devoid of subjectivism and loose-ends. Even when inexplicable evidence rises to the fore, the instinct is to distance it from the uncertainties of human nature.

Finally, in Anthony D. Smith’s *primordialist* theory, he holds that nations are not simply an ideology or manifestation of political strife, but that nations are a cultural phenomena with roots that predate the state,

Nations were ‘built’ and ‘forged’ by state elites or intelligentsias or capitalists; like the Scots kilt or the British Coronation ceremony, they are composed of so many ‘invented traditions’,... ‘nations’ can be understood as historic identities, or at least deriving closely from them,... It [the creation of a nation] depended, therefore, in large measure on the rediscovery of the community’s ‘ethno-history’. (Smith, 1990: 177-181).

If the building of a nation (or of a nationalism) depends on the re-discovery of an ethno-history, then Smith defines the ethno-history as such,

The more salient, pervasive and enduring that history, the firmer the cultural base it afforded for the formation of a modern nation. Once again, these are largely subjective aspects. It is the salience of that history in the eyes of the community's members, and the *felt* antiquity of their ethnic ties and sentiments, which give an ethno-history its power and resonance among wide strata... For the participants in this drama, ethno-history has a 'primordial' quality, or it is power-less. (Smith, 1990: 181-182).

Smith sees the existence of national conflicts as the result of a disjuncture between nation and state at spatial and temporal levels. Because of the incongruence between nations and state borders, and between nations and states' recognition of their nationhood over the long-term, there exists conflict. In other words, national conflict is not an inherent feature to nationalism alone, but rather to the lack of overlap between nation and state.

Richard Collins (although not a "primordialist" theorist), in his article "National Culture: A Contradiction in Terms?" quotes Pierre Trudeau's observation that "It is not the concept of nation that is retrograde; it is the idea that the nation must necessarily be sovereign [Trudeau, 1968, p. 151]" (Collins, 1991: 234). While Smith's theory regards the problematique of national conflict as a matter of incongruence between ethno-histories and the imposed geographic territories that make up the spacial definition of the nation, Collins view of national conflict is contingent on a lack of fit between a nation and its sovereignty. Thus, both theorists arrive at a similar end conclusion, but from very different vantage points in their arguments.

In his 1991 book *National Identity*, Smith gives a balanced account of the benefits and dangers of national cultural identity. He acknowledges the positive aspects of nationalism, in that he finds nations to have the effect of locating a community in time and space, providing the individual with sacred centres as well as objectives of spiritual

and historical pilgrimage, and a “moral geography” (Smith, 1991: 16). He also finds that nations provide a legitimization of common legal rights, and that they set out the duties of legal institutions which define values, the character of a nation, and which reflect age-old customs and mores.

Smith criticises modernist theories of nationalism as being materialist (although interestingly, he does not critique Anderson or Hobsbawm, both of whom are materialist but still point to the value of memories, myths, and other subjectivist emotional attachments. These theories cannot account for the role played by (collective) memories, values, myths, and symbols. He sees national cultures as “*particular, timebound, and expressive*” (Smith, 1990: 178); in other words, they have emotional connotations. They are continuous from a longstanding past, and they are spatially limited. He believes that identity cannot be inscribed on faceless populations, but rather, that they *emerge* from historical circumstances and a pre-existing sense of cultural identity: national cultures are primordial (Smith, 1990: 182). He feels that modernists are only telling half of the story because they cannot account for sentiments of belonging and dignity within the concept of nationalism. Finally, nations provide a social bond between individuals and classes through “repertoires of shared values, symbols and traditions” (Smith, 1991: 16) and self-definition.

It appears that there are certain themes that are consistent throughout the accounts of these theorists, and so serve as a useful basis from which to begin. First, nations are spatially limited within a vernacular zone. While there is debate over the question of whether nationalism predates the nation-state, there is consensus on the importance that myth and memory plays in the fostering of nationalism, and the place of the intellectual as a transmitter of these narratives.

Conclusion

It has been impossible to extricate the concept of cultural identity from the national and supra-national ideologies we have been discussing. The reasons have become clear: cultural identities are a product of a membership to a collective made up of a hybridity of nationalisms. On the other hand, nationalism (and subsequently transnationalism), are relatively recent phenomena, younger still than shared customs and community ties. In other words, nationalism and other forms of social belonging are invented constructs, imagined communities, created out of the possibilities of mass-proliferation of intellectuals' deliberate visions of a cultural identity. Perhaps "deliberate visions of cultural identity" is too contrived a phrase, for cultural producers (artists) observe and depict what is around them, touching on what is already there, excavating it from an unconscious habit, and fortifying the object of observation. Thus, the unconscious subjectivity is raised to the level of tradition and custom, and histories around that tradition develop that situate a nation as apart from any other.

We live in a world where the grand-narratives of nationalism, transnationalism (or cosmopolitanism, as it is often called), pan-nationalism, and cultures of hybridity, are parallel and overlapping rather than exclusive. Meanwhile, the cultural identities which shape each of these ideologies also overlap to become conflicting elements of citizenship within which we mediate our existences.

Even the concept of transnationalism is slightly different from one community to another, such that Sweden was "Americanized in a very Swedish way" (Hannerz, 1994: 204); or conversely, that "in terms of nationality a person is either Canadian or not, but culturally one may be Canadian in varying degrees [Desaulniers, 1987, p. 151]" (Collins, 1991: 235). Smith expresses concern that a global culture is "memoryless" and empty in

that it borrows elements of certain cultural identities and displaces or decontextualizes them, however, one might argue that this is not so. These cultural artifacts are not the same in their new environments as in their original ones. Their genealogy has been revisited, their histories reshaped by translation into a new context, and their meanings reinvented by the environment that has appropriated them.

Joan Scott sees the construction of identity as a “fantasy-echo”, such that there is a “repetition of something imagined or an imagined repetition. In either case the repetition is not exact since an echo is an imperfect return of sound. Fantasy, as a noun or adjective, refers to plays of the mind that are creative and not always rational” (Scott, 2001: 281). Culture, then, is an ever-shifting and newly perceived set of identifications. One cannot say that an image of a pyramid on the wall of a Second Cup café has no meaning or memory, then, since it simply has a revised version of meaning. It is a fantasy-echo of its original form, an altered resonance whose sound-content is structurally the same as the original cry, but whose sound-frequency and timbre is utterly abstracted from the source. With this theoretical discussion of nationalism and nation, we have set a stage for chapters to come, for what plays out herein requires the backdrop of this terminology around nationhood (a key beacon for a search for national identity during the 1930s, as the navigation through this study will attempt to convey.) What we have established here, then, is the mountain range against which our *echo* of cultural identity resounds. In the coming chapters, the central concepts of analysis will be a theoretical discussion around cultural practice; a historical setting of Alberta during the Depression and the performative practices which stake out holds within this context; the role of education to the project of identity; and the “systems”, networks, and technologies which are harnessed in the project of citizenship. All these elements,

relating specifically to the formation of the Banff School in 1933, should work toward giving readers an idea of what that *fantasy echo* sounds like in Canada, and specifically in the Rocky Mountains.

It can be said that cultural identity is fluid. Whether one perceives cultural identity as echo or as a moving body of water, the imagination is working with fluidity, change, and waves that refuse to be pinned down. This is the effect caused by the overlap of ideologies of community (where “community” is a way of describing the macrocosm of internationalism, the microcosm of locality, and everything in between). It is a complex mediation of the roles of citizens who have the ability to compartmentalize meanings and codes in the world around them. We respond to the shifting nature of identity as our eyes respond to the shifting images of a kaleidoscope: with surprising adaptability, spellbound focus, and the boundless wonder of a child.

Chapter Two-- Performance Culture: Representation and Roles

In his book *Museums and Popular Culture*, Kevin Moore differentiates between popular (mass) culture and high (élite) culture. This is a conclusion drawn by other theorists (interestingly also by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill—representing the position of two theorists in the field of museology) that speaks to the other side of the debate around what constitutes culture from the position that Raymond Williams presents. While Moore is not directly responding to Williams, this school of thought, in its assignments of value and hierarchy to cultural practice, is contrary to Williams's inclusive definition of culture as a set of practices (primarily institutionally based) that construct meanings, values, and subjectivities for their audiences, and as not categorized by socially constructed hierarchies of standards. In Moore's oppositional definition of culture, he conceives,

Popular culture... is not defined as high culture. Where they differ is in how they perceive that culture to have been created. The multiplicity of approaches to the study of popular culture can be characterized, in simple terms, as adopting one of two fundamental positions. It is viewed either as a mass culture imposed by a culture industry to maintain the power of a ruling elite [sic], or alternatively as a genuine, creative cultural expression from below, a form of consumer subversion in opposition to the dominant ideology. (Moore, 1997: 2).

This categorical definition of popular culture as contradictory to high culture is a view reminiscent of that held by the Frankfurt School, as represented by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (Adorno, 1945). This view falls short of representing the gamut of cultural institutions that Williams is seeking to include in his definitions. In another account, Jim McGuigan offers a return to the view of culture as an inclusive set of practices that create meaning and value for audiences. As he notes in his *Culture and the Public Sphere*, "Raymond Williams... sought to overcome this dual problem of scope and delimitation with 'the concept of culture as a *realized signifying system*'. From this point of

view, 'culture' refers specifically to the practices and institutions that make meaning, practices and institutions where symbolic communication is usually, by definition, the main purpose and even an end in itself, like going to the cinema to see a feature film," (McGuigan, 1996: 6). In this passage, McGuigan astutely shows that Williams's fourth definition is seeking to include the gamut of cultural practice and experience, whether "high" or "mass", if it is in a position to create meaning for its audience.

This observation of Williams's intent is vital when relating to the role of theatre in Alberta during the 1930s, for instance, because like cinema (indeed, as a substitute for cinema during a time when cinemas were being shut down), theatre can be seen as a grey zone between "high" and "mass" culture. On one hand, theatre is considered a worthwhile and high-quality entertainment that was a vehicle for educational messages and civilized mores. On the other hand, the 1930s (as we have shown in earlier chapters) saw an era when theatre was a community endeavor, and a popular source of mass-entertainment. In this way, it might be said that theatre represents a 'grey zone' of culture that cannot be classified as either high culture or popular culture. Moreover, this genre fits well into the fourth definition of culture as Raymond Williams is offering because it informs audience opinion about meaning, subjectivities and values of historical events, ways of life, and tastes that make up identity.

Furthermore, this genre of performance culture can be seen as both a "mass culture imposed by a culture industry to maintain the power of a ruling élite" and "a genuine, creative cultural expression from below, a form of consumer subversion in opposition to the dominant ideology" in that certain audience behaviours and messages of citizenship were taught through the performative forum, while the content of the

plays was often subversive. In this genre of performance practice, the demarcations of high and mass culture, as established by Moore, are blurry and ill-defined.

The form of culture that we shall undertake to analyse will be a hybrid of Williams' second and fourth categories of culture: we will refer to this form of culture as *performance culture*. Elizabeth Fine and Jean Haskell Speer describe the role of performance as:

... [A] field [that] examines aesthetically marked performances, ranging from narrative to ritual and theatre, and encompassing all those genres, acts, events, and roles in which a person assumes responsibility for presentation to an audience. In performance, the aesthetic dimension comes to the fore as performers accept responsibility not only for what they do, but also for how they do it. The audience of a performance maintains a dual focus, attending to what is said and done, and how it is accomplished. (Fine and Speer, 1992: 2).

In this description of performance culture, one can see how the categories of culture as the amalgam of product and process (second definition), and as *realized signifying system*, are both at play in the type of culture we shall analyse.

Henry Giroux and Patrick Shannon classify performance practice as *cultural text* in order to express how "the performative can have some purchase in social action or help produce new forms of identity and politics while simultaneously developing a political and ethical vocabulary for making connections and... to create multiple public cultures," (Giroux and Shannon, 1997: 3)—in other words, how the performance contributes to the establishment of a communal identity. Similarly, Fine and Speer note that performance involves "analysis and reflection. They [performances] condense the raw stuff of behaviour to reveal essential and universal features. Thus,... performances involve poiesis—the art of making, as opposed to simple mimesis, imitation. Performance, then, as poiesis, makes or constitutes cultural identity, as well as imitates it," (Fine and Speer, 1992: 9). It is important to consider the role of performance as

opposed to simply the performing arts because of the blurred lines between high and mass culture in this form of entertainment. For, in its role as entertainment as well as catharsis, and educator of the audience, this form of performing arts (amateur theatre in the 1930s) relies heavily on the performance function rather than the rehearsal community or the *text* that accompanies it.

The notion that culture both reflects and inspires identity (that it is both the vehicle and apparatus of identity) is the very characteristic that allows culture to organically impart instruction about civil society. It may appear that there is a contradiction here between the terms “organically impart” and “instruct”, with the former term implying authentic expression while the latter term suggests imposition. However, the tension that is created here echoes culture’s roles as reflector of identity as well as of informer thereof. Certainly, theatre as a practice, is parallel to this tension: while the lines, movements, and emotions of the characters on the stage are rehearsed and deliberate (and meant to instruct audiences about the narrative), the artificially orchestrated setting of an auditorium filled with spectators has the result of injecting spontaneity, variability, and authenticity to the performance. Because audiences are meant to recognize and conform to ideas about identity (personal and communal) as set forth through performance culture, a construct of civil society (wherein the role of citizenship is key because of its starting point of civic belonging) becomes the logical extension of that identity. Performance becomes a vehicle of citizenship here, where the elements that are transmitted through this vehicle include how to abide and coexist in a governed and productive moral state. Mark Kingwell delivers an argument for a new kind of citizenship that is not based on old definitions involving belonging through blood, beliefs, and law, but rather on political action and duty to fellow world-citizens

Kingwell, 2001). This is the type of citizenship that is imparted through performance practices.

Fine and Speer also relay that one etymological origin of "identity," according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is the Latin adverb *identidem*, meaning over and over again, repeatedly (Fine and Speer, 1992: 9). This again shows the relationship between identity and the act of performance (involving repetition, rehearsal, and mimesis/poiesis), even at the level of its semantic origin. While the role of poiesis in the establishment of identity can be expressed in terms of performance culture, mimesis is expressed not only through that performance culture, but also through appropriated artefacts and traditions of a nation by a new grouping of people. The mobility of identity as imparted through performance culture is described by James Clifford in his *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*:

Twentieth-century identities no longer presuppose continuous cultures or traditions. Everywhere individuals and groups improvise local performances from (re)collected pasts, drawing on foreign media, symbols, and languages. The roots of culture are cut and retied, collective symbols appropriated from external influences... culture and identity are inventive and mobile. (Clifford, 1988: 14-15).

In this last quote, the notion of performance culture as an agent of identity is coupled with the observation of the mimetic element of that identity. We return here to the notion set out in chapter one, that supposes that nations are not primordial nor are they artificial: they are simply continually reinvented constructs, influenced by the traditions and customs of other national peers. Fine and Speer address this idea that tradition (read, identity) has no a priori existence in the past, but is "created through communicative processes in the present," (Fine and Speer, 1992: 17). The communicative processes to which Fine and Speer are referring are "entextualization" (in which a

performance is detached from one social situation, decentred from its context), and “recontextualization” (wherein the decentered performance/ritual is recentered by finding context in a new social situation).

Fine and Speer do not stop at the mere observation of cultural “borrowing” in the formation of identity. The writers continue to review the consequences of performance practices as agents and reflectors of identity. What is meant by *consequences* are the ethical implications or the moral dimension of such a role. The interpretation of performances involves a “politics of culture” (social and political forces) that “influence what elements of a culture are featured or suppressed, promoted or ignored, sanctioned or censored. The hegemony...of a particular group or institution... shapes habits of perception and interpretation,” (Fine and Speer, 1992: 16). Because of this prerogative, performance has a moral dimension to enhance civil society by “building values and goals that guide human behaviour and make it meaningful,” (Fine and Speer, 1992: 17). Taken a step further, performance is charged with the responsibility of promoting the democratic project (as in “the liberal-democratic rationale for citizenship”, as Jim McGuigan has said) in the interest of the nation.

However, as McGuigan cautions, the cultural politics here are tricky to navigate because this rationale is “founded in individualism whereas demands for cultural recognition are collectivist demands,” (McGuigan, 1996: 148). Otherwise put, the rationale of democratic citizenship stems from individualist roots within a make-up of social networks; this is in many ways contrary to the base requirements of cultural pedagogy, which grows out of the notion that an audience is a collective, and can be taught as an entity.

In McGuigan's account, citizenship and identity are akin in several ways. He notes, "[i]t is understandable why some speak of identity and some of citizenship. Although both are related to the self, they appear to refer to very different orders of reality, the personal and the political... Membership of a city is the classical definition of citizenship.... In effect, then, the relation between identity and citizenship is very much to do with problems of civilized living, how to live with civility towards one another," (McGuigan, 1996: 148). It seems then, that what McGuigan is suggesting is in fact that identity and citizenship are two sides of a coin, where one side is the personal and the other side, the political. One's identity is expressed in how one copes with civilized living, just as one's citizenship is reliant on a common denominator of social mores. Both identity and citizenship are at play within the context of the public sphere—the forum for civil discourses such as educational and performance practices.

In effect, pedagogy in itself also represents a form of cultural production equally critical to how power and meaning help construct and organize knowledge, desires, values, and identities. The educational philosophies of the early Banff School resonate with this concept, where the theatre theory classes for summer students are attempting to situate disjointed histories, schools of thought, theatre techniques, and authenticity of cultural production within a body of knowledge that is understood to be site-specific to the Banff School. Thus, Stanislavsky's "system" of theatrical production (Rudnitzky, 1988) is linked to a grand narrative of Canadian history, ethical correctness, and speech/pronunciation guidelines. These narratives seem unrelated to the historian, but within the context of the Banff School, summer students were trained to see these disparate narratives as related to one another and as natural (the historical intricacies of the Banff School will be further discussed in Chapters 3, 4, and 5). In a notebook

belonging to Helen Jo Kennedy, among the first summer students of the Banff School, it is shown that Professor Roy Mitchell instructs students on the history of theatre, theatrical techniques, theatrical lighting, and the “moral aspect of voice and speech”, while Professor J.F. Smith instructs on enunciation and pronunciation as well as imitation of dialects and accents. These professors are teaching a broad range of seemingly unrelated subjects, but they are all accounted for within the grand narrative of the Banff School (Helen Jo Kennedy Papers, Rocky Mountain Archives).

Far from being the sum-total of the mastering of skills and techniques, pedagogy is a cultural practice (Giroux and Shannon, 1997: 9) that must, like other performance practices, be accountable ethically and politically for the (hi)stories it produces, and the social memory it promotes. Pedagogy, like other performative practices, is an organic, subjective method of cultural production that functions “in the service of expanding the possibilities for democratic life,” (Giroux and Shannon, 1997: 242). When Speech instructor J.F. Smith taught students in proper enunciation and articulation at the 1933 Banff School of Arts Related to the Theatre (Helen Jo Kennedy Papers, Rocky Mountain Archives), the pedagogic element (of a representative of the intellectual élite forming a generation of well-spoken, proper, and etiquette-conscious Canadians) is no different from the educational component of the theatre programme notes which give instruction to audiences about how proper and respectable audiences should act (Herbert Earle Fonds, Glenbow Archives). Thus, there are sets of contradictions that make up the particularities of cultural practice: performance culture is, on one hand, about expression, liberation, and renewal; and on the other hand, about regulation, censoring and social conformity.

This last example of audience education within the milieu of performance practice is addressed by Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture*. He refers to the performance practice as a “dialogic ritual” in which spectators acquire an active role in a collective process that is sometimes cathartic and which may symbolize or even create a community,” (Bhabha, 1994: 30). Just as this last situation as outlined by Bhabha resonates with the experiences of audiences at a theatrical performance in Alberta in the early years of the twentieth-century, Bhabha’s conception of culture (Bhabha, 1994: 38) as an amalgam of a discontinuous, fragmented, and non-linear enunciation of cultural practice is in many ways reflected in Alberta’s performance culture of the last century.

Bhabha, here, is concerned primarily with the effects of colonialism on the location and practices of culture (in the sense of performative/pedagogic culture). Colonial discourse brings a set of altering variables to the production of culture that highlight the ways in which customs and traditions (also artefacts) of one nation can be adopted and re-interpreted in the context of the borrowing nation, resulting in the a new set of meanings and symbolisms around the borrowed cultural practice.

In Canada of the late 1920s and 1930s, a shift in self-perception was occurring which saw Canadians acquire a curiosity and taste for home-grown cultural practice. Canadian cultural producers were beginning to receive recognition; hence the remarkable change in scale between the profiles of artists like Ernest MacMillan, Jean Coulthard, Emily Carr, and Group of Seven painters, on the one hand; and artists the ilk of composer Calixa Lavallée, painter Maurice Brazil Prendergast, and poet Wyatt Eaton, and so forth on the other hand. Thus, the shift was away from a self-perception of Canada as the colony and uncultivated charge of Britain, to a self-perception of Canada as defined by a set of histories and practices--as a nation in its own right.

The set of circumstances around the growth of the Little Theatre movement in Alberta (as in the rest of Canada), the increase in popularity of amateur theatre forums, and the apparent power of the forum of theatre to subvert a political status quo (hence the force with which governmental authorities approached the setting of *Eight Men Speak* in Winnipeg, and other examples of official disruption of grass-roots theatre initiatives [Ryan, 1981]), all seem to point to a pattern of a colony struggling to find itself. It is not the intention within this study to speak to a nation-wide politico-cultural struggle against colonialism, but it is hypothesized that a reading of cultural practices in the microcosm of one province (Alberta) may reflect a parallel situation in national cultural practices. For if Canada felt itself to be a backwater to Britain and the United States, a less populated, rural Alberta was in a position of further geographic removal and felt itself as a backwater to eastern Canada.

That western Canada follows in the footsteps of eastern Canada is a common message of the Calgary media in the 1930s³. An early 1930s article in the *Calgary Daily Herald* that privileges a certain type of art, religion, and strain of nationalism notes, “Canada is a young country,... and its art is not in an advanced stage, but it is very promising... We have the finest country God ever made, and eventually the spirit of Canada will shine through its art... Vancouver needed a civic art gallery... [and should] follow the methods of Toronto to obtain one,” (Author unknown, ca. 1930). This is a fascinating glimpse into a commonly held notion that nationalism (“the spirit of

³ We are focusing on two newspapers within the body of this study: the *Crag and Canyon*, Banff’s weekly newspaper, and the *Calgary Daily Herald*. This focus gives us access to stories specifically about the Banff School, and local/regional performance practices like the Banff Literary and Dramatic Club, the Dominion Drama Festival, and other similar sites of culture. A focus on these two newspapers also highlights the Zeitgeist of the era of the Depression in Alberta and specifically in this region—using other newspapers would not give us access to as accurate a history of the Banff School and the milieu in which it is situated, and would prove too general a resource for the specificity of the study at hand.

Canada”) is strong and will be reflected by cultural producers; that a flourishing artistic culture hinges on a live nationalism.

It seems that a pattern can be observed here which points to the breakdown of colonialism when the colonial representatives in the colony experience a will to sovereignty separate from the imperial nation. The moment of initiation of this pattern might be located in the oppression of the original population of the territory in question by the colonizing population. In writing about how museums establish “master narratives” through exhibitions, Eilean Hooper-Greenhill sheds light on how a colonizing hegemony creates a master narrative for the territory, in which original populations’ heritages are subsumed into the colonizers’ heritage.

Master narratives are created by presenting a large-scale picture, by eliminating complicating and contradictory detail, by disguising difference, by hiding those elements that don’t quite fit, and by emphasizing those that do. Unity rather than difference is emphasised; gaps that emerge when the story doesn’t quite work are filled somehow, and those things that would have shown a different interpretation of events are excluded. The whole is naturalized through links to other supporting discourses. A homogeneous mapping is produced, the constructed character of which is not often readily apparent, partly because of the confidence with which it is usually projected, and partly because of the network of other supporting material. These master narratives are therefore naturalized as universal, true, and inevitable. (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000: 24).

While this passage is referring to museology, the curators and administrators of that cultural practice, who are the pilot forces behind the exhibits, come from a larger structure of official agendas. These museum officials are at the same level of policy implementation as the governmental officials in the upper echelon of the national policy makers. Because of the comparability of these policy makers, one might infer that positioning strategies are well-known to both policy-making groups. Thus, one can apply this positioning strategy to a grander narrative of colonialism. The intent here is not to condemn by association the initiators of the Banff School, for it is the populist

ideals of an art *for the people*, and the humanistic zeal to promote a sense of belonging and civic duty through the practice of theatre that drove the Banff School's creation. However, there was also the nationalist cause that was driving this School's mandate, and the definitions of what constitutes the national entail a promotion of one demographic over another, establishing a hegemony or at the least, falling within a hegemony.

Indeed, Homi Bhabha suggests that the roots of modernity itself and the foundation of the modern conception of civility, are to be found in colonialism. "[A]t the same time as the question of cultural difference emerged in the colonial text, discourses of civility were defining the doubling moment of the emergence of Western modernity. Thus the political and theoretical genealogy of modernity lies not only in the origins of the idea of civility, but in this history of the colonial moment," (Bhabha, 1994: 32). Because of the inextricable histories of modernity, civility and colonialism, it is useful to look at the ways in which Canada evolved with its colonial identity, from a position of a Dominion (speaking here, of course, strictly from the hegemonic self-perception of the ruling élite that was primarily English speaking, Christian, and white⁴) to that of self-proclaimed nation.

Ironically, while colonialism is launched by a mandate of extreme nationalism, the system collapses on itself in ways that produce a divide between nationalists and their home country ("*Heim*" [Bhabha, 1994: 164]), resulting in rifts between the representatives of the colonizing nation and the policy-makers in that very nation. In reference to colonial project of systematically and arbitrarily constructing social and

⁴ I am aware of the vast amount of self-perceptions of other ethnic groups, Aboriginal and non-Native, that do not concern themselves with the status of Britain and its standards. However, for the purposes of this

cultural signs, Bhabha writes, “these critical strategies unsettle the idealist quest for meanings that are, most often, intentionalist and nationalist,” (Bhabha, 1994: 68). The attempt to install a non-organic order in the colonized nation actually hinders one of the real objectives of culture, which is to find and establish meaning.

One process by which colonialists set up a hegemony and work to repress the cultural practices of the original ethnicity is to alienate the original culture from the centres of power and policy by establishing it as “Other”. In *Orientalism*, Edward Said postulates on the process and motives of this system. “The orient at large, therefore, vacillates between the West’s contempt for what is familiar and its shivers of delight in—or fear of—novelty,” (Said, 1978: 58-59). Here we see that the establishment of certain traditions as exotic and Other is a way of marginalizing that which is feared and dominated.

Yet this is only part of the story, for in the dialogue of hegemony and repression there are more than two players. While the cycle of hegemony might be seen as initiated with the colonization of one country or territory by another, a third interest group comes into the playing field with the emergence of a new and separate community from the *Heim* of the colonizers or the original population within a territory. This community consists of the front-line colonizers—those who represent the *Heim* in the colonized territory—who become geographically separated from the customs they know in the *Heim* and consequently look to solidify a community based on what is familiar (language, religion, cuisine, etc.) Administrative and cultural structures that were abided by in the *Heim* are mimicked in the colonized region. This mimesis is often

paper, addressing all the gamut of heritages and their self-perceptions is simply not feasible. Therefore, I will concern myself here solely with the dominant perception of the ruling elite.

exaggerated to maintain the perception of a continued attachment to the *Heim*. What results is the creation of a *façade of attachment*, where the mimesis excludes itself from its image by virtue of becoming a mirror of the image instead of an organic extension.

Bhabha writes:

In-between these two plays the time of a colonial paradox in those contradictory statements of subordinate power. For the repetition of the 'same' can in fact be its own displacement, can turn the authority of culture into its own non-sense precisely in its moment of enunciation. For, in the psychoanalytic sense, to 'imitate' is to cling to the denial of the ego's limitations; to 'identify' is to assimilate conflictually. (Bhabha, 1994: 137).

Thus in the very act of mimesis and moment of identification, a new community is formed of nationalists of the *Heim* who no longer belong to the nation of their origin by nature of their imitation of familiar practices. In fact, what is occurring is a threat of reversal, where colonizers who perceived themselves to be a "majority" (or at least a dominant superstructure) become a subgroup of the initial colonizing nation.

In Canada, this process of exclusion⁵ is evident in the sentiments of inferiority to British and American cultures and standards that are documented in newspapers, even as late as the late 1920s and early 1930s. An article in the *Calgary Daily Herald* from 1927 speaks of an art exhibit of A.C. Leighton's work (later to be active in the expansion of the Banff School to include visual art and music). "R.L. Harvey, supervisor of art in the public schools, has made it possible for the people of Calgary to see the work of this English artist who happens to be engaged on some commissions in the neighbourhood of Calgary," (Eloise Phillips Motherwell, Oct. 4, 1927). Note the qualifier "*English* artist"—to signify a level of calibre that might otherwise be described with the qualifiers

⁵ Where it should be pointed out that this "exclusion" is the exclusion of an internal élite, who are also themselves engaged in the exclusion of other internal élite and other classes of their collective. Thus, this exclusion to which we are referring is a peculiarity of a specific community of internal élites.

“renowned”, “acclaimed”, or “respected.” Moreover, the article describes Leighton’s association with British nobility in lieu of listing the artist’s accomplishments and credentials: “Mr. Leighton is the youngest associate of the Royal Society of British Artists. He is also a relative of the late Lord Leighton, who was president of the Royal Academy from 1878 until 1895... His home is outside Hastings in the south of England. He has his studio there, but spends half his time in London...” (Eloise Phillips Motherwell, Oct. 4, 1927).

The other painter to receive considerable attention in this same article is Carl Rungius, a German-born New Yorker who eventually moved to Banff. His status as an American *from the east* is a primary mark of honour in this article. The western regard for careers that have been made in the east (especially if the career has blossomed in the United States or Europe) is evident in this article when Rungius’ accomplishments are listed “exhibiting in the National Gallery... [and] in the Grand Central Gallery in New York,” (Eloise Phillips Motherwell, Oct. 4, 1927).

At the moment of recognition of the separation that is occurring, the nationalist subgroup that has severed its political belonging from the *Heim* seeks to construct its own civil society and identity that is separate from, but still influenced by, that of the *Heim*. A sense of reverence for the standards and mores of the colonizing nation propels the establishment of a non-verbal (but understood) hierarchy that perpetuates the self-perception of the colony as a subjugated and peripheral diaspora. Tensions are created when the governing authorities of the colony seek to refocus their nationalism onto the “new” territory and begin to harbour sentiments of independence. These tensions arise from the paradox that the colonizers have appropriated and re-invented cultural practices and rituals from the *Heim* to apply them to the newly formed community in the

colonized territory. The sense that the nationalist emigrants have been excluded from the *Heim* coexists with the deliberate detachment of this group from the country of their origin, such that there is a regard for the colonizing centre's cultural instructions at the same time as an impulse toward separation.

A 1933 article in Banff's weekly newspaper the *Crag and Canyon*, demonstrates the friction implicit in the impulse toward independence:

Canada is today an absolutely free and independent nation—just as much so as any other nations in the world. The King of Canada is George V. He is also King of Great Britain, King of Australia, Emperor of India. In Canada the King is represented by the Governor-General, who is appointed by the King on the advice of the Government of Canada. At one time the Governor-General was appointed on the advice of the Government of Britain, and he represented that Government, as well as the King, in Canada. But not now... (Author unknown, July 14, 1933).

The article's insistence that Canada is sovereign despite the fact that the King of Britain is the same as that of Canada, seems to point to an insecurity around the logic and semantics of the representation. In effect, the mere fact of publication of an article written to disseminate information about the sovereignty of Canada points to the tenuous understanding of that community's nationhood. To be forced to write about one's conviction of freedom indicates an ambiguity of the fact in question. In the face of uncertainty about what that sovereignty may look like, it is the intellectual who was turned to, to offer a description.

Enter into the equation the role of the intellectual. Jim McGuigan differentiates between two types of intellectuals: *practical* intellectuals who seem to reflect the characteristics of Antonio Gramsci's "organic intellectuals" ("a guide to oppositional practice, in fact referred first and foremost to a growing army of administrators, managers and technocrats, very different intellectually from cloistered academics and

maverick writers, the 'traditional' intellectuals," [McGuigan, 1996: 185]), and *critical* intellectuals whose role it is to undermine the discriminations, hegemony, and social injustices in a society (Said's conception of the intellectual [Said, 1994: 8-9]). These two forms of intellectuals seem to carry out opposing roles: the former, to lead the 'unquestioning mass' of society into understandings of behavioural norms and regulated conformity; the latter, to expose the exclusionary practices of the hegemony imposed by ruling élite (McGuigan, 1996: 187-190).

We would argue that the role of the intellectual cannot be divided into absolute categories of sinister motives and liberatory ideals. For as in the social role of the theatre, there are at once messages of conformity (self-censorship and audience control) and liberation (a forum for the expression of individual and community voices). However, even these characteristics (conformity and liberation) are not absolute benefits of or absolute drawbacks to civil society, for conformity (along with the negative connotations of social control and repression) also implies some positives such as a basis for identity and channels of communications. On the other hand, the liberation/expression of an individual or social group always entails the suppression of another equally valid story even at the basic level of who is permitted to speak to whom, and who is not given that voice. Thus, there are multiple levels of discussion engaged in the practice of theatre as an intellectual cultural form.

On the one hand, theatre in Alberta was a growing tool for the dissemination of a common conception of identity for a society that was outgrowing its persona of Dominion (apparatus of the critical intellectual). However, in a colonial setting, theatre was regulated by policy makers (practical intellectuals) who had stakes in the presentation of a certain set of identity characteristics and the power to decide whose

voice is to be heard in the forum of theatre. Consequently, the voice that was heard emerged from a group of people whose genealogy or affiliation stems from the subgroup formed after the moment of colonial detachment. Even the individuals behind the creation of the Banff School are of a certain class, white, educated, Christian, and linked to the power élite of policy makers in Canada (for example, Ned Corbett was named Director of the Canadian Association of Adult Education, CAAE, and was the Director of the Extension department of the University of Alberta.)

These intellectual policy makers (both of theatre in Alberta in specific, and of cultural practices in general) are the key operators in the presentation of a cohesive identity to the public. Performance rituals construct multiple layers of meaning for the audience with regard to performance content, audience participation and regulation, and by creating a community around the social groups in attendance at the performance event. Bhabha explains the process around how cultural practice constructs meaning: “[c]ulture reaches out to create a symbolic textuality, to give the alienating everyday an aura of selfhood, a promise of pleasure. The transmission of *cultures of survival* does not occur in the ordered *musée imaginaire* of national cultures with their claims to the continuity of an authentic ‘past’ and a living ‘present’,” (Bhabha, 1994: 172).

With this final stage in the colonial cycle, a new nationalist discourse is established by the reinstatement of locations of culture and enunciations of identity within the context of the community of colonial immigrants to a territory. With this also comes the construction of new cultures, new élites, and new exclusions involving those who are more central to the engineering of the story and those who are less central.

It would be impossible to assess the role of culture in all of its manifestations (as in the definitions by Raymond Williams.) However, culture as a performance practice

and pedagogical practice has wide-scale implications at the levels of democratic civil society, national identity, and as an apparatus for national policy to be disseminated to a wide audience. Whether culture informs identity or is molded by it, the underpinning concept to remember is that while the stories that are presented in performance culture are selected for their meaning. In this sense, performance culture is a vehicle for these fragmented, non-linear messages to be shaped into a seeming continuity that is translated as history and identity. Foucault's words about the discontinuity of culture resonate with the model proposed in this chapter on how a society's intellectual leaders use performance practices to re-invent traditions and identities:

Discontinuity—the fact that within the space of a few years a culture sometimes ceases to think as it had been thinking up till then and begins to think other things in a new way—probably begins with an erosion from outside, from that space which is, for thought, on the other side, but in which it has never ceased to think from the very beginning. Ultimately, the problem that presents itself is that of the relations between thought and culture: how is it that thought has a place in the space of the world, that it has its origins there, and that it never ceases, in this place or that, to begin anew? (Foucault, 1973: 50).

It seems that it is the role of performance culture to act as the bridge between these changes of thought—indeed, it is perhaps culture that acts as the stepping stones toward that bridge to begin with.

Just as a sense of identity and meaning is conveyed to rural Albertans through the medium of theatre; communities formed around the production and practice of theatre; and responsibilities allotted to *actors* within this industry; it must also be remembered that culture cannot function as a sphere independent of time, place, and situation. Theatre was the channel through which Albertans and indeed Canadians in the 1930s taught about, constructed and eeked out a sense of agency in an immediate community and at a broader level: through time and through space, performance

practices along with print media send out a message of meaning that calls individuals into communities, citizenship, and imagined communities. At the end of the day, it is a gregarious human impulse to belong to something—and it is performance culture that answers the call.

Chapter Three – Historical Context of Alberta’s Performance Practices

Sociologist E. Doyle McCarthy suggests that “all aspects of human being and knowing are *situated*; thought and action form a unity; a society’s intellectual developments cannot be divorced from its concrete historical and social contexts,” (McCarthy, 1995 : 107). What then, were the concrete historical and social contexts of 1930s Alberta that served as the infrastructure within which the “intellectual development” (an increase of popularity in theatre and other performative cultural practices) emerged? What is the historical evidence that points to this increase in popularity and recognition of the theatre industry? Certainly, the glaringly obvious historical incongruency present here is the notion that there seems to be a proliferation of activity in theatrical activity in Alberta (and indeed, nation-wide) during the very time of a serious international economic collapse.

To understand how the spheres of economy, politics, and civil society^o intersect to weave into a framework within which “intellectual development” (for instance, theatrical development) can interact with these forces, we will look to historical developments in these spheres within the province of Alberta. The constant underpinning element to be studied within this chapter will be the developments, alongside these spheres, of cultural practice.

To make a claim that a certain time is “ripe” for the birth of a new trend or popular pastime is either too general a hypothesis, or risks falling into a determinist theory where an element of that period of time is seen to be the cause of a another non-related element. It is not the claim of this study to suggest that the economic situation

^o Civil society, or the location of citizenship, is as Michael Shapiro suggests, “a temporal as well as spatial phenomenon. While it (is) [sic] conceptually located in a legal, territorial entity, within which it is associated

during the Depression alone is responsible for any fluctuations in the activities of cultural industries in Canada. However, certain cultural practices were directly impacted by economic disparity, and their fluctuations produced ripples throughout the cultural sphere in Alberta. The termination of cinemas during this time certainly had effects on the sorts of entertainment people had available to them. This fluctuation may or may not have worked in the favour of theatre-going—this is the nature of the questions we will be posing within this chapter.

A movement was gaining force at the end of the 1920s and into the 1930s that saw unprecedented popularity of theatre in rural regions of Canada, primarily in Alberta. Renowned Torontonians drama professor and enthusiast Roy Mitchell founded the *Artist Letters Club Players* (1908-1914) in Toronto in an attempt to foster the Little Theatre Movement early in the century; and Mitchell's followers (for he was a character who inspired loyalty and awe from his students) continued his teachings toward a Little Theatre Movement in other areas of Canada. When Mitchell was invited by Vincent Massey to become the Artistic Director of the New Hart House Theatre from 1919 to 1921, he undertook to stage *Brothers in Arms*, one of the first modern original plays at the Hart House Theatre (Tippett, 1990: pp. 9, 61, 120, 140).

Working with Roy Mitchell during these years, one student, Elizabeth Sterling Haynes, was to become an advocate and ally of Mitchell's teachings. Settling in Edmonton after her time with Mitchell, Sterling Haynes worked tirelessly with the Edmonton Little Theatre and eventually became the co-founder of the Banff School for the Arts Related to Theatre in 1933 (where Roy Mitchell was to be among the first faculty

with the privileges of sovereignty and the rights of individuals, it is also understood in terms of the historical process by which peoples develop shared characteristics," (Shapiro, 2000: 79).

members in the early years) along with E.A. Corbett. (Dorothy May Bradley Scrapbook, 1933 Summer School calendar, Glenbow Archives).

Already by the First World War, cities all across the Canadian Prairies were home to short-lived but ever-appearing stock companies. This type of theatrical organization can be defined as “an established group of actors with several different plays in repertory that settled in one location for extended stays. Stock companies produced popular commercial plays designed to entertain, not to educate, audiences” (Stuart, 1984: 65). Eventually, this characteristic of stock companies (to entertain, not educate) became the main criticism of cultural élite (drama professors, theatre administrators, theatre critics, etc.) against stock companies and led to the demise of this genre, replaced instead by the Chautauqua and theatre clubs (Jameson, 1987: 145).

In the towns across the Prairies, stock companies had certain common characteristics to distinguish them, however the quality of their products are said to have varied substantially. “Stock companies were composed along traditional lines, with romantic leads, older men and women, ingenues, comics, and, frequently specialty artists like singers, dancers, and jugglers. Acting was broad and energetic but without subtlety or style” (Stuart, 1984: 65). Thus, the shared characteristics of these stock companies tended to involve the structure of the company’s cast, or to be cosmetic in nature: the company was often named after its home theatre or leading member, an actor manager.

In fact, stock companies were not admired or endorsed by “serious” actors and theatre administrators. In the second year of the Banff School (1934), Roy Mitchell shared his unflattering opinion of stock companies with the summer school students. In a notebook belonging to one student, Helen Jo Kennedy, the scrawled writing which

suggests verbatim note-taking reads, "Stock companies do not teach one to act. The rule is given to keep 10 feet away from the main actor and act as badly as you like. Some ambitious students think they would like to join a good company in order to learn how to act. There are no good companies, don't long for things you cannot do [sic]," (Helen Jo Kennedy Papers, 1933). The message Mitchell disseminates to his malleable students leaves no room for doubt; his position as authority figure and revered professor of one of the school's masterminds (Sterling Haynes) establishes his word as the final pronouncement. Here we see the power and the role of the intellectual at work: influencing the thought of other community leaders, who will then return to their communities with these new learnings.

Yet one cannot accuse the stock companies of a lack of energy: travelling stock companies would typically stay in a town or city for two to three weeks, and would perform four or five different plays in at least eight shows a week. A standard company would have twenty plays ready at any given time, with as many as one hundred plays in their repertoire to perform with minimal rehearsal time. By all accounts, it was a thankless profession, with low salaries, teetering existences (often folding after one bad week of audience attendance), and difficult travelling means. Yet, the companies' members were undoubtedly exceptionally dedicated and dynamic. With the stock company taking up so much of their members' time, thereby limiting the space for employment, it was a fine line to speak of these companies as amateur theatre.

While the first of the visiting stock companies in the Prairies appeared in the 1890s, it was mainly from 1900-1920 that towns harboured their own resident companies. Certain prominent names such as the Dominion Stock Company (1908), the Eckhardt Players (1910), the Allen Players (1912), the Permanent Players (Winnipeg,

1912), and the Majestic Stock Company (1912), became staples of their prairie communities. Even as early as 1896, the beginning of organized theatre was developing with the formation of La Cigale Comedy Company. However each of these endeavours was a short-lived operation, lasting only a few months to a few years.

In Calgary, the burgeoning interest in theatre led to the creation of a “School of Expression” through Mount Royal College prior to 1912 (Stuart, 1984: 105). This school was, in fact, the only amateur theatre company to be established earlier than the Paget Players – an amateur dramatic company founded by theatre missionary Max Bishop. This company had the reputation of being a more evolved version of its predecessor (the stock companies) and was held to be the first of its kind in Calgary.

Aside from the stock companies and the School of Expression, the prairies also witnessed the first touring Chautauqua in 1917. Unlike the stock companies, the Chautauqua was both a form of entertainment and of education. Touring from one isolated community to another, the Chautauqua was fuelled by the same “cooperative spirit that was behind the growth of many amateur theatres, particularly in rural centres” (Stuart, 1984: 79). John and Nola Erickson brought the Chautauqua to Canada from the United States. They introduced the U.S.-based touring circuit of lectures, music, and drama with a strong cultural-educational mandate to Alberta; and that province soon took up the Chautauqua with zeal, becoming the backbone of this movement’s success (Jameson: 1979).

In an article published in the scholarly journal *Theatre InSight*, Moira Day insists that the Little Theatre movement in the Prairies led to an emancipation of women’s rights in these provinces. There were several reasons for this: with the lack of theatre grants, and an unstable economic situation, men as the only income earners of a family

(married women were not encouraged to earn an income in Canada at that time⁷) were not attracted to this sort of profession. Furthermore, the involved women, subsidized by her husband's income, was left available to perform cultural or humanitarian volunteer work, and often became prominent as director, actor, founder, board member, and even playwright in local theatre associations (Day, ca. 1988-1989: 45).

Women who championed the Little Theatre movement in the Prairies soon divided this movement into two distinct branches, albeit in a non-deliberate way. On the one hand, the Little Theatre movement led to an interest in extension or adult education work, whereby drama was used to "promote a greater sense of cultural enrichment, social cohesiveness, and co-operation in smaller or more isolated communities" (Day, ca. 1988-1989: 45). On the other hand, the Little Theatre movement also led into drama-in-education. This branch, influenced by child and educational psychology, believed drama to be a useful educational tool because a cutting edge psychological theory had it that children learned better through activity-oriented practices than through memorization.

Women like Nancy Pyper and Pauline Boutal in Winnipeg, Mrs. Roland Winter, Nola Erickson, and Betty Mitchell in Calgary, Mrs. Sterndale-Bennett in Lethbridge, Elizabeth Sterling Haynes in Edmonton, Margaret Greenham in Banff, Clara MacPherson of Ryley, and Edith Dorsey in Innisfail became true heroines of western theatre in the 1920s and 1930s. They pioneered the birth of theatre as a popular cultural

⁷ Gwen Pharis Ringwood recalls, "She [Elizabeth Sterling Haynes] was in the east and Donald [Cameron] offered me the job she had had, for a year and I taught here at Banff, this was the summer of '39 and taught the junior acting... I was married the fall of '39 and I did [sic] tell them I was married because you weren't supposed to work at the University if you were married. ... I felt awful that I was being such a hypocrit [sic] so I told Donald that I was married and pretty soon I got a call from Dr. Kerr who was president of the University... he said, well, Miss Pharis, I understand that you are married. I said yes, Dr. Kerr, I've been married since September... I said 'I hope I haven't embarrassed the University!' He said, 'Miss Pharis the University is not embarrassed.' Anyway that was 1940 and I came and worked here again at the Banff School as a part of my extension work [that summer]." (Leighton, 1981, 23-24.) N.B.: The use of quotation marks comes from the transcription of this interview—they are not our quotation marks.

activity in Canada's western provinces, and paved the way for other women in the theatre industry, such as Elsie Park Gowan, Gwen Pharis Ringwood, and Minnie Bicknell – prominent playwrights of the mid to late 1930s.

Of these leading-ladies of western Canadian theatre, Elizabeth Sterling Haynes, co-founder of the Banff School of the Arts Related to the Theatre, was arguably the most active and public face of theatre from the 1920s to the middle of the century.

Haynes, between 1932 and 1937, really set the model for the kind of drama extension job that would be established in all four of the Western [sic] provinces. Drawing strongly on her previous experience in school, in Chautauqua, and in Little Theatre drama, Haynes traveled [sic] literally thousands of miles by car, train, horse and buggy, and sleigh to give lectures, short courses, and personal aid to local community, Little Theatre, and school groups. Those whom she could not reach personally on her trips, she reached through the summer schools of the drama she helped found at Banff and Edmonton, as well as through letters, hand-outs, drama lessons over the radio, and the numerous books and plays she ordered for the Extension library. (Day and Potts, 8-35.)

Haynes' energy is indisputable. Even around the time of the inception of the Banff School, Haynes' colleagues were well aware of her input and influence on the School, although later the founding of this summer school is often attributed to the Director of Extension at the University of Alberta, Ned Corbett alone. In an interview with Peggy Leighton, Gwen Pharis Ringwood speaks highly of Haynes' involvement in the early Banff School:

She'd [Elizabeth Sterling Haynes] go in [to a community] and help choose a play and go in and sort of start it, the director and the town would keep it going and then she'd go back and see it again. A great many of the people she worked with would come to the school then because of Elizabeth. She brought a lot of theatre people here. I think it [the Banff School] had... more impact, the Banff School than anything else on western theatre, because people from Manitoba, British Columbia and Saskatchewan came. There were of course people from the United States who came too, but people who had heard of Elizabeth's work or she'd adjudicated in their town would come to Banff and then they'd go back home with a renewed appreciation of the art of the theatre. (Leighton, 1981: 15)

This testimony of Haynes's long-time assistant speaks to several levels of Haynes' involvement. She describes Haynes' impact on community Little Theatre, as well as her effective and vastly admired methods. In this way, witnesses like Gwen Pharis Ringwood testify to the local and regional impact of the Banff School in Alberta.

However, Pharis Ringwood also speaks to the national and international levels of the school's activities. Not only does she point out the impact of Haynes's work on western theatre, but also the school's impact. The description of the participants clearly demonstrates a national renown that the school enjoyed; but also of an international flavour, with Ringwood's account of American participants who had heard of Haynes' teaching methods.

It is curious that even from the first years of the school's existence, these elements (the local, national, and international) co-existed comfortably together at several levels of the school's make-up: the participants who came to the school for courses, the faculty who attended the session, and the plays and other course materials which were taught at the school. To this effect, Donald Cameron remarks, "Looking to the future it is believed that the Banff School can go forward to become a great Canadian institution, and that in time, Banff can become a Canadian Salzburg," (Cameron, 1950: 158). In this single sentence, the coexistence of the local (Banff), the national (Canadian), and the international (Salzburg) is laid out in the concrete.

Yet there are several layers of coexistence evident here, in that the definitions and understandings of what it means to be Canadian (and a distinct Canadian institution) are site-specific and influenced by the region in which the institution finds itself, and simultaneously establishing a Canadianness based on the reinvention of practices that were taken from an international context. Banff is a site of Canadianness, because it is

mimicking practices taken from Salzburg which are then revisited in a deliberately Canadian (and western Canadian at that) way.

While these theatrical practices continued to exist after the collapse of the stock market in 1929, the character of each of the stock companies, the Chautauquas, and other amateur theatrical organizations changed considerably from a more entertainment-oriented bent to an educational and socially mobilizing entity. Even before the Depression hit Canada's western provinces, theatre in this milieu was already shaping itself to be much different than the eastern Canadian experience.

Where the prairie experience tended to differ significantly from the Eastern, given the agrarian nature of the provinces... was in the greater importance placed on extension and educational drama... Confronted with the predominantly rural, sometimes 'frontier' conditions of prairie life, even those who may have been inclined to dismiss the 'art for art's sake' thrust of the mainstream Little Theatre movement as arty self-indulgence, were apt to see in the plight of the small, isolated communities scattered across an infinite, forbidding landscape, a legitimate cause for cultural missionary work. (Day, ca. 1988-1989: 45).

Within these circumstances, the social changes brought on by the economic situation of the 1930's are hardly surprising. The stock market had crashed in October of 1929, and a severe draught was ravaging the farming regions of North America. With the First World War still fresh in the minds of young men and women from less than a decade ago, social stability was on an uneven, if not rocky, road to recovery.

In Canada, the Depression had dealt a double blow to the provinces of the west. While the Prairies were forced to fight against hard economic strife, drought, and disastrous insect infestations, communities in these provinces mourned just as much for their lost "raison d'être" as for their meagre harvests – for Prairie communities had

always been able to look to their crops as evidence of leadership, when it seemed as though the west came in behind the east in matters of politics, culture, and business. During the first third of the twentieth century, even in the well-established east, there was considerable struggle to “establish and maintain Canadian visibility amidst an ever-rising tide of art, literature, and live entertainment flooding in from the more commercial and aggressive European, British, and U.S. markets” (Day, ca. 1988-1989: 44.)

The Depression changed the face of this challenge. The struggle prior to the Economic Crisis had been to make room for an as yet unexplored Canadian cultural heritage amid the increasing popularity of the U.S.-imported “talkies”, readily available to every small community in Canada. Once the Economic Crisis hit these smaller communities, the cinemas became too expensive to run. Suddenly, communities had to make their own entertainment rather than depending on the U.S.-imported screen industry. People turned to the theatre to fill the void left by the talkies. Donald Cameron explains this situation in the book he wrote about his involvement in the Banff School, *Campus in the Clouds*:

Because of the drought and the depression, there were no motion picture theatres in most of the country, no travelling companies were going about and the people had to depend on their own resources for entertainment. There never was a livelier, more vital community theatre in Alberta than there was in the years from 1933 to 1940, when the war began to impinge on community dramatics by removing leaders into the Armed Forces... (Cameron, 1956: 13)

This is certainly a valid observation by Cameron, although it is only telling one side of the story of the growth of community theatre in the Prairies. With people’s professional roles being eroded, it is of little surprise that theatre – be it in the form of a Chautauqua or a community’s little theatre – with its emphasis on large-scale

involvement, became a popular avenue for leadership. "Local Chautauquas stressed community involvement, and all proceeds remained within the area. People became participants, not just spectators" (Stuart, 1984: 84.) It can be said that citizens whose professional identities were being eroded were finding agency within the theatre.

Furthermore, I suggest that this form of entertainment fulfilled the dual function of bringing entire community together in the preparation stages (where people were engaged in acting for the production as well as costume making, set designing, lighting, and make-up), as well as providing for several evenings worth of escape from communities' woes. "Believing 'that the lonely, shut-in life of farmers could be changed by creative enjoyment,' one minister in rural Alberta thus joined, and so sought to encourage, that province's Clive Players (1935)" (Tippett, 1990: 12). Creative enjoyment, whether cathartic or fantastical, can be seen to be functioning on the level of individual release, community building, and adding definition to roles (such as farming) that the economic situation has rendered confining and inhibiting rather than liberating (as depicted in the words "the lonely, shut-in life").

Aside from this benefit of theatrical activity, theatre was becoming an active voice for social dissatisfaction. While both private and public cultural organizations had hitherto been content to use programming predominantly for the (non-political) entertainment of the working classes (who themselves were less concerned with matters of social or economic inequity as they were with mass culture or ethnic loyalties); the alarming and record rate of unemployment in 1931 significantly changed the focus of this classes' entertainment. With the Canadian Communist Party gaining strength, along with the increasing popularity of labour unions, and the emergence of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, there is little doubt that what Canada was

witnessing was a major shift in priority, and considerable social ferment (Tippett, 1990: 29). "The Depression not only affected workers in their jobs. It was so all-pervasive that even the students on the campuses joined the battles for a better future. At the University of Toronto, the newly-formed Students' League took part in awakening protest movements," recalls Toby Gordon Ryan in her memoir on progressive theatre in Canada during the 1930s (Ryan, 1985: 30). The revolutionary spirit that favoured the Social Credit parties (as in Alberta), the Workers' Theatre with branches in several Canadian cities, from Toronto to Winnipeg to Rycroft, and the students who took to the streets to protest, had become the norm as opposed to the marginal during the early 1930s (Ryan, 1985: 35-38).

Winnipeg, for example, had an active political theatre during the 1930s and 1940s. As with Halifax, Montreal, London, and Toronto, Winnipeg was home to a left-wing Progressive Arts Club with a working class theatre company called Workers' Theatre. Led by Joe Suken and Saul Cherniak, this theatre company did regular readings and plays, and staged evenings dedicated to satire, called "Beer and Skits". In following with the conventional practice of the day, its production of *Eight Men Speak*, about the attempted murder of Communist Leader Tim Buck in the Kingston Penitentiary, was banned by the city police prior to its scheduled performance in the Winnipeg Walker Theatre, on May 2, 1934 (Ryan, 1981: 83).

Eight Men Speak was not an exception in playwriting during the 1930s. The staging of a different brand of play was carving out a niche for itself during this turbulent time. Gwen Pharis Ringwood's *One Man's House* is concerned with the political and personal conflicts of a Polish immigrant labour leader. W. Eric Harris's *Twenty-five Cents* is about workers' struggles in periods of business depression. Millie

Evans Bicknell's *Relief* deals with unbearable living conditions of farmers in the western Prairies. All of these plays point to the priority shift apparent during the early Depression. The shift we are referring to here is the conception of art as a leisure activity, to the conception of art as an expression of the spiritual. In a *Calgary Daily Herald* article the assertion is made that "no community is worthwhile unless there is a keen appreciation of the artistic," (Author unknown, July 11, 1929). The article continues that "[a]rt is the highest human expression, merging the human into the divine,...[t]he greater the beauty and truth expressed, the greater the work of art. Art is the only thing which distinguishes the human being from the animal," (ibid.). While the article is discussing the value of visual art (painting), the connection can be drawn to the theatre, for what entails "beauty" and "truth" in visual art, is translated in the prerogative of theatre as "execution" and "truth" (ie: social truth).

At a time when families were faced with bankruptcy, anxiety, and instability, theatre was often a source of accomplishment and belonging. Given this volatile social climate, it is of little surprise that it was not very long before every community had a theatre group, and an active audience or following. Under these circumstances, it became evident that there was a gap to be filled in terms of a lack of Canadian theatre repertoire. What is meant by a "gap" is the lack of entertainment that was cathartic because of its strong resonance with the audience, while providing them with a story that is still a far stretch from their own, in the sense of being fictional, exaggerated, and in the realm of "someone else's tragedy". The 1930's saw this all change as the popularity of theatre opened up possibilities for more and more playwrights to write about the situations they witnessed.

In 1930, L.W. Brockington, a renowned theatre adjudicator and critic (and future head of the CBC), wrote: “there is at present a remarkable provincial renewal in the interest in things dramatic. Witness the public support given to the Dramatic Festival on Saturday” (Brockington, Feb. 18, 1930). In these words, we see reflected the notable surge in popularity that the theatre enjoyed in the province of Alberta.

With the growth of the Little Theatre movement, the founding of several dramatic societies and theatre troupes, and the implementation of an annual Provincial Dramatic Festival/Competition, theatrical productions could be described as having established theatre as an industry instead of merely a hobby. Maria Tippett writes, “...the existence of the drama groups in Coaldale, Alberta, demonstrates...public cultural organizations [were not] solely a product of the city and town. The rural areas of Canada, wracked by depression, drought, depopulation and the effects of modernization, needed, as John MacDougall’s *Rural Life in Canada – It’s Tasks and Trends* made clear in 1913, a revivifying force” (Tippett, 1990: 12).

The growth in popularity of theatre was marked by the establishment of several new theatre groups, festivals, and theatre halls in every small community in Alberta and in other Canadian provinces. In Alberta alone, the towns with an active little theatre following is a staggering number (see Appendix 1).

The communities shown on this map also competed against each other in Provincial and Regional Drama Competitions, such as the Dominion Drama Festival and the Alberta Drama Festival. It was the Alberta Drama League’s (1929) responsibility to coordinate this complex web of dramatic competitions throughout the province; and soon other provinces followed suit and established drama leagues of their own. In this

way, a tightly woven network of dramatic communities developed, which served as one another's resources of repertoire, costuming, and sets.

This kind of dialogue between little theatre groups was crucial to Alberta's cultural identity in another way as well: the sharing of all manner of dramatic materials and information created pools of knowledge around acting techniques and audience tastes. This aspect is closely linked to the function of extension learning, where a body of information is circulated, communicated, and debated in a community based around shared knowledge. This was a time for theatrical artists and intellectuals to solidify what it meant to be Albertan-Canadian in the Theatre Industry. To this end, governmental regulating bodies and officials were inviting intellectuals of other countries to give talks about identity issues and experiences. The *Banff Crag and Canyon* frequently published stories about visiting scholars and intellectuals, who were acting as blueprints for the popular quest for nationhood and identity that (western) Canada was experiencing in the 1930s (this point will be further elaborated in chapters to come).

A prime example of this popular quest for nationhood and identity is the establishment of the Banff's *Experimental School of the Arts Related to the Theatre*. Donald Cameron, who acted as Director of the School when Corbett moved to Toronto to Direct the Canadian Association of Adult Education, wrote a retrospect of the creation of the school. In this document, Cameron writes:

[In Alberta] the provision of competent adjudicators for... competitions... was another step toward establishing standards of appreciation and encouraging young talent... Not only was the original school at Banff designed to train community leaders in drama, music, and painting, but criteria used to evaluate the project were the signs of overall improvement of community life. Thus the constant contact between members of the Department of Extension [of which Corbett was the Director] and the Staff of the School with the community groups

throughout Alberta along with the systems of scholarships and awards which stimulated community activity and contributed to attendance at the School, provided for the growth and evolution of a pattern of education of which the Banff School has only been the pinnacle. ... Out of the movement have come the beginnings of a truly indigenous culture, of which the work in folklore, and the annual Festival Week [School] are perhaps the most vivid manifestations. (Cameron, 1953: 5, 22-23).

The implications in this passage are many-fold. First, the recognition that this was a time when Alberta was “establishing standards of appreciation” is significant to the argument for a search for identity, because appreciation and taste is inextricably linked to definitions about who one is, and what one is about. Second, the mention of the search for community improvement and the casual link of community improvement to the beginnings of an “indigenous culture” that Cameron conceives of as a growth out of the Banff School initiative. The glaring omission is, of course, in the lack of mention of an already established indigenous culture within Aboriginal customs.

When the Banff School launched its first summer theatre session in 1933, E.A. “Ned” Corbett and Elizabeth Sterling Haynes, the founders of the Banff School for the Arts Related to Theatre, expected to meet only a few dozen registrants. In the interest of drawing in perhaps forty-five keen souls to the first running year, they kept the tuition fee low – one dollar for a two-week session in dramatic art in Banff. After all, times were tough: the crash of the stock market in October 1929, followed by the heavy draughts across North America, plummeted the nation into a devastating economic crisis which would last ten years. Under these conditions, it is staggering to consider that the expected forty-five registrants turned out, in fact, to be 190 registrants (Leighton, 23).

This evidence points to the real popularity and mass-following which accompanied theatre. Dorothy May Bradley (1893-1981), a Calgarian drama enthusiast,

kept a scrapbook in which she collected newsclippings on the advances in theatre in her area. In an anonymous newsclipping (newspaper unknown, as is date) entitled *Widespread Interest In Dramatic School At Banff, August 7*, the expectations for what can only have been the first or second year (most likely the season of 1933) of the Banff School are laid out.

The article begins, "During the past year in Alberta there has been a tremendous increase of interest in all forms of dramatic art and a growing recognition of their educational value" (Author unknown, ca. 1933). The article suggests that this can be seen as "the vigorous amateur impulse toward the theatre." The journalist then speculates that "[t]he demand for people who understand life and have the power of interpreting it and who may be able to direct community drama, has grown beyond the supply, and this school has been established to satisfy this demand." Finally, the piece concludes that, "[t]he study and interpretation of drama is satisfying a great communal need, the need to establish artistic harmony between our instincts for self-expression and self revelation [sic] and the methods employed in so doing," (ibid.) The Banff School, then, was from the outset a research institution where a body of knowledge is compiled, as much as a rehearsal space and technical institution. This is the site of a link between technical performance practices and an institution of learning and evaluation—a link to be further explored in the chapters to come.

The sense that a fundamental change was taking place and that those active in drama were part of that change seems to have been a very conscious part of the field of drama and education. Elsie Park Gowan, a prominent Alberta playwright of the 1930s and 1940s, and an active member of the first years of the Banff School, tells Peggy Leighton that the early 1930s were an exciting time for Little Theatre. "[I]t was because

you had the consciousness that you were in the beginning of something” (Leighton, 1981: 12). Certainly, Elsie Park Gowan is right in pointing out the sense of exploration of new territory. Another example of how cultural practice was venturing into uncharted grounds was a Rockefeller Foundation funded project begun later, in 1943. The *Alberta Folklore and Local History Project* had its headquarters at Banff, and involved the gathering of local testimonials, myths, and legends, into a series of publications of the *Alberta Folklore Quarterly* (1943-1945). This material was also crafted into a series of half-hour radio programs broadcast nationally through the CBC. Most interestingly for this study, Gwen Pharis Ringwood (one of the earliest staff of the Banff School) was engaged to write a minimum of three one-act plays based on “native materials” from this research (Cameron, 1953: 20).

Let us return to the earlier timeframe we are discussing—that surrounding the inception of the Banff School. It is surprising to think that the individuals who were involved in the Little Theatre at such elite and high-visibility levels would be so conscious of the mark they were making on their home province. Yet, in the 1934 Banff *School of the Arts Related to the Theatre* program, used as its epitaph a quote from Lord Bessborough – a quote made only in the previous year, in April of 1933: “The spirit of a nation, if it is to find full expression, must include a National Drama.” Interestingly, this quote – strategically placed, and well reinforced in other passages throughout the pamphlet – is undeniable evidence to the strong nationalist mandate of the Banff School, even in its earliest manifestation. This well-reinforced message gave people the sense that they were involved in the beginning of something new and exciting: the fostering, if not creation, of a national cultural identity through theatre.

In this pamphlet on the School Elizabeth Sterling Haynes describes drama as “communal and composite. It needs writers, initiators, actors, dancers, singers, craftsmen and an audience before it can begin to fulfil its glorious appointment with life,” (Summer School program, 1934: Dorothy May Bradley Scrapbook). Once again, in these words, one witnesses the self-conscious analysis of theatre advocates who view the theatre as the glue of nation-building. Further to this observation, Haynes continues to say that “the multitude as well as the individual has found in the reading of Drama and its consequent interpretation, a generic impulse towards the establishment of a more unified culture.” Here another popular philosophy of the 1930s is at play, aside from the notion of identity cohesion through theatre. This is the notion that theatre is intrinsic or regenerative of the “multitude” – a quite left-wing perspective of the role of arts for the people. Renown theatre adjudicator and lecturer, L.W. Brockington (with whom Haynes worked closely on an annual basis in the adjudication of the Dominion Drama Festival) was of this mind: “True drama was written for the people and should be acted by the people” (ibid.).

Thus in its first two years of existence, the Banff School of the Arts Related to the Theatre was successful in promoting a Canadian national theatre in several ways. The education of known leaders of virtually every small Albertan community theatre group (and those of several prairie communities as well) in the ways of a nationally respected Canadian director (Haynes); the compilation of favourite “standard” plays for the theatre repertoire; and the use of many Canadian plays (by Canadian playwrights, or of Canadian subject matter), all contributed to the solidification of a distinctly national theatre.

Many plays (Minnie Evans Bicknell's *Relief*, Mary Carolyn Davies' *A Slave With Two Faces*, and J. Benavente's *No Smoking*—which were staged at the end of the 1933 session [Day, 1987: 219]) heralded democratic themes and citizenship ethics – a mandate which was perhaps more sub-conscious than the identity-formation policy. Nonetheless, this was also a concern of the Banff School, which sought to “achieve through this universal art a great basis of democratic wisdom” (Banff School Program, 1934: Dorothy May Bradley Scrapbook). It is questionable as to whether this last mandate of the School was added in to the School's description in order to satisfy the relevant provincial and national authorities that the School was not being used as a social destabilizer, as per the trend of the left-wing labour partisans whose plays were often shut down for their political leanings.

Certainly, the School's mandate had its roots in a populist thought that appealed to the immediate market in the Banff/ Alberta summer student base. Meanwhile, the founders of the school had to negotiate between this grassroots persona of the Banff School, and the School's ambition to be the epicentre of Alberta's dramatic knowledge and a mirror for Canadian cultural (performance) content to reflect its image out to an international market of faculty members, donors and funding bodies, and eventually to international summer students. While the School's official mandate was to encourage the creation of Canadian plays, educate the leaders of communities within the region in techniques of drama sanctioned by the School's founders, and to assemble a body of knowledge around the art of theatre that would come to stand for a school of thought native to the Banff School that would reflect a Canadian heritage, there seems to have also been an unofficial mandate to break a path for a Canadian dramatic heritage that was still emerging on the horizon.

For Banff's newly-born summer *School for the Arts Related to the Theatre*, the road to success as a national institution would require longevity as capturing the attention of funding bodies and governmental authorities (who, as the case of *Eight Men Speak* clearly demonstrates, had the ultimate power to disband initiatives that they deemed disruptive in a time of high censorship). For the founders of the Banff School, this meant walking the tightrope of progressive populist vision interwoven with government-approved (conservative) methods and objectives. Pointing to an international precedent such as Salzburg or Danish Folk high schools would call to the fore a neutral (ie: without Canadian "baggage") example to show how a site of cultural vision and risk-taking became an ally of federalist goals in another country. In this way, the presentation of evidence of federalist ambitions acted as a security net for the Banff School, and informed the School's identity at the same time: this would be a site of reinvention of international practices to work toward a body of knowledge of Canadian (performance) cultural identity, that would serve as a framework for the teachings of summer students from the region and abroad. It is to this question of pedagogy that we now turn in the following chapter: what exactly were the reinvented pedagogic/cultural practices, and what is so Canadian about the educational focus of the cultural institution?

Chapter Four – Identity, Culture, Education

Banff's experimental *School for the Arts Related to the Theatre*, as it was called during its first two years of existence, was from the start a complex site of cultural production. It melded experimental ideas about education practices, a professional standard of amateur theatre practice, and humanistic goals of increasing civic morals (by establishing an outlet of expression and a forum to teach the theatre's version of cooperation). Added to this tall order of the School's mandate was this institution's concentric circles of audiences—a cultural policy that would draw regional/provincial participants with its populist, grassroots persona; fulfil a national strategy of fostering Canadian artefacts and cultural products in order to establish a national school of theatre; and finally to engage in an international cultural sphere by calling on international funding bodies and faculty, and by looking to international educational methods to find a viable blueprint for a school that was ultimately to represent Canadianness.

In this chapter, it is the notion that an international educational method might suit the needs of a nationalist Canadian system, that is to be explored. Moreover, it is clear that the Banff School's existence was driven by educational ideals (even its title is indicative of this primary goal)—but these ideals were not by any means simple community efforts, rather they aspired to promote a deeper body of knowledge than merely theatrical and technical information. The School was to be a site of education on more than theatre: students (who were community leaders themselves) were attending a school of Canadian identity. And yet, the confounding element here is that the school was based on and funded by external locations of culture that supported nationalist causes of other nations.

The Banff School was granted wings to soar when it received funding from the Carnegie Foundation in 1933—the same foundation which would later fund six young Canadians—the next generation of Canadian intellectual élite—including Donald Cameron (the soon-to-be second director of the Banff School) to go to Denmark to study the educational system of the Danish Folk High School. It was this country’s educational method that had already rooted itself in Canada as well, and whose communitarian and cultural philosophies had influenced several Extension programs (including the University of Alberta’s) and peripherally the Banff School as well. The influence of the Danish Folk high school in Canada’s western provinces is at first glance a curious connection.

First, it may seem odd that Canada was looking outward for influences to its education system, at a time when the dominant response to immigration was to provide a means to Canadianize new citizens (whereby “new citizens” were encouraged to act Canadian by adapting to new behaviours and loyalties). These infrastructures for developing Canadian-ness range from educational “training” in Canadian citizenship, to the teaching of the national anthem and about emblems such as the flag, and to the exhibition of “new citizen’s” cultural artefacts for their countries of origin (a setting for the display of Otherness that must be downplayed in other settings [Author unknown, July 11, 1929]).

Second, the importation, as it were, of the Danish Folk high school tradition into a Canadian context, demonstrates how it is possible to construct a tradition by revisiting the practices that surround a tradition that is “borrowed” from another setting. The act of revisiting this tradition within a new setting builds new memories onto the tradition in question that conform to a new context, such that Canada is in fact appropriating the

Danish Folk high school tradition as its own memory. In fact, the reinvention that is taking place here amounts to the creation of Canadian memory for the tradition, as the tradition undergoes a series of permutations to adapt to its new context. As Stuart Hall writes, "identity is... always under construction. As I remarked elsewhere, it always moves into the future through a symbolic detour through the past (Hall, 1990). It produces new subjects who bear the traces of the specific discourses which not only formed them but enable them to *produce themselves anew and differently*," (Hall, 1993: 362). These words apply to the phenomenon I am discussing: the constantly reborn *myth of a seamless identity* that is composed of reinvented traditions from other contexts that find new meaning in the new time and place.

The impact of the Danish Folk high schools was felt not only in Danish communities in Alberta, but elsewhere, even at the university level of education, where there was a move toward the popularising of the university experience. The University of Alberta's Extension Department certainly focussed much of its attention on discovering ways of bringing education to rural populations: through radio; travelling lectures, art exhibits, and libraries; and eventually through the establishment of the Banff School. However, the University of Alberta's Extension Department is significant to the establishment of the Banff School in more ways than as simply the originator of this School. As the first University Extension Department in Canada, established in 1912 by the founding president of the University of Alberta, Henry Marshall Tory, the ideals of outreach and accessible education were already evident (Leighton, 1982: 11-17).

In one account of the dedication with which the founding members expanded the department of Extension, Edward Annand Corbett (who himself was later to become director of this department, and co-founder of the Banff School) describes:

When I joined the department in 1920, there were close to 300 travelling libraries in cost and circulation throughout the province, 15,000 volumes circulated by mail to people who were remote from ordinary library services. A packaged library filled with material for use by debating and discussion clubs. [sic] There were several hundred boxes of lantern slides used by school [sic] and churches, and a moving picture library with over 100 films. Short courses were provided all over the province, lecture courses arranged, correspondence courses in economics were sent out, agricultural instruction in solid, marketing, livestock, cooperatives, etc., were all provided at that time, [sic]... (Corbett, no date available: 6)

This is a testimonial to the active and engaged extension learning atmosphere in Alberta during this time. Already in 1920, an infrastructure for extension learning was in place wherein the University's intention of being an institution of learning for the whole province (and for the People) could be readily felt. A decade later, when the Carnegie foundation came to visit the University of Alberta's thriving Extension department, the implication that the Carnegie official (Dr. Learned) came to investigate one of the earliest Extension departments in North America, is of no great surprise.

In another account of the work of this Extension department, David and Peggy Leighton's history *Artists, Builders, and Dreamers*, describe the motives and values of the early department of Extension. The individual Tory selected as director of the newly-formed department of Extension, Albert Edward Ottewell, was a man of high energy and dedication to the program. Leighton explains that, "[o]ne of Ottewell's earliest acts was to introduce a travelling library service to supplement the extension lectures that had already been established. Then he started a publishing program, through which the department distributed literature on various subjects of current interest – women's suffrage, consolidated schools, immigration, the League of Nations" (Leighton, 1981: 13).

Certainly, advocates of extension work and adult education were drawn to causes that were on the edge of social change in Canada, as can be seen in the causes

listed above. Ideals of extension work included the vision of providing education to the People, among other populist ideals.

Even the federal government was in alignment with the left-leaning mandate of adult education. An infrastructure for educational policy was implemented in 1935 with the establishment of the Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE). . “The Conservative provincial government of Ontario had, through the first post-war years, liberally supported the adult-education movement despite misgivings about the socialist attitudes and utterances of some of the prominent personalities in it” (Bugge, 1999: 49). However, this political alignment was not to last. Extension work, which eventually expanded to include the adult-education movement in the 1930s was to be maimed in the 1950s when the influence of McCarthyism in Ontario saw the cuts to financial grants for the activities of this movement (Bugge, 1999: 49-50).

The political agenda of the personalities involved in extension work at the University of Alberta were, needless to say, in line with those of the department itself. E.A. Corbett and Elizabeth Sterling Haynes (who also taught with the Extension department) were the founders of the 1933 Banff *School for the Arts Related to the Theatre*. They “were alike in being fervent cultural missionaries who enjoyed the populist grassroots appeal of extension work, and drama’s appeal to the greater human spirit,” (Day, 1989: 49). The notion that theatre was an art for the people was certainly the message of the 1933-34 summer school programme: a multi-page document with quotes from Roy Mitchell, Wallace House, Sacha Guitry, and Walt Whitman (Dorothy May Bradley Fonds, 1893-1981).

Haynes travelled throughout the province in her role as educator with the Extension department, promoting and refining community theatre, and reaching

communities both in person and by radio broadcast. It is said that she travelled 11,000 miles in the course of one year to bring drama to small communities, and coach existing Little Theatre groups (Tippett, 1990: 62). Donald Cameron observed of Elizabeth Sterling Haynes's trips throughout rural Alberta through the extension department that, "...[it was the beginning] of a rather intensive training program for community leaders in the theatre [which] certainly paid off in increased interest in the drama and the vitality of the community theatre organizations." (Stuart, 1984: 100-101). The philosophy on teaching leaders in drama so that they return to their communities with the tools for passing knowledge along was equally central to the Banff School's early years, where the hope was that the University intellectual (faculty) could influence large groups of people by influencing a smaller strategically selected group.

Haynes "envisioned Alberta as a 'promised land,' though in her mythology, the threatening outer force was less the Eastern political and economic structure than the foreign, commercial stage," (Day, 1989: 49). This was a popular metaphor during the 1930s—a time when a population lacking in job security and in search of a "saviour" was turning increasingly to organized religion (wherein the common layperson could relinquish accountability for social instability to an overseeing force that would "make things right" for a desperate people). The popularity of religion was evidenced in the staggering faith in William Aberhart, a radio preacher from Calgary who often likened Albertans to the Biblical Jews in Egypt, whereby he himself stood in as the Messianic figure. (MacGregor, 1977: 262).

Also in this last quote, Day is referring to the Broadway stage as the sinister forces of commercialism. Not only did Haynes perceive the Broadway stage as "spiritually corrupt glitz" full of "money-grubbing professionals" (Day, ca. 1988-1989:

48), but she also had a missionary zeal in promoting theatre that was distinctly Canadian, and so could be related to by Canadian rural audiences. As the 1939-1940 Extension report stated, "the creation of a native Canadian drama is a goal worthy of our highest ambitions, and the progress that has been made in that direction ranks as the most significant and single greatest achievement of the Banff school so far" (anon. From Department of Extension Annual Report, 1940).

In fact, it was to a Russian model that Haynes looked to for guidance with her drama program. She was an avid disciple of Stanislavskian acting and directing techniques, and it is suggested that if "Toronto's leftist Theatre of Action, formed in 1936, was one pioneer of Stanislavskian methods in Canada, the Banff School was another and even earlier one," (Day, ca. 1988-1989: 53). The "emotional realism" that Stanislavsky advocated was intended to "mobilize the potential of the actor's creative nature to guarantee him truth of feeling and authenticity of the stage 'experience'," (Rudnitsky, 1988: 19). This experimental school's "system" involved stripping away any artificialism the actor may build up so as to find a highly expressive theatrical language where this "truth of feeling" would take on confessional proportions (Rudnitsky, 1988: 19-21). Followers of Stanislavsky's "system" felt that actors who followed these guidelines would morally elevate themselves, or at the very least, be used as a tool of self-improvement (ibid., 20); certainly, this was the theory from which Roy Mitchell and Elizabeth Sterling Haynes were working.

Haynes' son recalls that "Growing up in my parents' household... I was exposed to the ideas... gleaned from the Unitarian Church and Bahai Faith... Although labelled a 'red' in the McCarthy era, Elizabeth believed in the brotherhood of man and the abolition of racial, class and religious prejudices," (Day, ca. 1988-1989: 53). Furthermore,

it is interesting to note that this leftist trend only continued to grow as the 1930s progressed: in the 1937 Banff School, three of the eight one-act plays presented publicly were Canadian social-action plays, two of them written and premiered at Banff (*The Last Race* by Cecil James Young, and *On To Ottawa*, by Mary Ellen Burgess[Day, ca. 1988-1989: 53]).

Besides Haynes, the Banff School's other key founder, E.A. (Ned) Corbett, too, was a man of socialist sympathies. Less of a commanding personality than Elizabeth Sterling Haynes, it was Ned Corbett who secured the \$10,000 Carnegie grant over three years to hire Haynes as a full-time drama instructor for the extension department in 1932 while in his capacity as Director of the Extension department. Ned Corbett was certainly the administrator and educational pioneer of the Banff School project. It was his financially shrewd and business-savvy manner that saw Corbett assume directorship of the Banff School for the first three years of its existence.

Like his fiery colleague, Corbett was a cultural missionary. His goals in promoting the arts in Alberta were quite methodical and self-conscious. In a memoir that was published through the Canadian Association of Adult Education, Corbett outlines his theory on education to rural communities with clinical precision:

...[O]ur job was to bring to the remote places of the province, whatever cultural and entertainment values the university could offer as means of encouraging community solidarity, strengthening morals, awaking civic conscience in regard to better home and school conditions, and to bring order and some kindness into the heart and lonely lives of frontier people. (Corbett, CAAE: 6).

There is evident here a combination of regional and national objectives, where the former is exemplified in the encouragement of community solidarity, the awakening of civic and moral conscience, and the relief of frontier-life pressures. A nationalist goal, on

the other hand, can be seen in the awakening of civic conscience as well, as concerns a vision of citizenship and a larger public sphere of nationalism.

When Corbett stepped down from his position at the Banff School and the University of Alberta's Extension department in 1936, it was not for the lack of an effective partnership, for the Corbett-Haynes connection was an entrepreneurial match made in heaven. Moving to Toronto for what he thought was to be a short-term position, Corbett had taken the role of first director of the newly formed Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE).

This association was formed in 1935 with funding from the Carnegie Foundation. In effect, it was an amalgamation of numerous Canadian organizations in the adult education field, and was patterned after a similar American association. The creation of this organization was evidence of a growing interest in innovative and far-reaching teaching techniques. Maria Tippett observes, "[t]he conviction that 'continued learning throughout life was not only possible but necessary if democratic institutions were to survive' certainly motivated the formation of the Canadian Association for Adult Education," (Tippett, 1990, 59). This points to the notion that a shift in perception around the purpose of education was taking place: education was not only a vehicle to influence and shape the youth of a nation, but could also foster nationalism and civic duty among its older generations.

There is also present in this quote the idea that education and democracy are linked inextricably. Here enters the link between cultural institutions of learning and democracy (where "cultural institutions" refers to the many societies, clubs, and associations that were initiated by the agenda of the Little Theatre Movement – the early Banff School included – are testament to the marriage between education and cultural

activity). It seems that the cultural élite of the 1930s (and indeed still of today) draw a logical relationship between ideals of democracy/citizenship and the empowerment people draw from cultural activity.

Certainly this was a belief of the Carnegie Foundation. While the foundation was established in 1905, the Scottish-born steel magnate, Andrew Carnegie, was active as a cultural philanthropist well before then. The mandate of this foundation was "to do all things necessary to encourage, uphold and dignify the profession of teaching,"(*About Carnegie Corporation*. (n.d.). Retrieved August 2002, from <http://www.carnegie.org/sub/about/biography.html>). While the Foundation itself was not a granting organization, the Carnegie Corporation in New York was created six years later to do just that. In 1911, eight years before his death, Carnegie established the Carnegie Corporation of New York, a separate, grant-making foundation as large as all of his other trusts combined, to advance knowledge and cultural exposure.

Maria Tippett offers credible reasons as to why Carnegie and the Rockefeller Foundations both contributed so generously to budding cultural organizations:

Carnegie's philanthropy extended beyond the American border to Britain and all of the English-speaking Dominions... In both cases [the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations] the impetus for giving was multi-faceted. It lay in a wish to alter the unpleasant aspects of early twentieth-century American life—brought on, ironically enough, by capitalist industrialization the profits from which were now being applied to their amelioration. It was rooted in a belief that a 'scientific' approach to the distribution of wealth could aid in this. It was concerned with giving the United States a cultural identity of its own. And, finally, both Carnegie and Rockefeller hoped that they would secure their own salvation by giving to others less fortunate than themselves. (Tippett, 1990: 144)

While there is certainly some verity to this theory in that philanthropy is, at the end of the day, a selfless urge to "do good" or give back to society in some manner (possibly motivated by the teachings of religious faith and secular values, as Tippett suggests

when she speaks of seeking salvation), these reasons alone seem too facile and conveniently fitting a solution. It is not our intention of implying sinister motives behind philanthropy—this would also be too simplistic an explanation. At a basic level, philanthropic activity was rewarded by tax breaks in the United States well before similar measures were introduced in Canada. When Canada instated a comparable policy under the income tax act in the 1940s, the tax incentives still could not rival the equivalent American tax benefits, at between 5 and 10 percent (Cameron, 1977: 144-146).

Aside from this purely economic rationale, political agendas are also at play in decisions to act philanthropically. Surely lucrative companies such as the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations aim to position themselves in a laudable light to their stakeholders and public. Not only does this positioning increase the credibility profile of the company, but it also enables the institution to propagate the values from which it emerged through the organizations that it sponsors. These are by no means purely dark and insidious motives, rather they are the stepping-stones toward building a platform for the company's longevity in its sector. If the values which created the company become the values of that companies' stakeholders and clientele, then the public it operates for is more likely to see the need for that company to continue its operations.

Always on the search for initiatives poised for success, it was in 1931 that Carnegie official W.S. Learned heard of the "innovative educational experiments in Alberta" (Tippett, 1990: 146) and made a visit to Ned Corbett's Extension department at the University of Alberta. Impressed and convinced of its feasibility, Learned arranged for funding to come to the department—funding which would translate to the establishment of the "Intensive Summer Course" in the Arts Related to the Theatre, the earliest manifestation of the Banff School (Dorothy May Bradley Fonds, ca. 1930-1934).

The Carnegie grant on this occasion also covered a variety of other cultural endeavors, including a "Travelling Exhibition of Art"⁸. In a press releases by Eloise Phillips Motherwell in 1932, she describes this particular allotment of funds: "[t]hese travelling exhibitions are the result of the allotment for art of a portion of the grant of \$30, 000 to the Department of Extension, University of Alberta, for the development in the province of a greater appreciation of the arts," (Motherwell, 1932: 1). Interestingly, this exhibit presents a number of Canadian paintings (most likely influenced by the Group of Seven, after the description). "Some of them follow the modern trend which may perhaps have held sway in the centres where they had their training. There is a predominance of landscape—chiefly Alberta scenery depicting all seasons and with various treatments. ... some are outstanding for their technical excellence, their beautiful striking colouring..." (Motherwell, 1932: 1) The list of paintings and artists which follows the release includes some prominent Alberta artists, such as A.C.Leighton, Catharine Whyte, Peter Whyte. The paintings chosen for this exhibit indicate an agenda to promote a specific type of art which was to become the definitive, identifiable Canadian school of painting: the creation of a Canadian identity in visual art.

In 1933, the Carnegie Foundation made funding available for six Canadian scholars to conduct research in Denmark on Danish Folk High Schools—a phenomenon in education which had been introduced in Canada by Danish immigrants, and was seen

⁸ Other educational initiatives at the University of Alberta which received funding from the Carnegie Foundation in 1934-1935 are :

- An anthropological study of « Northwestern Indian tribes » involving a « study of ... skulls » by E. Greene
- Summaries and extracts of works by Plato, typewritten by J. M. MacEachran
- The testing of a device created to study the field strength of university radio station CKUA by E.J. MacLeod
- A study of literature on the « Indo-Germanic problem » by P. Owen
- A study of the « ranching era in Southern Alberta » which was to be a « useful contribution to local history » by G. M. Smith (selected examples from University of Alberta, Presidents Files, 1935)

as a progressive and positive pedagogic technique. Donald Cameron, who was involved with the University of Alberta Extension department, and was to be Corbett's successor as director of the Banff School, went to Denmark on such a scholarship.

It was found that the Danish Folk High School system was in many ways compatible with the needs of rural education in Canada. Spearheaded by Nikolai Frederick Grundtvig, a Danish theologian, historian and reformer, this school system was designed to give power through knowledge to the rural folk of the small country, thereby solidifying a pride in themselves and their nation. It was essentially a nation-building project, designed to integrate the isolated existences of farming people whose lack of access to motor transportation often kept them within close range of their dwellings.

Sociologist E. Doyle McCarthy holds that "*knowledge is culture*", and that furthermore "various bodies of knowledge, such as those of the natural sciences or the social sciences, operate *within* culture--...they contain and transmit and create cultural dispositions, meanings, and categories. It also means that all knowledges, whatever else they do, operate as systems of meaning:...they provide categories and conceptions that enable their users to understand their worlds *as something*, (McCarthy, 1995: 108-109). This is precisely the philosophy of the Danish Folk High Schools: knowledge (about Danish language—including literacy—as well as about Danish history, customs, and the "objective" sciences of arithmetic and basic bio-sciences) offers meaning to the notion of Danishness. Knowledge, as power, increases the sense of accountability and responsibility (citizenship) to the *nation* to which one belongs.

Alex Sim, a Canadian researcher of the Danish Folk High School model, was a keen supporter of this system. He writes, "We [pioneers in adult education] were

impressed by the fact that it had aided a people to defeat limitations placed upon them by poverty, a poor soil, obstinate neighbours, and a peasant population which had forgotten its art, poetry, legends, indeed the greatness of the Norse culture," (Bugge, 1999: 63). For these very same reasons regarding geographic and political challenges, the Danish Folk High School system seemed a perfect fit for rural Alberta, where poverty and instability was making the project of nation-building a difficult task with people preoccupied with survival.

Yet, what of the cultural rationale for the Danish Folk High School? Was there a sense that Canada had "forgotten its art, poetry, [and] legends", and that there was an indifference around the "greatness" of Canadian culture? This site is perhaps where the permutation of this tradition begins, for the sense of nationhood one observes from reading newsclippings of this period do not point to a loss of pride, but indeed a lack thereof. In fact, where Denmark was rekindling Danish pride in art, poetry, legends, and Norse culture; Canada was accumulating a body of these cultural practices to initiate a Canadian pride where there was a perceived lack (Author unknown, ca. 1931-1933).

Using this educational philosophy, it was believed that a Canadian identity could be translated through the encouragement of such People's schools. While this notion was certainly not far from what was already underway with the early Banff School, the ability to focus a reform of education on a specific model gave the task of identity-builders a focus in that they could now name the system they were trying to introduce. In his The Impossible Dream, Donald Cameron writes: "when I studied the Folk High Schools of Denmark, Norway and Sweden,... I got the basic ideas which I modified and adapted in the Banff School. ... I didn't think the term folk high school would sound right in Canada, but the idea of a school for the people of all ages, all backgrounds and

all educational standards would fill a real Canadian need. The Banff Folk High School would have sounded phony [sic] but a school for the people at Banff was quite indigenous to the Canadian Scene. So the Banff School of Fine Arts and Centre for Continuing Education sounded Canadian..." (Cameron, 1977: 146) Thus it was that years after it was founded, the Banff School underwent a name change.

In the above quote, it is quite clear that what was happening at Banff was already along the lines of the schools Cameron was researching in Scandinavia. At first perception, this school may seem less complex and strategic than it really was. However, when reading into Cameron's words, it becomes clear that a nation-building, identity-forming project was underway in the establishment of the Banff School – a project which the founders and administrators were not shy in naming or describing it as what it was. Cameron himself speaks of a conscious and deliberate reform of the School, including a change of name, which would "sound Canadian" as opposed to "sound[ing] phony [sic]". The constant use of the verb "to sound" points to a concern around messaging and presentation: Cameron is searching to fit the School into a Canadian identity that is, contrary to the vision of the school, already there. For something to "sound right in Canada," there needs to be a sense that Canadians already have a fixed set of tastes and ideologies.

However, it was not Donald Cameron, or even the Carnegie Foundation, which identified the Danish Folk High Schools as research-worthy. It was Agnes Macphail, the first woman to be elected to parliament in 1921, who drove the first Canadian interests in Danish Folk High Schools. She described the schools as:

[A school]...in which students between 18 and 30 years of age were taught from a world point of view, universal history, philosophy, literature, song and gymnastics, and so successfully that they go out into life and give the very best

that is in them to life, and serve to the limit of their ability. (Paterson & Wilson, p. 67), (Bugge, 1999: 93).

Interestingly, Agnes Macphail refers to the notion of a “world point of view”, where it is apparent that she does not perceive that the school disseminates Danish-national traditions, but rather that there is the teaching of a more “profound global perspective” (Bugge, 1999: 94). This is significant, because in this discourse there is a precedent for a school which contributed to a national self-image and identity, as well as teaching from an international perspective.

Taking up Agnes Macphail’s interest in the Danish Folk High School model, politician Irene Parlby travelled to Denmark in 1929. She was impressed by “the way the folk high schools strove to arouse the population, particularly farmers, to become living and co-operatively active citizens” (Bugge, 1999: 95). It is noteworthy that these two women combined the notions of cosmopolitanism and citizenship within this educational model – an early example of how citizenship is nurtured within an internationalist discourse. This, as we will see, is a curious aspect of the early Banff School, in which a nationalist impetus seemed to coexist naturally with international influences.

The suggestion was initially Irene Parlby’s, to send “one or two, or as many as could be provided for, of the brightest young people with receptive minds...to these older countries... to spend two or three years in Denmark to soak in that atmosphere of co-operation,... we should be doing a wonderful work for the province of Alberta, [ib. 70]” (Bugge, 1999: 95). However, it was Peter Manniche, the principal of the International High School in Elsinore, whose application to fund 6 travelling

scholarships to Scandinavia was finally acted upon by the Carnegie Foundation. Thus, in 1933, Donald Cameron was sent to Denmark.

Of his stay in Denmark, Cameron writes, “[t]he Folk School movement in Denmark took root and prospered following a national calamity. We too have experienced national calamity—the economic crisis,” (Bugge, 1999:96). However in Cameron’s there is a silence around other influencing factors that saw the creation of the Danish Folk High School, perhaps because these factors were still on-going in Canada and therefore seemed to raise the element of risk in undertaking a similar venture in Canada. The Danish Folk High Schools were created as a struggle against powerful neighbours’ cultural imperialism, but with a country (former colony) with as long a border to the south as Canada’s, would this initiative be enough to combat cultural bullying from the south and from Britain? Second, Danish Folk High Schools worked to bridge disparate communities of secluded rural inhabitants, but in a country of vast and rugged stretches, would the same system work as effectively as in the smaller European country?

The findings generated from this study and compiled into a report in 1935 for the newly created Canadian Association of Adult Education (CAAE) were meant to be applied to finding an educational system to fit the needs of Canada’s rural communities, under siege from a flagging economy: a system which was both tried and true, and on the other hand, distinctly Canadian. This combination seems to entail a paradox in itself, for if policy is distinctly Canadian, then is this not a novel system in which policy is attempted that does not emulate a precedent? Yet, the system was discovered in the Folk High School: tried and true in its original home of Denmark, and distinctly Canadian when the system was renegotiated to fit the new territories’ needs. Part community

centre, part school, this type of system did not set age limits to education, and was sensitive to a rural lifestyle. It seemed the right combination for a people whose values included higher learning and community life, but whose hard-hitting reality often compromised these values.

The initial Banff School was perhaps not immediately intended as a Canadian model of such a Folk High School, but certainly the concept around this early Banff School was compatible with the concept of the Danish Folk High School, and it was soon to be veered increasingly in that direction. Elsie Park Gowan notes this intention in 1951 when she says, "Cameron believes that what we are now building at Banff is the nearest thing in Canada to a Folk or People's School..." (Gowan, 1951: 19). Combined with Cameron's other vision of Banff as a new Salzburg, one is lead to wonder if these Eurocentric ideals are contributing to leading Canada toward (and not away from) the European colonialism that it is intending to reject through the implementation of distinctly Canadian practices.

This initiative exhibits a growing interest in Canada around education and ways for rural communities to have access to intellectual knowledge. A trend in this direction is evident much earlier: travelling libraries and art exhibits were supported by the CP Railways in that this mode of transportation was made available to the organiser of these exhibits. As well, Canadian artists whose work was exhibited in this fashion were later commissioned to provide paintings for the train cars. A 1933 letter from an art dealer in Vancouver to the University of Alberta depicts the cooperativeness of the railway to the cause of artistic exhibition. This exhibition would be travelling to several American and Canadian cities, from the east coast to the west coast and back, over the course of a 2-year period. (Along with this letter, the art dealer sends a list of titles of the

paintings and their artists. Tellingly, twenty-one of the 35 paintings in the exhibit on this train still have titles relating to British subjects [McClure, September 23, 1933].) This type of initiative becomes popular as the 1930s progress—a testament to the priority for Canadians (and their neighbours to the south) to make artistic production accessible and available to as wide a *national* audience as possible. This trend will be further discussed in the following chapter *Technologies of Citizenship*.

Education in rural areas was further encouraged when the University of Alberta launched the first extension program of its kind in North America in 1912. Lecturers travelled long distances to speak to rural communities about Canadian history, literature, geography, and even arithmetic. They brought along with them libraries of books and other educational materials—resources to which these Prairie towns would not regularly have access.

As was already mentioned, Haynes travelled many thousands of kilometres through the extension program of the University of Alberta to coach the community drama groups in leading edge theatrical techniques. This type of educational activity was so widely appreciated that it was not long before a need for a self-contained theatre workshop was located. Thus, in 1932, the jurors of the Dominion Drama Festival (Leonard W. Brockington, Solicitor for the City of Calgary and keen supporter of the arts, Corbett; and C.J. “Tiny” Elphicke, manager of the radio station CJCA in Edmonton) decided on Banff as a key area to develop such a program. The Banff School grew out of this decision in the summer of 1933.

The impetus behind these educational initiatives points to a growing sensitivity to disseminate information about things Canadian. While it is clear that there is concern to meet British standards in both art and education, the shift occurring in the inter-War

period is one of a search for relevancy of artistic creation and education in the lives of Canadians. "By performing British music and plays and conforming to British standards Canadians were not only bringing Canadian culture into line with that of the mother country; they were also, in Grey's words, binding the Dominion itself together by giving it 'an identity of tastes and aspirations,'" (Maria Tippett, 1990: 57.) Paradoxically, the pedagogy of British standards and practices were moving Canada further away from the Dominion by placing Britishness in the realm of Other. The identity of tastes and aspirations of Canadians was coming into relief based on what it was not.

This imperialist attitude was only just beginning to dissipate in the 1930s with the increased interest in Canadian-authored plays and Canadian subject-matter. As late as 1913, an English manager of a touring theatre company, launched the British and Canadian Theatre Organization Society. This society had the unabashedly élitist mandate to provide British productions as competition to the American vaudeville touring acts. This initiative is described in the a 1914 Literary Digest article:

Amusement... is a necessity of colonization, and the very remote districts of Canada are very badly served in this respect. Especially does this apply to the western provinces, where the life of the colonist is very strenuous and amazingly lonely. Very occasionally a company of American "vaudeville" performers will come within reach—which is to say within fifty miles or so—of his farm, but the entertainment which they have to offer is of so sorry a description that it does not make worthwhile the necessary journey to see them. (1914 Literary Digest, from E. Ross Stuart's *The History of Prairie Theatre*, 1984: 51.)

The cultural consumer, as citizen, is demanding that art reflect a recognisable version of daily life: the portrayal and solidification of a Canadian cultural identity (through the use of Canadian raw materials for artistic production as well as Canadian content). Alex Sim, one of the most well-respected pioneers of adult education and a scholar on Danish

Folk High Schools, noted a surge in the creation of national organizations in the 1930s, and attributes this new trend to a shift in attitude about Canadian nationalism.

In Canada, new national organizations had sprung up. The Canadian Chamber of Agriculture, the CBC, The CAAE, Canadian Clubs. It was a golden age, when the British connection was dissolving, and the American colossus had not overshadowed our fair land... The Group of Seven... The discovery of the Canadian landscape by these painters was a political event. They were heroes, who gave courage to many of us, who strove for a cultural rebirth in Canada. (Sim, 1982: 10-11; Bugge, 1999: 130).

What is strikingly clear in retrospect is the sheer volume of initiatives in educational reform that are occurring through the early 20th century, and especially the late 1920s and into the 1930s. We have named some of these endeavors – evidence of a growing sensitivity to educational reform.

The establishment of the first university extension program at the University of Alberta and the far-reaching effect this department had on rural communities all throughout the province, including travelling art exhibits and libraries, is one. The creation of a primarily educational radio program (CKUA) which broadcasted lectures, plays, debates, and educational discussions about a variety of subjects was a second. Third, the wide scope of grant moneys and funding available for educational purposes from the Carnegie Foundation and other such philanthropic organizations. Fourth, the exponential increase of fora for educational displays, for example, the rail cars of the Trans-Canada trains which became a forum for the display of Canadian art. Finally (and perhaps most importantly) the founding of the CAAE in 1935 which was to be a resource for pan-Canadian adult education pioneers. The side-effects of the creation of this institution are innumerable – from a mandate to research progressive educational techniques (as, for instance, the Danish Folk High School model) to the implementation

of similar projects across the nation (the People's School in Antigonish founded in 1920, and the Folk High Schools all across rural Alberta—the first as early as 1921).

It is also clear that those active in extension work and other progressive forms of pedagogy, were very much concerned with the dissemination of culture (where all the senses of "culture" are included, from lifestyle, to tastes, to artistic production) as long as that "culture" was distinctly Canadian (the definition of "Canadian" that educators sanctioned). What is meant by this is that the project of nation-building and identity formation was not one which haphazardly fell into the hands of the same individuals who were educational activists and intellectuals.

The role of cultural producer was taking on larger proportions than simply as a creator of artefacts, for these artefacts were manifesting an identity for their audience. In this way, cultural producer, administrator, and educator were becoming one and the same role – a role filled by an élite group of well-connected and well-informed Canadians. Two teachings have had the effect of locating a collective sensibility for Canadians that work to shape cultural identity: first, the shaping of tastes, values, and expectations around sites of cultural production; and second, democratising the role of the audience with the introduction of the critic, who is an active intellectual participant (whether the role of critic is self-assigned or a professional occupation).

Maria Tippett offers a suggestion for why the artist or intellectual was one of educator as well. "The artist's educative role was assigned to him or her by... [a] variety of circumstances [that] were in fact giving the cultural producer that function. The decline of traditional religion... was one; the need to fit immigrants into their new society was another; a continuing urge to stimulate national feeling was a third; and there was also a feeling that art could teach people to cope with urbanization and

mechanization," (Maria Tippett, 1990: 49.) Tippett's description is problematic. The "decline of traditional religion" may be fitting to other contexts within Canada (such as the major urban centres) but it is not historically accurate to speak of a decline in traditional religion in Alberta during the 1930s. In fact, as can be seen with the popularity of William Aberhart and the popularity of the religious values that he preached, traditional religion was seeing an incline rather than a decline (MacGregor, 1977: 262). However, Tippett does give an interesting account of how the intellectual in Canada is seeking to create a self-governed public sphere that is sovereign of any other nation-state when she points out the "continuing urge to stimulate national feeling".

Furthermore, it is valid to remark on the influence of mechanization on a population. During the years before the Canadian west was struck by the "car-craze" (Jameson, 1987: 99), Chautauqua personnel were using the car to their benefit for touring circuits. However, once the "car-craze" hit, the changing conditions made the role of the educator both increasingly important and more difficult, with the existence of better roads and more cars that brought the entertainment of the urban centre closer to the hitherto-removed and isolated farmer. Radio too was double-edged. While it may have provided opportunity and progress in certain areas of cultural production, there were also challenges to enticing radio-listeners from their homes to attend a cultural event such as the Chautauqua (Jameson, 1987: 139-140).

Certainly however, there is a difference of opinion around the question of religion. In an essay dealing with the rise of interest in community theatre during the 1930s, Moira Day suggests that the climate of social activism and change brought on by the plight of the Depression was a major factor in the trend toward the Little Theatre Movement. Moreover, she goes on to say, the call to social change went "hand in hand

with a fervent call to religious fundamentalism” (Day, ca. 1988-1989: 48) in Alberta. Far from the decline of religion, then, we might see the popularity of artistic trades as aligned with Albertan’s faith. While it is perhaps true that certain “traditional” forms of religion, then, were losing members of their diocese to newer forms or sects of that “traditional” religion, spirituality is certainly not declining in the regard of Albertans.

Whatever the case, artists’ social rung on the ladder of society was clearly on the rise in the 1930s—as can be seen in the belief and trust placed in these artists as the educators of society. It is interesting to conceive of this shift as, actually, a earth-shaking change in western Canada, when one considers that many societies elsewhere moved more subtly from an agricultural, to an industrial, to an intellectual society, whereas it seems that the shift in Alberta was from an essentially agricultural to an agri-intellectual society within the space of a dozen years.

With this in mind, it is less surprising that religious fundamentalism held such a firm place in Alberta’s rural communities: agricultural societies tend to mean interdependent, traditional (in the sense of fixed adhesion to roles and functions), and tightly-knit family units; whose vast properties prohibit frequent and extended interaction with people outside the small communities. Such circumstances are ideal breeding grounds for organized religion which often reinforces a “right order” for things, and a divine purpose for any situation. Combined with the “sublime” in artistic creations, and the values of community which art such as theatre tends to promote, one can see how a pious-natured population might look to an artist as a “creator”, a conceiver of the sublime, and a leader/educator in the community.

This said, then, one can see how the political and social malaise of the 1930s incited people to look to educators to be their crusaders for social change, and how this

resulted in a new breed of pedagogue and community leader in one hybrid: a preacher-teacher. Combined with the expressive power of a theatre artist, this role was certainly of growing significance. Into this setting emerges the popular Little Theatre movement, along with educational initiatives such as the Chautauqua, play readings over the radio, and the Banff School. Fading was the view that art and performing arts were dispensable, trite luxuries of after-school children. Although there were and always will be those who hold this view, many now began to couple values of education and artistic creation – seeing these as constructors of a cultural heritage for new citizens and a nation in need of stability.

Chapter Five : Technologies of Citizenship

In Chapter One, we discussed some key concepts of nationalism, trying to maintain a balance between the criticisms and the benefits of this emotionally-laden attachment. Pitting nationalism against the effects of globalization, Stuart Hall observed an erosion of “centred” nationalisms as experienced by the Western European nation-states in the 20th century, and a consequent strengthening of transnational and local allegiances, simultaneously “above and below the level of the nation-state” (Hall, 1993: 354). While this phenomenon seems to be the case in the later years of the 20th century, the situation in Canada appears to have been quite different around the 1930s, when one can observe a search for the nation rather than the strengthening of transnational and the local.

Instead of focusing on *regional* ventures, several initiatives were being promoted to advance *national* projects. The Canadian Association of Adult Education (1935) was launched as a national vehicle to promote the cause of Adult/Extension learning. Progressive Arts Clubs were being established in several Canadian cities (early 1930s) and syndicated across Canada through the national monthly publication *Masses* in 1932 (Ryan, 1985: 34). The Dominion Drama Festival was created by Governor General Bessborough as a national theatre competition in 1932 “under the personal sponsorship and patronage of their Excellencies,” (*Crag and Canyon*, March 10, 1933). And the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation was formed in 1936 as a result of the newly created Canadian Broadcasting Commission (1932) (Tippett, 1990: 80)—just to give readers an impression of the surge of national projects around the 1930s.

This period has been described as a “Canadian Renaissance,” writes Maria Tippett, but it was “a reaction to, rather than a celebration of, modern life,” (Tippett,

1990: 11). To illustrate this point, Tippett quotes Herman Voaden, who wrote in his diary in 1927 that the flourishing amateur theatre movement was “an industrial civilization trying to redeem—to save—itsself by a devotion to something more permanent than money and material things,” (Tippett, 1990: 11 of Voaden’s comments to the Sarnia Drama League, March 6, 1928). Canadian Renaissance indeed: the organizations outlined above are all cultural organizations (and have educational mandates as well). This is significant because it leads to questions about why there seems to be a quest for national cultural initiatives more so than the regional projects which dominated the first decades of the 20th century. It is hypothesized that these national cultural initiatives have their source in a concept of citizenship that has expanded from a local/regional definition to a broader national one. With the rapidly evolving context of mechanization, it is suggested that a combination of old technologies (such as print media and the role of the Text) and new technologies that bind larger geographic distances (the railroad, motor car, and the radio, to name a few) are working together during the early 1930s to form a concept of a new social order, involving a wider definition of citizenship. Organized forums that reinforce this broader take on citizenship also work with the existant technologies, so that the role of national/federal associations, political affiliations, and the role of organized religion as a site of a duty-bound collective will need to be examined here.

Far from being simply a construct of ideology or a form of politics, nations are rather a cultural phenomena. This is a theory held by Anthony D. Smith (Smith, 1991: 16), and is a key notion in his theory of the importance of memories, values, myths, symbols, and collective memory, in the existence of “nation”. In his account of nationalism, he suggests that nations in themselves are not the preservationist initiatives

which entail the suppression of peripheral identities, but rather that they have beneficial effects on individual consciousness (Smith, 1991).

As Smith proposes, not only does the concept “nation” locate a community in time and space, but the nation provides a sacred center to the individual, equipped with objectives of spiritual and historical pilgrimage, and a “moral geography” (Smith, 1991: 16). In effect, what Smith is pointing to is the role of citizenship in nationalism.

Citizenship--a slippery term at best--can be loosely described as the sense of belonging and obligation that the individual perceives as personal duty when he mediates his status within the collective, and the rights and privileges the collective affords back to the individual. In order to assess the effects of citizenship in nationhood, one must first look to the role that culture plays in fostering a sense of citizenship.

Nations, in fact, are not singularly political or ideological entities, but a combination of these and cultural factors. Politically and ideologically, the outline of a nation is suggested through the legitimization of common legal rights (civic duty), as well as duties of legal institutions which serve to define values by reflecting perceived “age-old” customs and mores, and serve to define the “character” of a nation. Culturally (and this term is used with reference to Raymond Williams’s “way-of-life” definition of culture), the concept of “nation” provides a social bond between individuals and classes of society through repertoires of shared values, symbols, traditions, and self-definition (*imagined communities*, to borrow from Benedict Anderson). It is in these repositories of memory that the individual is engulfed in a sense of collective belonging, for he recognizes a set of shared memories and tastes of the collective, that are then reflected through individual members. In effect, the collective is establishing an identity through the gathering of this repertoire.

While it is difficult to single out any one specific trigger for the apparent search for national identity that was occurring in the late 1920s and early 1930s, one can point to a variety of situations which might have rendered the environment open to this new direction. Certainly, the search for a national cultural identity did not appear as a national interest over night; the objective of locating a national identity is evident throughout the early decades of the 20th century in small increments. Therefore, it is important to note here that the environment that this chapter will discuss is not being framed as a causal effect of this search for identity, but rather this chapter is observing a set of circumstances that are conducive to such a search becoming a national obsession, of sorts.

Sketch of a Canadian Landscape Part 1: From Regional to National

In the impoverished agricultural provinces of western Canada, whose 1930s experience was quickly robbing them of the sense of promise and potential (the “American Dream”, as it were) which had been the impetus for their settlement, the regional allegiances which had hitherto been the imagined community to which people clung were becoming insufficient concepts. In the *Crag and Canyon* newsclippings of the early 1930s, this change in direction is evident. An anonymous staff writer of the Banff weekly newspaper *Crag and Canyon* writes, “What Western Canada needs today in order to successfully tide over the existing depression, and to save the country for the future, is the old spirit which was so long the pride and boast of this country--the courage, the endurance, the optimism of the early pioneers” (Author unknown: October 16, 1931). In this quote, one can see that there is a perception of a loosening of morale and direction on a collective scale in this locality.

While similar articles lamented the perceived loss of solidarity and cohesion that had previously been a regional “pioneer” mentality, other articles are beginning to be shaped by the search for a Canadian rather than pioneer character. Even the small rural town of Banff had a speaker series which met regularly in the local Mount Royal Hotel, entitled the “Canadian Club”, hosting such federal personalities as Agnes McPhail— then the only woman member of the House of Commons (Author unknown, November 6, 1931).

In fact, it is interesting to note that for a small-town weekly newspaper, the focus of the *Crag and Canyon* was already then largely on a national perspective. In an article entitled “Who Owns Canada”, *Crag and Canyon* editor and publisher E. S. Duncan endorses the publication of a government-issued article chastising Canadians and the failure of the Canadian education system, for ambiguity and uncertainty about the status of Canada within the British Commonwealth. The diatribe here comes as a result of a staggering uncertainty as to the answer of the question in the title, on the occasion of Catholic school examinations submitted to students in Montreal. “It is evident from the answers submitted in the school examinations at Montreal that the subject had not been sufficiently emphasized by the teachers, and the secretary of the Catholic School Commission has stated that in future more attention will be paid to it. It would be well if this was done not only in the Catholic schools of Montreal, but in all schools throughout the Dominion,” (E.S. Duncan, July 14, 1933).

Interestingly, this article calls for a stronger sense of citizenship (whereby it seems that it is meant a curiosity and assiduousness of students on the subject of the nation) and accountability in Canada for the specific end of maintaining a strong position and respect within the League of Nations. What is striking about this

positioning around the topic is that the apparent goal of the country isn't the education and awareness of its citizens in itself, but rather the image which education and awareness of citizens will cast externally, to the nation's international governmental elite peers. Also interesting is the tone of the plea for national awareness: something in the tone implies that the plea is being addressed to a population whose sense of self and confidence is not fully developed as a mature and self-governing body.

Furthermore, the speaker of this plea is a government which expects accountability and national curiosity of its citizens, but which absolves itself neatly of reciprocal independence and responsibility, "[u]p to the present, ...Canada has preferred to retain to itself the right of carrying judicial appeals to the impartial tribunal of the Privy Council [of Britain], especially in all matters in dispute between the Federal and Provincial Governments," (E.S. Duncan, July 14, 1933). Further to this absolution of accountability of the leading officials, the article continues in an idealistic tone in praise of democracy, "[t]hey [Canadians] are the masters of their own national destiny. Nobody can tax them but themselves..." (ibid.). Taking the stance of the "messenger" then, the governmental spokesperson whose voice is carried in this article, is suggesting a contradictory message. On one hand, the spokesperson is chastising citizens for a lack of independent curiosity and awareness about the status of their country as sovereign—a move to cast the fault of misinformed citizens back onto themselves. On the other hand, the spokesperson is hailing the well-oiled machine of democracy for functioning in a way that gives voting citizens the ultimate control and power over their own national affairs—which attempts to return to those same misinformed citizens unfiltered governmental control.

Reading this type of article, one can assume that the situation (as it was perceived

in the west, specifically in the region around Banff) in Canada during the early 1930s was one of transition. It might be argued that it is conceivable for a time of transition to involve a crossing of contradictory key messages and experimentation with different versions of the new “look and feel”. (The transition here is from a regional bond to a national bond, brought about by economic strife, advances in transportation technology, and “progressive” techniques of higher learning such as radio and extension work, which serve to cover more territory than the country school house ever did.) Certainly there seems to have been a curiosity about the make-up of national identity in other countries—an interest which might have been born of a mechanism for people to cope with the shift from a regional understanding of their collective character to a national understanding thereof.

On February 9, 1934, an article in Banff's *Crag and Canyon* weekly paper describes the speaker invited by the Canadian Club that week. This speaker was part of a series for International Week, a Canada-wide initiative of the National Council of Education (Author unknown, February 9, 1934). The Canadian Club was a Banff-based group which invited intellectuals in different domains of civic life to give talks. Among other speakers were Agnes McPhail who was speaking on the benefits of disarmament (Author unknown, November 6, 1931); and a well-known radio announcer from the Calgary Rotary Club, C.F. Jamieson, who gave an educational talk on the “lives of two great Canadians” (Sir Robert Borden and the Hon. W.S. Fielding [Author unknown, August 5, 1933]). The topic of civic values seems to be a reoccurring one throughout the years of the Canadian Club. Certainly, with the speaker from Italy speaking on Italian identity (“the educational, cultural and economic life of the country,” [Author unknown, February 9, 1934]), one can see the national policy (in the sense that this particular talk is

sponsored by the National Council of Education) which is put in place to speak to the growing search for a Canadian cultural identity, presumably by way of discovering what entails a national identity in other countries (educational, economic, and cultural), or perhaps by way of highlighting the differences of how Canada experiences the aspects of identity presented by the guest country.

Alternatively an unspoken rationale for this type of activity could be as a means of establishing a blueprint for the assemblage of Canadian national identity, based on what other countries seem to value as being part of their identity. Certainly, the article in the *Crag and Canyon* seems to suggest this: "...this cultural program of things Italian should do much to awaken or re-ignite a love in the great arts and stimulate good-will and understanding between the Italian and the Canadian peoples," (ibid.). The notion that this talk may "awaken a love in the great arts" suggests that Canadians who take part in this speakers series will learn about what is to be valued culturally to be a model citizen. The interesting pattern to take note of here is that Canadian officials are endorsing the project to look to external international models for ideas on what might work within a Canadian context—from educational methods (Danish Folk High Schools) to models of civic belonging (as in this talk).

Whatever the reason for this internationalist outlook in the speakers series, it is noteworthy that the spokesperson charged with the task of carrying out such diplomatic relations in this case is a representative of the Italian academic/intellectual élite. The message here is that the values with which the Canadian organizers (also intellectual élite) want listeners to come away from the lecture, are that the cultural identity of Italy is bound together with its educational identity. Élités were encouraging the activities of Canadian intellectuals during this time as well—a trend which seems to point to the

objective of establishing a national identity with intellectual diplomats of this nation's own.

One *Crag and Canyon* article in 1933 hails the increased popularity of drama and drama festivals in Alberta. Specifically praising the advances made by the Alberta Dramatic League, which in 1932 founded the Dominion Drama Festival with the support (if not urgency) of Governor General Lord Bessborough, the article goes on to observe that other repercussions are taking effect. "Besides fostering a keener interest in the spoken drama, a greater appreciation and finer discrimination on the part of students of dramatic art, there should result from these festivals a greater interest in the writing of plays," (Author unknown, March 10, 1933). The insinuation here is that an as yet unrefined taste on the part of Albertans is becoming groomed to a higher-class palette; and that along with taste comes the grooming of intellectuals who will be worthy of representing Canada to the world through their plays. The discrepancy here, of course, is that artistic selectivity is being taught from a singular perspective: that of a small number of playwrights within Alberta. Along with the collective benefits (of belongingness and responsibility), the endeavor is also a subjective and exclusionary one, which assigns value to certain interpretations and denies other interpretations to the public. Yet, the media portray the increase in popularity as an objective educational discovery—a positioning which is endorsed by the cultural elites whose ambitions are behind the newly created Alberta Dramatic League.

Sketch of a Canadian Landscape Part 2: Waltz of Culture and Education

Educational methods were also undergoing changes and experimentation in Canada, as was discussed in Chapter three. It may not be immediately apparent why

education and cultural initiatives are central to the national project. In the performative sense one can locate rituals that weave memories for an audience or community.

Benedict Anderson wrote of the notion of *simultaneity*, where the technology of print, through the art of literature (the novel and the newspaper) “provided the technical means for ‘re-presenting’ the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation,”

(Anderson, 1983: 25). He argues that simultaneity works to foster nationalism because,

... [T]he idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogeneous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history. An American will never meet, or even know the names of more than a handful of his 240,000-odd fellow-Americans [sic]. He has no idea of what they are up to at any one time. But he has complete confidence in their steady, anonymous, simultaneous activity. (Anderson, 1983: 26).

This said, one might extend the concept Anderson is proposing by considering how theatre might act as print does in creating a *simultaneity*, in a performative/living rather than inanimate/printed way.

Part of Anderson’s concept hinges on the notion that when people read the experiences of narrated characters, a “national imagination [is] at work in the movement of a solitary hero through a sociological landscape of fixity that fuses the world inside the novel with the world outside,” (Anderson, 1983: 30). There is a parallel to be drawn here between the simultaneity experienced by readers who feel that there are others reading the same words in other contexts, and the simultaneity experienced by theatre-goers who know that others are experiencing the same dialogue and action that they are at the same moment. This is a broader experience than one gathers upon the first glance, for the concept of simultaneity is translated into everyday existence, as Anderson suggests (*ibid.*: 30) and allows citizens to make sense of, or to organize, the statistics of populations who make up the collective to which he belongs:

The newspaper reader, observing exact replicas of his own paper being consumed by his subway, barbershop, or residential neighbours, is continually reassured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life. (Anderson, 1983: 35-36).

Similarly, audience members in a theatre, who are experiencing the action of characters on stage in full emotional three-dimensionality, are further assured of belonging to a collective outside the play when they observe other members of the audience around them. Thus, theatre-going is comparable to experiencing the printed word in that audiences relate emotionally to the characters on stage, and experience the narrative first hand, resulting in a shared memory for the audience and performers, building community.

Theatre-going creates rituals that serve to promote a sense of community or at least a belonging to an exclusive club. Through the conventions of audience behaviour (where such actions as clapping, standing-ovations, and expectations of silence, all contribute to definitions of behaviour) and theatre-going practices, a closed community (a self-selected collective) is created where individuals want to display their membership and prestige by publicly adhering to the theatre's conventions.

Audience etiquette and public self-censorship are *learned* rather than instinctual habits, that result in a forced consensus around, and an enforced cohesion of collective behaviour, and works to inform a broader national behaviour. Etiquette is taught by means of audience mimesis of their peers as well as by direct instructions from theatre companies by way of written materials such as programs, or by theatre authorities (supervision of security personnel, ushers, theatre attendants). An example of how such rules are taught can be seen in the programs of early 20th century performances. A program for the Calgary Theatre Guild's production of "Ruth Ripley" (or "The Orphan's

Sacrifice”) establishes a number of “rules” for audience behaviour. While there is no date on the program itself, it is most likely after the turn of the century, but before the popularity of the motor car in the 1920s (“Carriages may be ordered for half past ten o’clock.”) The regulations set out by this program aim to teach people how to be proper audience members. A warning about propriety reads: “Men and women in the audience will kindly refrain from cracking peanuts during the performance. Ladies and gentlemen do not need to be thus cautioned.” A further warning against tardiness reads, “Curtain at 8:30 Promptly [sic].”

The “rules” are sometimes repetitively enforced, and while other times the “rules” are less obviously regulatory devices behind their mask of conventional, accepted behaviour. In the latter case, audiences quickly learn “how to act” by means of self-censorship, not wanting to seem uncouth to other members of the theatre-going community. Whether behaviour is learned through self-censorship or the surveillance society of the theatre, these rules are adopted by members as evidence and signs of membership.

Another link between culture and education within the realm of the theatre is the dissemination of a set language modeled by the actors (model citizens). Language fashions are disseminated by theatre during a time when there is a growing awareness of the importance of education and literacy to the cause of nationalism. While educational initiatives have been outlined in Chapter 4, it is important here to note that these two elements of intellectual capacity (education and literacy) are necessary to the creation of a nation because a community of intercommunicating élite is established that coincides with a particular territory established by a vernacular language zone. Meanwhile, a unified vernacular language is important because it connects the spatial

(territory) and temporal aspects of nationhood (Smith, 1991: 17).

It is thus established that common language is constructed through repetitive use and granted fixity through print (plays are ideal because they are not only printed but also hold a performative function). Further to this, Michael Shapiro points out that the function of official documents of nation-state--histories, journalistic commentaries--all impose a coherence on what is actually a series of fragmented and arbitrary conditions of historical assemblage. Meanwhile, other forms of writing such as journals, diaries, novels, and counter-historical narratives, challenge the state's scripted ways for writing and performing national and social coherence (Shapiro, 2000: 80-81).

With this in mind, it is necessary to ponder where theatrical plays fit in. While it is not possible to reconcile this question, a number of considerations arise. On one hand, several plays that were written during the 1930s and in years preceding the Crisis do challenge social status quo both in their content and delivery (*Waiting for Lefty* by Clifford Odets, *Steel* by John Wexley, and *It Can't Happen Here* by John Moffit and Sinclair Lewis were all written around this time, and performed by the Theatre of Action in Toronto during the 1930s). When in 1931, eight leaders of the Canadian Communist Party were arrested in simultaneous raids across the country, the Progressive Arts Club spoke out about the incident. Four writers from this organizations, H. Francis (Frank Love), Mildred Goldberg, Oscar Ryan, and E. Cecil-Smith co-authored a play entitled *Eight Men Speak* which was produced by the Workers' Theatre in Winnipeg but finally was not publicly performed on that occasion. Police intimidation of the theatre's owner, C.P. Walker, saw the show cancelled on the pretext of obscenity (Ryan, 1985: 43, 83). Besides the function of raising awareness about a political status quo, these kinds of plays also disrupted social coherence because of their fictional quality and

encouragement of imaginative interpretation. On the other hand, theatres impose a set ritual around the production of the written piece, and bring people together into a passing community (but with powerful and lasting effects of shared experience) to grant cohesion to perceived community.

Whether cultural activities such as theatrical performances support or disrupt the functions of the nation-state is important when considering if cultural practice is a tool to subvert *status quo* (as many plays written during this era like *Eight Men Speak*, *Slave With Two Faces*, *Relief*, *Defeat*, and others seem to indicate with their messages of political or social discontent) or if cases of subversion are taking place within a broader narrative of symbiosis between cultural practice and governmental policy. While some plays specifically denounce politics of governments, other plays are written without political intent. The grounds on which this question might be answered shift further still when one factors in Ernesto Laclau's suggestion that "nationalism has no necessary political belongingness" (Hall, 1993: 356). If plays and nationalism are now political and now non-political, it seems that a definitive answer to such a question is not to be ascertained.

Furthermore, as Hall suggests, nationalism is neither reactionary nor progressive because the nation/state was never solely a political entity, but also a symbolic formation and a system of representation (Hall, 1993: 356). When one considers that this symbolic formation and system of representation is the infrastructure within which planned performance culture activity can become an industry, it is difficult not to come to the conclusion that the cultural industry and nation-state are symbiotic structures, although the public perception may be that the cultural industry is critical of the infrastructure of the nation-state.

Sketch of a Canadian Landscape Part 3: Citizenship and Innovation

Certainly, a strong factor in the change in direction from a regional toward a national confidence and cohesion was produced by the innovations in transportation. While the growing popularity of the motor car was collapsing the barriers to travel between farming communities in the lightly populated western expanses in the 1920s and 30s, the completion of the railroad and wider use of rail transportation were also collapsing the barriers of distance for Canada as a whole.

One might say that the railroad had vested interest in the strengthening of the relationship between Canada's eastern and western provinces, the fostering of a national consciousness and curiosity. After all, the railways were seeking clientele for their method of transportation and by creating a bond between eastern and western Canada, railways were certainly in a better position to provide a travel route for Canadians who were traversing the country for personal or business reasons. It is of little surprise, then, that railways were a prime stakeholder and supporter of the propagation of a "national school" of artistic activity: providing venues for the display of art—even commissioning works by selected artists—as well as transporting national traveling exhibits and artists gratis from Ottawa to Calgary, and providing generous funding for cultural activity in other arts (Tippett, 1990: 110).

From a psychological stand-point, artifacts are emotionally laden, personal, subjective, and often easily identifiable representations (signifiers) of nationhood. When passengers on trains come to identify a certain type of artistic aesthetic with Canadian Pacific Railway because each train car is adorned with that style of painting; or when citizens in small towns across the prairies come to expect cultural activity of a certain

kind when artists get off the train at that station, the railway establishes a “look”, or consistent aesthetic. Across the country, the railway was developing a set aesthetic that was becoming synonymous to the linking of Canada coast to coast.

Maria Tippett shows that the railway had bands and choirs across the nation comprised of their employees—a move toward employee well-being which was being practiced by other national corporations during the 1920s and 1930s. Some of the companies who were practicing this new trend were Bell Telephone Company’s “Blue Bell Orchestra” and “Bell Telephone Choir”, Canada Packer’s “Operatic Society”, and T. Eaton Company’s “Eaton Chorale Society” to name but a few (Tippett, 1990: 113). Additionally, the Canadian Pacific Railways was a keen supporter of artistic activity (the *Crag and Canyon* testifies in March 1933 that the CPR endorses the new Alberta Dramatic League with “whole-hearted cooperation...[placing] not only properties but staff at the disposal of the club.”[Author unknown, March 10, 1933]) in communities across Canada. They were positioning themselves as a philanthropic organization whose main interest was the betterment of the nation, and a vehicle through which nationalism was fostered.

Another useful tool in the project of “zooming out” from a regional to a national (where it is meant a linkage of the local/regional activity as within a wider lens of national activity) perspective is the growing popularity of the radio. Radio was a technology well-suited to forging a bond between the coasts of Canada. With radio waves reaching across most of the country, the technology became an ideal tool to create a stronger sense of nationhood. However, it is important to note that radio itself was not the deciding factor in the shift toward a more federalist mentality in Canada. As this chapter demonstrates, many other factors played a hefty role within this shift. However,

during the early 1930s, scientists held hopes for the power of radio to revolutionize other technologies.

In a 1931 *Crag and Canyon* article, an anonymous staff writer extols the virtues of radio as a powerful new technology which would shortly change the lives of Canadians across the country. The language of the article in question demonstrates an unabashed technological determinism:

Scientists have high hopes for the ultimate development of radio power transmission. Even governments anticipate it.... The future can easily be imagined. ... The beams would be transmitted at various levels for different uses—one perhaps above house tops for domestic use, and another at a level where automobiles might pick up the power. To save loss of power, a receiving station at the far end of the city would pick up unused power, storing it for redistribution... Applied to vessels at sea, the problem of diminishing fuel would no more trouble the captain. The course of the vessel might even be simplified, the power beam acting both as energizer and course-director. In the event of storms at sea, storage batteries would reserve enough energy to operate the vessel until it found the “beam” again... Railroads would be revolutionized, and aeroplanes might utilize the two-fold advantage of the power “beam” as a course-director and energizer. (Author unknown, January 15, 1931.)

In this last quote, one can see evidence of the perception that the development of this new technology might change peoples’ lives in a broad range of ways. Interestingly, all of the areas which were to be affected by radio wave technology were within the scope of transportation; and while people seemed less concerned with the communications changes that might occur on an educational or community level, mobility, around and away from the vast expanses of Canadian soil, was of paramount importance.

While such articles touted a determinist vision of radio, little attention seemed to be paid to another side of how radio might make waves in how society operated. It is not the medium which is the sole message: while it is true that the mere ownership of a radio gives a citizen the sense that they are connected in to the nation along with his

fellow radio-owners (provided the radio has proper reception), it is probably more likely that the transmission of a common program gives listeners the sense of connectivity.

According to statistics from a 1931 census, published in the *Crag and Canyon* in March of 1933, 16 of every 100 farms in Canada had a radio, where Alberta figures as the fourth highest radio:farm ratio of Canada's provinces at 18 radios per 100 farms (Author unknown, March 3, 1931). These figures translate into a total of 116,354 radios found in 728,623 farms in Canada at this time. These numbers are impressive when one considers that they are looking uniquely at the farming population, while factoring in the city-dwelling population owning a radio would doubtlessly raise the statistic somewhat.

These statistics mean that a significant portion of Canada's rural population is suddenly part of a great community that they would otherwise perhaps not be in a position to travel to. Even if the established radio community is not necessarily national (in other words, if the program which links this community together is not a nationally-broadcast program, but a regional one) the content broadcasted was often national in scope.

The *Crag and Canyon* publicized a series of radio discussions supported by Banff's Canadian Club, which are examples of the national content broadcasted on the radio. With renowned national Canadian figures such as Irene Parlby, John W. Dafoe, and a selection of Ministers in the House of Commons as guest speakers, this series of radio discussions is aimed at the education and informed debate of issues facing Canada as a nation. Discussion topics--such as "what does partnership in a collective system involve for Canada?", "what might happen to Canada if the collective system is abandoned?", "how can we work for peace in Canada?", and "how can Canada work for peace in the world?"—were framing Canada as a priority for discussion amongst a population which

had hitherto seen itself as primarily “Albertan” or even “Calgarian” up until then. Also concerned with what systems worked or didn’t work in other countries (“why did the collective system fall in Manchuria?”), it is inferable that the as yet undefined nature of what makes Canada tick as a nation was prompting Canadian scholars and leaders to look to other nations’ situations to eek out similarities that might point to answers for Canada.

Sketch of a Canadian Landscape Part 4: Where the Clergy Meets the Left

Perhaps significantly, it is possible to locate a set of seemly conflicting philosophies/world views that existed alongside each other during the 1930s. A climate was developing in Canada, accented by, on the one hand, a religious awakening, and on the other hand, a growing popularity of socialist thought and attitudes. While on first glance, these world-views seem not to relate to matters of amateur theatre at all, some fundamental questions and quests link these belief systems to community theatre.

The 1930s were producing in Canada a surge of socialist tendencies. The Canadian Communist Party was a firmly established political movement. Progressive Arts Clubs found homes in all the major cities across the country as well as some small towns. Groups like the Workers’ Experimental Theatre and the Workers’ Theatre, both in Toronto, were putting on shows to full-houses. The University of Toronto’s newly formed Students’ League was easily mobilized for protests. A national publication was launched by the Progressive Arts Club between 1932-1934 that was documenting the staging of plays across the country, the ilk of *Solidarity*, *Not Charity*, *Eviction*, *Farmer’s Fight*, and *Labor’s Love Lost*. In Winnipeg, productions put on by the group “Beer and Skits” was ever popular. And in Rycroft, Alberta the Ukrainian Labor-Farmer Temple

Association had a workers' theatre group of 25 members (Ryan, 1985: 27, 30, 34, 35, 37, 50, 76, 227-230).

At the same time, the Depression seemed to be sparking a renewal in religious fervour across the nation, seeing the establishment of several religious youth groups, camps, Sunday School initiatives, and religious columns in newspapers. One example of a summer school designed for youth by the church is an Anglican Summer School held in Banff. The camp, as it were, was established in 1927 and involved religious leaders mainly from Calgary. This is one event of several religiously-motivated projects to be established around 1930, not only in Alberta, but across Canada. An article in the *Crag and Canyon* in the summer of 1934 publicizes the camp for profile purposes rather than as a call for registration (Author unknown, June 29, 1934). Interestingly, the rise of summer camps and Sunday Schools during this time period, is parallel to an increase in popularity of amateur drama.

It is noteworthy that both social projects/belief systems use an educational base for the dissemination of their ideas, in the form of camps, schools, and educational events. This points as well to the awareness that introducing ideas about identity to communities involves intellectual leaders educating the community about that identity. It seems that intellectual leaders, in the fields of academics, cultural practice, and religion, were looking to the popular entertainment form of the theatre to disseminate their views. A *Calgary Daily Herald* article taken from the notebook of a student from the first session of the Banff School (Helen Jo Kennedy Papers, ca. 1933) speaks to the role of dramatics within the setting of organized religion, as an educational tool,

At the present time mutual improvement association promoted dramatics in each ward of the church,... and it was part of the program to produce three one-act plays and one three-act play yearly. More than 1,200 such plays were presented

last year,... and this was made possible by blanket royalties. (Author unknown, ca. 1933:).

Interestingly, this article was discovered pasted into the notebook of this student's Banff School course notes, indicating either that the students were instructed to retain relevant newsclippings, that they were provided with the newsclippings as course material, or that they were unofficially encouraged to scan the print media for useful historical documentation of the evolution of dramatics. Furthermore, the newsclipping in question seems to be evidence to the notion that theatre initiatives such as this one were not exclusive to a certain type of theatre, but rather that there was a valuation of a variety of social/spiritual causes that used theatre as a tool for reaching their respective audiences.

It seems that if the populist mentality of leaders in the amateur drama movement is motivated in part by a search for social betterment and community solidarity, it is not being opposed by religious groups either. While the goals of the two sorts of community activities may differ radically at the level of social philosophy (with one displaying populist, leftist artistic tendencies while the other is driven by the fundamental hierarchies of the church) one might say that amateur drama was at least not contradicted by the aims of religious groups in the same regions. While difficult to determine, it is impossible to rule out the question mark that there may have been some cross-over of participants from both areas.

A Crag and Canyon article from the Fall of 1933 announces a nation-wide course in "Temperance" put on by the Religious Education Council of Canada. This is an example of how religious groups sought to reach a national community as opposed to simply a regional one. Again, the trend one can see here is the choice of an institution to

conduct outreach through education. Another interesting element to the religious project (which also highlights the interests of the institution) is the objectives of instilling citizenship values for the country in the participants. "The creation of a new mind in regard to the use of alcoholic beverages will be one of the leading factors in bringing about the revitalizing of Canada. Loyalty to the best interests of our country demands a sound body, clear brain, and morals above reproach," (Author unknown, October 6, 1933). It is clear from this quote that intellectuals across the country had a variety of takes on what the identity of a Canadian should be, depending on the agendas of their institutions.

Here, the message of the Religious Education Council of Canada is unabashedly evident: the upper classes of the church are sending out the message that they are involved in the "creation of a new mind" and in the "revitalization of Canada" through the values of the church. This course is attempting, through education, to inject religious fervour, citizenship values, and church ethics into a mold of Canadian nationalism that they are creating. The term "temperance" is a denominational term that has resonance with duty-bound term "citizenship" as it requires that the individual put all "natural appetites" aside in respect and duty for the church. Similarly, (secular) nations' understanding of these virtues would be citizenship, as the same suppression of individual appetites, and the same self-discipline is required for this quality, in deference to the nation-state.

Toby Miller, in *The Well-Tempered Self* (Miller, 1993), suggests that the "compulsion of duty says that citizens serve because they understand rationally that it is their duty to do so. Denial of desire is important and self-aggrandizement is eschewable under the sign of service. Each option assumes, with Rousseau, the need to 'create

citizens,' to teach them virtue as part of a process of 'learning to deserve to live'" (Miller, 1993: 2). This is undoubtedly a tenet of the church's effort to popularize temperance as a virtue of pious citizens. Another side of the coexistence of religious fervor and leftist political leanings is uncovered with Moira Day's observation that "politically, in Alberta, the demand for radical social and economic change went hand in hand with a fervent call to religious fundamentalism. Far from rejecting religion as the 'opium of the masses,' William Aberhart's victorious Social Credit Party sold Albertans on a vision of themselves as the chosen people of a new Jerusalem..." (Day, ca. 1988-1989: 48). Day is speaking here specifically of Alberta, but the trend she observes can be seen in the success of national religious councils (Religious Education Council of Canada) and the interesting coexistence and cross-over ideals of left-leaning artistic organizations.

To this end, Toby Gordon Ryan writes that Imbert (Bob) Orchard, professional director of the New Theatre in Toronto, recalls, "the important point is that everywhere—in England or the States or here—members of social theatres felt an obligation over and above theatre. It was an obligation to society.... You folded programs, distributed leaflets, worked backstage because you were part of a collective effort," (Ryan, 1985: 78). This discourse of citizenship is strongly reminiscent of the sense of duty and obligation that are being disseminated by the church.

Certainly, an objective of the amateur drama movement in Alberta is to foster a sense of citizenship in the communities where groups are formed. The School of Dramatic Art in Banff, for instance, was fulfilling a mandate to instill citizenship values in its audience and members. "The cooperative value of the play is very important," says a 1933 article about the very first Banff School held at the Bretton Hall (Author unknown, August 4, 1933). Furthermore, a key message of the School is that "[the Banff

School] will concentrate on the modern idea of interpreting the spiritual intention of the playwright..." (ibid.). Here again, one sees evidence of the alignment in philosophy (albeit that different forms of spirituality are at stake here) and "verbage" of theatrical camps or drama leagues, and religious education.

Both the religious camps and the drama school, then are sending out the message that they are fulfilling a communal need for education, history, and community cooperation (citizenship). "During the past year in Alberta, there has been a tremendous increase of interest in all forms of dramatic art and a growing recognition of their educational value. ... The demand for people who understand life, and have the power of interpreting it and who may be able to direct community drama has grown beyond the supply, and this school has been established to satisfy that demand. ... It [the Banff School] will show how some of the principles of the past have been incorporated into the practice of the present," (ibid.). In this quote, one can see that the school's administration has intended to set up the course work of the school's session to further the project of cultural identity creation.

The professor of one of the drama courses of the School, Kenneth MacGowan, is quoted in this same *Crag and Canyon* article as saying, "The history of the theatre begins for us in the theatre of tomorrow," (ibid.). With this quote, it seems that the intellectual leaders of theatre have charged themselves not only with the education of tomorrow's theatre leaders, but with the task of telling the story of theatre's history. This task, one might add, involves a reinventing that history for the purpose of presenting a seamless and continuous narrative within which to fit a perception of a "natural evolution" for the molding a cultural identity.

The hypothesis that these instructors have charged themselves with the formation of a cultural identity is not a far-fetched assumption. It is no secret that one of the goals of the school was to teach participants about artistic taste, where the assumption is that instructors are working with a blank slate when it comes to student's tastes. "The general lectures given will introduce the students into the world of the theatre; acquaint him with the dramatic origins; teach him consideration of the fundamental laws of the drama; train him to know plays for kind and quality, and to see them with theatrical acumen and artistic consciousness," (Author unknown, August 4, 1933). One reads in this quote that the purpose of the school is to train the common man in theatrical and cultural good taste. The implication here seems to be that Canada and Canadians have no previous theatre history or historical cultural taste, and that this school is part of a national scheme to endorse a process of building that history and subjectivity. This assumption echoes with the education of audience etiquette demonstrated by the program-notes to the show "Ruth Ripley" or "The Orphan's Sacrifice" outlined above. The establishment of a cultural identity for Canada, then, meant an intense effort to educate Canadians about everything from behaviour, to history, to citizenship.

Toby Miller's remarks reflect the impact of the project of a "consciously constructed culture" where the result is a new social order of bourgeois tastes and innovations:

Sometimes in imitation of aristocracy and sometimes as an act of its own invention, the bourgeoisie becomes an innovator in the sense that it strives for T.H.Marshall's 'consciously constructed culture' as a means of building a new social order. For the first time, art and intellection were conceived, not just as mechanisms, of distinction, but equally and also as techniques for molding a citizenry (Miller, 1993: 19).

However, while he speaks of cultural practice as a tool for harnessing a community sense in the audience, he acknowledges that culture is as much governed by a way of life which is *always already* there, as it is a creator of this same way of life. "It [culture] moves between a standing as the principal determinant of social structure and as a mere epiphenomenon accorded representational labour, either 'society's bandmaster' or merely its 'looking-glass'" (Miller, 1993: 15). When one is considering the role that theatre in Alberta (and indeed, in Canada) played in the creation of a citizenship that supported a nationalist view of Canada, both roles of "bandmaster" and "looking-glass" are evident in the newsclippings about cultural creation during the 1930s. An example of a newsclipping in which both of these roles are clearly stated can be demonstrated in a *Crag and Canyon* article from the summer of 1933, on the objectives of the first Banff School,

Dr. R.C. Wallace, President of the University of Alberta, made a few introductory remarks telling the delegates that during the past two or three years a great revival of the Drama had taken place here. He said that the Extension Department wished to take up this work in the rural districts, and create an appreciation of music, art and drama. Dr. Wallace went on to say that the pioneer people had a great desire for beauty, and presentation of the drama fulfilled that need. (Author unknown, August 25, 1933.)

Even in this short quote from the 1933 Banff newspaper, one can see various important messages. The first is that the intellectual leaders of this drama school wish to "create an appreciation", thereby using this vehicle of expression in its function as "bandmaster" of society. Second, Wallace is playing to the populist, grassroots Zeitgeist of the 1930s era, that the impetus for the creation of this school arises from a "pioneer" search for beauty. In effect, Wallace is contradicting himself, because if the school is arising from a pioneer "need", then there shouldn't be cause for the creation of an appreciation, as he had previously stated. Third, Wallace suggests that the implementation of a drama school

was fulfilling a “need for beauty”, such that now the role of culture seems to be located in the “looking-glass” function suggested by Toby Miller.

Finally, the argument presented here is that culture was harnessing technologies (print, vernacular language, locomotive, motor-car, radio, etc.) that were conducive to the cause of fostering citizenship, not only in a regional sense, but as an apparatus of nationalism. Certainly, just as cultural practice works to foster a sense of citizenship, this last virtue is also a symbiotic social factor in promoting cultural practice.

That state [cultural-capitalist state] needs to produce a sense of oneness among increasingly heterogeneous populations at a time when political systems are under question by new social movements and the internationalization of cultures and economies. It works to forge a loyalty to market economics and parliamentary democracy, as well as a sustainable society through the formation of cultural citizens, docile but efficient participants in that economy-society mix (Miller, 1993, xii).

In this paragraph, it is apparent that citizenship and technologies of cultural practice need each other as pillars of support. Indeed, the circumstances that are required to produce the sort of citizenship and cultural practice that came about during the 1930s is a fine balance of social philosophy, technology, economic (in)stability, political contention, labour availability, and cultural practice. The exact ingredients of this recipe are difficult to benchmark. “All the World’s a stage,” as Shakespeare mused, and “one man in his time plays many parts,” (Shakespeare, 2, VII, 139-143)—indeed it can be said that cultural practice is a stage on that stage, and that it plays many roles to the scenes and players who move across it.

Epilogue

The practice of culture is a living site of policy, and is as subjective and fickle as the human beings who inhabit and inform it. This body of work has tried to offer a range of elements that are at work within the dialogue of cultural practice, and national identity, with the aim of giving a balanced and well-rounded account of this dialogue. Chapters 1 and 2 involved primarily theoretical investigations of the concepts of nationalism and performance culture practice within the post-colonial context of Canada (specifically western Canada) during the 1930s. Let us return for the moment to some final thoughts on the interplay of performance culture within the context of nationalism and colonialism.

Here, it is assumed that Canada was functioning within a discourse of colonialism of European (especially British) settlers. The theories and assumptions of Chapters One and Two are renegotiated here when we identify how nationalism and colonialism affect Canada and the Canadian west in specific. The assumption that Canada felt itself to be in the shadow of Britain and the United States is based on repeated messages to this effect within the newspapers (specifically those in western Canada: the *Calgary Daily Herald* and the *Crag and Canyon*, where furthermore it is evident that western Canada perceives itself as a step behind eastern Canada, culturally and politically). An article from Calgarian E.P. Motherwells's scrapbook (most likely from the *Calgary Daily Herald*) gauges the profile and talent of Canadian artists: "the fact remains that the opinion of New York upon matters which we are not ourselves competent to judge counts for something," (Author unknown, ca. 1931-1933). The message of this article is an *idée fixe* of the media: that Canadians *do* produce a body of artistic creation that is separate from creation elsewhere, but that Canadian consumers

must turn to the “informed opinion” of British and American consumers to decide on the validity of those cultural products.

In Chapter 3 and 4, a historical picture is painted in which site-specific performance culture initiatives are examined, as well as the role that education plays within these sites of cultural practice. Otherwise said, performance culture is affiliated to the vehicles of education in order to infiltrate consciousness of a social group through pedagogy. Because of the structure of expressive agents performing to a participating but regulated audience, the parallel structure of an educational situation wherein a teacher conveys sets of meanings to participating but subdued students, is called into the equation.

Finally, we have located how cultural practice assists with the construction of identity for a specific social group, resulting in a community of common understandings of citizenship and civil society. In a museology study that resonates on many levels with the effects of performance culture, Eilean Hooper-Greenhill writes about the construction of meaning (read identity) through exhibits:

Meanings are always constructed within social relationships, and social relationships are always enmeshed in power networks. The meanings that are most likely to be publicly upheld are likely to be approved by those who hold the most power. But this does not mean that dominant meanings are always accepted. Running alongside dominant meanings alternative meanings are always found... Meanings have social effects. Although meanings, beliefs and values may be misinformed, factually incorrect, historically ignorant, they may well form the basis for social action. Individual agents act because of convictions, which then have consequences which influence the deployment of resources, the emphasis of one image over another, the privileging of some texts rather than others. (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000: 50.)

Meanings constructed in social relationships and enmeshed in power networks are those aspects of civil society that become fixed in definitions of identity. What Hooper-Greenhill is also suggesting in this quote, is that identity is not a social phenomenon that

resides apart from civil society and social action. Quite the contrary: identity informs active decisions of policy-makers and other social agents based on how convictions of a nation's social agenda relate to that nation's (preferred) identity.

Such is the nature of the democratization of culture which is the subject of Chapter 5. On the one hand, performance culture in Alberta was made readily available to a vast portion of society through an influx of either new or now-accessible technologies (railroad, motor car, radio, cinema, amateur theatre, etc.) that were permeating Albertan (rural) society. Jim McGuigan describes the effects of public cultural activity:

The everyday mode of consuming... culture, in relaxed distraction rather than intense concentration, enriched the experience of people in general, enabling them to become cultural experts without formal aesthetic training in a way which undermined the role of academic critics and mediators... Ordinary cinema-goers [replaced by theatre-goers in Alberta in the 1930s] acquired a certain expertise, a knowledgeable and critical nous denied most people before... Cultural consumption was, in effect, becoming democratized: it was no longer confined to the privileged and highly educated. (McGuigan, 1996: 79.)

This was the case in Alberta with the rise in popularity of theatre as a replacement for the cinema. Rural farming communities in Alberta had access to cultural entertainment that expressed a certain theme or story—often the story of their own experience with the economic crisis of the 1930s.

However, this is only half of the story of the democratization of culture, for as is the case in a democracy, one voice—that of the dominant class of society—is granted expression while others are silenced. Giroux and Shannon examine the ways in which performance culture and pedagogy deliver deliberate messages to their audiences: “[p]edagogy as a performative practice—with or without a concerted notion of cultural authority or politics—is never neutral, just as it is never free from the influence of larger

social and political forces,” (Giroux and Shannon, 1997: 8). The preservation of one cultural text or set of ideas, privileges that text over another story, and works to exclude a set of ideas that contradict or do not support the dominant cultural discourse. In Alberta, the hegemony of post-colonial Canada excluded the identities of Aboriginal peoples, and other ethnic backgrounds of immigrants to Canada (ie: Ukrainian, German, French, etc.) by silencing their voice or by propagating a certain stereotype around that ethnic background that encloses people of those ethnicities into a certain economic or social bracket.

A 1929 article in the *Calgary Daily Herald* lumps several ethnicities together to strip new immigrants of their heritages in order to position them as “new Canadians.” “Ukrainian tapestries, Hungarian embroideries and German laces may be seen here in all the colourful designs of the European peoples. Those in the city who viewed the fine New Canadian exhibition staged by the Women’s Liberal Association early in March will remember the fine work these people can do,” (Author unknown, July 11, 1929). In this article, the tendency to remove difference around that which is Other in order to minimize a more complete understanding about the Other culture, is evident.

In another article of this same paper, a visit by Doris Rayner (a Montreal guest at the Stampede) to a Mundare, a “Ukrainian settlement” near Edmonton is the topic. “That the Ukrainian people make fine farmers was her opinion.” The stereotype of farming people is propagated by further description of this general nature: “The Ukrainians are of sturdy peasant stock,... Miss Rayner was more convinced than ever that these people make for good Canadians,” (Author unknown, July 11, 1929). Here again, the message that is preferred by this article confines immigrants of this background to a stereotype of belonging to a certain class of society. This form of

labelling is as much an exclusionary move as silencing the stories of groups of people who do not conform to the dominant hegemonic construct.

What we have been implying is that there is no rosy picture to be painted when discussing complex issues such as culture, identity, and nationalism. However, the grand narrative of the strain of identity relayed by the Banff School, including all its consequences (of populism, expression, hegemony, and social commentary, to name some of those consequential elements) has as its foundation humanist ideals about citizenship and civic morals. This basic tenet cannot and should not be lost within the critique that has been offered. For the staying power of the Banff School (now The Banff Centre) has proven that whatever ruptures and fragmented histories this site of cultural practice entails, there is a partnership that has endured, encompassing the concentric spheres of regional, national, and international concepts and goals that this site has tried to reconcile.

What began in 1933 as a summer theatre school has now become The Banff Centre—a truly an internationally recognized (within the international sphere of “high” culture composed of stakeholders of that industry) cultural development centre. Since 1933 the institution has undergone several permutations as it has expanded from a summer school with a primarily regional attendance base to a series of program areas in an array of disciplines (from theatre to dance, and from music to visual arts, in a broad cross-section of ethnically-influenced and Aboriginal traditions). Even this description is to stop short of the cultural and corporate hub that The Banff Centre has become, for it is now positioned as “Canada’s only learning centre dedicated to the arts, leadership development, and mountain culture... [Serving] the needs of accomplished artists, business and community leaders, and members of the global mountain community

through year-round programs designed to enrich professional practice beyond the realm of traditional education," (*About The Banff Centre* . Retrieved September, 2002 from <http://www.banffcentre.ca/about/>.). Moving away from an identity divided into separate divisions and a conference centre, The Banff Centre is undergoing yet another transformation, testifying to the adaptability of the institution's identity vis-à-vis changes in the Canadian social and political climate.

Perhaps the ultimate reconciliation of all these permutations, fractured (hi)stories, and disparate identities lies in the ability of the Banff School to don many hats, to embrace a persona that was (and is) by no means singular. Perhaps this is the basis of our very identity as human beings: a non-singularity, and a contradiction of character traits and influences. Like the passions, minds, and hearts of the builders who drove the formation of this *cross-roads of identities*, the Banff School was (and is) a constantly evolving vision, forever mediating between the clashes and paradoxes that make up its identity.

Appendix 1

Map of Alberta



E. Ross Stuart, *The History of Prairie Theatre: The Development of Theatre in Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan 1833-1982*, (Toronto: Simmon and Pierre, 1984.)

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