

**INVENTING THE SOUTHWEST:  
HOW MODERNISTS SHAPED AN AMERICAN REGIONAL EXPERIENCE**

by

**Elizabeth Lloyd Oliphant**

BA in English and Southern Studies, University of Mississippi, 2008

MA in Literature and Cultural Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 2014

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of  
The Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
PhD in English and Cultural Studies

University of Pittsburgh

2017

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
KENNETH P. DIETRICH SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

This dissertation was presented

by

Elizabeth Lloyd Oliphant

It was defended on

July 24, 2017

and approved by

Jonathan Arac, Andrew W. Mellon Professor, Department of English

William Scott, Associate Professor, Department of English

Kirk Savage, Professor, Department of History of Art and Architecture

Dissertation Advisor: Nancy Glazener, Professor, Department of English

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2017

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Elizabeth Lloyd Oliphant, PhD

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This dissertation traces the emergence of the Southwest as a distinct region with significant influence on U.S. literature and popular culture. I argue that modernist-era writers helped to promote the U.S. Southwest and to distinguish it as a unique region in the national imaginary. In addition to writing about the Southwest for modernist publications, these writers had a significant hand in shaping the experience of tourists in the region by working with the tourist industry. Building on the interventions of New Modernist Studies, this project expands the scope of literary studies to consider how writers affiliated with the modernist movement reached large audiences through commercial channels.

The introductory chapter of this dissertation situates the project in scholarly conversations about modernism, regionalism, canonicity, and settler colonial studies. The remaining chapters take up case studies related to literary and commercial activity in the Southwest. My first chapter follows the career of author Charles Lummis, who popularized tourism and literature related to Spanish Colonial culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. My second chapter locates the growth of heritage tourism in the 1920s Southwest in projects of author Mary Austin. My third chapter looks at representations of tourism and imperialism in the Southwestern writing of D.H. Lawrence, Jean Toomer, and Lynn Riggs. My fourth chapter recovers the relationship between the modernist little magazine *Poetry* and the Southwestern tourism industry, showing that *Poetry*'s Southwestern issues featured poems that were later used in the promotional materials distributed by the Fred Harvey

Company, a large tourism and hospitality business in the Southwest. The afterword to this dissertation offers a short close reading of the official brochure for the 1928 Santa Fe Fiesta, which brought together commercial, civic, and creative interests in the promotion of tourism and colonial nostalgia. The afterword also addresses some of the implications of understanding modernism as a literary movement that was partially driven by commercial interests.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the completion of this project it's been a pleasure to reflect on the communities that supported my labor and enriched my thinking. I'm grateful to the University of Pittsburgh's English Department for institutional support and for giving me intellectual freedom as a scholar and a teacher. Special thanks to Jesse Daugherty for his administrative wizardry. I thank the helpful staffs at the Autry Museum, the Charles Redd Center for Western American Studies, the University of New Mexico, the Huntington Library, and the University of Arizona. I'm grateful to the staff of the New Mexico Museum of Art, especially Erica Prater and Kate Ware.

Nancy Glazener has helped me put my thoughts and writing in order for the last 8 years. With good reason, her mentorship and friendship are legend among everyone who knows her. I thank her for countless working lunches, her good humor and friendship, and for always knowing the word or phrase that's escaped me. Among her many talents, Nancy writes and edits with the precision of a poet. I'm thankful for Jonathan Arac's wisdom and kindness at every stage of this project. I'm thankful to Kirk Savage and Bill Scott for joining this project and contributing their enthusiasm and wonderful ideas.

I thank Nathan Kosub for his steadying influence, for taking me to the desert, and for those five years in Pittsburgh. He is my favorite traveling companion, my favorite fellow tourist. My mother raised me as a reader and a writer, and she's supported and encouraged me in all my endeavors. There's no way to thank her that feels sufficient. I learned from my father to practice

a constant consideration of my environment. In a sense this has been the basis for my scholarly life, and I'm thankful for his loving support and his pride in my work. I'm grateful to my sister, a grounding figure my whole life and, as an adult, she's also been my professional inspiration.

I'm so glad for the women I've met at Pitt, who are my family: Thanks to Swathi Sreerangarajan, for a constant, inspiring, often-hilarious exchange of working ideas. I'm grateful for her dispatches from South Dakota, and for our travels in California travels and Nevada. Pioneer sisters, for sure. Thanks to Amanda Phillips Chapman for clear-eyed advice (scholarly and otherwise) and for teaching me about gratitude. Thanks to Clare Sigrist for long walks and conversation, and for being fearless in her thinking. Thanks to Jess FitzPatrick, for perspective-shifting questions and for helping me finding the joy in scholarly work. Thanks to Jessica Isaac and Kirsten Paine for their friendship and scholarly support. Thanks to Jen MacGregor, for conversations that helped me find a framework for this project, for opening her home to me in Los Angeles, and for all our walks around Baldwin Hills.

I'm grateful to my New Mexico writing partners. Thanks to Julie Williams for good friendship and for so many hours of writing and discussing our scholarship. Her work on embodiment in the American West has helped me grow as a scholar. Thanks to Stephanie Spong for gracefully blazing a trail to post-PhD life.

Thanks to all associated with the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi. The Center is a model of critical, rigorous, loving studies of culture and place. I especially thank Kathryn McKee for her generous guidance that put me on this path.

Finally, this dissertation is for Nathan Kosub, and for my grandmothers, Maudie Miller Oliphant and Dorothy Russell Scott.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION: MODERNISM, MARKETING, AND THE EMERGING SOUTHWEST**

At the end of the nineteenth century, the American Southwest emerged as a fashionable topic in U.S. literary and popular culture. Authors traveled to the region, wrote articles about Southwestern history and culture, and published personal accounts of their trips. They fed readers' interest and encouraged them to make their own trips West. These literary representations significantly shaped how the American West figured in the U.S. imaginary. The rising popularity of Southwestern tourism, especially literary tourism, was "critical to the development of the American West" in the late nineteenth century (DeLyser 48). Travel in the Southwest was taken up by the wealthy and "trend-setting elite" and seeing the West was frequently framed as an act of American patriotism (DeLyser 48). Southwestern writers reached enthusiastic audiences, including both the small, discriminating readerships of modernist-era "little" magazines and the audiences of national magazines with larger circulations.

A number of modernist writers traveled in and wrote about the Southwest in this era. Alice Corbin Henderson, Harriet Monroe, Witter Bynner, Mary Austin, and others produced formally experimental poetry and prose about the Southwest, publishing in modernist "little" magazines and journals. In exploring questions of region and place, they also drew on the work of a previous generation of regionalist authors, including Bret Harte, Helen Hunt Jackson, and Charles Lummis, authors whose writing about Southwestern Native and folk cultures helped

jumpstart tourism in the area. In spite of modernism's formal break from the literary conventions of the nineteenth century, modernists' writings about the Southwest shared regionalism's semi-ethnographic, semi-voyeuristic interest in regional characteristics.

In many respects, nineteenth-century regionalist writings fueled the rise of tourism in the Southwest, but a number of modernists in the Southwest built even closer connections with the tourism industry. They endorsed and sometimes partnered with tourist companies to produce promotional and literary projects, reaching larger audiences than the little magazines could. Through these unexpected commercial channels, literary modernism had a significant influence on popular representations of the U.S. Southwest, as both a tourist attraction and a creative center.<sup>1</sup>

The Southwest's literary popularity coincided with a period of great cultural nostalgia for the frontier-era U.S. West. In his 1893 frontier thesis, historian Frederick Jackson Turner argued that the process of westward expansion—and the frontier, the stage on which that expansion played out—had significantly influenced American culture. Turner wondered: if the frontier was “closed” by the 1890s, and if westward expansion had so significantly shaped American character up to this point (and Turner believed both these things were true), then what would the loss of the frontier mean for America in the twentieth century? Turner's thesis is probably the most famous scholarly expression of fin-de-siècle America's nostalgia for the frontier era. Intrepid literary authors, publishers, and agents of the burgeoning tourism industry also recognized, and capitalized on, America's zeal for a certain romantic version of the old, wild, frontier West and located important vestiges of that world in the Southwest.

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<sup>1</sup> In this study, I will sometimes refer to the work of modernists writing about and living in the Southwest as Southwestern modernism.

The Southwest, then, was associated with romantic ideas of American heritage: pioneering, the Wild West, and Manifest Destiny, along with the settler-colonialist entitlement that fueled the process of westward expansion. Paradoxically, the region was also represented as disconcertingly different from the rest of the U.S.—and those differences also contributed to its popularity in literature and in travel. The Southwest was more Catholic, Mexican, Native, and arid than New England, the Midwest, or the South, all vivid locations in the national imaginary during the nineteenth century. The mythologies surrounding these cultural materials appealed to communities of tourists, avant-garde artists, and business entrepreneurs. The history of the Southwest encompassed U.S. relationships with Spain, Mexico, and Native American tribes in the region. That history offered a new way of framing U.S. identity, an alternative to the version of the U.S. grounded in the country’s relationship to Great Britain.

Those same factors fed the tourism industry, which paradoxically encouraged travelers to go to west in order to “See America First” while also highlighting the Southwest as the U.S.’s most exotic, virtually foreign region. The region’s alien features were precisely the grounds of its significance to the modernists who chronicled the region. Modernist writers in search of an aesthetic break from the old guard literary establishment especially appreciated the Southwest’s historical distance from northern European influences.<sup>2</sup> Writers believed that the Southwest’s

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<sup>2</sup> Writers frequently represented the Southwest as exotic because of its distance from Anglo and northern European traditions, treating the region’s Indigenous and Spanish colonial traditions as equally foreign to English-speaking Americans of European descent. This was influenced in part by the Latinx communities that constituted the Spanish-speaking people of the Southwest. However, as Gayle Rogers shows, the sense of Spain as a non-white or not entirely European nation was prevalent in the northern European and U.S. imaginaries in the early twentieth century, a line of thought that could be traced to Spain’s history as a Moorish colony (*Modernism and the New Spain*, 2-4). The treatment of the Spanish-language/Hispano Southwest as exotic was shaped not only by racial demographics of the Mexican/U.S. borderlands, but also by long-held ideas about the racial history of Spain.

hybrid Spanish colonial and Indigenous traditions could hold important sources of aesthetic inspiration, allowing artists to bypass the cultural dominance of England.

This project brings together the authors that were most active, vocal, and influential in shaping the Southwest in U.S. culture, considering the ways they represented and profited from the region's landscape and mythology. It reveals the Southwest's importance as a point of intersection between modernist literature and highly commercial domains within popular culture, and providing evidence of modernism's close relationships to both literary regionalism and advertising. I mean to contribute to developing a more complete representation of modernism by reconstructing the invention of the popular Southwest as it emerged in both commercial and avant-garde publications.

The commercial aspects of modernism's circulation have been long overlooked by scholars and generally deemed antithetical to the modernist movement. A persistent critical narrative suggested that modernism was fundamentally characterized by its indifference or hostility to commercial interests, so much so that the notion of a commercial modernism "seems almost oxymoronic" since modernist writers were characterized fundamentally by their refusal "to court a popular audience" (Dettmar and Watt, 1; Wexler xv). The commercial, market-focused side of the modernist movement has recently gained more attention from scholars

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Such a complex (and somewhat arbitrary) cultural belief about what constituted European identity presents a practical problem in writing about the Southwest's position in the American imaginary. Namely, the highly specific way that the Southwest circulated as a non-white region means that it's most accurate to say that the Southwest was contrasted with the culture of white, non-Spanish-derived European Americans. For the sake of simplicity I'll refer to this demographic as Anglo-American when relevant. In *Recognizing Heritage: The Politics of Multiculturalism in New Mexico*, Thomas Guthrie notes that the terminology used to refer to communities in New Mexico is "notoriously problematic, since none are universally acceptable and most are homogenizing" and that these complications "reveal[...] a complex history of identity politics" (xv).

launching the New Modernist Studies. However, literary modernists' significant shaping of tourism in the American West and, consequently, their influence on the national vision of the Southwest has been largely overlooked.

Modernists in the Southwest were no less experimental or innovative because they worked in commercial venues or were on friendly terms with commercial ways of seeing and traveling in the Southwest. By the same logic, the Southwestern tourism industry and the industry's customers were no less conventional for their associations and dealings with experimental authors.

As I'll address later in this introduction, modernist scholarship approaches with some embarrassment the possibility that modernist literature was produced with some consideration of market demands. Modernism's proximity to commercial mass culture casts these relations in a new light. What about the possibility of bringing tourists to the Southwest inspired modernist writers? And what about modernist literature and art spoke to agents of the tourist industry and, presumably, to the tourists themselves?

This dissertation uses material histories of regionalism, modernism, and touristic writing to reconstruct the swirl of literature composed about the U.S. Southwest in this era. In this way, my project follows Lawrence Levine's reconceptualization of circulation studies, in which he argues against literary methodologies that replicate the taste-based hierarchies forged in the early twentieth century that anachronistically isolated "high" and "low" texts from each other (Levine 3). For example, this study considers not only Alice Corbin Henderson's work as a co-editor to the foundational modernist periodical *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* but also her contributions to brochures for the Santa Fe's annual Fiesta and the Fred Harvey Company's advertisements for Indian Detours taken by automobile. My archive situates modernist writers in a broad literary

landscape where formally experimental writing converged with regionalist projects of place-naming and reached elite and popular audiences, brought together on the imaginative terrain of the Southwest.

I focus on quite a few writers who worked in the Southwest, especially southern California and New Mexico, in the early twentieth century. This project isn't meant to provide a comprehensive index of writers working in the Southwest, though.<sup>3</sup> Rather, I've chosen authors whose work on the Southwest significantly influenced the region's emergence as an artistic resource and an object of touristic interest. Some of the writers visited or lived in the region only briefly but are important to examine because of their stature in literary culture: D.H. Lawrence, Harriet Monroe, and Jean Toomer. The writers examined most closely in this project, such as Charles Lummis, Mary Austin, and Alice Corbin Henderson, spent much of their careers writing about and living in the Southwest and are strongly associated with the region. Lummis, the journalist who developed the "See America First" investment in the Southwest, published travel guides, regional cookbooks, and folklore collections focused on the Southwest and edited a regional literary magazine for much of his career. He was the first literary author to serve as a consultant for the Fred Harvey Company. Regionalists, especially Lummis, established the Southwest as a region with a distinct history and culture, while modernists contributed cultural capital by presenting Southwestern study and travel as highbrow pursuits. For example, as a public intellectual, Mary Austin contributed articles on feminism, psychology, and radical sexual politics to journals such as *The Dial*, *The Forum*, and *The Nation* in addition to taking the Southwest as a lifelong topic of study. Austin authored collections of regional sketches and

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<sup>3</sup> See scholarship by Lois Rudnick, Jerold Auerbach, and Lynn Cline for thorough coverage of the networks of writers and artists working on and in the Southwest in this era.

nature writing, such as *The Land of Little Rain* (1903), *The Basket Woman* (1904), *The Land of Journey's Ending* (1924), *One Smoke Stories* (1934); poetry, such as *Children Sing in the Far West* (1928), and an ethnographic collection, *The American Rhythm* (1923). She also served as a reviewer and contributor for Henry Nash Smith's *Southwest Review*. Alice Corbin Henderson moved to Santa Fe in 1916 in search of a treatment for her tuberculosis. From New Mexico, Corbin Henderson continued to co-edit *Poetry* magazine, bringing more Western and Southwestern poets to the magazine's roster; she also published her own place-focused poetry and compiled regional poetry anthologies such as *The Turquoise Trail* (1928) and a short collection for the Fred Harvey Company (1929).

In spite of the diversity of these authors' writings and careers, each author considered in this dissertation wrote incisively and influentially about the Southwest, expressing a strong belief that the region held special importance to American arts and letters. All of these figures—even those who spent most of their lives in the Southwest—were also involved in discourses and creative networks that extended far beyond the creative communities in the Southwest. As a result, the modernists' Southwest sheds light on the overlapping, permeable, and sometimes competitive relationships between regional and urban modernisms. Each author in this study took interests and materials from the Southwest far afield: to New York City (Luhan, Austin, Bynner, Lummis, Riggs), Los Angeles (Riggs, Lummis), Florence (Austin), Paris (Riggs, Luhan), Chicago (Monroe, Corbin Henderson, Toomer), Mexico City (Lawrence, Riggs, Bynner), and the Indian state of West Bengal (Toomer), among other places.

The expansive and enduring influence of the Southwest on modernists complicates the critical commonplace that these authors headed to the prairie and the desert seeking temporary relief from the modern ills of eastern cities. Lois Rudnick describes the Southwest's modernists

as working in the tradition of transcendentalism, seeking a utopian respite from modernity, a narrative that still reverberates in the marketing of artists' retreats in the Southwest (Rudnick 7). Eric Aronoff also presents modernists as escaping from the crowded industrial and commercial world of urban modernity, describing modernists in the Southwest as being "among [the] tourists" who visited the Southwest in increasing numbers as it became more accessible by railroad (93). Aronoff correctly describes modernists as cultural tourists "looking for alternative models of art and culture" (93). But modernists weren't just tourists. In direct and indirect ways, they helped conceptualize and design the experience of traveling in the Southwest.

In essays and editorials, authors such as Harriet Monroe, Carl Sandburg, and Alice Corbin Henderson wondered: How could the Southwest enrich the work of writers? How could it educate Americans, and how might it enhance American culture? Their goal was to see Southwestern aesthetics incorporated within works of art and literature that circulated nationally and internationally, including in modernist networks, and to see the Southwest recognized as a significant source of cultural inspiration. Writers frequently returned to versions of the same idea: a visit to the Southwest should be part of a program of cultural regeneration for tourists and artists alike.

This belief that the Southwest could make important contributions to U.S. culture at large was the motivation behind modernists' partnerships with travel companies, especially the Fred Harvey Company. The Harvey Company dominated the Southwest from 1890s through the middle of the twentieth century: when tourists in this era visited the Southwest, they were likely to sleep, dine, and shop at Harvey Company establishments. The Harvey Company started in the 1870s when Fred Harvey, having worked in both food and railroad industries, opened a few restaurants along the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe rail lines in response to the dearth

of appealing food and lodging options for railroad passengers. The company quickly expanded to open luxury hotels, gift shops, and entertainment venues, and adopted the practice of hiring ethnographers, writers, photographers, and visual artists to promote tourism in the region (Dilworth 145). At its peak of operations in the 1920s, the Harvey Company managed more than 80 hotels and restaurants from Illinois to California along the AT&SF's routes.

The Harvey Company's highly commercial, elaborate tourism empire may seem like an odd fit for modernists who traveled to the Southwest in search of solitude and authentic experience. In fact, many writers devoted to the Southwest expressed skepticism about tourism's effect on the region. Harriet Monroe described tourists who tested her patience at the Grand Canyon and fretted that mass tourism would only dilute artistic representations of the Southwest (*Poetry* 7.2 86-7). Mary Austin was also skeptical of large-scale tourism. She successfully campaigned against the establishment of a Chautauqua-style summer colony in Santa Fe. The presence of a colony of summer seminar attendees would have compromised the city's creative culture, Austin argued, by driving away "a resident community of creative workers of established reputation" (Austin "The Town," 195). The literary promoters of the Southwest expressed many of the concerns about mass-produced, large-scale commercial tourism that we might expect.

However, a number of these writers had close ties to the Fred Harvey Company. They contributed their writings to Harvey publications and published praise for the kind of tourist experience the Harvey Company provided. They appeared often to be optimistic about the potential for Harvey-style cultural tourism to educate tourists and offer the best of the region to visitors. The Harvey Company, with a team of anthropologists and writers contributing to this design, incorporated visual and written references to Spanish Colonial and Native American

aesthetics and promised travelers encounters with “living history” via live entertainment and sightseeing tours of local villages and Pueblos (Fried 206).

In some ways, Harvey tourism emphasized the same arts and culture that drew artists and authors to the region. For this reason the Harvey Company is an important player in the story of the modernist-era Southwest. The overlaps between the tourist giant and the independent artists and writers of the Southwest included a focus on folk and Indigenous cultures as well as a paradoxical sense of the Southwest as timeless and unchanging but also home to a rich history in need of preservation and stewardship—Mary Austin referred to this tension as the “tragic zest” that made the Southwest compelling (Austin 658, “The Indian Detour”). Understanding modernists’ investments in the Southwest requires reassessing those modernist endeavors that existed, as Newcomb writes, beyond “the particular [...] shape [of] canonical modernism” (Newcomb 7). Doing so allows us to better understand how modernism influentially circulated through literary and popular culture, and the ways that modernism shaped the U.S. regional imaginary for much of the twentieth century.

## **1.1 REGIONALISM AND MODERNISM**

Modernists who wrote about the Southwest were influenced by literary regionalism insofar as modernist writers adopted regionalism’s emphasis on local customs, histories, and folk cultures, and a belief that those communities were comparatively uncorrupted by encroaching modernity. As Amy Kaplan argues, regionalism imagined its subjects as “frozen in timeless island communities” (Kaplan 252). Regionalist authors focused on the qualities of a place that made it distinct from the rest of the United States, rendering for national audiences a region’s

histories and traditions while presenting fictional scenarios set in the present or the recent past. With roots in local color humor (especially “Southwest” humor—the Southwest referring to the present-day Southeast), regionalism grew increasingly popular after the Civil War. Amy Kaplan and Richard Brodhead both argue that the genre facilitated a sort of armchair tourism *and* a post-war reunification, as readers turned to representations of America’s regional pasts as a sort of shared heritage, a way to confirm the present-day “relations among” all Americans (Brodhead 121). Regionalist works also offered nostalgic alternatives to the anxieties posed by modernity, which was associated especially with cities. Stephanie Foote argues that the genre was “profoundly shaped by an awareness of the globalizing and standardizing tendencies of urbanization and industrialization” and soothed readers’ uncertainties about phenomena related to modernization (Foote 3).

Kaplan emphasizes the significance of regionalism’s emergence in the same era as anthropology. Regionalist writers were motivated to capture folkways, believing that “native inhabitants possessed primitive qualities that made them worthy of study [...] and left them in need of interpretation by outsiders” (Kaplan 252). Brad Evans argues that the genre’s focus on the aesthetic qualities of vernacular cultures—including retellings of folk stories, details about local customs, and transcriptions of local accents and vernacular—laid groundwork for modernism’s similar interest in local communities. Evans sees this line of influence as akin to the way that “objects collected by [nineteenth-century] anthropologists became poised to fuel modernist primitivism” (Evans 139). As Philip Joseph characterizes it, regionalism’s mode of representation sometimes suggested that its subjects’ best possible future was “the smooth transmission of a community’s culture from generation to generation, undisturbed by external values and knowledge” (8). This approach rendered the rural and small-town settings prized by

regionalists permanently provincial and quaint, so that communities in New England or Tennessee or Indiana appeared to offer respite from the stresses of modernity at the cost of being cut off from development and change.

The academic discipline of anthropology, as it grew more standardized and widespread in the late nineteenth century, significantly influenced literary depictions of place and culture. Michael Elliot argues that from its earliest iterations, anthropological writing has had a close relationship to the literary, and especially to regionalism and realism, two genres associated with the periodicals invested with the greatest literary authority in the late nineteenth century (Elliot 99; Glazener *Reading* 232). In addition to frequently focusing on remote folkways and rural communities, anthropology also shared with regionalism its narrative-driven form—like regionalist texts, early anthropology often relied on an “outsider” narrator to guide readers through its alien subject matter. Anthropology, especially its founding premise that an ethnic group or community could be studied objectively, remained an influential discipline for many modernists, of course. Just as anthropology helped shape regionalism’s “salvage imperative” in the nineteenth century, it forged modernism’s interest in the primitive (Elliot 125).

Notably, neither anthropology nor regionalism was intended to address its subjects. In fact, anthropology presumed and regionalism implied that its subjects would be unable to understand such texts. Just as anthropologist Frank Hamilton Cushing’s late-nineteenth century writings on Zuni culture were not intended to be shared with the Zuni who’d helped Cushing compile his studies, regionalist literature was written in a manner that suggested it would be illegible to the communities it depicted (Elliot 92). (It’s notable that the genres not only shared formal conventions, they often shared readerships: Cushing’s study of the Zuni was reviewed in *The Atlantic* and *Harper’s*, two of the most prominent magazines to publish regionalism in the

same era.) Regionalism achieved the effect of distancing itself (and its readers) from its folk subjects partly through the genre's reliance on dialect, which "bracketed the speaker as uneducated and inferior" in contrast to the urban narrator's standard English (Kaplan 251). A core quality of regionalism, according to Kaplan, is that it addressed literary tourists: "tourists did and could read local color fiction, which, after all, could not be read by the people it depicted" (Kaplan 252). Regionalist works, especially those published by a "highly centralized industry located in Boston and New York," were instead assumed to "appeal[...] to an urban middle-class readership" on the East Coast, readers who "consum[ed] images of rural 'others' as both a nostalgic point of origin and a measure of cosmopolitan development" (Kaplan 251). Readers of regionalism were Americans who "could afford to travel, and if its members did not think of themselves as exactly worldly, they probably did not think of themselves as provincial either"—that is, its readers aspired to cultured ways of reading and traveling (Foote 4).

Lawrence Levine observes that increasingly rigid literary hierarchies emerged in the late nineteenth century, affecting regionalism's standing in larger literary culture. An author's publication in *The Atlantic* in the late-nineteenth century, Richard Brodhead writes, secured that author a "place *in* literature and *as* literature in a moment when a hierarchical reorganization of the literary publishing sphere" was shifting ideas of literary quality, authority, and taste (Brodhead 152-3). However, regionalism was not granted the same prestige as genres such as realism, even though regionalism was also published in the *Atlantic* and other magazines of the highest literary standing.

In breaking with the previous cultural establishment, modernists rejected some of its ideas about what constituted literary quality and good taste. Nancy Glazener identifies little magazines as a new site of literary authority that emerged in the early twentieth century as part

of a reorganization of literary culture. Significantly, the little magazine was associated with university-educated writers and readers as well as highbrow literati that were not affiliated with academia but took an intellectual interest in the avant-garde and experimental (Glazener, *Reading* 237). Little magazines, which were frequently short-lived, with low circulations and small budgets, did not threaten the success of magazines like *The Atlantic*, but they were the “progenitors of later magazines [...] that replaced the *Atlantic* group as extra-academic purveyors of the literary” (Glazener 239). Literary modernism fully embraced the little magazine as a publishing platform, and by the 1910s, little magazines served as a significant outlet for modernist authors who sought to “resist[...] the values and sensibilities of commercial periodicals,” including the mainstream commercial periodicals of the previous literary establishment, in favor of experimental and radical writing (McKible 668).

In keeping with this turn toward alternative forms and kinds of publications, modernists produced their own little magazines in the Southwest, such as Spud Johnson’s *Laughing Horse* (published in Santa Fe and Taos) and Norman Macleod’s Albuquerque-based *Morada*, which Ezra Pound speculated was “the best bet as a successor to the *Little Review*” (Worden 198). These authors also published outside the Southwest in little magazines such as *Poetry* and *The Little Review*. Modernists fascinated by the southwest mainly adopted regionalism’s belief that folk cultures were the most authentic sites of American culture. They purported to challenge a literary establishment that had been forged in Anglocentric traditions by claiming the Southwest as a resource for literary innovation, a base of flourishing cultural exchange rather than a regional outpost.

The Southwestern modernism’s close relationship to regionalism troubles the critical consensus which defines literary modernism by its distance from the literary conventions that

came before it. This critical cliché persists despite the canonical centrality of writers such as Zora Neale Hurston, William Faulkner, and Willa Cather, who all wrote about regional histories and cultures or experimented with elements of regional aesthetics, such vernacular accents and folklore, while also drawing on the formal hallmarks of modernism, such as experimental language and innovative poetic forms (Herring 3). As Scott Herring argues, modernist scholarship has in the past relegated region-focused modernism “to case studies” and “geographic curiosities,” in spite of “the importance of locality to modernism’s world-imaginary” (Herring 3).<sup>4</sup> Regional modernism, then, reconfigures the geographies of modernism. Herring, Neal Alexander and James Moran, and Daniel Worden all note that while regional modernism’s focus was often hyper-local, regional modernist authors also participated (and circulated their work) in transnational, global networks. For example, Worden situates the Taos-based little magazine *Laughing Horse* in an international network of modernist publications, noting that while *Laughing Horse* published location-specific pieces, such as articles about the maintenance of adobe homes, and featured authors local to the Southwest, it also published work by D.H. Lawrence and Langston Hughes. *Laughing Horse* attracted subscribers across Europe and the U.S. and was distributed in bookstores in Mexico, the U.S., and several European countries (Worden 197).

As I’ve noted, modernists writing about the Southwest also adopted nineteenth-century regionalism’s close relationship with literary tourism. Regionalism grew popular just as tourism

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<sup>4</sup> Herring writes that modernism’s “tried-and-true formulae [is that] a hallmark of a modernist text—new or old—is a breakaway from the region in terms of migration and affect. Its keyword is deracination, and it likes to think that it has uprooted itself from provincialism as a way of life” (2). He continues: “[in this scholarly tradition] regions become sites of eradication and regionalism—as a genre—becomes a discarded literary mode, the case study of an isolate, or, scraping the bottom of the ideological barrel, the henchman of the nation-state [...] that international modernisms eclipsed” (3).

became “a growing middle-class phenomenon” rather than a pursuit exclusively of the upper class (Kaplan 252). Armchair travelers read about New England through Sarah Orne Jewett, the Midwest via the work of Hamlin Garland and Mark Twain, the far West through Twain and Bret Harte, and the Deep South through George Washington Cable and Joel Chandler Harris. These authors and other regionalists presented their impressions of regional folk and residual cultures, translated for curious outsiders.

Regionalist literature about the Southwest inspired the first waves of commercial tourism to the area. Tourists flocked to California in the 1880s and 1890s because they were first enchanted by romantic *literary* representations of the area, through works such as Helen Hunt Jackson’s popular novel *Ramona* (1884), a sentimental romance set in Southern California just after the Mexican-American War. Dydia DeLyser argues that this literature, especially Jackson’s novel, served as a “cultural elegy” for the Southwest’s Spanish colonial history and significantly shaped Southwestern tourism (DeLyser 29, 48). Anthropologists, journalists, and popular writers of this era created what Suzanne Forrest calls a “marvelous rewriting of Southwestern history” (Forrest 1998, 48).

Modernist authors not only continued this blend of literary and commercial work, they expanded it. For example, Alice Corbin Henderson served as an editor for *Poetry Magazine* and also compiled poetry anthologies for the Fred Harvey Company. Mary Austin worked with Henry Nash Smith as a consultant for *The Southwest Review*, reviewing articles about anthropology for the journal, and she also partnered with the Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce to found some of the city’s most popular art festivals. As part of Mabel Dodge Luhan’s efforts to convince D.H. Lawrence to visit her in Taos, Luhan sent him a copy of Charles Lummis’s New Mexico travelogue, *The Land of Poco Tiempo* (1893)—a blend of romantic folklore and travel

advice that Lummis would excerpt in promotional materials for the Fred Harvey Company's New Mexico routes.

Modernists in the Southwest participated in some of the hallmark innovations of modernism, with elements of vorticism, imagism, and primitivism shaping their work. They were published in modernist "little" magazines and small presses based in cities far from the Southwest and printed their own little literary magazines from presses in Taos and Santa Fe. However, in addition to reaching audiences of literati, these modernists were also published as experts on the region, appearing in popular middlebrow venues and contributing to tourist writings about the Southwest. The fact that some of the poems first printed in issues of *Poetry* were later reprinted in Harvey-published poetry anthologies needs to enter into our understanding of modernism's location in early twentieth-century culture.

## 1.2 THE SOUTHWEST AND THE WEST

Foote, Joseph, Kaplan, and others have argued that regionalism should be recognized as a national and transnational literary genre, in spite of its provincial, local focus. As Joseph argues, "[regionalist] writers understood their own work as crucial to the national discussion of locality" and the genre, with its focus on "many models of local community," facilitated explorations of "the predicaments posed by broad communication networks and the continued importance of local forms of social organization" (Joseph 3). Regional modernism performed many of the same functions. In fact, Joseph considers Austin part of the "new regionalist" movement, a second wave of regionalist writers who found aesthetic inspiration in the folk. Michael Denning identifies some of the same writers as "radical regionalists," referring to those writers' belief that

folk culture served as a “multi-accented banner” which allowed writers to resist homogeneous literary hierarchy, and revealed the avant-garde’s potential to speak to “proletarian culture” (Denning 133).

However they were grouped and named, the modernists writing about region generated comparative studies of Southwestern and global cultures and meditations on U.S. identity and ethnic authenticity as they pertained to Southwestern cultural traditions. For example, D.H. Lawrence and Mary Austin both predicted that Mexican Indigenous and folk cultures would have a profound influence on U.S. art and culture in the twentieth century. Lawrence wrote that Native cultures in the Americas had “real continuity” with innovative U.S. art and literature, and mattered more than networks of influence between “Europe and the new States” (qtd Rudnick 101). Alice Corbin Henderson held that the poems of the Southwest “constitute[d] perhaps our most Indigenous folk-poetry” (“Editorial Comment: Cowboy Songs” 256). Corbin Henderson was interested in Native American culture of the Southwest, writing poems inspired by—or in the style of—Pueblo and Southwestern Native traditions. She shared Harriet Monroe’s belief that Native cultures in the region remained unaffected by modernity and therefore provided a more authentic, undiluted form of aesthetic inspiration. From his home in Santa Fe, Cherokee writer Lynn Riggs produced dramatic and poetic studies of Indigeneity in the U.S. Plains and Southwest.

Transnational American studies, focusing on the “multiple histories of continental and overseas expansion, conquest, conflict, and resistance which have shaped the cultures of the United States and the cultures of those it has dominated,” is an important framework for this study (Kaplan 4). The authors I’m examining treated the Southwest as both a basis for national cultural identity and a portal to the rest of the world. They wrote about the Southwest in relation

to the sovereignty of Native American nations and in relation to travels across the Americas and Asia. Modernism in the Southwest, like the modernist movement more broadly, was frequently cosmopolitan in scope.

These cosmopolitan and transnational dimensions are apparent in modernists focus on Spanish-language and Native American aesthetic cultures as sources for their Southwestern work. These ethnic traditions were the key features that distinguished the Southwest within the broader regional rubric of the West, as those regions were popularly understood. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the U.S. “conquest” of the West—which meant the conquest, assimilation, and management of the last Native American tribes—was still very much in process. The Southwest was seen as offering the last vestige of “uncorrupted” Native culture in the United States. At the same time, the Southwest was marked as culturally different from the U.S. because of both its Spanish influences and the fact that its Southwestern tribes “maintained [. . .] a degree of sovereignty” that contrasted strikingly with the more precarious conditions that tribes experienced in the rest of the country. (Dye 6). Consider, for example, that while the Harvey Company was developing popular vacation options for tourists in the Southwest—and advertising encounters with *real* Indians—the U.S. government was violently forcing tribes from the Great Plains. The atrocities of the Plains Wars were well-documented in the press. Visitors to the Dakotas took home postcards commemorating the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre at the same time that Harvey tourists were buying Pueblo Indian-made pots and baskets at railroad stations in Colorado and New Mexico.

Philip Deloria has examined the premature nostalgia fueling the U.S. fantasy of the Indian as a figure whose extinction was inevitable and imminent. Photographer Edward S. Curtis’s popular photography project, *The North American Indian* (1907), epitomized this

fantasy. Curtis's book was advertised as documenting traditions that, by its 1907 publication, had already disappeared. Never mind that Curtis edited his photographs to meet a certain idea of what an Indian must resemble. Curtis erased signs of "modernity" in his photographs such as an alarm clock resting beside the bedroll of a Plains Indian and frequently posed his subjects in costumes that he supplied (Lyman 85). In the same era, the federal government institutionalized Richard Henry Pratt's assimilationist pedagogy for Native American youth. Following Pratt's contention that schools must "Kill the Indian to save the Man," federal Indian Schools adopted Pratt's corporal punishment-based curriculum, which was designed to erase tribal languages and cultural practices. These mass-assimilation (and, often, mass-extirpation) projects, coupled with press coverage of the Plains Indian Wars and a fast-growing infrastructure across the American West, all confirmed that Native Americans were near extinction, or at least had been so culturally corrupted by modernity that they had lost their former glory.

But the Southwest existed in the national imaginary as an exception to this thinking: to visitors, Southwestern Indian cultures appeared to be completely uninfluenced by modernity. Of course Natives in the Southwest had adapted to modernity just as the rest of the country had—Navajo weavers ordered synthetically dyed yarn to brighten the traditional patterns of their woven rugs, for example. Still, there was some historical basis for these misconceptions about the Southwest. While Southwestern Native communities had experienced several centuries of violence and cultural upheaval due to Spanish and later U.S. colonialism, in the nineteenth century they'd experienced less displacement and disruption by the federal government than had the Native tribes displaced by previous removal campaigns in the South, the Northeast, and the Plains (Vargas 67-8). This fact was not lost on authors who traveled to the Southwest, who championed the "intact" Native communities, nor was it lost on tourism agencies. Many of the

Harvey Company's most innovative tourist offerings—such as live demonstrations by Native artists and the incorporation of vernacular architecture into the design of Harvey buildings—were meant to appeal to tourists eager to see Native people and inhabit Native spaces.

The Southwest, as it appeared in the writings of modernists and the publications of the tourist industry, encompassed part or all of New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, and southern California. The area of the Southwest that received the most touristic and literary attention in the early twentieth century was the territory that had been occupied by Spanish colonists since the 1500s and was ceded to the U.S. by Mexico in 1848. As I've noted, the area was important because of the combination Spanish and Native heritage, with its proximity to Spanish Colonial and Mexican histories setting it from the rest of the American West. Additionally, the area had been a historic urban center for Ancestral Puebloan communities beginning in 500 CE, and some of the Pueblos remained among the longest continually inhabited communities in North America. This long history appealed to writers in search of a U.S. origin story that was an alternative to those that began with English and Dutch colonies on the East coast.

Drawing on this history, modernists directed readers to a distinctive set of cultural relays and contact zones in the Southwest. Mary Austin believed that the revival of Mexico's folk art and its influence on Southwestern folk art were suggestive of the "possibility of the reinstatement of the hand-craft culture and of the folk drama [in the United States]" (Austin *Earth Horizon* 336). Austin worked to promote a folk culture revival by founding the popular Santa Fe Spanish market, a celebration of Spanish Colonial art and craft in the region. Charles Lummis based much of his early writing on the residual influences of Spanish colonialism in the Southwest, publishing collections of Spanish-language folk songs preserved through an oral culture that he

believed (implausibly) to be *unchanged* since Spain's arrival in the area. These same elements were also incorporated into promotional tourism in the Southwest—Harvey hotels advertised Spanish dances and Spanish-style cuisine.

The Southwest, then, emerged as a distinct *place* within the U.S. West, a place characterized especially by the cultural contributions of Spanish colonialism and Pueblo Indian tribes. These ingredients allowed tourists (and artists) to reorient their understandings of America's history and cultural makeup. Popular depictions of the Southwest also mirrored the work of a new movement in American historical studies, inspired by Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis. These historians focused on westward expansion and the nation's shifting western borders as framework for understanding American culture, departing from earlier historians' focus on English influences. Significant in this movement was Herbert Bolton, a student of Turner's who extended his frontier thesis in *The Spanish Borderlands* (1921) to incorporate consideration of the frontiers created by Spanish Conquest. It's notable that Bolton's emphasis on the significance of Spanish frontiers was in line with Lummis's cultural framing of the Southwest. As I'll discuss in Chapter One, Lummis's *The Spanish Pioneers* and many of his touristic projects were centered on the belief that America's cultural heritage should be understood to include Spanish folkways, cuisine, and language. Historian Walter Prescott Webb was also inspired by Turner's thesis, which provided the basis of his study *The Great Plains* (1931). Webb argued that the westward conquest of the Great Plains significantly shaped the evolution of U.S. institutions and culture in the nineteenth century, as settlers adapted to accommodate the spatial and environmental particularities of the massive, arid Plains, leading to the development of new weapons, new agricultural methods, and even new modes of literary expression. Rachel Adams suggests that these historians laid some of the groundwork for the late

twentieth century's transnational turn in American Studies, which she figures as the most recent chapter within a long scholarly tradition that sought to challenge accepted narratives of America's history by insisting on the significance of conquest and borders (Adams 20).

### 1.3 MODERNISM AND THE MASSES

It's a truism that modernist writers destabilized formal literary conventions through innovative and experimental uses of language—“[i]nitially conceptualized as a site of resistance to modernity's regulatory and routinizing practices” (Latham and Rogers 15). Moreover, as Douglas Mao and Rebecca L Walkowitz argue, modernist studies has historically defined literary modernism according to the readerships it did or did not address—that is, works from the twentieth century that addressed highbrow readers and excluded “the masses” of readers outside the intelligentsia tended to count as attracting modernist readerships (738).<sup>5</sup> Michael Newcomb similarly argues that this thinking has limited the term modernism to a “proscriptive usage” that leaves out modernism's full and varied modes of address and circulation (2).<sup>6</sup> As these critics make clear, modernist literature is rarely remembered as aspiring

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<sup>5</sup> Mao and Walkowitz describe the “vertical reintegration” ushered in by New Modernist Studies, which moved away from the traditional scholarly understanding of modernism as “a movement by and for a certain kind of high (cultured mandarins) as against a certain kind of low (the masses, variously regarded as duped by the ‘culture industry,’ admirably free of elitist self-absorption, or simply awaiting the education that would make the community of cognoscenti a universal one)” (738).

<sup>6</sup> In Newcomb's study of new verse poetry, he claims that modernism, as a term, has acquired connotations that make it unproductive for his circulation-based study. In refusing to describe new verse poetry as explicitly modernist, he seeks “to avoid the proscriptive usage that limits the latter honorific [modernism] to texts that use destabilizing stylistic innovations to express disdain for the benighted values of a mainstream readership” (2).

to reach wide audiences. Instead, formal experimentation served as (and was sometimes intended to be) a barrier for many readers.

This selective address wasn't necessarily due to a "disdain for the benighted values of a mainstream readership," as Newcomb characterizes literary modernism's stance (2). But as Mao, Walkowitz, and Newcomb have all suggested, scholarship about modernism has historically accepted the idea that writers leveraged their works' inaccessibility and small audiences as desirable features. In the process, modernist authors devised (and claimed) a lofty place in the twentieth century's hierarchy of cultural capital and literary.

In this respect, the New Modernist Studies enters into a scholarly conversation whose terms were initially set by members of the Frankfurt School, who starkly contrasted high art, which they implied could transcend economic determination, with mass culture, which they presented as debased and manipulative, products of a capitalism-created culture industry.<sup>7</sup> This position has been contested by many scholars of popular culture. The New Modernist Studies aims to complicate this stark opposition by "attempt[ing] to synthesize rather than to bracket or isolate forms of cultural expression across multiple media and throughout the world" (Latham and Rogers 150). New Modernist Studies challenges as well from Fredric Jameson's proposal that modernism is a stylistic response to the fractured incompleteness of modernity, and therefore must be understood outside of any historical periodization (Flynn 134; 126).

I build on the work of New Modernist Studies scholars who have explored the often-overlooked economic incentives that shaped literary modernism, particularly scholarship by Lawrence Rainey, Joyce Piell Wexler, and many of the contributors to Kevin Dettmar and Stephen Watt's *Marketing Modernisms* (1996). These scholars mainly take up canonical

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<sup>7</sup> See Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944).

modernist texts as case studies in the commercial development of modernist publishing and authorial personas, thereby challenging the longstanding scholarly assumption that modernist texts were exempt from the factors and motives at work in commercial publishing.

I follow this scholarship in insisting that the recovery of a fuller history of modernist-era literary exchange and participation requires us to nuance and expand our understandings of the modernist movement. My project takes up modernism in the Southwest, therefore, as one case study in modernism's expansive role in influencing popular culture in the early twentieth century. The traits of the Southwest that aligned authors and artists with the region were easily translated into commercial language and appeal. As Richard Pells argues, the modernist movement was extremely compatible with the early twentieth century's innovations in advertising: after all, "no one was more interested in innovation and novelty [in the early twentieth century] than the American entrepreneur" (Pells 85).

The phenomenon that Pells identifies, in which modernism's investment in innovation put it in good company with advertising and marketing of the era, significantly disrupts the tendency of modernist studies to imagine modernist authors as seeking to transcend or ignore commerce. This is certainly the case with modernism in the Southwest, in which artists and writers participated in commercial enterprises and helped bolster marketing campaigns. As Joyce Piell Wexler notes, in the early twentieth century the low sales of modernist authors took on special market value as an indicator of those authors' artistic merit. Modernists' commitment to authorial integrity indicated a sea change in ideas of literary success and taste, as reflected in the positive reviews and critical acclaim those financially unsuccessful authors received. Wexler counters the commonplace belief that modernist authors "refused to court a popular audience" and, if they chose to do so, were discredited as "hacks," tracing this logic to the influence of

Flaubert's "defense of the artist" on modernists (Wexler xv). In this concept, Flaubert posited that authors must choose between commercial success and artistic integrity (Wexler xv).<sup>8</sup>

It's notable, then, that some of the New Modernist Studies scholarship concerning modernism's relationship to commercial interests still conforms to Flaubert's logic. For example, Dettmar and Watt compile case studies of modernism's involvement in the commercial realm, examining writers who were motivated by profit and strategic in how they marketed their work—but even so, the studies featured in Dettmar and Watt's collection generally uphold the hierarchy identified by Wexler. Editors Dettmar and Watt take as their foundational thesis that modernists were not "unfortunate victims of a mechanism outside of their control or ken [...but rather] were more deeply complicitous in this marketing" than traditional accounts suggest (6). The language in this passage—in which authors who sought compensation for their creative labor could only be named as *victims of* the literary market or *complicitous in* it—implies a close association between authors who pursue economic success and, as Wexler put it, "hacks" (Wexler xv).

When scholars attend to the commercial dimensions of literary modernism, the cases studied tend to be outside the mainly-white, mainly-male, European and American canon of modernism. As Christopher Mott's contribution to *Marketing Modernism* reminds us, the Harlem Renaissance has long been studied as a movement that had a "sensitivity to market forces, [a] dependency on white capital, and [a] susceptibility to economic injury" (254). Indeed, as Mott indicates, plenty of scholarship on modernism's commercial side existed before New Modernist

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<sup>8</sup> Frederick Karl's 1979 biography of Joseph Conrad, Wexler argues, explores Conrad's financial success, but ultimately replicates the "ideological antithesis between art and money" in the service of defending Conrad's artistic merit, rather than considering his strategic appeals to certain consumer groups (23-24).

Studies' explorations. But that scholarship, as Mott notes, generally examined participants in minority-led movements such as the Harlem Renaissance (254). Related to this is the tendency of mainstream modernist studies to acknowledge female modernists who "supported" modernist writing as editors or patrons, dismissing their significant hand in the design of modernism as a literary movement by relegating it to a managerial, financial position (Marek 8). Or, if modernist studies did acknowledge an author's financial success, it was likely to be described as an unexpected dividend of authorial talent (Wexler 23-24).

Perhaps the selectivity of these studies is symptomatic of two insidious, related tendencies in modernist scholarship: (1) privileging a certain canonized group of high modernist authors—mostly Anglo or Anglo-American, white male authors—presumed to produce work without regard for market influences and (2) assuming that market influences inherently sully the integrity of the art. These assumptions ignore the fact that commercial conditions affected modernists' authorial and editorial decisions, inevitably shaping the modernist literary realm—just as commercial and market demands affected all creative work published for profit.

Scholarship's inattention to the economic motivations of modernist-era writers is, perhaps, in kind with a general undervaluing of academic labor both from within and outside the academy. If a goal in academia is to bring our research and theories into the public sphere in the spirit of a more nuanced and progressive discourse, then we should first interrogate how we value the labor required to formulate, teach, and share humanities scholarship.<sup>9</sup> The ideological assumptions that Wexler identifies in modernist studies must be challenged as part of a broader

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<sup>9</sup> Rachael Fest identifies a widening gap between the project of U.S. academia—a project of progress and inclusion that has been quite successful *within* humanities departments—and the realities of both the academic job market, in which fairly compensated and secure university jobs are increasingly scarce, and that of U.S. culture more broadly, in the wake of Donald Trump's election and a rising tide of nationalism ("What Will Modernism Be?").

interrogation of how the culture of academia values and compensates academic and creative labor.<sup>10</sup> The tacit dismissal of any commercial influence on literary modernism suggests that authorial integrity is incompatible with advertising or tailoring a text to meet the demands of a certain readership. Even the interventions made by New Modernist Studies scholars, including those in Dettmar and Watt's anthology, tend to treat works' commercial contexts gingerly.

Using the Southwest as a case study, I mean to trouble these assumptions. The authors that explored and promoted the Southwest did not avoid profitable commercial work—rather, they sought the exposure that such jobs offered. This exposure allowed them to promote travel in the Southwest—their stated goal—and to influence the large-scale circulation of Southwestern culture and imagery around the United States. Their earnings from this work were probably important to them, but there is little evidence to suggest that these authors were dismissive of or secretive about their involvements with concerns such as the Harvey Company, or that they undertook such projects only to make ends meet. Rather, it appears that a number of modernists living in the Southwest established friendly terms with commercial tourism.

My project, then, further contests the persistent notion that modernist writers must have either operated in opposition to commercial interests or compromised their artistry insofar as they worked to promote tourism. While it isn't the goal of this project to assess or value the modernist movement's commercial entanglements, I want to explore how modernist writers' investment in the Southwest shaped and was shaped by their roles as promoters of the Southwest and even in some cases as contributors to the tourism industry. Understanding modernism's relationship to commercial undertakings offers a fuller understanding of the reach and stakes of

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<sup>10</sup> In the afterword I say more about how an intervention in scholarship about modernism and commercial work might be useful in assessing academia's current relationship to intellectual labor.

the modernist moment. I follow John Newcomb's assertion that a fuller study of modernism's position in early-twentieth century culture can teach us about "modernisms more responsive to the diversity and specificity of their times, and ours" (Newcomb 2005, 7).

In fact, Wexler's argument in particular makes it clear that modernist authors and their publishers recognized the commercial value of scarcity. I use the term "scarcity" in both in the literal sense, as when modernist authors printed expensive, limited runs of their books, a practice Lawrence Rainey has detailed, and in a figurative sense, insofar as modernist texts were *formally* inaccessible to most readers, marked as the antithesis of mass-marketed literature.<sup>11</sup> The result was that sales were no longer the only indicator of a successful text, and publishers understood modernism's appeal to literary tastemakers as prestige. Publishers began to market modernist authors as *critically* successful iconoclasts who "ostentatiously refused to court a popular audience" (Wexler xxii-xv). This marketing encouraged consumers to identify themselves as part of an elite group by simply purchasing and appreciating these iconoclastic writers.<sup>12</sup>

Timothy Materer identifies a similar strategy in Ezra Pound's work as editor of *The Little Review*. When Pound took over editorship, he concentrated on publishing new, experimental imagist poets, "turn[ing] it into an avant-garde [publication] and so necessarily shorten[ing] its life" (Materer 25). This shift, and the brevity of *The Little Review's* tenure as an avant-garde

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<sup>11</sup> Rainey argues that authors intentionally responded to the market demand for cultural capital by producing small-scale publications and favoring challenging prose and poetic styles, strategies that often resulted in critical success and, in the case of the "art object" books of making the books into collectible, in-demand items (Rainey 40).

<sup>12</sup> Rainey suggests that the limited production of modernists' texts had the effect of turning book buyers into "patron-investors, collectors, and speculators on the rare book market"—a way to give consumers the sense that they were participating in a literary movement (40).

publication, was key to Pound's making imagist poetry a critically-respected movement.<sup>13</sup> Materer argues that the reach of Pound's marketing was limited "because anyone who markets a product that appeals to the few and antagonizes the many does not belong in the world of commercial advertising" (26). However, Materer doesn't acknowledge that the reputation of a literary movement that "antagonizes the many" was likely to mobilize *critical* excitement for modernism, in a manner comparable to the appeal of a luxury product that appeals to consumers specifically because it is difficult to attain. In a departure from Rainey, Wexler, and other studies of modernist marketing strategies, Materer does not consider the possibility that Pound may have recognized the value of this form of marketing.

Rainey, Wexler, and other scholars have suggested that modernist works were often valued precisely for their perceived difficulty or inaccessibility, because those qualities imbued modernist texts with cultural capital that appealed to aspirational readers. Modernism shared this strategy with other marketing projects, including the Southwestern tourism industry. The region was treated as exotic and faintly dangerous: a difficult place for the average traveler to enjoyably navigate on her own, even once she'd undertaken the expense and difficulty of *getting* to the Southwest (hence the need for guidebooks and guided sightseeing trips). The same affinity was sometimes noted in modernists' reviews of Southwestern literature and culture. Carl Sandburg wrote about Southwestern Native aesthetics that "[s]uspicion arises definitely that the Red Man and his children committed direct plagiarisms on the modern imagists and vorticists"

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<sup>13</sup> Materer's argument gives little attention Margaret Anderson's significant role in making *The Little Review* an avant-garde publication. Under Anderson's editorial control, *The Little Review* was the first venue to publish *Ulysses* in the United States. This qualification isn't crucial to my argument, but Materer's oversight is indicative of the tendency in modernist studies—even the ostensibly innovative lens of New Modernist Studies—to overlook the contributions of authors who are not considered part of the high modernist canon, particularly women.

(“Indigenous Poetry II” 255).<sup>14</sup> Sandburg’s comment was likely in jest, a reference to the liberal hand of translators like Frances Densmore and Alice Corbin Henderson. But he also suggested that Southwestern vernacular cultures were in tune with the aesthetic principles of modernism, and their appreciation required readers to have discriminating taste.

The hospitality industry also linked tourism to the region’s bohemian creative colonies—through the guidance of the Harvey Company or similar companies, tourists were promised they could see the region just as artists and authors saw it. At first glance these mass tourism projects may appear to be decidedly non-literary, but they appealed to aspirational consumers. One Harvey brochure assured its readers that when they completed their tour they would become “honorary member[s] of that intimate circle who really know New Mexico”—that circle included writers who’d contributed promotional writing to the Harvey Company (*TKNM* 3). Central to this promise was the fact that many artists and authors were contributing to the guidebooks distributed to passengers, either by lending their names and endorsements or by providing art or writing. Regionalists and modernists alike suggested that simply studying the Southwest would elevate the tastes of readers. Perhaps the elaborate, highly visual, theatrical components of mass tourism in the 1910s and 1920s appeared to modernists as progressive, creative ways ensuring that tourists developed some appreciation for regional authenticity.

The Harvey Company’s various sightseeing endeavors mimicked the kind of immersive experience that blended a museum visit with anthropological field work—an “adapted world’s fair formula, which offered live Native Americans” (Howard and Pardue 57). The Harvey Company’s elaborate infrastructure first gained traction during early twentieth-century World’s

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<sup>14</sup> All quotations from *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* are sourced from the online database at the Modernist Journals Project.

Fairs, and spectacles affording consumption remained important in the Harvey aesthetic. Their gift shops mimicked the layout of museums, but all the “artifacts” for sale—jewelry, pottery, and weavings—were mass-produced with tourist consumption in mind. Harvey tours were designed in a similar manner to exhibits at a World’s Fair, offering travelers spectacle and some education about local and Native life. The modernists who endorsed these ventures probably believed that this sort of tourist experience was culturally improving, leaving sightseers more educated and culturally appreciative. For readers today, the Harvey Company’s cultural samplings are reminiscent of a theme park such as Disney’s Epcot Center—spaces that distill a culture into a set of palatable signifiers. A more productive reading of these projects, then, suggests that the intellectual figures who endorsed and enjoyed these touristic endeavors may have simply been optimistic that the large-scale cultural tourism they helped develop would offer a new way of bringing culturally improving, educational experiences to trainloads of middlebrow, aspirational tourists.

#### **1.4 THE PROBLEM OF PRIMITIVISM**

It isn’t modernist writers’ roles as marketers and advertisers that compromises the legacy of modernists writing in the Southwest. The more alarming element in both the Southwest’s creative communities and its touristic culture is the frequent, often unthinking embrace of the ethos of primitivism. Modernists in the Southwest were fascinated by the region’s Indigenous and non-Anglo folk cultures and histories, and their interactions with these communities were shaped by a kind of settler-colonialist entitlement, in which they felt free to take from—and pass judgment on—the cultural traditions of local communities. Their work often appropriated

materials from these traditions, as when poets fabricated “translations” of Native poetry, or imposed stringent, arbitrary ideas of what constituted authenticity or value within that culture’s artistic expressions, as when Mary Austin insisted that participants in various Spanish and Native arts festivals must prove the purity of their family’s lineages. In those ways, Southwestern modernists followed tendencies of the modernist movement at large—such as the appropriation of Indigenous aesthetics. They also replicated early-twentieth century anthropology in their belief that folklore wasn’t valuable only for the aesthetic inspiration it might offer, but also for its “ability to yield insight about the culture to which it belonged”—thus allowing authors who knew something about folklore to claim expertise about a region and its people (Elliot 128).

The avid pursuit of Southwestern folk cultures was part of a larger turn toward interest in folk, Indigenous, and rural cultures at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>15</sup> Marianna ninick argues that the primitive appealed to modernists precisely because it was so easily appropriated in service of modernists’ own desires or intentions. The primitive served as modernity’s implied other and served “the needs of the present,” easing anxieties about materialism, sexual repression, sexual promiscuity, or the general chaos of modern life (Torgovnick 8-9). In this

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<sup>15</sup> Regionalists Helen Hunt Jackson, Charles Lummis, Mark Twain, and Bret Harte all wrote about parts of the Southwest as curious outliers in American history and culture. Some of this regionalism focused especially on the region’s Native, cowboy, mining, or Spanish colonial cultures. This emphasis on the cultural mixing and clashing between non-Anglo colonizers and Native people is typical of U.S. regionalism and local color. Work by Kate Chopin, George Washington Cable, and Charles Chesnutt focused on aspects of Creole, Cajun, African, Caribbean, and Acadian cultural exchanges in the South—their popularity evidenced a national interest in a region that had at points experienced “four decades of rule by the Spanish, its incorporation into the United States by the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, and its complex mixture of cultures, languages, religions, and traditions” (Nagel 160). Similarly, the mid-nineteenth century saw the rise of ethnographic collections of folk songs in the Appalachians, which traced Appalachian musical cultures back to Scottish and English balladry traditions (Spencer 7). These projects helped set a precedent for modernist-era ethnography, folklore collections, and projects funded by the Federal Writer’s Program, all of which sought to capture rural regional folkways.

context, the Southwest was situated to appeal to U.S. modernists with an interest in the primitive or anti-modern. The Southwest's folk cultures were imagined, by visitors from other parts of the U.S. or Europe, to be largely unchanged by twentieth-century modernity.<sup>16</sup> Modernists went to the Southwest in search of new materials—or at least, subjects and materials that were new to them, usually drawn from Native, Hispana/o, and Spanish-language cultural traditions.<sup>17</sup>

Michael North notes that increased literary interest in folk language and dialect coincided with the publication of the Oxford English Dictionary, a project that began in the 1880s—as English grew more standardized and was being documented by the OED, writers grew more interested in the language's variants, etymologies, and subcultures (North 11). North ties the interest in dialect specifically to literary modernism, considering it to be a component of the movement's rethinking of the conventions and limits of language as a form of expression. As I've noted, these impulses have roots in literary regionalism's attention to folk cultures. Focusing on the use of dialect in regionalism, Foote notes that the juxtaposition between standardized English and "local accents" in regionalism was meant to underscore the fact that the genre addressed "urban inhabitants" (3). North's argument could also apply to nineteenth-century

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<sup>16</sup> Of course the Southwest had been changed along with the rest of the U.S. by modern infrastructure and innovations, including railroad and automobile travel. However, there was little development of infrastructure in the Southwest prior to the arrival of the railroad in the 1880s. Before its 1848 cession into the United States, the region was a territorial buffer, first for New Spain, and then for Mexico—it was useful for its strategic location, so the Spanish did little to expand the infrastructure or its colonial population. Under Spanish rule, development of the region was left to the Catholic Church and the Spanish soldiers who'd received land grants from the Spanish Crown. After Mexico gained its independence in 1821, the area remained isolated from the capital city.

<sup>17</sup> Regarding the term "Hispano," Maureen Reed writes:

This New Mexican term of choice [ . . . ] referred to people of Spanish or Mexican descent who were lifelong residents of the state, just as their parents, grandparents, and often their great-grandparents had been before them. It served to differentiate this group of residents from Anglo and Mexican immigrants, as well as from American Indians. (Reed 2005, 6)

regionalism, which shared modernism's interest in dialect and was frequently motivated by authors' frustration with literary hierarchies based on allegiance to East Coast intelligentsia.

Modernists were drawn to Native ceremonies in the Southwest—many of those events, including tribal and Pueblo festivals, feast days, and ceremonies, would become even more popular as touristic attractions. Artists Bert Geer Phillips, Ernest Blumenshien, and other members of the Taos Society of Artists depicted Pueblo Feast day ceremonies. Similarly, authors Mary Austin and Alice Corbin Henderson published translations—usually loosely interpreted or outright fabricated—of Native songs in little modernist and national literary magazines as well as in monographs. These artists incorporated references to Native culture into their prose and visual art, where those Native aesthetics served as flashes of authenticity, a means of livening up a conventional form—a poem, a painting—with references to culture that was timeless, unchanged by modernity (and distinctly rooted on U.S. soil, and as such unaffected by modern European cultural influence that modernists believed plagued the East Coast).

In addition to these sorts of aesthetic appropriation, modernists in the Southwest enacted a form of racial mimicry. Philip Deloria refers to one influential form of racial mimicry as “playing Indian,” a pervasive practice in the twentieth century U.S. in which Americans appropriated aspects of Native culture—either the imagined or actual practices of different tribes—in order to “imagine and materialize distinctive American identities” (Deloria 129). Through this Indian play, authors attempted to replicate, translate, or mimic the tone and experience of Native Americans. In the process, as Deloria and others have argued, Indian play facilitates a damaging erasure of Native people's lived experiences—by rendering a complex culture into a kind of costume drama, the pressing political and cultural concerns of Native people fall away in favor of a simpler idea of the Indian as a kind of identity available to be put

on and taken off.<sup>18</sup> Cultural practices of Native communities encompassed much of what modernists considered authentic Southwestern culture. Austin went so far as to suggest that by studying and adopting the lifestyle of tribes in the Southwest, she had, at times, “succeeded in being an Indian” (Austin 1930, 41). This practice, and the more general embrace of primitivism, significantly shaped modernists’ commitment to acquiring deep local knowledge about the region.

The effect of this problematic approach was to severely exploit and disrupt the day-to-day life of Native communities in the Southwest. Perhaps the best illustration of this disruption is the Harvey Company’s Indian Detour, a mid-1920s driving route that took carloads of tourists to Pueblos in New Mexico and eventually expanded into parts of Arizona. These tours brought so many sightseers to Native communities that many tribal governments passed restrictions on photography in response to these tours. However, the tours also inspired enthusiastic endorsements from modernists like Harriet Monroe, Alice Corbin Henderson, and Mary Austin, all of whom contributed to the Harvey Company’s Indian Detour promotional materials.

This romantic and imperial investment was only one dimension of the Southwestern modernism’s complex relationship to Native Americans and tribal cultures, however. For example, Luhan and Austin worked as advocates of Native American sovereignty in an era in which federal assimilation policies were perhaps at their strictest and most invasive.<sup>19</sup> Monroe

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<sup>18</sup> These sorts of performances are similar to the culture of blackface minstrelsy in the U.S. in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as documented in Eric Lott’s *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the Working Class*, wherein white Americans wielded racist performances of racial mimicry as a means of expressing their fascination with (and violent hostility toward) black culture.

<sup>19</sup> Austin critiqued the assimilationist policy of Indian boarding school. Along with several fellow writers, she led a campaign against the Bursum Bill, which would have exploited a legal loophole that would have compromised the land and water rights of New Mexican Pueblos.

and Corbin Henderson frequently wrote in support of Native artists, and Corbin Henderson curated a museum of Native art in Santa Fe in the 1920s. This record of activism suggests that modernists did not always see a contradiction between their promotion of tourism and their strict (albeit appropriative) preservation projects. Perhaps these modernists, as self-appointed stewards of the Southwest, felt that exercising control over projects that documented the Southwest, and projects that made it more available to visitors, would help limit the potential for the “corruption” of the Southwest.

Modernists in the Southwest were also fascinated by the region’s Hispana/o and Latinx cultures, and heavily appropriated the imagery and folkways associated with that diaspora into their art and writing. They were particularly interested in the religious practices they found exotic, such as the practices of New Mexico’s Catholic Penitentes, and the visual culture of the Hispano tradition, such as the regional tradition of craftsman-produced *santos*, carved wooden statues reminiscent of medieval Christian imagery. Modernists adopted markers of these cultures, peppering their writing with Spanish phrases, imagery, and references to Spanish-Colonial history. As was the case with modernism’s relationship to Native cultures, Hispano communities were presented as aesthetic archives or cultures in danger of disappearance, in contrast to the reality of the active and often-thriving communities that populated the Southwest.

Following K. Wayne Yang and Eve Tuck’s work on settler colonialism and decolonization, this project recognizes the inherently settler-colonialist position of the non-local visitor to the Southwest, whether as artist, author, anthropologist, tourist, or entrepreneur. Yang

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Mabel Dodge Luhan, who lived near the Taos Pueblo, campaigned for Native water rights in the region. John Collier, later Commissioner of Indian Affairs, began his career as an activist in Taos as a guest at Luhan’s home. Collier’s political record was imperfect, but he was responsible for the significant 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, which ended many of the federal government’s assimilation practices and restored land and mineral rights to many tribal nations.

and Tuck write that “the horizons of the settler colonial nation-state are total and require a mode of total appropriation of Indigenous life and land” (Yang and Tuck 5). These figures all profited from the Southwest they helped to invent, and they built their artistic reputations on having been early to recognize the value and charm of the region’s non-Anglo ethnic histories. The popular Southwest depended on turning the region’s Native and Latinx cultures into easily consumed, tourist-friendly cultural novelties.

The writers living in or writing about the Southwest sometimes manifested a sense of entitlement in relation to Southwestern cultures and traditions. For example, Harriet Monroe described early modernist translations of Southwestern Native poetry as a mere “outcropping of the mine” of cultural resources available in the region (“Aboriginal Poetry” 251). Monroe’s language and choice of metaphor are telling. She describes the modernist search for aesthetic inspiration as a kind of extractive mining, with Native culture providing the raw materials for this cultural interpretation. This metaphor recalls the economics of imperialism and colonialism, in which raw materials are extracted from a colonial space in order to benefit the colonizing nation state. Modernists visiting the Southwest often approached Native, Hispana/o, and Latinx cultures as the raw materials for their art. The work they produced about those cultural traditions reached many readers, and consequently this work had a significant influence on national imaginings of the Southwest.

This project traces the emergence of the Southwest as a distinct region with significant influence on U.S. literature and popular culture. Authors and artists treated the Southwest as a subject of interest and inspiration, as well as a destination for writers in search of a new creative community. Following their lead, tourists were drawn to the Southwest for many of the same reasons: travel to the Southwest promised novelty and adventure. I’ll consider the emerging

Southwest in relation to avant-garde and modernist poetry and prose, as well as nineteenth-century literary regionalism. Writers' engagements with the Southwest consequently influenced popular depictions of the region. In the same era that the Southwest rose to cultural prominence among literary and artistic circles, it became an increasingly popular tourist destination. This dissertation depicts some of the overlapping artistic and commercial interests that influenced the role played by the Southwest in the national imaginary. I offer the following chapters ways of understanding literature's role in constructing and circulating ideas about the region's significance.

## 1.5 CHAPTER OUTLINE

In examining this archive of literature and ephemera related to the American Southwest, the strongest and most consistent theme I've noticed is the mutual interplay between modernist artistic motives and commercial interests. The story of the invented Southwest begins with turn-of-the-century literary tourism and follows the evolution of cultural capital associated with in-depth regional knowledge, which became a marketable feature of works of literature and art. My archive traces modernism's role in conferring a certain cultural capital on the Southwest.

**Chapter 1** introduces author Charles Lummis (1859-1928). From his home in Los Angeles, Lummis wrote prolifically about Southwestern culture, especially its Native and Spanish histories, and achieved considerable fame in his lifetime as an expert on the Southwest. He encouraged Americans to visit the Southwest, arguing that their travel would be patriotic: the duty of any good citizen to reenact westward expansion by taking a vacation in the West. I argue that Lummis introduced to readers a mix of patriotic tourism and cultural preservation that

significantly shaped the region's tourism industry for much of the twentieth century. For the modernists who arrived in the Southwest in the mid 1910s, Lummis was a significant presence. His work modeled ways of understanding and representing Southwestern history and cultural traditions that modernists would recycle and adapt.

This chapter focuses especially on Lummis's appropriation of Spanish Colonial history for American audiences: his writings about Spanish-language folklore, Spanish colonial-era architecture, and Spanish-Latinx foodways. He described Spanish Colonial culture as the Southwest's greatest cultural treasure, but only insofar as it could be enjoyed and upheld by English-speaking, white Southwestern residents and tourists.

**Chapter 2** investigates the New Mexico-based work of Mary Austin (1868-1934). A prolific author and life-long booster of California, New Mexico, and the desert Southwest, Austin became an important figure shaping Santa Fe tourism in the 1920s. I argue that Austin reworked Lummis's dominant travel-as-patriotism model, instead framing engagement with the Southwest as a necessarily difficult intellectual undertaking. Austin's approach also laid groundwork for many modernists' treatment of the Southwest.

Austin's New Mexico novels are populated with travelers and transplanted residents, and in her commercial work she often opined on the best ways for tourists to experience the Southwest. This chapter offers a reading of Austin's Taos-set novel *Starry Adventure* (1931), which follows a young New Mexican architect through his early adulthood and includes a thinly-veiled portrayal of Mabel Dodge Luhan as a character who is building a home in Taos. I look to *Starry Adventure* to study Austin's characterization of non-locals encountering Southwestern culture. Important contexts for the novel are some of Austin's projects for the Fred Harvey Company and her work as the founder of the Society for Spanish Colonial Arts Santa Fe

Chamber of Commerce, an organization which collaborated with the Museum of New Mexico to boost the sale of Hispana/o folk art and craft during the city's annual Fiesta.

Given Austin's commitment to the preservation of Spanish folkways, it's telling that she largely overlooked the projects of fellow Santa Fean authors Cleofas Jaramillo, who began Santa Fe's La Sociedad Folklorica, and Concha Ortiz y Pino de Kleven, who started an educational center for Colonial Hispanic crafts in Galisteo, New Mexico (Reed). This chapter contrasts the projects of Jaramillo and Ortiz y Pino de Kleven with Austin's Society, arguing that Austin's immersive, preservationist ethos of travel privileged the folk craft and lore of the Native and Spanish Southwest while overlooking those communities' lived experiences. In this way, Austin continued (rather than revised) Lummis's politically problematic framing of Southwestern culture.

**Chapter 3** locates modernism's break from the nationalistic, representation of the Southwest that had been popularized by Lummis and embraced by middlebrow tourism, wherein the Southwest's cultural significance was measured only by its relevance in American history. Writers D.H. Lawrence, Jean Toomer, and Lynn Riggs all encountered the Southwest as a geographic node connected with other parts of the Americas or the globe . In this chapter, I establish how the Southwest functioned as an imaginative framework for larger meditations on national and transnational belonging and identity. When Lawrence arrived in Taos as a guest of arts patron Mabel Dodge Luhan, he was intrigued with the area's Indigenous cultures, but ultimately grew disenchanted with the tourism industry. He critiqued it harshly, even as he repeated some of the romantic misconceptions perpetuated by the tourism industry. Toomer traveled to the Southwest intermittently in the 1930s and 1940s, after he'd left New York and the Harlem literary scene. Frustrated by the racial divisions he observed in New York and in the

South, Toomer wrote essays and a long unpublished play that treated the Southwest's multiracial social order with optimism. He framed Southwestern society as an alternative to the segregation he'd observed in the East. Of course, that vision did not account for the region's history of conquest. Riggs more clearly addressed the constraints and difficulties placed upon Native people in the Southwest, as a region with a long colonial history that was being actively exploited in the service of an entertainment-based tourist industry. In his plays, Riggs imagined how acts of decolonization and rebellion taking place against the backdrop of tourist-friendly Southwestern spaces.

**Chapter 4** close reads several issues of *Poetry* magazine from the early 1920s that are devoted to poetry of the Southwest. These issues demonstrate that *Poetry* editors Harriet Monroe (1860-1936) and Alice Corbin Henderson (1881-1949) saw the Southwest not only as a trove of aesthetic inspiration, but as the home to poetic communities that were more dynamic than the readerships active in mainstream literary culture. I look closely at Corbin Henderson's fascination with the creation and circulation of folk culture in the Southwest. I then turn to her participation in compiling an anthology of Southwestern poetry that was included in promotional materials for the Fred Harvey Company. These two case studies show us how the Southwest emerged as an object of modernist interest, in part, through the editorial guidance of Corbin Henderson in Santa Fe and Monroe, from Chicago.

Moreover, they show us how the notion of active, region-based readerships remained part of the appeal of the Southwest for modernists, be they a community of cowboy poets or a community of well-read Southwestern tourists. Many of the poems featured in these *Poetry* issues were republished in a poetry anthology compiled by Corbin Henderson for the Fred Harvey Company; the anthology was distributed to passengers on the Harvey Company's Indian

Detour, a tour of Southwestern Pueblos. This recirculation, in the name of advertising for a hospitality company, suggests that by the 1920s advertising was legible to modernists as an alternative means of creating and sharing poetry.

*Poetry's* western issues—and their second life as promotion for mass tourism in the West— are characteristic of a foundational intention in Southwestern literary modernism: the movement's interest in the Southwest as a source of new inspiration and as a model for new ways of composing and circulating poetry.

**Afterword:** In the late 1920s, the infrastructure for tourism and creative production came together in the Southwest especially generatively. My afterword examines materials related to an event that combined artistic participation and tourist-friendly entertainment: the 1928 Santa Fe Fiesta. I offer a close reading of the primary brochure promoting the event, a document printed by the city's Chamber of Commerce for the purposes of guiding visitors to the city's popular annual festival. Using this brochure as a case study, my afterword addresses some fundamental qualities of Southwestern tourism that were invented in this era and remained influential in representations of the Southwest through the twentieth century. I consider the implications of our scholarly beliefs about artistic integrity, creative labor, and compensation for intellectual pursuits.

## **2.0 MENUS, MUSIC, AND MISSIONS: HOW CHARLES LUMMIS SHAPED TOURISM IN THE SOUTHWEST**

Many factors contributed to the Southwest's popularity in the late nineteenth century, but the career of writer Charles Lummis was important to launching the region into a national spotlight in the 1890s, and Lummis continued to play a key role in how the literary Southwest evolved and circulated in the early twentieth century. Lummis's writing and projects helped shape both the design of Southwestern tourism and literary representations of the Southwest. In this way, Lummis significantly influenced how tourists and readers experienced the region. As I'll demonstrate, Lummis created and popularized a version of the Southwest centered on the region's Spanish colonial legacy. In the process, he established some hallmarks of regional tourism that remain influential today.

Lummis's lasting contribution to the American imaginary was popularizing the Southwest as a distinct region with historical and cultural traits that set it apart from the rest of the U.S. West. He argued for the Southwest's importance to American culture at large, publicizing Southwestern history's important contribution to American culture. In the process, Lummis worked to popularize experiential cultural tourism in southern California and the greater Southwest, with a particular emphasis on Spanish colonial and Latinx traditions and folkways. Recognizing that there was much for American tourists to enjoy about the Southwest, he promoted regionally-specific food, music, and architecture in his travel writing and tourism

projects. A savvy marketer, Lummis saw that these forms of tourism would help him realize his goal of making the Southwest a national travel destination. He also anticipated the popularity of folk and regional cultures in the early twentieth century, laid the groundwork for the Southwest's popular tourism, *and* directed the ways that modernists interacted with and represented the region. Lummis even took credit for coining the phrase "See America First," a slogan adopted in advertisements for the Great Northern Railway in the early twentieth century urging Americans to choose domestic tourism over vacations abroad.

As Dydia DeLyser notes, tourism in the U.S. West was treated as something of a patriotic obligation (DeLyser 48). The sentiment framed tourism as a celebration of nationhood, in which intrepid pioneering is translated into a leisure activity. It's unclear whether the slogan really did originate with Lummis—he was prone to exaggerating his accomplishments—but he spent much of his career declaring that travelling in the Southwest and studying it were acts of patriotism.

Lummis was drawn to the Southwest in 1885 by an intense interest in the histories of New Spain and the region's Indigenous communities. Once in California, he began a series of cultural preservation efforts and writing projects devoted to popularizing the Southwest. He was attracted to the Southwest for its multicultural history, especially the vestiges of the Spanish conquest in the region. As a Spanish territory in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the region functioned mainly as a territorial outpost. Its distance and isolation from the colonial capital of Mexico City resulted in less adherence to colonial culture—instead, the colonizers of the northern frontier blended Indigenous and European practices in a manner that "transformed Spanish culture through adjustments in [...] dress, diet, medicine, homes, and communities" (Vargas 7). These multicultural "adjustments"—affecting Southwestern clothing, food, architecture, and cultural practices—provided the foundation of Lummis's Southwestern

marketing campaign *and* formed the basis of a lifestyle he embraced and promoted. As I'll explore in this chapter, Lummis encouraged regional tourism through ethnic masquerade, and helped popularize Spanish Colonial-era dress, Native and Spanish jewelry, song, and food as part of Southwestern tourism experiences. Drawing on Philip Deloria's conception of "playing Indian," I'll also explore the impact of Lummis's cultural appropriation.

Lummis's move to the Southwest was well timed. He set out on a campaign to promote the region during an era when the future of the greater U.S. West appeared to be increasingly in flux. In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner introduced his frontier thesis to a meeting of American historians in Chicago at the World's Fair Columbian Exposition. Turner suggested that the event that had defined the American experience for the last century—westward expansion, and the perception of nearly-endless available land—had just concluded. In contrast, Lummis argued for a west-to-east narrative of American history, and in doing so he offered a way to divert nostalgia for westward expansion into leisure travel. Like Turner, Lummis sought to answer the question of how American identity, which had in the nineteenth century heavily depended on narratives of pioneering and conquest, would evolve after the country's westward expansion was more or less complete. According to Turner, the frontier had just closed, but Lummis's *The Spanish Pioneers*, also published in 1893, maintained that the Southwest held plenty of opportunities for Americans who still aspired to pioneering.

In particular, Lummis argued that modern Americans would do well to study the lessons of the Spanish colonials. He identified in Spain's conquest of the Americas an imperial model of aggressive nationalism and masculinity that he believed had declined in U.S. culture since the end of westward expansion. Americans should look to the Spanish conquistadors to revive the nation's pioneering spirit, which was implicitly masculine.

Lummis promoted a version of American exceptionalism so powerful that it appropriated other nations' empires to enhance a narrative of U.S. geopolitical power. By Lummis's logic, the legacy of New Spain had paved the way for the U.S. project of Anglo-led westward expansion, and so he placed value on the history of New Spain because it was important to Anglo America. In doing so, Lummis's version of Southwestern history erased the experiences of Native and Spanish-heritage/Latinx people in the Southwest. As I'll demonstrate in this chapter, the "revival" of the Spanish-language Southwest, which Lummis helped to institute, failed to acknowledge any contemporary Latinx cultures in the Southwest, instead presenting the Spanish Southwest as a set of cultural ingredients for Anglo American readers to enjoy on vacation or in their homes (and, significantly, through English translation).

A recovery of Lummis's role in shaping cultural perceptions of the Southwest provides a backstory that is essential to fully tracing the confluence of modernism, tourism, and popular culture in the twentieth-century Southwest. I argue that Lummis significantly shaped the Southwest's position in the national imaginary in several roles—his position as a popular writer and public figure, his work with the tourism industry, and his influence on later Southwestern writers. Lummis popularized a selective, limited historical account of Spanish colonialism, and he worked to preserve elements of Southwestern culture in contexts that cloaked their political significance—through this work, he helped to turn a story of conquest into an era viewed nostalgically as one of romance and masculinity. Writing about multicultural tourism in the US, Heather Diamond notes that projects meant to popularize ethnic or folk cultures have historically been "endeavors that showcased the traditional practices of people considered cultural outsiders," and that these projects were directed at white audiences, often resulting in misrepresentation and appropriation (Diamond 6). Similarly, Lummis's projects often

misrepresented or flattened the complexity of the cultures that he intended to celebrate. As Diamond, Thomas Guthrie, and others have observed, and as I'll address at greater length at the end of this chapter, these sorts of tensions continue to plague endeavors to promote multiculturalism, especially as a commercial enterprise.

This chapter chronicles Lummis's creation of a distinct Southwest by exploring several of his multimedia projects—from popular history to cookbooks to folk music—which established a lasting set of narratives about the region. I look first at Lummis's history book *The Spanish Pioneers* (1893), in which he argued for the relevance of Spanish colonialism in understanding American history, particularly westward expansion. I turn next to Lummis's efforts to recover aspects of Spanish colonial culture by exploring his restorations of Spanish Missions in southern California, his compilations of Spanish folk recipes, and his translations of Spanish language folk songs. Through these projects, Lummis shaped the Southwest as we know it.

## 2.1 REVISING THE WEST: *THE SPANISH PIONEERS*

Lummis's history of New Spain, *The Spanish Pioneers*, championed Spanish history as an integral part of the American heritage. He'd maintain this position for the rest of his career. Lummis believed that Spanish conquistadors embodied masculine-coded American virtue and geopolitical ambition (or, put another way, America's practice of settler-colonialism). He sought to celebrate and popularize the story of the Spanish conquest as a way of reviving America's pioneering heritage in the nation's post-frontier era. This position would shape many of his tourist-centered projects. But before Lummis channeled that enthusiasm into cookbooks, sing-

along concerts, and building renovations, he argued in *The Spanish Pioneers* that the US, as a nation of pioneers, owed more of its character to Spain than it did to England.

*Spanish Pioneers* faulted U.S. historians for treating the English colonization of America as the nation's starting point, thus doing a disservice to students of U.S. history. Lummis argued that this focus diminished Spain's significant role in shaping America's character. That inattention threatened to have dire consequences: in an era when America's westward expansion was slowing, Lummis spoke to a growing concern that the nation had lost its zeal for pioneering, exploration, and innovation.

His solution to this problem was a recovery of New Spain's history and legacies in the U.S. Calling the Spanish conquest "the largest and longest and most marvellous [sic] feat of manhood in all history," Lummis hoped to broadcast the story of New Spain to U.S. readers, especially young men, inspiring the next generation of Americans toward a settler-colonialist masculinity (12). By Lummis's account, England's colonial undertaking was inferior to Spain's from its very start because the English crossed the Atlantic by necessity, to escape religious oppression.

The English colonized America, Lummis wrote, "not for the sake of opening a new world, but to escape the intolerance of the old [world]," while the Spanish were driven to the Americas by more admirable and heroic motives: a sense of adventure and curiosity (*Spanish Pioneers* 46). (Lummis didn't acknowledge that both empires were also motivated by the promise of natural resources in the Americas.) Lummis suggested that English settlers' limited capacity for adventure and curiosity made for a civilization that wasn't destined to grow as culturally advanced and sophisticated as that of New Spain.

Moreover, he argued, the Spanish warranted greater respect than the English did, because the Spanish faced circumstances more difficult than those of the English, including the adverse geographical conditions of South America and the southern reaches of North America, and because they instituted more effective policies for assimilating native populations and building a colonial infrastructure. The Spanish colonists' development of the land's resources and economic potential laid the groundwork for American ingenuity: Spain primed the West for industry and progress in the nineteenth century under an American flag.<sup>20</sup> Likewise, the difficulties that English pioneers experienced in the wilderness of the northeast paled in comparison to those faced by the Spanish. In comparison, the Spanish navigated "such a frightful desert as no human conquest ever overran before or since"—this was crucial evidence of their grit and character (and, consequently, the strength of American pioneers who came after them) (22).<sup>21</sup> Lummis held that the Spanish were the most successful settlers because they instituted a sophisticated social order and built a sturdy infrastructure.

However, Lummis didn't propose that the Spanish were the actual forefathers of the United States. He was careful to make a distinction between his readers, the "Saxon boy[s]" he envisioned as the next generation of American pioneers, and the "Spanish hero[es]" who ought to serve as their role models. When Lummis imagined America's future—one born from pioneering and conquest—he saw it unfolding for an Anglo-American population. Consider the

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<sup>20</sup> It's notable that Lummis's history of the Spanish in North America focuses almost entirely on the U.S. West—Spanish exploration of the present-day southeastern United States and the Gulf area is hardly mentioned in *The Spanish Pioneers*.

<sup>21</sup> Lummis came to the same conclusion when he compared the Spanish to earlier explorers in the Americas, such as the Norse visitors to the upper Atlantic coast of North America who "built no towns, and practically added nothing to the world's knowledge" (17).

preface to *The Spanish Pioneers*, in which Lummis explains why Spanish Colonial history should be understood as a vital part of the education of American readers:

We [Americans] love manhood; and the Spanish pioneering of the Americas was the largest and longest and most marvelous feat of manhood in all history. It was not possible for a Saxon boy to learn that truth in my boyhood; it is enormously difficult, if possible, now. The hopelessness of trying to get from any or all English text-books a just picture of the Spanish hero in the New World made me resolve that no other young American lover of heroism and justice shall need to grope so long in the dark as I had to. (12)

Accordingly, Lummis reasoned, any “American lover of heroism” would naturally gravitate toward stories of the manly Spanish conquest over stories of the New England colonies.

These arguments demanded that readers reevaluate the origin story of the US, and they might be interpreted as critiquing the dominance of Anglocentric versions of U.S. history. Were this the case, Lummis would have been espousing an argument that became key in Chicana and Latina studies, which pushed for the recognition that a “New England legacy” shaped, but was not the sole influence, on U.S. literature and culture (José Aranda xx). If Lummis’s readers recognized that the nation began—as far as European settlements were concerned—in the American Southwest, then it seems a feasible next step that readers might be led to acknowledge the significant influence of Spanish and Latina culture on the western United States. (Of course, even this hypothetical revision of American history would still have failed to acknowledge any of the sovereign tribal nations that occupied the continent before European colonization.)

But this wasn’t the direction in which Lummis took his argument. Instead, he presented the Southwest as a geographic and historic singularity—American *and* exotic, an unknowable, ancient terrain *and* a good spot for a vacation or business venture. Such representations were an

early iteration of the apolitical, appropriative multiculturalism (before this term existed) that fueled the tourism industry for the next century. Instead of radically revising ideas about the trajectory of U.S. history, Lummis's *The Spanish Pioneers* reproduced a settler colonial perspective.

In particular, *Spanish Pioneers* treated conquest gently—as a necessary, if unpleasant, phase in civilizing the Americas. Lummis understood that this argument would only increase the book's popularity with readers eager for a narrative that praised the mechanics of empire, particularly as the U.S. considered its post-frontier position by probing possible overseas expansion in Hawaii and in some Spanish colonies.<sup>22</sup> *Spanish Pioneers* begins with a chapter called “The Pioneer Nation,” which describes Spanish colonization this way:

One of the wonderful things about this Spanish pioneering—almost as remarkable as the pioneering itself—was the humane and progressive spirit which marked it from first to last. Histories of the sort long current speak of that hero-nation as cruel to the Indians; but, in truth, the record of Spain in that respect puts us to blush. (23)

It's not surprising that *The Spanish Pioneers* did not take a critical look at the process of empire.<sup>23</sup> The idea that European colonizers had a “civilizing influence” on Native American tribes *still* circulates in various depictions of U.S. history. It was certainly a common position in

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<sup>22</sup> In later writing, Lummis would attribute Spain's failure to maintain control of Guam, the Philippines, and Cuba during the Spanish-American War as evidence of the country's waning imperial power in the face of America's new dominance. Surprisingly, he didn't support U.S. involvement in the Spanish-American War because Spain's “colonies ruined her”—while Lummis admired the methods by which Spain conquered the Americas, he acknowledged that a global empire was difficult to maintain (“In the Lion's Den” 256).

<sup>23</sup> Lummis's embrace of imperialism in this text is evident in the book's dedication to Elizabeth Bacon Custer, “one of such women as make heroes and keep chivalry alive in our less single-hearted days.” Elizabeth Custer, Gen. George Custer's widow, tirelessly promoted her husband's legacy after his death.

the 1890s, an era that saw the height of battles between Plains tribes and the U.S. Cavalry, the institution of the Dawes Allotment Act, the expansion of government boarding schools for Native American children, and the outlawing of Native religions and spiritual practices. In his first chapter, on the merits of New Spain, Lummis argued, “The legislation of Spain in [sic] behalf of the Indians everywhere was incomparably more extensive, more comprehensive, more systematic, and more humane than that of Great Britain, the Colonies, and the present United States all combined” (24). When Lummis referred to the superiority of Spain’s treatment of Native people, he was contrasting their methods to those of English colonizers. While Spain’s treatment of Indigenous populations subjugated them through conversion, sexual violence, and enslavement, the English approach centered on elimination and genocide.

Lummis wrote at length about historic forms of conquest, but *The Spanish Pioneers* did not explore the parallels between U.S. Indian policy and the Spanish and English conquests that preceded it. The book did not specifically address the effects of the Indian Removal Act, westward expansion, or the US’s ceding of northern Mexico. However, some of Lummis’s other writings and his political activism provide evidence that he had less disregard for Native welfare than *The Spanish Pioneers* suggests. For example, he worked with activists to lobby against laws designed to dismantle sovereignty and land rights, and he briefly served as the superintendent to the Albuquerque Indian School while convalescing in New Mexico in 1891, during which time he softened some of the school’s repressive policies. Under Lummis, the school ended their practice of forcibly cutting Native children’s hair and requiring that children only speak English. Lummis also ended the practice of year-round boarding, allowing children to return to their families for summer vacations (Thompson 154-163).

Lummis's praise of Spanish colonial Indian policy seems contradictory, given his activism on behalf of Native people. However, Lummis embraced the dominant ideology of his time: he regarded Native Americans as a primitive group in need of guidance and elevation. If Lummis's advocacy was motivated by a paternalistic view of Native Americans, then his appreciation of Spanish conquest makes more sense. By his logic, Spain's treatment of Native people was at times cruel, but ultimately necessary and overall productive, like some of the U.S. policies about Indian assimilation. Even in his involvement with the Albuquerque Indian School, after all, Lummis didn't campaign to *close* the school or completely abandon the school's assimilationist agenda. Instead, he worked from within the school, a settler-colonialist system of assimilation, to lighten some of the school's more restrictive policies.<sup>24</sup> While Lummis explored Indigenous and colonial interactions extensively in his career and was a vocal advocate of Native rights and sovereignty, he did not challenge the prevailing settler-colonialism in U.S. culture.

Lummis began *The Spanish Pioneers* with a critique of historians' neglect of Spanish colonial history, but the book did not purport to be an academic intervention. Instead, Lummis addressed and advertised the book to his usual general audience of armchair travelers and

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<sup>24</sup> Another of Lummis's notable activist projects was the organization of an All Pueblo Council in New Mexico in the 1920s. Partnering with activist (and future director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs) John Collier, Lummis helped organize a group of leaders from various Indian Pueblos in New Mexico. The group was gathered to resist some of the most damaging effects of the Bursum Bill, which would have caused the Pueblos to lose valuable water and land rights. As with nearly all his pet projects, Lummis used his platform to as a public figure to garner support. He published editorials, gave public talks, and invited interviews on these topics. However, such projects did not stop Lummis from pursuing his own interest in the use of Indian land. Through his membership in the Southwest Society of the American Archaeological Institute, Lummis successfully lobbied the government to allow archaeological institutes access to Indian reservation land for the purpose of digging—something the Bureau of Indian Affairs had not previously allowed. Lummis considered this to be a great achievement in the name of education. His writing never acknowledged that tribes had sovereignty over their lands and may have disagreed with the decision to dig up and export human remains and potentially sacred objects to museums.

Southwest-interested readers. Accordingly, he responded to writers such as Francis Parkman and William Prescott, historians who'd already shaped the nation's vision of the West and Southwest through their work on westward expansion, as well as Washington Irving, who had stirred national interest in Spanish history with his popular book *Tales of the Alhambra* (1832) and other writings on Moorish Spain, the life of Christopher Columbus, and Spanish culture.<sup>25</sup> Prescott, Parkman, and Irving all reached large readerships, publishing in venues including *The Atlantic Monthly*, New York's *The Knickerbocker*, *The Boston Quarterly*, and various "drawing room companion" news and literature digests.

In particular, Lummis's *The Spanish Pioneers* updated Prescott and Parkman. In his book's introduction, Lummis wrote "No student dares longer refer to Prescott or Irving, or any of the class of which they were the leaders, as authorities in history; they rank to-day as fascinating writers of romance, and nothing more" (18). Those histories, he argued, had too much reliance on "fables" instead of facts. But beyond an initial scolding of Prescott and Parkman, *The Spanish Pioneers* didn't do much towards offering specific correctives to those earlier histories. Instead, the book was intended as "a guideboard to the true point of view, the broad idea" designed either to inspire readers to further study or to at least leave them with "a general understanding of the most romantic and gallant chapter in the history of America" (18). This move is characteristic of Lummis's approach to nonfiction writing—heavy on polemical claims, but light on specifics. His goal wasn't to present new original research on Spanish colonial history. Rather, Lummis sought to further popularize the story of the Spanish conquest, as interpreted through an American lens.

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<sup>25</sup> Francis Parkman's most significant works on U.S. history were *The Oregon Trail: Sketches of Prairie and Rocky-Mountain Life* and the multi-volume *France and England in North America* (1865). William Prescott wrote extensively about Spain and New Spain, including the multivolume books *The History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic* (1837), *The History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843), and *The History of the Conquest of Peru* (1847).

Inheriting these authors' topic and mode of address, Lummis *did* make an intervention when he moved to distinguish the Southwest as a region with unique cultural and historical significance. He promoted the Southwest by focusing on the region's specifics—desert environs, the Spanish conquest, and the impressive cultural and architectural legacies of both Spanish conquest and Indigenous history. By emphasizing these details, Lummis set the Southwest apart from the rest of the West. Of course, the story of westward expansion more broadly included the same themes of violent conquest, charged cultural contact, and pioneering heroics. Lummis could have made the same argument for an American re-appreciation of the Great Plains or the Pacific Northwest, once-frontier spaces that also boasted striking environments, active Indigenous cultures, instances of violent conquest, and blended Indigenous and European cultures.

But Lummis didn't look northward or to middle America for his inspiration. He was drawn to the Southwest, and especially to the era of Spain's conquest of the Southwest. He focused on the specific cultural history and iconographies of the Southwest. For example, Lummis's early works covered an array of local color unique to the Southwest, including the lives of Pueblo and cliff-dwelling Indians, the events of the 1680 Pueblo Revolt (in which Spain was briefly driven out of the New Mexico area), lore surrounding some of the Spanish Catholic penitent practices in the Southwest, the Spanish land grants and ranches of southern California, and some of the religious practices of Navajo and Hopi Indians in Arizona and the Mojave desert. Writing always as a booster of the Southwest, Lummis appealed to the country's interest in the last frontier territories to emphasize the Southwest's importance in American culture.

*The Spanish Pioneers* also adopted some of the signature methods and assumptions of Parkman and Prescott, such as Parkman's frequent first-person travelogue and narration and

Prescott's assertion that histories of Mexico, Peru, and the rest of New Spain were valuable because of their relevance to U.S. culture. David Levin notes that Prescott, Parkman, Irving, and their ilk were writing during "a time of great literary concern with American character" (12). The character of frontiersmen and pioneers drew the attention of those authors, and that same fixation would also guide much of Lummis's writing. After traveling from Missouri to Oregon, Parkman wrote *The Oregon Trail* (1849), a historically-focused account of his trip with a group of traders. Parkman gave extensive details about his life on the trail and at camp, recalling his encounters with Indians and fur trappers and recounting the stories he'd heard about past frontier exploits. Parkman was the hero of his own book—the observant writer, recalling long days on horseback and brushes with violence across the plains. He published the narrative first in installments for *Knickerbocker Magazine* and next as a book which became a popular touchstone in literature of the U.S. West. With that success, Parkman appeared on the literary scene as "a new writer, at home on the frontier as well as in staid, provincial Boston" ("Francis Parkman").

Parkman's persona—as at home on the frontier as he was on the East Coast—was very similar to the persona that Lummis developed in his early career in the 1880s. Lummis must have appreciated Parkman's trajectory from Boston to the Great Plains, particularly since Lummis himself lived in Massachusetts (briefly attending Harvard) before lighting out west for his own adventures, first to Ohio, then to California. Lummis often boasted that he'd easily shed his New England upbringing in favor of a western and Spanish approach to life (before Lummis began reading these histories, he noted that he consumed lots of dime novel westerns, which piqued his interest in the Wild West). Lummis, like Parkman and most historians of the era, frequently misrepresented Indian Country in his writing, but unlike those authors, Lummis made

his resistance to New England's dominance in U.S. culture and history into a central part of his authorial persona.

Parkman provided a model of the kind of public celebrity that Lummis fashioned for himself, but it was William H. Prescott, a founding historian in Hispanic studies, who more powerfully influenced Lummis's writing of *The Spanish Pioneers* (Eipper 416). Prescott's historical writing, especially his three-volume *The History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843) and the two-volume *The History of the Conquest of Peru* (1847), provided a model for Lummis's approach to history. Prescott importantly shaped how the Spanish Empire existed in the U.S. imaginary. His work circulated in popular and academic settings, and his legacy remains relevant to Latin American studies, a field in which John J. Eipper argues there are still "lingering Prescottian contours" (Eipper 416). Prescott's influence on Lummis is evident in the format, topic, and argument of *The Spanish Pioneers*.<sup>26</sup>

Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843) focuses on Aztec society before Spanish conquest, detailing social structures and class systems, before moving on to the details of Spain's colonial movements. Prescott begins his two-volume work by explaining how he came to choose this topic. Why, among Spain's other colonial projects, did Prescott devote so much attention to the area that would become Mexico? He explained his focus in terms of its relevance to U.S. history. Arguing that the Indigenous societies in that area were the most "advanced" in the Americas, Prescott reasoned that Spain's ability to successfully invade Mexico was a testament to Spanish ingenuity and bravery (Prescott "Preface"). Sixty years later, Lummis circled around the same theme in *The Spanish Pioneers* when he also praised Spain's military

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<sup>26</sup> Like Parkman and Lummis, Prescott was raised in New England, but he developed an interest in Spain's colonial era under the mentorship of his teacher George Ticknor and through the influence of the author Washington Irving ("William H. Prescott").

success, arguing that Spain faced greater challenges than did English colonizers in North America. In addition to the ideological formulations that Lummis took from Prescott's work, he also adopted Prescott's focus on individual historical figures. Prescott's history detailed the lives of several conquistadors. Lummis structured the second half of *Spanish Pioneers* the same way, featuring nine chapter-length profiles of "Specimen Pioneers," including Christopher Columbus, Francisco Pizarro, Hernando Cortez, and Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca. Like Prescott before him, Lummis's profiles extol the qualities of curiosity—which Lummis felt indicated superior intellect—and bravery that made them heroes.

However, Lummis's *The Spanish Pioneers* and his other books about Southwestern culture, such as *The Land of Poco Tiempo* and *Some Strange Corners of Our Country*, were narrower in focus than the landmark studies of historians like Prescott or Parkman. Lummis did not mean to explore the majority of New Spain, as Prescott did in his multivolume explorations of Spanish conquest. Instead, Lummis focused on the parts of the U.S. West that were once under the Spanish flag. Lummis's Southwest was roughly equivalent to the once-Spanish West—everything ceded to the U.S. by Mexico in 1848. By his account, the legacy of New Spain was one of the Southwest's defining characteristics, and the Southwest as a distinct region was formed when Spanish colonial culture (and its residual, post-empire traditions) were blended with the traditions of local Native American tribes and recently-arrived American pioneers. Identifying and popularizing the Southwest as a culturally distinct region was Lummis's addition to a discourse that Parkman and Prescott began; it also became Lummis's lasting contribution to American culture.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Some of Lummis's success in popularizing the Southwest was a matter of timing. Parkman and Prescott refer to the area that Lummis called the Southwest as northern Mexico, because they

Lummis especially echoed Prescott's romantic depiction of the pre-U.S. Southwest. True to the settler perspective typically taken by nineteenth-century historians, Prescott based the story of New Spain on the experience of its colonizers. He began with a study of Isabella and Ferdinand and moved next to profiles of conquistadors, with narratives focused on heroic individuals, brave feats, and the romantic past. This approach, which likely contributed to Prescott's success as a contributor to popular periodicals, is also reflected in Irving's literary treatments of Spanish history and exploration.

This nostalgia for the romance of New Spain became a powerful component of southern Californian culture in the 1880s and 1890s. Southern Californian communities celebrated "Spanish Heritage Days," celebrations that rewrote Southwestern history from an Anglo-American perspective and consequently excluded Latinx communities in California. These events were civic booster projects and tourist attractions designed to appeal to families and businesses who might move to California. Vargas describes such celebrations:

This bygone era [of the Spanish colonial Southwest] now existed only in myths and fantasies celebrated up and down the California coastal towns as 'Spanish Heritage

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were writing before the Mexico Cession of 1848. However, the idea of a distinct Southwest, separate from the rest of the Western frontier, took a few decades to take hold. As late as the 1870s, for example, national magazines and newspapers used the term "Southwest" to refer to the southern territories and states just west of the Mississippi River, such as Arkansas, Oklahoma, or sometimes Texas (Cook; Ennis; Haven). This misidentification of the mid-South as "Southwestern" might indicate how the Southwest, as Lummis understood it, circulated in the American imaginary prior to his intervention: as a place so distant or foreign that it didn't even warrant reorienting the basic national geography. When the Southwest *did* circulate in the American imaginary, as I've noted, it was usually depicted in the context of Spanish conquest. Lummis seized on the romance of this narrative, following historians such as Parkman and Prescott. One exception to this literary trend is in local color fiction by writers including Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and Sui Sin Far, who also wrote about pioneer, Native, and immigrant communities in the Southwest and California in the present day with less emphasis on lingering colonial legacies. Harte and Sin Far were frequently featured in Lummis's magazine *Land of Sunshine*.

Days.’ These romanticized celebrations that ignored the contributions of Indian and Mexican culture were concocted by Anglo urban boosters to appeal to tourists, especially to the prospective real estate investors and developers among them. (146)<sup>28</sup>

Vargas goes on to note that the recreation of Spanish colonial culture in white, English-speaking spaces effectively silenced the living, evolving cultures of contemporary Latinx and Native communities. This mythology of the Spanish colonial Southwest quickly took hold in Southern California, leaving little room for accurate or nuanced explorations of the colonial era. It did, however, provide the basis for several of Lummis’s tourist-oriented, marketable experiences. This ideology gradually shaped the Southwestern tourist industry at large.

## **2.2 LANDMARKS, RECIPES, AND SPANISH SONGS: LUMMIS’S HERITAGE**

### **TOURISM**

Lummis’s tourist-focused projects, including experiential events and culture-focused writing, encouraged his readers to import Spanish colonial culture into everyday U.S. life. They are early examples of the spectacle-focused tourism involving cultural appropriation that defined travel in the Southwest for the twentieth century. In Lummis’s projects, the recreation of Spanish

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<sup>28</sup> As many white Americans moved west in response to the region’s new industries and agricultural markets, Latinx people were driven from their land and jobs, through unfair legislation and threats of violence (Vargas 144-6). Latinx communities in California would continue to grow in pace with the region—by the 1920s, the Spanish-speaking population of Los Angeles would quadruple—but Latinx residents of Los Angeles and other cities in the Southwest were largely segregated to certain areas of the city and restricted to low-wage, manual labor (Vargas 177).

colonial culture took place in white, English-speaking spaces—through architecture, foodways, and folk music. The tourism industry effectively depoliticized the Spanish colonial era’s legacies and influences and also ignored living Latinx and Spanish-language communities in the Southwest.

One of Lummis’s first forays into Southwestern boosterism was as a founding member of the Landmarks Club, a historic preservation society devoted to restoring Southern Californian mission buildings. Seizing on the success of tourism related to Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona* (1883), the Landmarks Club sought to restore Spanish colonial buildings as a way to honor California’s heritage *and* promote tourism. Lummis promoted the club’s efforts by writing and printing the club’s bulletins in his *Land of Sunshine* magazine.<sup>29</sup> These progress reports detail club-funded renovation projects in Los Angeles, such as reversing earthquake damage to the sacristy at San Juan Capistrano and restoring the adobe walls in buildings at the Pala Mission (60; 156).

Lummis also helped the club compile a community cookbook that appealed to home cooks in California who were curious about “Spanish-American” foodways—that is, ingredients and recipes associated with Latinx/Indigenous cooking in Central America, South America, and the Southwest. *The Landmarks Club Cookbook* (1903) began with a short preface by Lummis about the food cultures of the Americas during Spanish colonization. He also authored a chapter of recipes titled “Spanish-American Cookery, with the Most Famous Dishes of Old California,

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<sup>29</sup> Lummis was the editor *Land of Sunshine*, a Los Angeles-based magazine underwritten by the city’s chamber of commerce, from its first issue in 1894 through 1923. In 1902 the magazine’s name changed to *Out West*, at the same time the magazine merged with the struggling San Francisco-based *The Overland Monthly*, which had been in print in California since 1868.

Mexico, and Peru, by Chas. F. Lummis,” to which he contributed recipes such as “Patitas con Mani (Peru)” or “Bernalillo Chile Sauce,” a New Mexican recipe (4; 17).<sup>30</sup>

The cookbook especially typifies the model of multicultural tourism that Lummis championed throughout his life. It presented Spanish-American foodways as a collection of exotic recipes of interest mainly for their novelty. Like the buildings that Lummis’s club restored, these recipes evoked New Spain’s romantic history as a consumable leisure experience. Aside from that chapter’s continent-spanning reach, the rest of the recipes were mainly of the fare you’d find in any Junior League cookbook in the US, with perhaps more regional leaning, such as soups made of almonds or dried apricots and citrus cocktails, all nods to the cash crops of California at the time (18-19). The Spanish-American recipes allowed readers to dabble in an exotic food culture—to select a signature dish for a dinner party, for example.

*The Landmarks Club Cookbook* treated Spanish-American recipes as a novelty, not the grounds for readers to drastically change day-to-day home cooking. However, Lummis’s preface suggested that it would benefit readers to do just that—to make their kitchen staples reflect those of Spanish-American foodways. He argued that food was a way to adapt to place and climate in the Southwest. Drawing on some loose evolutionary thinking, Lummis suggested that the diet of Spanish colonizers would help modern Californians thrive in the same place:

‘Americans,’ for instance, who settle in California and continue to eat precisely as they used to in Maine or New Jersey or Indiana, need not wonder if in the long run their digestions fare as would the digestion of an Eskimo removing to Ecuador and

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<sup>30</sup> Lummis traveled to Peru with Adolph Bandelier in 1892, it’s likely that this trip accounts for the inclusion of these specifically Peruvian recipes from South America. He also described the conquest of present-day Peru as the greatest feat of Spanish exploration in his 1893 *The Spanish Pioneers*, devoting the final of the book’s three parts to this story of Peru.

maintaining his diet of blubber. Natural man always does so adapt it—by the slow process of the survival of the least foolish—and has his reward. [...] It is well for civilized people to be as wise. For such as dwell in the arid half of the United States, the Spanish-American menu can give many profitable hints. (Lummis, *Landmarks* iii)

Central to Lummis's argument is his belief that the history of New Spain was instructive for contemporary Americans. He reasoned that if the Spanish found ways to thrive in the Americas in every way, including their diet, then Americans, especially those living in the Southwest, ought to study up on the Spanish colonial way of life.

The half-restored missions were photographed as cavernous and empty, or featuring an unidentifiable club member in the distance (to show the massive scale of the buildings). These photos framed the missions in a way that relegated their original use, as thriving centers of colonial power, to history. After the missions were restored, they were frequently repurposed as concert venues, featuring performances of Spanish-language folk music. California's missions were being preserved in order to house events that operated on a nostalgic register. The missions were not, for example, the location of church services geared toward Spanish Catholic practices. Nor were any of these mission concerts advertised to or directed at most of the Latinx residents of Southern California. Instead, the missions existed in the service of entertainment for white Southern Californians with an interest in elements of the region's history—the same audience that much of Lummis's writing addressed. Like many buildings that were restored or preserved thanks to preservationist zoning laws in the Southwest, the California missions were maintained to memorialize the region's colonial past while neatly sidestepping any involvement from non-Anglo communities that might count as stakeholders. The preservation of mission buildings

reflected a desire to preserve the infrastructure of Spanish colonialism in the service of maintaining the region's romantic history.

The Landmarks Club projects also laid the groundwork for what would become one of Lummis's most commercially-friendly projects: collecting and translating a number of Spanish-language folk songs for use in homes across the United States. The project was also one of his longest and most ambitious endeavors, beginning in the late nineteenth century during Lummis's first visit to the Southwest, when he traveled by foot. The notebooks from his trip include transcriptions of Spanish-language lyrics, and he continued to transcribe and later to record Spanish-language songs after he moved permanently to Los Angeles.

In 1923, he finally published some of those translations from Spanish-language folk music in partnership with composer Arthur Farwell, in a volume called *Spanish Songs of Old California*. *Spanish Songs* was a collection of 14 folk Spanish-language folk songs, translated into English by Lummis and accompanied by piano arrangements transcribed by Farwell. Lummis's foreword introduced his readers to Spanish-language musical culture in California and the Southwest, and presented it as a fast-disappearing set of folk practices that would likely be entirely forgotten if not for projects like Lummis's. He wrote:

Personally, I feel that we who today inherit California are under a filial obligation to save whatever we may of the incomparable Romance which has made the name California a word to conjure with for 400 years. I feel that we can not decently dodge a certain trusteeship to save the Old Missions from ruin and the Old Songs from oblivion. (4)

As with earlier projects, Lummis referred to a "filial obligation" that white Americans had towards Spanish-language songs—a "trusteeship" that positioned Spanish culture a part of the rightful inheritance of English-speaking Americans in the Southwest. Lummis did not

acknowledge these projects might be significant to any Spanish-speaking and/or Latinx Californians. Instead, he argued that Spanish speakers in the Southwest had nearly forgotten the songs, and that the task of preservation fell to cultural stewards like himself. He wrote, “the very people who taught [the songs] to me have mostly forgotten them, or died, and few of their children know them. But it is a sin and a folly to let each song perish” (3). Lummis chided contemporary Spanish speakers in the Southwest for the “sin and folly” of forgetting the songs—even though he offered no evidence that any such forgetting was happening. It’s likely that the survival of the Spanish language and of Latinx culture in the United States was invisible to Lummis because he wasn’t looking for it.

Lummis introduced these plans for *Spanish Songs* in a 1905 bulletin published by the Southwest Society (an archaeological society also founded by Lummis, as an extension of his Southwest Museum). He presented the project as a last measure to preserve a disappearing culture and called the songs “the flowers of our lost romance,” a phrase that he’d reuse two decades later as the title of his *Spanish Songs* foreword. Lummis suggested that the legacy of Spanish colonialism in the Southwest was on the decline and that “in ten years it will be [dead]” (“Catching Archaeology” 3). “The old people who knew [the songs] are dying off” (11). Lummis went on to blame the threat of cultural loss on “the younger generation” of Spanish speakers, who would “forget—or even look down on—the music inheritance” thanks to their assimilation to mainstream American culture (11). Lummis’s stated mission was to “catch” as many of these “fast vanishing treasures of American archaeology” as he could, to give them a second life in parlors across the United States (13). This narrative of erasure fit Lummis’s broader message about the Southwest: that the quality of Spanish colonial culture that created the songs—the same cultural vigor Lummis identified in the Spanish pioneers— had been carelessly *lost* by

post-conquest Spanish speakers in the Americas. Further, this line of thought ignored the existence of non-institutional forms of memory, elevating instead the role of archaeologist as cultural savior.<sup>31</sup>

It's telling that Lummis couched his song-collecting as a form of archaeology, a study that in the early twentieth century explored human history largely through excavations of cultural remains. Lummis implied that without his work in saving another culture's "fast vanishing treasures," the Spanish folk songs would be lost forever. The songs, then, were a nearly-extinct element of California's past, translated for English speakers (the rightful inheritors of the Southwest's land and culture). Lummis also had Farwell transcribe the songs into sheet music for the decidedly middle-class instrument of the piano. The songs, revamped for white American parlors, are an example of the kind of cultural repackaging and erasure that is a hallmark of Lummis's projects and of regional tourism at the turn of the century.<sup>32</sup>

Lummis initially had ambitious plans for the scope of this project. He meant to produce multiple volumes of translations and transcriptions from the hundreds of songs he'd collected, with the first release being "a volume of four or five hundred of the Spanish Songs [...] [A]rranged, translated, and with critical notes, will make a rather respectable monument for the

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<sup>31</sup> Lummis *did* have a relatively expansive understanding of what could be called a cultural artifact—this article appeared in the same issue as an article by Frank Palmer about his current archaeological project, on the recent acquisition of materials from gravesites of some of the "primitive workmen of Southern California." Palmer's article described the significance of some pots, pottery shards, and arrowheads that the Southwest Society purchased from an unnamed seller ("Beginning the Southwest Museum" 16). The contrast between Palmer and Lummis's work is striking, and it's evident that Lummis had a broader sense of the potentials for anthropological study and cultural archaeology. However, Lummis's project still traded in the same appropriative and colonialist tropes favored by his contemporaries.

<sup>32</sup> He further discounted the life these songs had outside the United States, referring to Mexico as a "Step-mother" for Spanish culture, implying that Indigenous Mexico served only as a corrupting or interfering influence (3).

work of the youngest Society of the Institute in its first year” (“Catching Our Archaeology” 13). He also had his eye towards commercial, popular audiences. Lummis “hoped also to issue a collection of say fifty of the choicest numbers, harmonized, as a popular edition. Next year a large volume of the Indian songs may well follow; then another in the Spanish, and repeat” (13). But these plans were never realized—instead, it was almost twenty years before Lummis published *Spanish Songs*, and that would be the only published volume to draw on Lummis’s extensive collecting.

Lummis worked with composer Arthur Farwell from 1904 to 1923. Their lengthy correspondence reveals a problem-ridden collaboration contributing to the delay. It was difficult for Lummis to find a publisher for the volume, and he eventually ended up publishing it himself, with the help of loans from friends. Lummis was near the end of his life when *Spanish Songs* was finally published in 1923, and he was also in the midst of health problems, personal difficulties involving estranged children and a scandalous divorce, and an ongoing dispute with the Century Publishing Company over their reissue of his book *Some Strange Corners of Our Country*. For those reasons, perhaps he simply did not have the time or energy needed to continue publishing materials from his collection.

Given his treatment of the book in promotional materials, however, Lummis and Farwell may have also simply recognized that they’d find more success publishing the book for popular, not scholarly, audiences. Consideration of musical trends may have factored into their decision. Commercial circulation of folk music through recordings, sheet music, and bound volumes of transcription boomed at the turn of the century. Lummis’s work was published after this trend was well underway, even though he began the project well before the vogue of folk music collections (Tick 502-3).

Lummis conceived of American folk music in a more expansive way than most of the leaders of that trend. Alan Lomax, in the preface to his 1947 *Folk Song USA: 111 Best American Ballads* (co-authored with his father, John), a commercial endeavor that included piano accompaniments, described the evolution of American folk music this way: “These forty eight states came singing out the wilderness many long years ago...A people made a three-thousand-mile march between the eastern and western oceans. Songs traveled with them” (qtd Tick, 513). The Lomax volume was a kind of best-of anthology, featuring 111 songs that John and Alan Lomax had chosen for “singability” and general representativeness of the American experience. It was meant to definitively tell the story of American folk music—an east-to-west story that drew on the idea that all the culture in the American west came from eastward settlement by Anglo settlers. Lummis tells a different story, describing the Spanish songs as a geographical inheritance, a part of American culture because Americans occupied the land that had once been occupied by Spain.

A difference between Lummis’s book and previous collections of regional songs were the pains he and Farwell took to transcribe the melodies as piano music—a strategy that John and Alan Lomax adopted only in the 1940s with the publication of their collection, *Folk Song USA* (Tick 512). Creating piano accompaniments for all the songs in *Spanish Songs* invited readers to perform and briefly participate in the culture they were consuming, as opposed to only viewing the songs as part of an archival collection.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, Lummis removed the songs from any particular historical context—his brief introduction to *Spanish Songs* describes the idyllic, disappearing communities of Spanish-speaking shepherds in the Southwest from which he’d

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<sup>33</sup> For instance, the collections of cowboy songs by John Lomax or Howard Thorpe, which were released around the same time and reviewed in similar publications, included few musical transcriptions.

gathered many of the songs, but it does nothing to address either the context in which Spanish culture had arrived in the Americas or the ways in which it was since marginalized in the United States. His history of Spanish America came in pieces, glimpses of a romantic past.

Lummis's conception of the value of these songs is undeniably appropriative, but it also insists that readers (and potential performers) recognize the existence of culture in the Americas before and beyond English colonization, a version of American history overlooked in Lummis's lifetime and one which, by the mid-twentieth century, had been edited out of popular representations of American folk music. In this way, *Spanish Songs* was in step with Lummis's overall project of reviving Spanish-American history in the United States. Lummis encouraged his readers to incorporate the practice of "Community Singing" into their daily lives—he insisted that the effect would be a return to a slower, simpler time that he recalled from both his "New England boyhood" and his early days in California, when singing was a ubiquitous pastime (4). Suggesting that singing "shall bring back, somewhat, the like saving grace to our hurried, angular lives," Lummis listed social ills that could be cured by a slower and more melodic pace, including "the unrest, the social dyspepsia, the de-humanizing and de-homing, the apartness that comes by multitudes"—all issues he identified as problems of a growing, fast-industrializing American West (4).

*Spanish Songs* was self-published, so Lummis and Farwell promoted the book themselves. Lummis conducted radio interviews and planned a national speaking tour, while Farwell conducted promotional concerts in Pasadena with a community choir. Lummis and his secretary fulfilled mail orders themselves, corresponding with hundreds of institutional and individual subscribers. Lummis also wrote the promotional materials himself; in them, he pitched the songs as a part of the American canon of folk music. The subscription form for the book's

second printing reiterated this by suggesting that part of the songs' appeal was the ease with which they could be translated for contemporary, English-speaking audiences. The form's text, most likely written by Lummis, refers to the new ownership of Spanish heritage:

These [songs] Grew out of the Heart of a People. They have stood the test of a century, yet come to us as new as a discovered flower [...] Soloists are singing these new-old songs in every State; and Schools, Glee Clubs and Community choruses are finding their fascination. To sit under Farwell's baton now, and watch a thousand 'Gringos' fairly 'eating up' these lays of Old California, is to realize that they have already proved their vital worth for our own USE. ("Flowers of Our Romance are a Notable Contribution")

The songs may have grown "out of the Heart of a People" who once lived in California, but those were not the people Lummis addressed.

Eric Hobsbawm's concept of "invented tradition" is applicable to this recasting of the Spanish past in the service of an American present. Hobsbawm argued that communities, particularly communities undergoing rapid industrialization or modernization, draw on older cultural traditions to "construct invented traditions of a novel type for quite novel purposes [...]" Sometimes new traditions could be readily grafted on old ones, sometimes they could be devised by borrowing from the well-supplied warehouses of official ritual, symbolism, and moral exhortation" (6). Hobsbawm's concept usefully describes the way that Lummis's cultural appropriation effectively erased the originating culture by repurposing a ritual or practice for a new audience.

By calling the Spanish-language influence on California "lost," Lummis relegated a living culture to history. This is a rhetoric that was widespread, especially in treatments of Native American culture in turn-of-the-century work on region, place, and ethnicity, and it is ubiquitous

in work by Lummis and his peers, who were enthusiastic about archaeology. Lummis's attachment to Spanish culture was different from the treatment of Native American culture, however, because he contended that the Spanish better understood how to live and thrive in the country than did the English or French. Instead of positioning Anglo-American culture as the zenith of progress, as most ethnographies of native culture did at the turn of the century, Lummis focused on the Spanish colonies that he believed to be the foundation of civilization in the Americas and the origin of the Southwest's multiculturalism.

### 2.3 PLAYING SPANISH

Lummis's career serves as an origin story for much of what we think of as multicultural tourism today. His work argued against the dominant Anglocentric colonial narrative in the U.S. but upheld some of the same colonialist impulses. These tensions are still alive in multicultural tourism today, insofar as it continues to veer toward cultural appropriation. Additionally, Lummis's way of representing the Southwest proved influential as the region's tourist trade expanded in the early twentieth century. Even after his 1928 death, Lummis's books were regularly read by tourists and armchair travelers alike, and exchanged in creative circles associated with the Southwest.

Given Lummis's longstanding influence on depictions of the Southwest, his success in giving it a distinctive identity can't be separated from his tendency to render culture into consumable, palatable commodities. Indeed, the erasure of ethnic cultures and the whitewashing of legacies of violence and conquest were *integral* to making the region an appealing destination

for leisure tourism. After all, in the mid-nineteenth century, the region was often depicted as a space of lawlessness and danger, described by a popular dime novelist as “the paradise of traders, trappers, and thieves” and, as late as the early 1880s, the home to storied murderer Billy the Kid and to ongoing conflicts between the U.S. Calvary and Southwestern Indian tribes (Reid 40). Lummis’s writing drastically refigured the Southwest in the popular imaginary not as a violence-ridden outpost but as a sleepy region that had “never wakened” from a post-Conquest “after- nap” (Lummis 1893, 4). This revisionist history helped launch the Southwest as a space for early tourists to imagine and enact their ideas about patriotism, masculinity, and exoticism.

Lummis understood exactly how to make the Southwest appeal to readers and tourists, and his marketing of *Spanish Songs*—with an emphasis on exoticism and colonial nostalgia—is an example of his skill in advertising and marketing. Lummis understood that this fantasy of New Spain appealed to readers, and he wove this through his marketing of *Spanish Songs*. Before the book was published, he called on his most powerful Southwestern ally, the Fred Harvey Company, to help him secure sales. The Harvey Company dominated tourism in the Southwest in the early twentieth century—like Lummis, the hotel, restaurant, and leisure travel company had seized on the national interest in the Southwest in 1890s to great success. Their gift shops were ideal venues for selling *Spanish Songs*. Lummis worked as a sometime consultant to the Harvey Company, advising on sightseeing routes and advertising.<sup>34</sup>

Banking on these past collaborations, he appealed to them to sell copies of his fledgling *Spanish Songs*. He contacted Harvey House director J.F. Huckel to tell him about the project, noting, “I hope you will be able to handle a good many of these books for me in your vast

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<sup>34</sup> For more on the Harvey Company’s importance to Southwestern tourism and culture, see chapters 2 and 4.

enterprise” (Huckel Correspondence, 1923 Oct 4). Huckel was uncertain that the book would sell at Harvey establishments: “Our experience in handling songs, books of poetry and the like, has almost invariably been a disappointment both to the authors and to ourselves. People when traveling seem to prefer, almost exclusively, the light novels or ‘best sellers,’ and it is very difficult to direct their attention to books of any other nature” (Huckel Correspondence, 1923 Nov 3). Still, Huckel concluded his letter by conceding that the company would buy 50 copies to distribute to their employees as a means of continuing education—an integral part of Harvey workplaces, since employees’ knowledge of Southwestern culture was a point of pride.

Lummis responded to say that he’d anticipated the Harvey House might be hesitant to sell his book, but he suggested that *Spanish Songs* might “sell to some extent in your principal tourist hotels, like the Alvarado and El Tovar, particularly. There is a demand for everything Spanish; and this booklet of songs will be so strikingly handsome in appearance that it will sell where other collections would not” (Huckel Correspondence, Nov 15 1923). He was right. A few months later, Lummis heard from the Harvey Company again: they’d sold more copies of the book than they’d expected, and they needed to order additional copies. (Huckel Correspondence, March 7 1924). Over the next few years, the Harvey company ordered several hundred copies to sell at its Southwestern newsstands and gift shops.

This anecdote demonstrates Lummis’s power in the tourism industry by the early 1920s—both in that he convinced the Harvey Company to take a small risk in selling his book and that he recognized it would be popular even though the director of sales at the company did not. Moreover, the incident marks the beginning of the Harvey Company’s successful foray into

selling regional poetry and folk lore alongside the “light novels and ‘best sellers’ ” that they usually stocked.<sup>35</sup>

It’s also evident that Lummis understood that participatory experiences, such as playing and singing Spanish songs at home, would appeal to travelers in the Southwest who were eager to immerse themselves in the region and “everything Spanish.” These immersive models of tourism allowed tourists to “play” Spanish, in a fashion similar to Philip Deloria’s concept of “playing Indian” (129). Parallel to the ways in which people adopted cultural practices from Native Americans while endorsing violence against Native American people and their culture, interested parties experimented with cultural practices associated with Spanish-American/Latinx cultures in the Southwest without recognizing the frequent, and often state-approved, violence against Hispanic people in the Southwest and along the US/Mexico border (Martinez 662). Indeed, Lummis enthusiastically practiced Spanish *and* Indian play in the name of regional celebration. He sometimes dressed in Pueblo and Southwestern tribal clothing, but he *especially* shaped his daily life and work around his interest in colonial Spanish culture—he learned Spanish, recorded hundreds of Spanish folk songs on wax cylinders, and educated himself about Spanish and Central American cookery. He hosted dinner parties that featured Spanish language folk music concerts and Spanish colonial/Central American menus, and insisted that his children also learn to perform Spanish songs. Lummis also cultivated a public persona that centered on these interests; his marketability as a writer, editor, and public lecturer depended on his claiming

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<sup>35</sup> As I’ll discuss more in chapter four, the Harvey Company went on to distribute brochures of poetry to its passengers on sightseeing tours in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Lummis’s *Spanish Songs* was one of the company’s earliest successes in combining collections of verse with leisure travel.

an unparalleled knowledge about Spanish Southwest. Accordingly, he regularly gave interviews and lectures about his Spanish lifestyle.

Heather Diamond uses the term “culture brokers” to identify the misguided if well-intentioned figures like Lummis who endeavored to “shape and mediate culture” by interpreting it for outside consumption (5). In the process, these culture brokers answered to several competing groups, including “ethnographic subjects, sponsoring agencies, the media, and the public” (Diamond 5). The position of culture broker is sticky—answering to many interests, mediating on behalf of another culture (or several cultures), and manipulating the presentation of a culture to include or exclude certain political contexts. In particular, promoting Southwestern culture brought Lummis into contact with several forceful interests—a growing tourism industry, railroad and real estate interests, political issues related to tribal sovereignty, and interactions with the anthropologists and archaeologists who’d begun to turn their attention to the region’s rich cultures, both active and ancient. As Thomas Guthrie notes, the “heritage industry and anthropology are closely related, especially in the Southwest” (Guthrie 218). Multicultural tourism in the region adopted the “salvage mentality” of late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century anthropology, which assumed that ethnic, Indigenous, and folk traditions were on the verge of being lost forever. Enter the cultural savior, in the form of an anthropologist, a collector, or a tourism entrepreneur (or, like Lummis, someone who combined those three roles). Guthrie argues that these figures have ample common ground because “heritage itself is a quasi-anthropological category” (Guthrie 219).

Lummis carried out his projects with good intentions. He wanted to expand Americans’ sense of their heritage and history and to foster more appreciation for a culture that helped shape the United States. However, as we’ve seen, even when champions of multiculturalism and

preservationist work are very well-meaning, they are susceptible to the perspectives and prejudices of their times. Moreover, as Diamond notes, celebrations of folk traditions are inherently “embedded in politics,” whether those politics are the “liberal goals [of] subvert[ing] cultural elitism and hegemony” or conservative perspectives “that see tradition as a stable alternative to real political change” (Diamond 5-6). When cultural endeavors are crafted in a way that ignores or obscures politics—as was the case with Lummis’s recipes, song books, and his gentle history of Spanish conquest—extreme misrepresentation is inevitable.

It’s notable that Diamond and Guthrie are both writing about the phenomenon of multicultural tourism, although their case studies are quite recent: the Smithsonian Folklife Festivals of the 1980s and Southwestern tourism in the early-twenty first century, respectively. But their descriptions of conflicting interests, cultural tensions, and the dangerous desire to “preserve” a living culture resemble—and in fact, are sometimes identical to—the tendencies I’ve observed in Lummis’s projects from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As I’ve suggested, Lummis was among the first to capitalize on the appeal of this sort of consumable culture. If these descriptions sound familiar, then it’s partially because Lummis strongly influenced the model of multicultural tourism that Diamond and Guthrie examine. Perhaps this resemblance is also indicative of how little multicultural tourism has fundamentally changed. In many ways contemporary endeavors like those studied by Diamond and Guthrie remain motivated by the same unchecked voyeurism and other desires that drove Lummis to obsessively document, interpret, and market the Southwest.

Deloria’s study of Indian play focuses on the problematic power dynamics introduced when a settler culture masquerades as a colonized people—native cultures were put under attack, then imitated in diluted form by a settler nation. Spanish play invited tourists to position

themselves as conquerors, not the conquered, and presented Spanish conquest in a manner that ignored the violence of conquest and its legacies. Recalling the history of conquest through a cheerful lens wasn't unusual in historical narratives from the early twentieth century. Still, the cultural blinders created by such a perspective are notable and had a lasting impact on the touristic practices that still characterize much of the leisure and travel marketing of New Mexico, Arizona, and the four corners area of the Southwest (Guthrie 25-6).

Tourists were assured they'd experience the region authentically by going "off the beaten path," or possibly being the first among their friends to acquire a certain object or to have a certain experience through travel. Lummis returned to this idea repeatedly in his work, echoing the philosophy of "See America First" even in his first newspapers editorials, which eventually became *Some Strange Corners of our Country* (1892), one of the earliest English-language guides of the Southwest. Unlike frontier travelogues and regional ethnographies that preceded it, *Some Strange Corners of our Country* accounted for the possibility that its readers might plan to visit some of those strange corners, and it included some practical travel advice to make sightseeing easier (Goodman 34). Guided by Lummis's multiple volumes of travel writing and his influence on tourism enterprises, travelers could play cowboy or Indian when they toured the West, but they could also walk in the footsteps of the Spanish conquistadors who were equally represented in Lummis's travel writing on the region.

Lummis wrote about living and traveling in the Southwest as an opportunity for Americans to re-enact the best experiences of westward expansion by imaginatively following a path forged during Spain's conquest of the Americas. Perhaps that was exactly the framework that appealed to readers and potential tourists. Tourism in the American West was framed as an act that revived America's pioneering spirit; accordingly, leisure travel became conflated with a

settler-colonial perspective. It was framed as the best way to cultivate an appreciation of one's national history and heritage. In this context, good citizenship entailed traveling through colonized lands, viewing the land with the same entitlement as had its original European conquerors. What implications, then, did this popular form of tourism have for mainstream perspectives on race, historical claims to land rights, and tribal sovereignty?

This mindset matters because it shaped so much writing and activity in the Southwest over the next half century. Lummis's legacy determined how the Southwest circulated in American culture, both in commercial settings and through creative channels. Consequently, his mistakes and missteps—the problematic aspects of how he told the story of the American Southwest—had a long reach. He shaped the infrastructure of tourism in the Southwest, both indirectly, through his writing, and directly, in his partnership with the Harvey Company. Lummis came into a position of influence in the moment when the Southwest received lots of national interest, and he influenced how the region circulated in American popular culture for much of the twentieth century.

### 3.0 WHEN THE LOCAL AND THE OUTSIDER MEET: MARY AUSTIN'S MODERNIST, COMMERCIAL SOUTHWEST

In many ways, the Southwest had become, by the early twentieth century, a ready-made destination for large-scale commercial tourism. As discussed in the last chapter, the Southwest flourished under a model of tourism popularized by Charles Lummis. Lummis emphasized experiential regional tourism, including food, music, and spectacle. Regional writing and cultural projects about the Southwest helped propel the region's favor among tourists. Lummis's position as editor, regional booster, and public personality brought those forces together. Some of the nation's most prevalent fixations—including questions about post-frontier American identity and about the preservation (or loss) of Native American culture—converged in the Southwest. Those national interests were taken up by writers, artists, and scholars, and propelled more travel to the region.

Within two decades of Lummis's first travelogue about the Southwest, however, writers began rejecting aspects of Lummis's nationalistic, tourist-centered Southwest in favor of a more culturally highbrow interpretation of the region's value. The artists and writers who lived there became increasingly protective of the Southwest as it grew increasingly popular with and accessible to tourists. They had been drawn to the region's isolation and remoteness, and they'd enthusiastically adopted aspects of the local rustic, traditional lifestyle. The region appealed to the Southwestern intelligentsia *because* it was remote and (they liked to believe) largely

uninfluenced by modernization. For this reason, modernists worried that mass tourism threatened the region's integrity. In this chapter, I examine how modernists in the Southwest reconciled their mistrust of mass tourism with their involvement in commercial opportunities to design and market the Southwest to tourists.

I look specifically at the career of author Mary Austin, who lived most of her life in the Southwest and made a career as a writer and public intellectual associated with the region. Austin strongly influenced U.S. impressions of the Southwest, and was as important in establishing the Southwest as a region associated with modernism as Lummis had been important in establishing the Southwest as a tourist destination. I consider Austin's relationships to the cultures she knew as Spanish Colonial and Indian. In the name of protecting and giving currency to the Southwest, Austin promoted it as culturally important. However, she also worked to fend off the access of tourists (and sometimes, rival authors and cultural figures) to its cultural resources.

Surprisingly, Austin also regularly collaborated with tourism companies and even created her own tourist-friendly ventures. Austin's Southwestern projects demonstrate a peculiarly cooperative relationship between the middlebrow, popular force of tourism and the experimental, intellectual adventurousness of modernism. They reveal ways in which elements of modernism were absorbed into the marketing of Southwestern culture, as well as demonstrating how modernists established their relationship to the growing tourist industry. More broadly, the tensions between local artists and tourism interests contribute to our emerging understanding of modernism's commercial dimensions and its influence on commercial projects.

This chapter argues that the Southwest became a significant influence on modernist thought and writing and that, in turn, modernist principles sometimes overlapped and sometimes

conflicted with the commercial promotion of the Southwest. Austin's trajectory, from her early work in California to her prolific later years in Santa Fe, is also suggestive of a shift in how the Southwest was conceptualized for tourist purposes, moving from Californian mission tourism to the Indian tourism based in New Mexico and Arizona. More than any other author in this study, Austin's writing and projects show the ways that experimental literary culture converged with commercial interests and contributed to the expansion of the region's tourism industry.

Austin's career, as a case study, puts pressure on the long-standing assumption of modernist literature's disengagement from commercial concerns. A critical consensus maintains that the experimental literary movements associated with modernism existed in isolation from the commercial concerns of the publishing industry, such as profit, sales, and anticipating readers' tastes. When modernist writers *did* engage the commercial, the story goes, they were hesitant, and approached the commercial realm only as a last resort.<sup>36</sup> Austin's trajectory suggests that this isn't the full story. Along with many of her modernist peers in the Southwest, Austin not only participated in commercial projects, she often did so with apparent enthusiasm. Her embrace of tourist-friendly and commercial projects shows Austin's intention to merge modernist sensibilities regarding the value of the Southwest with mass tourism's aim to reach as many consumers as possible. The result was that Austin and her fellow artists helped to design

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<sup>36</sup> See Richard Pells and Joyce Piell Wexler's scholarship for more on the relationship between modernism and commercial interests. Pells and Wexler both demonstrate a closer and friendlier union between the two interests than previous scholarship has acknowledged. Pells focuses on the commercial work that modernist authors and artists did in advertising. Pells argues that modernists and entrepreneurs in the early twentieth century shared an interest in "innovation and novelty" that made for natural collaborations. Wexler focuses on the marketing of modernist writing, arguing that modernists (and their publishers) were strategic in how they appealed to audiences. Modernists were marketed *according* to their reputations as iconoclasts who "refused to court a popular audience" (Wexler xv). In this way, modernism's reputation for eschewing commercial appeal also made for a successful marketing campaign to appeal to readers who were interested in avant-garde and highbrow literature.

the experience of Southwestern tourists by fashioning a modernist-inflected form of mass tourism. Austin's involvement was motivated by her belief that the Southwest would truly benefit from the perspectives of outsiders like Austin, who wanted to preserve and celebrate Southwestern traditional culture.

Austin argued that she and her peers were in a unique position to act as stewards and boosters for Southwestern folkways *and* to introduce locals to the nuances of their own heritage. However, Austin's approaches to stewardship—while often well-intentioned and rooted in a respect for folk culture—reflect the tendencies toward primitivism and paternalism that often characterized modernism's encounters with Indigenous and folk cultures. Austin sometimes rejected input from the very communities she was invested in preserving and celebrating, and she often made the mistake of treating those communities as out of modernity's reach and frozen in time. Additionally, Austin did not feel that her Southwestern stewardship should preclude her from profiting from the marketing of Southwestern tradition and folkways in tourist enterprises.

Tracing Austin's career alongside the development of Santa Fe-based tourism, I'll first recover Austin's hand in planning and shaping tourist events that centered around New Mexican folk art. Austin was at the helm of planning art markets and a shop that sold folk art and craft, founding a preservationist society, and funding the restoration of a Spanish Colonial chapel, which became (and remains) a tourist attraction in northern New Mexico.

In the second half of this chapter, I will examine Austin's novel *Starry Adventure*, her frankest depiction of modernist life in New Mexico. *Starry Adventure* explores interactions between local New Mexicans; wealthy, recently-arrived artists and intellectuals; and the tourists who followed these tastemakers. Weighing the ramifications of such contact on longstanding traditions in the region, *Starry Adventure* critiques some of the behavior of newcomer

modernists, but ultimately presents those outsiders as important stewards for Southwestern tradition. Taken together, Austin's projects narrate modernism's influence on tourism in the Southwest.

### **3.1 "A PERMANENT HOLD ON THE FUTURE": SPANISH COLONIAL FOLKWAYS, TOURIST COMMERCE, AND AUSTIN'S PATH TO NEW MEXICO**

As a resident of Santa Fe in the late 1920s, Austin embodied dual roles as one of the Southwest's best-known public intellectuals and as an architect of Southwestern tourism. Through her role in founding the Spanish Colonial Arts Society and in planning the first Santa Fe Spanish Market, Austin helped stir modernist (and tourist) interest in New Mexican culture's long history of Spanish Colonial art and folkways.

Austin's Spanish Colonial projects demonstrate her position as self-appointed steward of the Southwest. They also reveal her involvement with tourism and merchandising in New Mexico. As I will argue in this section, such projects are indicative of the ways that regional modernists and the commercial interests in the Southwest worked side by side and frequently overlapped. They also reflect Austin's philosophy about the correct ways to document, preserve, and travel in the Southwest.

Before exploring Austin's projects in depth, it's useful to understand the process by which she came to Santa Fe, and how her time in New Mexico inspired her involvement in

preservationist projects.<sup>37</sup> Following several decades living in Europe and New York, Austin visited New Mexico in the early 1920s. While she had continued to write about and visit California and the Southwest during her time away from the region, this first visit to Santa Fe left Austin determined to move permanently back to the West.

In her 1932 memoir *Earth Horizon*, Austin explained that New York's urbane, fast-paced environment hindered her creativity because it was "not simple nor direct enough," and because New Yorkers were too "bemused by [the city's] own complexity" (349). The Southwest, on the other hand, had an inspiring "continuity" and a "permanent hold on the future." Austin wasn't alone in finding the Southwest's distinct traditions inspiring. This was also what Alice Corbin Henderson, Harriet Monroe, Witter Bynner, D.H. Lawrence, and Jean Toomer praised about the Southwest. But continuity and long-upheld traditions are not usually the qualities championed within literary modernism, a movement often characterized by its ruptures and breaks with past tradition.

What did Austin mean by "continuity," and why did it appeal to her? Austin was referring to the folkways of the Native and Hispano communities in the Southwest. While Hispano and Native traditions were dual interests for both modernists and sightseers, it's important to note that the communities were distinct groups with distinct, though historically

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<sup>37</sup> It is likely that Austin's interest in Spanish culture grew also from her exposure to Spanish Colonial history of the U.S. early in her career, when she lived in California. Austin knew and worked with Charles Lummis in the days when he was first producing writing about the Spanish Colonial Southwest that helped put the culture in vogue in the region. Lummis attempted to mentor Austin after his magazine *The Land of Sunshine* printed some of her early work, but Austin ultimately rejected his interests. She did remain a close friend of Lummis's wife Eve, to whom she dedicated *The Land of Little Rain*. Austin ended her working friendship with Lummis after he scolded her about her occasional misspelling or misuse of Spanish words. Lummis objected to Austin's use of the term "Puebloño." More generally, their correspondence suggests Austin's creative independence and unwillingness to heed Lummis's opinions frustrated his attempts to position her as one of his protégés.

interrelated, cultures and traditions. Following the convention of Hispano culture advocates of the time, Austin and other writers frequently used the terms Spanish and Hispana/o interchangeably. The terms Hispana and Hispano referred (and is still used in reference) to New Mexico-born people of Spanish and/or Mexican descent. Maureen Reed explains the term this way:

This New Mexican term of choice [. . .] referred to people of Spanish or Mexican descent who were lifelong residents of the state, just as their parents, grandparents, and often their great-grandparents had been before them. It served to differentiate this group of residents from Anglo and Mexican immigrants, as well as from American Indians. (Reed 2005, 6)

New Mexico's social and ethnic structure emerged from many centuries of conquest, territory dispute, and the introduction of colonial racial hierarchies. Old Hispano families in the area held wielded political, economic, and social power, and were part of an established, elite social order based on the prestige of Spanish lineages. Moreover, the territorial and later the state laws incorporated precedents established during Spanish Colonial rule—for example, vital water and farming rights were often assigned to property owners who could trace their titles back to land grants from the Spanish throne. For these reasons, New Mexican families of Spanish descent benefitted from asserting their seniority over more recently-arrived Anglo and Mexican immigrants.

For both social and economic reasons, Hispana/o New Mexicans were also a group distinct from New Mexican Native Americans; this category also included the Hispana/o New Mexicans who had Indigenous ancestors but were not members of any tribal nations. Though inspired by somewhat different motivations, the Native tribes in the Southwest were also focused

on lineage. This was both a means of ensuring cultural longevity in the face of colonization, and, after the area became part of the U.S. in 1848, a means of meeting the terms of the federal government's invention of blood quantum laws as a way to quantify racial belonging. These laws were established to police and restrict tribal enrollments.

Given those communities' complex reasons for giving serious weight to their histories, lineages, and heritages, Austin wasn't just being romantic when she praised Hispana/o and Native New Mexicans for being unchanged and untouched by modernity—there were very real traditions upheld in both communities.

As Austin frequently argued, it was that unchanging quality that she and other modernists looked to for aesthetic inspiration. The traditional folkways of the Southwest provided modernists with a chance to break from mainstream culture, simply because those traditions existed in relative isolation from transatlantic trends and movements. In this way, a prejudices of provincial northern New Mexico aligned with the primitivism and emphasis on racial authenticity embraced by Austin and other modernists.

In *Earth Horizon* Austin recalled the pivotal moment that set her on a path to Santa Fe, the Spanish Colonial Society, and all the projects associated with those interests. It occurred when Austin met with a group of Mexican revolutionaries who contacted her after “several [of Austin's] articles for *The Nation* [...] attracted [their] attention” (336). Austin had written in support of the Mexican Revolution's reverence for folk and Indigenous cultures. The revolutionaries, apparently glad to hear of Austin's enthusiasm, requested to meet with her while she was in New Mexico.

The meeting further cemented Austin's interest in reviving and preserving the art forms of the Indigenous Southwest and the Colonial Spanish borderlands of North America. Austin wrote:

[The meeting] roused me to the realizations of the immense cultural activities going on up and down the great central plateau, and the importance of these matters to the whole Southwest. What I felt in New Mexico was the possibility of the reinstatement of the hand-craft culture and of the folk drama, following the revival of those things in Mexico. I began definitely to plan to locate at Santa Fe and to work explicitly in that field. (Austin 336)

Austin says nothing about the politics of the Mexican Revolution. In her writing, Austin's politics leaned toward socialism, and she also frequently participated in activist movements for social justice and equality. Her passage in *Earth Horizon* treats this meeting as a bragging point: her work was sophisticated enough to catch the eye of the (greater) Southwest's ultimate folk revivalists. However, this account is mainly significant as evidence of Austin's longstanding commitment to the preservation of Southwestern folk cultures. Following her first visits to New Mexico, Austin began to argue that Hispano folkways were a too often overlooked but vital component of U.S. culture. In these works, she saw a set of populist aesthetic traditions that hadn't been fully appreciated or utilized by U.S. creative culture—and her meeting with agents of the Mexican revolution propelled her interest even more.

Austin imagined a kind of Southwestern futurism, wherein the aesthetic cultures of the Southwest had a “permanent hold on the future” and provided artists and authors with new creative directions (336). Austin contrasted the Southwest with the creative communities she'd known in New York, which were “too narrow” and “lacked freshness” (336). Within a few years

of her first visit, Austin permanently moved to Santa Fe and began to undertake a series of projects focused on the preservation and documentation of Hispana/o culture.<sup>38</sup>

Austin's mission to revive Hispana/o New Mexican culture began with a simple idea: an arts competition. In 1926 Austin placed an advertisement in the local Santa Fe newspaper announcing "a prize competition for modern examples of Spanish colonial arts and crafts, open to any native New Mexican of Spanish descent," an idea she'd conceived of and planned along with artist Frank Applegate and several other Santa Feans who shared her interest in Spanish Colonial art (Pedace 16). The resulting event was a success, and it evolved into a full-fledged annual event called Spanish Market, which involved artists who worked in traditional Spanish art forms such as *santos*, *bultos*, *retablos*, altar screens, and tinwork.<sup>39</sup> A few years after the initial success of the competition, Austin and Applegate co-founded the Spanish Colonial Arts Society in 1929, which aimed "to preserve and support the work of Hispanic artisans" (Rudnick 90). On behalf of the Spanish Colonial Arts Society, Austin raised funds to purchase and renovate a Spanish chapel in Chimayo, New Mexico.<sup>40</sup> Architect John Gaw Meem, one of the originators of the Pueblo Revival architectural style, oversaw the renovation.

All of those projects were fueled by the popularity of Austin's first Spanish Market. Her initial announcement of the competition provides important details about her relationship to folk culture and preservation. When Austin first announced the competition, she explained that she'd

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<sup>38</sup> Together with Witter Bynner, Austin began collecting Spanish-language plays and songs from Mexico with the intention of publishing some of those materials in a collection. The publication never happened, but her letters further indicate an enthusiasm for reviving many aspects of Spanish Colonial and Mexican culture.

<sup>39</sup> Visual artists in New Mexico were equally inspired by Spanish Colonial culture. Photographer John Candelario photographed Hispano *santos* in the homes of New Mexicans in the 1930s, and modernist painter Marsden Hartley was painting abstracted *bultos* as early as the 1910s.

<sup>40</sup> A significant example of Spanish colonial architecture, the sanctuary was (and remains) a popular destination for Holy Week pilgrimages.

been inspired to revive Spanish colonial arts and crafts after doing some field research along the U.S. Southwestern border in 1925 on behalf of the Carnegie Foundation's Americanization Study, which evaluated diasporas and immigrant communities in the United States (Dawson and Goodman 207).

It was during these travels that she grew interested in Latinx and Hispana/o culture. She wrote:

[During the Carnegie-funded travel] I became acquainted with one of the native resources of the state which was then, and is still, practically unworked, a resource from which not only financial returns could be expected, but good repute, the respect and admiration of the world outside. I mean the resources of artistic capacity resident in our Spanish colonial population [...] [M]any people thought as I did [...] that the capacity to produce work of equal value remains with the Spanish-speaking population, and could, with very little encouragement become a profitable activity among them. (qtd Pedace 16)

This excerpt reflects several of Austin's tendencies when engaging with folk culture and preservation—tendencies shared by other modernists in the Southwest. First, Austin was certain that a folk revival would bring about “the respect and admiration of the world outside.” Her dual fixations on authenticity and global acclaim create a tension that runs through nearly all her projects. She wanted to assemble international recognition for the cultures she spent much of her career documenting. However, she also worried that national recognition (and the mass tourism that would follow) might compromise the Southwest's integrity—her answer to this dilemma was to strictly police what counted as “authentic.” In the case of the Spanish market, Austin eschewed the mass production of Spanish-style crafts and chose to instead consider only the work of “native New Mexicans of Spanish descent”—that wasn't a small population, but it

certainly excluded many artists who were producing Spanish colonial-style work in the 1920s Southwest.<sup>41</sup>

Second, Austin's announcement reflects her characteristic paternalism toward local folk artists. Austin suggests that she and the other patrons of the competition had recognized an artistic capacity so far unappreciated and latent in Hispana/o New Mexican culture. Austin believed she was positioned to determine the racial purity of these artists—and the Spanish market required (and continues to require) that participants show proof of their Spanish colonial lineage. In New Mexico, Spanish lineage was sometimes framed as superior to Indigenous lineage—Austin followed suit by demanding that artists assure their genealogies included Spanish backgrounds. However, it's notable that she upheld the idea that Spanish lineage was a marker of quality or superiority.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, Austin calls these Hispana/o traditions “resources” that would serve to benefit U.S. art and literature more generally, evoking the language of exploitation typical of settler colonialism. By this logic, the value of this cultural history appears to be dependent upon its usefulness for modernist artists and for commercial audiences.

I do not mean to suggest that Austin was not sincerely committed to preserving Hispana/o culture, or that she had intended to financially exploit those artists when she helped establish a larger consumer market for Spanish colonial art. However, Austin's intense interest in New Mexico's Hispana/o culture, and her enthusiasm for the Mexican Revolution's exaltation of folk

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<sup>41</sup> This way of formulating authentic Spanish/Hispano identity relied on ideas about racial purity that have a long history of motivating anti-Indigenous racism in settler-colonial spaces.

<sup>42</sup> As Maureen Reed explains, the proof of Spanish lineage was (and remains) a factor in the Spanish Market participation and in other Santa Fe Fiesta events. A New Mexican proclaiming lineage in one of the “original Spanish families” in northern New Mexico connotes a prestige akin to the first families of Virginia or the Daughters of the American Revolution.

culture, both seem to be at odds with her commercial projects. In spite of her strong feelings about authenticity in cultural preservation, several of Austin's projects aligned with the tourist economy dominating 1920s Santa Fe.

In the late 1920s, the Fred Harvey Company added more Hispano content to its Santa Fe-based tourism experiences—seemingly responding to the success of Austin's Spanish Colonial Arts Society. The Harvey Company advertised both the Spanish market and the Spanish Shop as tourist attractions in Santa Fe, and Harvey gift shops added Hispano/o-made art and craft to their stock. The Harvey Company also publicized the Spanish Colonial Society's acquisition of the Chimayo chapel and planned sightseeing tours to see the chapel. While the Company wasn't explicitly involved in this renovation, the chapel was a regular stop on their automobile tours. The Harvey Company also publicized projects by Austin and her peers, through written materials distributed to tourists. The company released weekly information bulletins to Harvey couriers, an all-female group of tour guides who were touted as Southwestern experts; those bulletins, produced under the guidance of courier director Farona Konopak, detailed the Chimayo renovation, the Spanish Market, and many of Austin's other projects ("Courier's Instructional Bulletin" no. 44). Austin and other writers were hired by the Harvey Company to serve as consultants and contributing authors of these materials.

The Spanish Colonial Arts society joined other tourist-friendly shops on the Santa Fe Plaza, such as the newsstands and gift shops of the Harvey Company's La Fonda, by also making Hispano/o art available for tourists and collectors to purchase. From 1930 to 1933 the Spanish Colonial Arts Society had an associated store, The Spanish Shop, on the Santa Fe Plaza, which sold the work of artists in the Spanish market and negotiated with galleries in the eastern U.S. to host some of their pieces (Pedace 18). The shop also partnered with Edgar Hewett's Museum of

New Mexico to promote Spanish Colonial arts and performance events during Santa Fe's annual Fiesta. In these ways, Austin's preservationist projects helped to mold the tourist industry's ways of depicting the Southwest, shaping in turn the content of sightseeing tours, the reading material given to travelers, and the priorities of the Company at a corporate level.

Austin and her Spanish Colonial Society were not the only people actively working towards historical preservation and cultural revival in northern New Mexico. A Hispana/o cultural preservationist named Cleofas Jaramillo was producing comparably large, elaborate initiatives that grew alongside to the Spanish Colonial Society's art events and building renovations—but Jaramillo and Austin's projects never overlapped. Jaramillo's career contrasts to the work Austin did, particularly because Jaramillo was herself of Hispano heritage and founded the preservationist group *La Sociedad Folklorica* in the 1930s as a corrective to the Hispano cultural preservation efforts that were funded by white patrons.

Jaramillo was moved to reclaim Hispano folkways from the patrons of the Spanish Colonial Society after observing some inaccuracies in the Society's literature and practices. She began working for the preservation of local folkways around the same time that Austin did, in the late 1920s (Reed 69). She was aware of Austin's projects and she was partially motivated to begin her own preservationist work because she disagreed with the Society's representations of Hispano culture. Jaramillo believed there was a demand for better, more accurate Hispano heritage tourism in New Mexico (Reed 69).

Her inspiration came from an unexpected source: the Deep South. After reading about elaborate "pilgrimage" events in Natchez, Mississippi, involving antebellum costumes and pageantry, Jaramillo realized that northern New Mexico's Hispano communities could easily host versions of this sort of tourist-centered celebration of historical culture and architecture.

Following Mississippi's nostalgia-based tourism, Jaramillo imagined elaborate events that celebrated Hispano New Mexico's domestic traditions (Reed 69).<sup>43</sup> Jaramillo and some like-minded friends began an initiative to bring authentic Hispano events to the 1934 Santa Fe Fiesta, including the showing of traditional costumes, the performance of traditional dances, and the preparation of traditional food (a "Spanish chocolate *merienda*," though Jaramillo had initially hoped to have a *matanza*-style barbecue) (Reed 108).

The next year, Jaramillo founded *La Sociedad Folklorica* with the mission to continue exposing tourists to New Mexican Hispano folkways in a manner she believed to be more accurate than the Hispano-focused projects designed by white arts patrons in Santa Fe (Reed 106-7). Jaramillo was concerned with maintaining Hispano traditions and heritage within her community of Hispano New Mexicans. If those projects attracted the attention and money of tourists, all the better, because the work of her society countered some of the inaccuracies she observed in Austin's work. For example, Jaramillo worked with Edgar Hewett to plan events for the Santa Fe Fiesta, after she pointed out some of mistakes in the Anglo-led events during the Fiesta. Jaramillo also wrote several memoirs and a cookbook, *The Genuine New Mexican Tasty Recipes* (1939), meant to provide more authentic recipes than those she'd observed printed in magazine articles about Southwestern tourism, which often listed inaccurate ingredients or misrepresented the staples of New Mexican cuisine (Reed 106).

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<sup>43</sup> It is notable that Natchez Pilgrimage celebrations were revived in the early twentieth century, a period of pervasive racial violence and oppression in the Deep South. By focusing the celebration's antebellum nostalgia on white domesticity, the vileness of a society built on slavery remained subtext. In this way, the perspective of the Natchez Pilgrimage *wasn't* so different from Jaramillo's vision of Colonial New Mexico, wherein the slavery, torture, and sexual violence of Spain's conquest was erased in favor of a nostalgic look at pre-1848 Hispano home life.

Jaramillo worked in opposition to the achievements of Austin (and by association, those of the Harvey Company), which sought national acclaim for the Hispano traditions and prioritized commercial interests. Jaramillo agreed with Austin's mission to publicize Hispano culture. But Austin and her collaborators did not seek the advice or involvement of any Hispano New Mexicans, with the exception of the Hispano artists that Austin vetted for participation in the Spanish Market. Jaramillo believed instead that Hispano arts were best understood and promoted *by* Hispano preservationists.

Jaramillo's projects were successful in Santa Fe—with her help, the city incorporated more Hispano culture and history into their festivities. But she never partnered with the Harvey Company or received the kind of Harvey-endorsed exposure that helped propel some of the Spanish Colonial Society's projects. Perhaps this was Jaramillo's choice. It's likely that she'd have objected to the Harvey Company's commodification of Hispano culture through translation and misrepresentation (recall that Lummis was one of the early figures helping develop the Harvey Company's approach to cultural tourism). It's also quite possible that the Harvey Company never approached her, as the Company tended to work with white authors and artists like Austin who appeared to share the Harvey commitment to popularizing the Southwest.

### **3.2     DETOURS, COLONIES, AND CULTURE CENTERS: AUSTIN'S CAMPAIGN           AGAINST THE WOMAN'S CLUB OF TEXAS**

Mary Austin's Spanish Colonial projects might indicate that she had an uncomplicated relationship to tourism in Santa Fe. After all, her work with the Colonial Society, the Spanish Market, and the Harvey Company were all in the service of adding a new layer of touristic

interest to the Santa Fe experience. However, these projects are only one facet of Austin's relationship with tourism in the Southwest. In the same years that she partnered with the Harvey Company, Austin also campaigned against certain tourist initiatives and published some scathing criticisms of mass tourism.

In this section I'll examine two instances when Austin stepped into public forums to discuss Southwestern tourism. First, I'll look at a 1925 campaign that Austin led against the establishment of a Women's Club-sponsored arts community in Santa Fe. Next, I track Austin's 1920s support of the Fred Harvey Company's automobile sightseeing tours. Both these examples show that Austin was mainly comfortable with touristic enterprises when she had some influence over their messaging.

As I've noted, Austin frequently collaborated with the Fred Harvey Company and took the tourist industry into consideration when she worked on her own projects, such as the Spanish Shop. She also collaborated with Edgar Hewett, one of the founders of the New Mexico Museum—like Austin, Hewett encouraged artists and writers to travel to New Mexico (Joseph 86). However, Austin also expressed concerns about the effects of mass tourism in Santa Fe. The clearest example of her concern is her campaign against the establishment of a new arts community in Santa Fe. Austin was immediately resistant to a 1925 proposal by the Texas Women's Club to establish a "summer university" in Santa Fe that they would call the Culture Center of the Southwest (Joseph 86). The Texas Women's Club, a branch of the Federation of Women's Clubs, hoped to establish a summer colony in the tradition of the Chautauqua adult education movement. They planned to offer attendees seminars and workshops focused on Southwestern topics.

The Culture Center's proposal is a testament to how attractive Santa Fe had become to a national audience by the 1920s: people were eager to visit and to learn about the area. The Culture Center plan was hardly disruptive—the women planned to build a facility outside the city, in fact. The proposal received support from Edgar Hewett and the School of American Research, an important archaeology institute housed in Santa Fe. Those institutions had “little reason to anticipate that any of Santa Fe's constituencies would resist the Culture Center plan,” in part because Santa Fe hosted so many similar initiatives, including sightseeing tours, museum-hosted artist residencies, and regular public lectures and workshops (Joseph 86).

Austin's resistance may not have been expected by Hewett or the Texas Women's Club, but she was able to quickly gather fellow writers to support her campaign, including Witter Bynner and Alice Corbin Henderson. With Austin at the helm, the writers, who'd all moved to New Mexico within ten years of taking action against the Culture Center, founded the “Old Santa Fe Association” with the explicit purpose of resisting the Culture Center. Largely propelled by Austin, the Old Santa Fe Association launched a letter writing campaign to the Federation of Women's Clubs and published several editorials protesting the Culture Center (Joseph 87). As Philip Joseph argues, Austin's success in leading this resistance and defeat of the Culture Center reveals her ambivalence about Santa Fe's growth and, perhaps more importantly, it's evidence of the power she held as an influential figure shaping Santa Fe's tourism industry (Joseph 87).

Austin and her supporters argued that a busy summer institute would crowd Santa Fe and disrupt the peace and quiet that made Santa Fe an attractive place for working artists and writers. One of Austin's primary arguments rested on the fact that she and her friends had established their own informal creative communities in Taos and Santa Fe. Austin rejected the term art

colony, as she felt it implied a lack of involvement in local community—a concern she expressed specifically about the Texas women’s club’s proposed summer colony.

Austin’s campaign was successful: within the year, the women’s club withdrew their proposal (Joseph 87). The resistance of Austin and her peers was probably a slap in the face for the Woman’s Club, as they’d given their support to some of Austin’s activist causes, which were often in the service of protecting or increasing tribal sovereignty. The Federation of Women’s Clubs had backed Austin’s protest against the Bursum Bill, which would have legitimized the claims of non-Natives living on Indian lands (Burke 20; Dawson and Goodman 221). Moreover, Austin’s intellectual milieu wasn’t so far from that of the women’s clubs she critiqued. She frequently toured the country as a lecturer, delivering talks on the West, women’s rights, and literary history to groups of clubwomen. Those lecture tours were a significant part of how Austin built her national cultural prestige and supported herself financially. Perhaps the Texas Woman’s Club’s fatal mistake was not inviting Austin and her peers to join their planning.

The year after the Culture Center was defeated, Austin published an article in *The New Republic* praising the city of Santa Fe’s decision to keep the city free of summer colonies and the patrons they attracted. The adult education movement, Austin wrote, led “a vast majority of Americans [to believe] that ‘culture’ is generated in ‘courses’ and proceeds as by nature from the lecture platform” (195). She continued: “There are [...] two types of cultural center, the creative and the Chautauqua, and the two are incompatible in the same community” (196). Austin objected to the Chautauqua movement’s conception of culture as something attainable through a specialized course of study.

The Southwest, she argued, couldn’t be reduced to lecture series and seminars. Further, she disagreed with the idea that a temporary colony of artists could produce valuable art; rather,

“places, particularly places artists called home, produced art” (Burke 369). This assertion reflects Austin’s core belief that a deep knowledge of place shapes aesthetic traditions.

Austin’s resistance to the Culture Center on the grounds that it would crowd and disrupt Santa Fe is puzzling, because large groups of visitors were *already* crowding the city. By the mid-1920s Santa Fe was home to many hotels, gift shops, and restaurants—mostly meant to accommodate the thousands of out-of-state tourists that visited the city each year. The force that made this elaborate tourism possible was the Harvey Company, which provided the lodging, entertainment, food, and shopping experiences that had come to characterize the a Southwestern vacation. The Harvey Company’s agenda for tourists was likely to include music and dance performances and sightseeing tours—forms of entertainment more intrusive than the seminars and lecture series proposed by the women’s club. How was it that Austin could resist the Culture Center while also collaborating with an industry meant to facilitate exactly the kind of touristic engagement that Austin found to be insidious and gauche?

Austin sometimes wrote editorials praising the Harvey Company. These writings offer some insight into how she inhabited these seemingly contradictory roles. Austin wrote in support of the Fred Harvey Company’s Indian Detour, an elaborate, multiday sightseeing automobile tour through northern New Mexico. Austin contributed her writing to a few brochures associated with the Detour, joining Harriet Monroe, Alice Corbin Henderson, Witter Bynner, and Lynn Riggs in that endeavor. The Detour appealed to Austin’s belief that tourists must have authentic encounters with the “real” Southwest in order to fully appreciate the region’s value. Indeed, the tourism industry and modernist Southwestern authors privileged a “detoured” Southwest: an authentic relation to the area that had to be specially sought out, in contrast with more mainstream and superficial forms of travel.

Austin praised the Detour in a 1929 article for *The Bookman*. In the article, Austin expressed some concern about the effects of mass tourism on her beloved Southwest, but she ultimately settled on the Detour as a *corrective* to insidious tourism. She saw the Detour as demonstrative of an aesthetic ideology shared by artists in New Mexico. The Detour, she wrote, was not simply a driving route and it was “not so much an idea, an illumination, but by the phrase that heads this account of it, a detour, a variation from the well mapped creative way, an Indian Detour” (654). Austin’s description suggests that the Indian Detour could in theory replicate some of the creative evolution that she and many of her peers experienced in the Southwest.

For Austin, the Indian influence was a crucial part of the creative dynamic that she found in the Southwest. In the same *Bookman* article she explains: “it is the Indian life here that gives the note, that subtends like a deep embracing chord the various themes that arise and sing themselves out in various mediums in varied minds” (654). In Austin’s rendering, the Harvey Company’s driving detour took an ephemeral experience—a radical creative rebirth—and made it into an organized, accessible experience for tourists. Among the many touristic ventures that emerged at the height of Southwestern tourism, the Indian Detour was especially elaborate. Tourists covered lots of ground on the three- or five-day tour, and the journey was predicated on a hurried, “see it all” approach to traveling in Indian Country.

Given the reductive nature of the Indian Detour, Austin’s endorsement is surprising. While her Spanish Colonial Arts Society and Spanish Market were also designed to target tourists in Santa Fe, those ventures were within the realm of Austin’s control, operated by herself and her close friends. Moreover, unlike the Indian Detour, which traveled through several tribal nations, Austin’s Spanish Colonial pursuits were mostly based in Santa Fe, a city already adapted

to large numbers of tourists. Austin, along with likeminded members of the local intelligentsia such as Frank Applegate and museum founder Edgar Lee Hewett, designed these projects and could therefore shape them to support a level of cultural engagement that they deemed meaningful yet manageable. But the Indian Detour was part of the much larger network of sightseeing tours, themed hotels and restaurants, and spectacle-focused entertainment that made up the Harvey Southwest.

Harvey tours adopted some aspects of the Chautauqua formula that Austin critiqued in her resistance to the Women's Club Culture Center. For example, while the Indian Detour *did* take its passengers on the road, it was designed to streamline the Chautauqua-like process of efficiently learning about a culture. The Detour offered tourists a series of tour guides and informative brochures to peruse while they traveled by train or car around the West, promising to pack full cultural immersion into a three-to-five day agenda. What convinced Austin to favor the Harvey Company? Austin's writing about tourism—both for the Harvey Company and elsewhere—suggests that part of her willingness to advertise the Harvey Company was because those ventures gave her some control over how large crowds of tourists saw and experienced the Southwest. If she could help plan the Indian Detour and contribute to the Detour's supplemental information for passengers, then perhaps she could determine how the Harvey Company fit its projects into the landscape of Southwestern tourism, and how the Southwest was represented to tourists.

Austin recognized that by the 1920s tourism was an integral part of the Southwest's economy—it wasn't going away. She hoped that by encouraging the industry to make cultural authenticity part of their mission (and marketing), she could preserve some aspects of the Southwest that she valued. Moreover, Austin *did* want to see the Southwest receive more

recognition and acclaim for its cultural treasures, rather than seeing the Southwest marketed only as a destination for outdoor enthusiasts (an angle that characterized some of the Rocky Mountain tourism in the Mountain West) or a place for health tourism (the region had once been known for resorts offering hot spring “cures” and tuberculosis treatments). In contrast, Austin pushed the Harvey Company to create tourism ventures that focused on the Southwest’s special blend of cultural influences. In that way, she could be more certain that the Southwest was being celebrated in a manner that ensured some level of cultural appreciation and preservation.

It’s important to also acknowledge the financial incentives that likely drove Austin to work with the Harvey Company. It’s difficult to recover information about Austin’s agreements with the Harvey Company regarding compensation, but given that she was not wealthy—she sometimes was forced to borrow money from friends or ask for advances from her publishers—it seems likely that the Harvey paychecks would have been welcome. Not all Southwest modernists were involved in financial partnerships with tourist industries, and those peers of Austin who *didn’t* work in tourism were often more critical of its effects. Spud Johnson, a poet and editor of the Taos-based little magazine *The Laughing Horse*, frequently mocked the tourism industry in his small-circulation satirical newspaper, *The Horse Fly* (even though he also contributed some writing in promotion of the 1928 Santa Fe Fiesta, as I discuss in the afterword to this dissertation). The independently wealthy arts patron Mabel Dodge Luhan never worked with the Harvey Company in any capacity, though she did once encourage the Harvey Company to open a Taos hotel, in order to relieve Luhan of some of her many long-term houseguests (Luhan to Austin 1921 AU3577).

The trajectories of the Culture Center and the Indian Detour also demonstrate how quickly tourism expanded in the 1920s, with the Harvey Company leading the charge. The

number of hotels, gift shops, entertainment events, and driving tours rapidly grew across the Southwest, especially in New Mexico. Under these circumstances, the defeat of the Culture Center is indicative of the kind of complicated, sometimes defensive impulses modernists developed in response to the Southwest's popularity. Austin, likely recognizing the power that the Harvey Company held in her home state, worked with and wrote positively about the Harvey tours for the company's publications.

At odds with Austin's support for Harvey enterprises was her fear that sightseeing tourism might turn Native art and culture into tourist commodities. Austin expressed concern that the "great American mill is at work also upon the Indian material, rubber-stamping him down into dull replicas of the elements in our population by whom the hope of a genuinely American esthetic is denied" ("The Indian Detour" 658). Austin wryly wrote that this sense of an endangered culture lent "a tragic zest to the Santa Fe adventure" ("The Indian Detour" 658). Specifically, she distrusted the "rubber-stamping" of Native "material"—the mass production of Native goods and the mass promotion of Native tourism, economies that boomed thanks to Harvey tourists. Surprisingly, she presented those economies in contrast, not in kind, to the Indian Detour. The Detour, Austin believed, did a better job respecting the cultural integrity of the tribes it visited.

Austin backed exactly the sort of ventures that had brought a tourist economy to the Southwest in the first place and motivated the mass production of Native-made goods. However, she framed the Indian Detour as an alternative to this "rubber-stamping." Through some rhetorical gymnastics, she justified the Harvey Company's Indian Detour as a way to *defend* the Southwest against the influence of Harvey-like mass tourism. Rather, the Indian Detour could

help keep “real” Indian art, craft, and culture intact by taking the consumer to Indian Country, to experience Native culture in the Pueblos.

Austin’s emphasis on the importance of “saving” Indian culture from corruption is another example of the paternalism that drove her preservationist projects. In her worries over “rubber-stamping” Indian culture, she assumed that any contact with modernity or technology would corrupt or lessen the value of Native production and diminish the lives of Native people. But Austin was incorrect in this assessment. Many scholars argue that the introduction of a tourist economy facilitated artistic innovation, as well as profits, for Native artists, in spite of the inherent inequality of those partnerships. Native artists often established agency and bargaining power in setting the economic terms of their trade with tourist agencies. In protesting mass production of Native goods, Austin and other modernists failed to recognize that Native American art was as adaptive and subject to evolution as was any other living art form; neither did they acknowledge the economic incentives for artists to adopt more efficient means of production (Bsumek, 37-39). As such, many modernists in the Southwest understood Indigenous cultures as valuable only if they appeared to be “precapitalist utopia[s] in which only use value, never exchange value, prevail[ed]” (Torgovnick, 8). When Native artists deviated from this “primitivist ideal,” perhaps to produce a piece of art that better met a buyer’s demands, they were understood to have been “rendered inauthentic through contact with modern society” (Deloria 137).

Austin’s strong opinion of what constituted authenticity drove both her resistance to the Culture Center and her endorsement of the Indian Detour. She worried that the Culture Center would misrepresent the Southwest as she and her modernist peers saw it, because it was being designed by outsiders (the Texas Woman’s Club) and wasn’t consulting any of the locals who

worked toward cultural preservation (that is, Austin and her friends). Austin valued the Southwest because she saw it as a culture frozen in time, with little access to the outside world. It was a place that was difficult to traverse, and its landscape was inspiring in part *because* of that difficulty. Through projects like the Indian Detour (or an Austin-vetted event like Spanish Market), tourists could be given a controlled, mediated glimpse of those qualities. But the Culture Center, without the oversight of Austin or any other locals—to Austin’s mind, it threatened to run rampant over the preservation work and protections that she tried to instill.

Austin’s editorials protesting the Culture Center and endorsing the Harvey Indian Detour leave little room for nuance on the subject of tourism. This is likely because she saw there was much to lose if she misspoke: she might have given away her town to a group of Texans, or lost the lucrative favor of the region’s most powerful patron of Southwestern artists and writers. However, her novels from this era offer a more complex sense of how Austin imagined the relationship between modernist outsider, tourist, and Southwestern local. In the next section, I turn to her novel *Starry Adventure* (1931) to understand how Austin wrote about the tensions between outsiders and locals when she wasn’t explicitly writing on behalf of a tourist project or addressing an audience of tourists.

### **3.3 “YOU BELONG HERE?”: MARY AUSTIN’S *STARRY ADVENTURE***

Austin’s 1931 novel *Starry Adventure* explores the sometimes-charged meetings that occurred between locals and newcomers in New Mexico. The novel offers a contrast to her unwavering support of the Indian Detour and similar commercial ventures. Instead, *Starry Adventure* provides a close study of the effects of the modernist Southwest on local

communities. Set in a Taos-like village, it depicts encounters between artists, writers, wealthy bohemians, and local Southwesterners. Austin's portraits of newcomers to the Southwest are nuanced and sometimes self-deprecating: her modernist characters are flawed and sometimes humorous in their romantic zeal for the Southwest.

*Starry Adventure's* central concern is how those modernists' presence affects and influences local communities. As I'll argue, Austin makes a case for the overall positive impact of the modernist Southwest. She implies that the presence of more creative, innovative communities brought further enrichment to an already vibrant culture. Austin makes no mention of cultural appropriation or co-opting. Instead the encounters between the local and the creative outsider are depicted as nurturing local people's creative skills, reviving would-be lost traditions, and introducing new, radical ideas to local communities. In keeping with many of the preservationist projects that Austin undertook, this perspective was paternalistic and quite self-congratulatory.

In this section, I offer close readings of two relationships in *Starry Adventure*. I first consider the relationship between Gard Sitwell, the young man who is the protagonist of the novel, and his mentor Marvin, a disciplined architect specializing in Southwestern vernacular architecture. I next consider the relationship between Gard and Eudora, his first lover. Marvin embodies the *right* kind of modernist newcomer: principled and studious, Marvin respectfully adapts his craft to fit the vernacular traditions of the Southwest. Eudora, then, is the less desirable sort of transplant. She moved to the Southwest because she learned it was chic, and while the novelty of the place initially thrilled her, she ultimately proves unobservant and uninterested in learning about the region.

*Starry Adventure* begins with Gard's mostly idyllic childhood in a small, northern New Mexico town that is reminiscent of Taos. Gard's family is impoverished and intellectual—his father is a poet in bad health, and his publications don't yield quite enough money to support the family. But their noble poverty does not faze Gard. We learn that "except for when he saw mother worrying, or when he really wanted to go to the Snake Dance, or the Rodeo at Las Vegas, he couldn't see that being poor meant anything that particular" (93). As a boy Gard fixates on the idea of a "starry adventure," Gard's name for a feeling of certainty and optimism concerning his future—a certainty he links to his fondness for New Mexican landscapes and ambience.

Gard's desire for adventure doesn't compel him to leave his hometown. Rather, his sense of possibility is linked to his day-to-day life in New Mexico. These ideas are often expressed in somewhat mystic language, such as in this passage depicting Gard's thoughts at sunset:

He heard the long yearning chant of the Penitentes die away, and after it the flute trailing above the moonlit vault two or three stars glowed whitely. The sense of his great adventure came over him...but when...but where? The sense of Presence was around him; he lifted up his arms. He would have called to It, but he did not know Its name.  
(121-22)

Austin conflates Gard's abstraction—the *sense* of a great adventure, an "It" without name—with sensory experiences of the Southwest. The passage makes reference to the Penitentes, Catholic practitioners of an archaic ritualistic self-flagellation unique to northern New Mexico and associated with practices brought to the Americas by early Spanish missionaries.<sup>44</sup> The

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<sup>44</sup> The Penitente Brotherhood practiced ritual of self-flagellation in accordance with Catholic religious observations, and they also held a powerful position in local politics. For more on the Penitentes' history and cultural position in New Mexican culture. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz argues that the Penitente communities of northern new Mexico became "a key social institution" for

Penitentes are followed by the music of flutes, an instrument important to Pueblo ritual and worship, as “the [sound of a] flute trailing” into Gard’s window. The Penitente chants and the flute music are suggestive of New Mexico’s distance from modernity: Colonial-era and pre-Colonial sounds are part of the fabric of an ordinary night.

Gard’s attention then turns to the clear night sky, and he’s overcome with a feeling of transcendence. These obscure descriptions of sense of place and of the natural world are typical of Austin’s writing, and reminiscent of much of the modernist discourse about the Southwest. (In fact, Austin mocks this exact tone in *Starry Adventure* when a character breezily describes the shared “vibrations” in the New Mexico mountains.) Gard has difficulty articulating the idea clearly to anyone except his childhood friend Jane, who shares his feeling. Like Gard, Jane’s feelings of optimism and excitement are rooted in the Southwest. We learn that Jane, as a young adult, toured Europe and opted to return to New Mexico because she found Europe “stale” and haunted by war (232).

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Hispana/o New Mexicans (Dubar-Ortiz 61). The penitentes have long fascinated outsiders. For example, they were one of the subjects Lummis grew interested in when he first walked through New Mexico on his way to California. When he returned to live in the state in the 1890s, he photographed the Penitentes Brotherhood’s ceremonies without their permission and published an article sensationalizing their religious practices. Shortly after the article was published, Lummis was shot by an unknown assailant. Lummis maintained that the Penitentes were behind this assassination attempt—a testament to their secretive and dangerous reputation—though Lummis had made himself unpopular among several groups while living in New Mexico, so it’s unclear who wanted to kill him (Thompson 107). Alice Corbin Henderson wrote *Brothers of Light: The Penitentes of the Southwest* (1937) a short book that featured illustrations by her husband, William Penhallow Henderson, depicting the group’s practices. Photographers Ansel Adams and John Candelario and painter Gene Kloss were among the modernists who depicted or referenced Penitente rituals in their work. The Penitentes also made their way into cinematic depictions of the Southwest. Jacques Tourneur’s horror film *The Leopard Man* (1943), set in rural New Mexico, drew on the same legends and imagery in the service of giving the movie its spooky atmosphere.

The latter half of the book explores Gard's apprenticeship with an architect named Marvin. Through his position Gard meets and begins an affair with Eudora Ballantine, a wealthy divorcee who collects art and extols radical sexual politics. Eudora recently moved to New Mexico, purchasing an old Spanish-style home to renovate. The architect Gard works for specializes in Southwestern vernacular architecture. The traditional architectural models of the area aren't represented as old fashioned or happenstance. Instead, Marvin's interest (and his accreditation as a Chicago-trained architect) is meant to show the aesthetic and utilitarian logic at work in its tradition. It's this very architectural tradition that attracted most of the artists and creative types to Gard's small town. During his apprenticeship, Gard is fascinated by the people he meets at Marvin's studio. Their advice and perspectives are influential:

Interesting people came to [the architect's] studio; painters and writers. They came and went, from Santa Fe, and Taos, from New York. They looked at your work whether you wanted them to or not, and said yes, that was right, get the feeling of the thing and let it rip. All these people had a kind of talk of their own. You didn't know what it was about, not much of it, but here and there you picked up a word or a phrase that you could use. You picked up tricks of noticing things: blue in the snow shadows; the way you could tell at a distance the leafless scrub oak from the plum thickets. (170)

This passage is one of Austin's strongest arguments in favor of the ongoing presence of modernists in the Southwest: the mutual, positive exchange of aesthetic traditions, possibilities and perceptions. Gard's work is *enriched* by this exposure, just as those painters and writers in Marvin's studio were no doubt influenced by their time in the Southwest.

Gard's encounters with modernist culture—through his job as an architect's assistant and through his affair with Eudora—give him an education, both culturally and sexually. He meets

the bohemians that spend time at Eudora's house, which serves as an informal salon and guest house for her bohemian friends. She's a thinly veiled caricature of Mabel Dodge Luhan, Austin's sometime-friend and collaborator, and the scene of Eudora's salon is meant to reference Luhan's Taos circle of artists, writers, and intellectuals.

Of all Austin's writing, *Starry Adventure* represents her New Mexico social circle the most directly. Besides the Luhan-inspired Eudora, significant characters include Marvin, Gard's Chicago-trained architect mentor who seems to be almost certainly based on William Penhallow Henderson, a fixture on the Santa Fe scene. The husband of Alice Corbin, William trained as an architect and artist in Chicago, where he worked under Frank Lloyd Wright. After moving to New Mexico William specialized in Spanish and Pueblo Revival architecture and furniture making.

*Starry Adventure* draws a clear distinction between Marvin's friends at his architecture studio, who provide Gard with aesthetic guidance as he develops his architectural eye, and those friends of Eudora's, who are presented as shallow and only casually interested in their creative pursuits. Describing the parties of each group, we learn that Marvin's friends grew noisier and more enthusiastic the more they drank, while friends of Eudora's became "slightly amorous and superior and blasé" with intoxication (335). The implication—which plays out in other scenes in the novel—is that Marvin's friends are genuine in their creativity, while Eudora's friends are more status-conscious and frivolous. These depictions of social scenes can tell us something about how Austin saw herself and her peers coexisting with local New Mexicans. If Austin, in her day-to-day life in Santa Fe, worked to make the Southwest a subject that would circulate through popular and intellectual audiences, then she used her fiction to interrogate the results of that circulation.

Austin positions Gard as a pivot between local knowledge and the transplanted-bohemian culture, in which his experiences with artists in New Mexico help him more fully realize the promise of his “starry adventure.” Gard finds fulfillment in his work as an architect’s assistant, has his perspective changed as well as making peace with the isolation of New Mexico. Jane, the representative of Gard’s childhood, is relieved to leave her tour of Europe, which smelled “stale and winey and of war,” to return to New Mexico, which smelled of “juniper and sage and chamisa, and chile and orchards; but mostly of nothing at all. That’s what I like about it” (232). This sentiment about New Mexico—it evokes “nothing at all. That’s what I like about it”—recalls the statements by writers who moved to New Mexico in search of an aesthetic uninfluenced by contemporary European aesthetic hierarchies. Editor and poet Harriet Monroe, for example, turned to the Southwest as an alternative to mainstream literary culture’s “obstinate residence in” and fixation on the Eastern U.S., as well as the generational weariness in the years after World War I, which manifested in creative groups as a desire for new aesthetic inspiration (Monroe “Editorial Comment: A Nation-wide Art” 84).

But it isn’t until Gard meets Eudora that he experiences a creative and sexual awakening—components of the “starry adventure” alluded to throughout the novel. In her first encounter with Gard, she’s attracted to his deep knowledge of place. He matter-of-factly refers to a “newcomer” family who live near Eudora’s recently-purchased home, and adds that they’ve “not been here much more than a hundred years” (256). Eudora replies, “And you? [...] You belong here?” (256). When Eudora first arrives in New Mexico she begins a relationship with a member of the family from whom she buys her house. To Gard, Marvin wryly notes that Eudora’s attention moved from “the house [to...] the handsome caballero [who she found to be] extremely decorative” (263).

Gard treats long held traditions of the Southwest with casualness and familiarity, dismissing a century of residence as “newcomer” status. This moment epitomizes qualities about the Southwest that dazzled Austin and her fellow authors: the seemingly-uninterrupted lines of tradition and history that appeared exotic to newcomers and, moreover, a blasé attitude that Austin ascribes to locals like Gard who are largely unimpressed by cultural history they take for granted. Just as Austin suggested she and Frank Applegate were well-positioned to appreciate the Hispano art forms that she felt had fallen into disuse and obscurity, *Starry Adventure* suggests that Gard cannot articulate the most valuable aspects of his home until he’s seen it through the perspectives of outsiders.

*Starry Adventure* pokes fun at Eudora and her collector’s perspective on the Southwest. But Austin’s novel—in keeping with much of her feminist writing—explicitly rejects the conservative sexual politics and misogyny that fueled some of the more vehement critiques of women who found some form of personal or sexual freedom in the Southwest—women like Mabel Dodge Luhan, who divorced her third husband to marry Taos Indian Tony Lujan,<sup>45</sup> or Austin herself, who divorced her husband and spent the rest of her life unmarried, intermittently involved with romantic partners. As Janis Stout has noted, *Starry Adventure* rejects normative depictions of marriage and sexuality, and its female characters, including Eudora, Jane, and Gard’s widowed mother, display significant sexual agency at different points in the book.

Austin goes so far as to imply that the Southwest was especially hospitable to this radical gender equality. Jane confesses to Gard that she feels most adamantly feminist when she is in New Mexico and desires to remain in the state so that she does not “lose a bit of [that feeling];

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<sup>45</sup> When they married in 1923, Mabel took as her last name “Luhan,” an anglicized version of Tony’s last name “Lujan.”

not the least tiny bit” (130). It’s a testament to Austin’s most idealistic, utopic visions of the Southwest that she could imagine that the region, with its large creative class and its distance from mainstream American culture, might be the crucible of more empowered young women and a less toxic sort of American masculinity. (Austin conveniently ignored the patriarchal influence that the Catholic church held over much of the region.)

Gard’s perspective as a supporter of women’s equality and an “avowed suffragist[...]” is backed by Marvin, who serves as his aesthetic and moral role model, a paternal figure after the death of Gard’s father (130). Regarding the local gossip about Eudora’s multiple marriages and divorces, “Marvin intimated that it was really a sort of defense against any feeling of inferiority that might flow from the contemplation of her five millions.” (260).

Eudora’s wealth also empowered her complete control over the renovation of her house—to the detriment of the project, Austin implies. Marvin, Gard, and the other architects and builders “couldn’t stay the flow of her ideas by reminding how much the alteration would cost” (260). Eudora’s wealth gives her power, but it also makes it impossible for her to truly live as a local in New Mexico. This difficulty manifests in the ways that Eudora’s limitless wealth undermined the construction of a truly New Mexican home, because the local architecture (and culture) are defined by an aesthetic of economical sparseness. The genius of Spanish-style New Mexican architecture, we are told, is that it “made art out of Spanish colonial housing, the limitation of means subdued by the building impulse to the necessities of living”—this sparseness was integral to achieving an authentic aesthetic—“And it wasn’t there for Eudora Ballantine” (261). Late in the project, Gard is further disillusioned when Eudora tells him she plans to build a swimming pool in her backyard, replacing the plans they’d had for her to revive a *yerbas medicina* garden that had historically been part of the property (299).

For Austin, Eudora is too superficial, inattentive, and flighty in her interest in New Mexico. Austin offers a measured critique of the introduction of excess, and of reckless or unobservant wealth, into New Mexican culture: “She was seeing herself as newcomers in New Mexico often did see themselves in its glamorous light, collateral branches of its expressiveness, missing heirs, to whose belated recognition of their obligations a welcoming attitude was due” (251). When Gard behaves jealously in response to Eudora’s flirtatiousness at a party, she scolds him: “I should think [...] you’d take an interest in my friends, in making things interesting for *them*” (335). From Gard’s perspective, however, “Eudora’s friends were only interested in him to the extent that he proved one of the odd things that Eudora had picked up out here. He whetted their curiosity as to what Eudora meant by the effect she had achieved. There was no more in it for them than that. The house he and Marvin had sweated over; an effect, a back-drop, and himself a set piece to be shifted” (334).

Eudora is ultimately depicted as a source of amusement for locals, not a figure that threatens to seriously disrupt life in her New Mexican village. There’s no indication, for example, that she might foreshadow large corporate interests moving in to the village or that she might bring so many friends to the village—establishing a colony—that local people would be outnumbered. But those possibilities did loom in the Southwest of the 1930s, and the villagers’ intense mistrust of the wealthy Eudora is tied to her power to alter the village as impulsively as she kept changing her renovation plans.

The novel never tells us, exactly, how we should view figures like Eudora—as dangerously unaware of their exploitation of the region, or as good-natured emissaries from a more urbane, creatively expansive tradition. Perhaps this ambiguity is intentional. Austin rarely wavered in endorsing her pet cultural tourism projects, but in this novel we see a little more

reflection on the complexities of touristic encounters. It's obvious that Eudora is the "wrong" kind of tourist. Although Eudora bought property in New Mexico, she behaves as if she is only passing through. She is interested in the exotic and novel aspects of Gard's home, but isn't interested in taking the time to learn about or assimilate to the place. Marvin, in contrast, spends his career adapting his architectural style to best suit the needs and traditions of the Southwest.

The contrast between attentive Marvin and flighty Eudora recalls again the distinction Austin made between Santa Fe's "community of creative workers" and a "culture colony" such as the Culture Center that failed to take root in Santa Fe. Conflating the two, she felt, was an offense to the Southwestern authors and artists because they were engaged and active in their community ("The Town" 195). In contrast, tourists visited the Southwest because it was fashionable: "they have been told that significant people think it the most significant sight in the United States" ("Indian Detour" 653). Austin conceded, however, that even tourists who couldn't grasp the "measure of [the Southwest's] significance [are] never quite the same, touched in spite of themselves" by their experiences in the Southwest ("Indian Detour" 653). In the same way, Eudora remains satisfied with her newly renovated Southwestern home, even though she opted not to maintain some of its most distinctive vernacular features.

### **3.4 CATHER, AUSTIN, AND THE AUTHOR AS TOUR GUIDE**

Austin argued that *Starry Adventure* was the only "genuinely representative" novel of the Southwest (Austin "Regionalism," 101). She positioned her novel as an alternative to Willa Cather's acclaimed *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927). Austin made her case for *Starry Adventure* in an editorial titled "Regionalism in American Fiction." Austin strongly believed in

regional determinism, and argued that it was a subtle, constant influence on human activity: “no sort of experience [...] works so constantly and subtly upon man as his regional environment. It orders and determines all the direct, practical ways [of life]” (Austin “Regionalism,” 97). While Austin prioritized racial purity as a marker of authenticity—as in the Spanish Market’s strict rules about participants’ lineage—she also championed the idea that studied, immersive mimicry could give someone access to the same intuitive knowledge of region that “order[ed] and determin[ed]” local lives. Following that logic, Austin once noted that while she would never call herself an Indian, she had at times, “succeeded in being an Indian” through her expansive study of Southwestern Indians (Austin *The American Rhythm*, 41). We can see similar logic at work in *Starry Adventure*, as Gard’s relationship to his regional environment significantly determines his perspective and the course of his life.

The comparison that Austin initiated between her work and Cather’s makes sense. Both authors chronicled the Southwest and were well known for doing so. Both frequently wrote narratives about women realizing their personal agency against the backdrop of the rural West. Besides sharing those thematic similarities, Cather and Austin were social acquaintances. In fact, Cather wrote much of *Death Comes for the Archbishop* while she stayed in Austin’s Santa Fe home.

Both books also reached a readership that included Southwestern tourists. Cather and Austin were among the authors whose books were sold at Harvey-run newsstands and recommended in Harvey brochures as suggested reading for tourists. Furthermore, excerpts from Cather and Austin’s works made up the required reading for Harvey Company couriers.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> University of Arizona, Faron Konopak Collection.

However, the books are strikingly different in how they introduce regional signifiers. *Starry Adventure* gives its readers little guidance in understanding the Southwest culture it depicts, while *Death Comes for the Archbishop* peppers its vignettes with explanatory asides and clues about the larger context for the action. For Austin, this is intentional—the reader is assumed to *already* know about the Southwest, like locals or studious transplants. If a reader had not already studied or traveled in the Southwest, *Starry Adventure* would provide very little guidance for helping her know the Southwest.

In contrast, Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop* is a sweeping history of the New Mexico territory in the nineteenth century, as experienced by the Archbishop Jean Marie Latour, who came to the New Mexico territory from France in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>47</sup> Cather uses a semi-anthropological tone to depict life in the nineteenth century New Mexico territory, using the newcomer Latour's orientation to the Southwest as a way to teach the reader about life in the region. For example, Cather includes significant context in a passage that gives a brief history of Navajo silversmiths, tracing the skill of silversmithing from the New World, via Spain, back to its Moorish roots. Father Latour writes a letter to a friend concerning a silver bell acquired in the region: "I am glad to think there is Moorish silver in your bell. When we first came here, the one good workman we found in Santa Fe was a silversmith. The Spaniards handed on their skill to the Mexicans, and the Mexicans have taught the Navajos to work silver; but it all came from the Moors" (45). Cather uses the regional hallmark—objects made of silver (which Navajo artists often inlaid with locally sourced turquoise)—to position the Southwest within a global history of colonization, to reference the region's hybridized cultures, and to assert the hand of conquest in

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<sup>47</sup> Latour is mainly based on the archbishop Jean Baptiste Lamy who came to the New Mexico territory in 1850.

shaping local culture (“it all came from the Moors”). The book includes tropes of Southwestern culture, including food ways and fiesta practices, that would have been somewhat familiar to a U.S. audience in 1927, given the region’s popularity. But Cather gives more texture and context to those tropes, positioning them within her epic sweep of the Southwest’s Spanish, French, and Native histories.

In contrast, Austin featured Navajo silver work as a regional detail in *Starry Adventure*. During a hurried wedding between Gard and Jane, Gard borrows Marvin’s silver and turquoise ring to serve as a ring for the ceremony. The significance of Austin’s use isn’t just the fact of the silver and turquoise, but the casualness with which it is used. Short on time, Gard can most easily procure jewelry that happened to be associated with centuries of cultural exchange and history. Austin doesn’t bother to explain the crucial place that silver and turquoise both held in Southwestern history—her readers would either know or they wouldn’t, but the purpose of *Starry Adventure* was not to teach them.

This is characteristic of Austin’s approach to representing region in *Starry Adventure*. She featured tropes of Southwestern culture such as regional food, cultural practices, and the use of colloquial Spanish New Mexican words with region-specific meanings (*farolitos*, *piñon*, *penitentes*). However, her readers are given little guidance on how to interpret these obscure details, much less information about how to translate most of the Spanish words. It is likely that Austin and her fellow Southwestern enthusiasts would enjoy these insider references. But much of the book’s significance would have been lost on readers unfamiliar with matters such as how piñon wood smelled, what Hispano Catholic Penitentes *did* at Easter, or the specific blend of Indigenous and Spanish European ingredients that made up the complex food culture of New Mexico. This opacity might be one reason why *Starry Adventure* fell out of print rather quickly

and is rarely cited in contemporary studies of twentieth-century regionalism on the West, while Cather's book has become a landmark in Southwestern literature.

It's not that Austin simply didn't know how to write successfully to readers unfamiliar with the region. After all, that was exactly the work she did on behalf of the Harvey Company. Instead, we should understand *Starry Adventure* as indicating the high expectations Austin had for visitors to the Southwest—expectations that she perhaps quieted when she pursued commercial projects. However, she expected the readers of her novels, at least, to familiarize themselves with the geography and customs of the Southwest—possibly through tourism—and to avidly seek out the unknown.

### 3.5 CURATING SANTA FE

Thanks in large part to Austin's work in promotion of the tourist Southwest, modernism became so enmeshed in the popular depictions of the Southwest that the Harvey newsstands began selling collections of Southwestern poetry featuring experimental work by modernist poets as well as novels by modernist writers such as Willa Cather, Austin, and D.H. Lawrence alongside more traditional regional fare. The Harvey Company, through its newsstands and gift shops, helped curate Southwestern writing as well as Southwestern arts and crafts. In this way, the Harvey Company shaped a canon of popular Southwestern reading, selling modernism alongside more traditional fare like western dime novels and cowboy poetry.

A Harvey brochure from the late 1920s titled "Books of the Southwest" typifies literature's place in the Harvey tourist experience. The brochure encourages travelers to read books by Mary Austin, Witter Bynner, Charles Lummis, Walter Prescott Webb, Hamlin Garland,

Zane Gray, and Owen Wister—suggesting that tourists may have consumed some combination of authors who produced experimental, historical, and/or genre-shaping Western writing.<sup>48</sup>

Mary Austin recognized that reaching tourist audiences was perhaps the most effective way to publicize the Southwest in the early twentieth century—for that reason, she willingly promoted some travel opportunities in the Southwest, even as she expressed concern that large-scale tourism would compromise the Southwest's integrity.

These tensions show up in Austin's cultural projects in Santa Fe. She introduced Hispano art and craft to tourist audiences and helped design and promote some of the city's most popular tourist events. However, she also guarded the city from outside interests such as the Texas Woman's Club's. In her commercial writing she praised some of the projects of the Fred Harvey Company, even though she also expressed concern that a thriving tourist industry might compromise Southwestern cultures.

Through her commercial work, Austin tried to shape Santa Fe into the sort of place she wanted it to be. If tourism in Santa Fe and the surrounding area was all but unavoidable, then Austin hoped that tourism would emphasize preservation and expose visitors to the region's cultural diversity. She wanted the authority to curate people's Southwestern experiences, and to shape their impressions of the place—and as a major influence in Santa Fe's development as a tourist capital, Austin got her wish. In the process, she helped blend modernist voices and art forms with commercial regional tourism.

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<sup>48</sup> Photographs and purchase orders from the Harvey's Southwestern newsstands reveal that most of these authors were available at newsstands and gift shops, sold alongside a mix of vacation reading, regional literature, and standard periodical fare. University of Arizona Special Collections, Z1251S8H2PAM. n.d., c. 1934.

#### **4.0 “THE SAME HILLS, THE SAME SUN”: TRANSNATIONALISM AND TOURISTS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN WRITING OF D.H. LAWRENCE, JEAN TOOMER, AND LYNN RIGGS**

The three authors featured in this chapter wrote about the Southwest as temporary residents—they passed through the region for a short season, or they visited intermittently through their lives. As writers who stayed in the Southwest only briefly, the investments they brought to the region differ from the commitments of figures that Carolyn Dekker dubbed “neonatives”—those artists who visited and fell in love with the Southwest, then opted to “stay and become hosts and patrons to other newcomers” (Dekker 93). Perhaps this brevity motivated their transnational perspectives. D.H. Lawrence, Jean Toomer, and Lynn Riggs configured the Southwest in relation to other parts of the world, highlighting the area’s colonial legacies and shed light on the imperialist mythology that underpinned its tourism industry.

Through the previous chapter’s study of Mary Austin, we learned that writers’ creative investments in the Southwest often aligned them with the goals and interests of the tourism industry. Writers in the Southwest frequently projected their fantasies onto the region; the same energy guided the tourism industry, which developed and refined a Southwestern mythology that it marketed to would-be visitors.

Toomer, Riggs, and Lawrence all took up the Southwest as a reference point in the service of larger meditations on national and transnational belonging and identity. Moreover, the

dual presence of tourists and creatives in the Southwest, and the contrast between those groups of Southwestern visitors, figured importantly in how each writer presented the region.

This chapter begins with the Southwestern writings of D.H. Lawrence, probably the most famous author to have passed through the modernist-era Southwest. A career tourist after he left England, Lawrence had travelled outside his native England for years before he visited New Mexico in 1922.

Lawrence's writing about the Southwest and Mexico repeatedly returns to the disconnect between his fantasies about the Southwest—fantasies encouraged by touristic promotions of the region—and the frustrating reality of a region he found overrun by tourists and fellow artists that he felt were insincere in their pursuit of Southwestern culture—so much so that Lawrence once called the Southwest a “playground for the white American” (“Just back...” 28).

Elaborating similar hopes and misgivings, the Southwestern writings of Jean Toomer and Lynn Riggs also highlighted the tendency of visitors and newcomers to project certain fantasies—often fantasies fueled by the mythology of Southwestern commercial tourism—on the Southwest. Toomer turned to the Southwest after growing disillusioned with the Harlem Renaissance; he spent time with the modernist community in New Mexico intermittently in the 1920s and 1930s.

As Emily Lutenski notes, Toomer and his wife enjoyed their time in New Mexico enough that they considered buying a home in Taos (Lutenski 26). The Southwest, with its history of dynamic interactions among Spanish/Hispano, Anglo, and Native communities, appeared to Toomer to be home to innovative cultural forces and to offer a social alternative to the racial hierarchies that frustrated him in both the Deep South and the creative communities of New

York City. Moreover, he was drawn to the region's connection to other nations—Native American nations, Spanish colonial heritage, and Mexico.

Cherokee-Anglo writer Lynn Riggs came to New Mexico from Oklahoma in his early twenties. Once in Santa Fe, Riggs found a supportive creative community that nurtured his growth as an artist. However, he also found Santa Fe to be home to a more commercial iteration of the same colonial power relations that frustrated him in Oklahoma. Unlike Toomer, Riggs could not imagine a progressive racial future for the Southwest. The region was, however, a jumping off point for how Riggs wrote about Mexico. In his Mexican plays, Riggs imagined the forms that decolonization might take. Riggs believed the same efforts to be impossible in the U.S., and particularly in the U.S. Southwest, where colonial history was still celebrated in leisure tourism.

The modernist community in New Mexico was a largely Anglo undertaking. This fact is especially striking fact given that these same modernists frequently took up local Native American and Latinx/Hispano cultures as subjects for their art. As writers of color who explored race and ethnicity in their work, Toomer and Riggs give some crucial nuance to modernism's often-reductive or romantic depictions of the Native American and Hispano Southwest. Toomer's writing about New Mexico allows us to see a new facet of the fantasy of the Southwest. Toomer recognized—and often humorously depicted—modernist neonatives who romanticized their interactions with traditional Native and Hispano cultures in the Southwest.

However, Toomer also expressed some optimism about the Southwest's social order as an alternative to the divided, racially segregated society he'd observed in the East. Riggs's writing illuminates the limits of Toomer's fantasy of racial harmony. It presents more clearly the constraints on Native people in the Southwest, as Indigenous people in a colonized space whose

primary industry capitalized on its history of conquest. Riggs responded to these constraints by writing his American characters as tourists in Mexico, facing political upheaval that was unimaginable to him in the United States.

These writers quested for something particular in the Southwest: a new social order, new creative cultures, or alternative futures for racial identity or Indigeneity. By virtue of being in the region, they inevitably engaged with the region's tourism culture.<sup>49</sup> For observers of the Southwest in the early twentieth century, tourism was often just as notable a topic of discussion as was the region's much-discussed history and landscape. In their respective searches for escape, they found themselves entangled with and influenced by the narratives and fantasies that were largely shaped by an industry of sightseeing and spectacle. As it had been in the past, the Southwest of the early twentieth century was a contact zone, a point at which many nations, cultures, and interests converged. This rich and layered cultural history was what drew many writers and artists to the region, including Lawrence, Toomer, and Riggs.

In addition to being home to tribal nations and the descendants of the region's colonizers, in the beginning of the twentieth century the area drew artists and writers from outside the United States as well as foreign tourists. Moreover, many writers and artists understood the Southwest as a gateway to travels in Mexico, as did Riggs and Lawrence. As a tourist destination, as a region that had been occupied by many flags, and as a borderland, the Southwest naturally promoted transnational imagining and thinking. Each of the authors I'll

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<sup>49</sup> In the previous chapter I discussed Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop* as a book that explores Southwestern colonialist fantasies. Cather was also only a sojourner in New Mexico. She visited Luhan intermittently, and she housesat for Austin while writing *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. But unlike Toomer, Riggs, or even Lawrence, Cather was mainly interested in imagining the Southwestern past, not in puzzling out the Southwestern present or future.

explore took up geography, history, and shifting borders as a means of understanding the Southwest. They also used their study of the Southwest to situate their own concerns and interests—in concepts of authenticity, racial belonging, and racial futurity.

#### 4.1 MABEL DODGE LUHAN'S TAOS

At the center of the creative community that drew Lawrence, Riggs, and Toomer to New Mexico was arts patron Mabel Dodge Luhan, who encouraged authors and writers to visit the Southwest. She frequently gave writers and artists housing and financial support on her Taos property, and was integral to the development of the area's creative community. Luhan is widely credited with bringing modernism to the Southwest and, in turn, helping to popularize the Southwest as an aesthetic resource and travel destination for artists and writers. Before Luhan arrived in the Southwest she'd been a well-known member of fashionable artistic circles in the United States and Europe. Luhan hosted salons in Florence, Italy and New York City and helped plan and fund the 1913 International Exhibition of Modern Art (often called The Armory Show), the first major exhibition of modern art in the United States. She was also involved in leftist activism, thanks in part to her friendship with labor organizer John Reed. Luhan first grew interested in the Southwest through the encouragement of her third husband, the painter Maurice Sterne. Sterne traveled to Taos to follow some of the painters who'd moved to Taos in the late 1890s, forming an art colony there. From Taos, Sterne wrote to Luhan to follow him to New Mexico and "save the Indians, their art-culture, and reveal it to the world" (qtd Burke 30).

Luhan did exactly that. She moved to Taos in 1917 and recalled that her "life broke in two" as soon as she exited the train in New Mexico (*Edge of Taos Desert* 6). She subtitled *Edge*

*of Taos Desert* (1937), the memoir of her early years in Taos, *An Escape to Reality*. She would divide her biography into pre- and post-New Mexico for the rest of her life. Not only did Luhan find her life's work in the Southwest, she found her longest and most fulfilling relationship—within a year of arriving she'd left Sterne (and later divorced him) so she could begin a relationship with Taos Native Tony Lujan, who became her fourth husband.

Of course, by the time Luhan arrived, the Southwest had already featured prominently in travel writing by writers such as Charles Lummis, in anthropology by Frank Hamilton Cushing and Adolph Bandelier, and in works of visual art by members of the Taos art colony such as Bert Greer Phillips and Ernest Blumenschein. Notably, Luhan was one of the first women to become associated with the burgeoning creative community in the Southwest, along with Alice Corbin Henderson, who'd moved to Santa Fe the year before Luhan arrived in Taos.

Thanks to her social connections and wealth, Luhan did much to further elevate the region's renown among modernists. She hosted many intellectuals and artists in New Mexico, often bringing them to the area for the first time. Her guests included anthropologist Elsie Clews Parsons, sociologist and New Deal social reformer John Collier, painters Marsden Hartley and Georgia O'Keeffe, and authors Gertrude Stein and Robinson Jeffers. Unlike Corbin Henderson, Mary Austin, and other modernist movers and shakers in the Southwest, Luhan opted out of preservationist projects and Southwestern boosterism.

She never expressed interest in making the Southwest more accessible to tourists. Instead, she focused her energy on inviting artists and authors to visit—or better yet, *relocate*—to New Mexico and create art inspired by the Southwest. Luhan did have an investment in seeing the Southwest reach communities outside the region, but the art and writing she supported was more likely to circulate exclusively in urbane and literary circles, not necessarily reaching would-be

tourists who might plan to visit the Southwest on a sightseeing vacation. While Austin's ambitions for the Southwest inspired her to help promote or design sightseeing tours, gift shops, and other tourist ventures, Luhan underwrote artistic projects about the Southwest that were more likely to reach tastemakers in cosmopolitan cities. Whatever her opinion of tourism may have been, Luhan didn't need the financial support brought by collaborations with tourism companies. She was quite wealthy, both as an heiress to a prominent banking family and as the widow of her equally wealthy first husband.

In fact, Luhan rarely discussed tourism at all unless it was in reference to welcoming guests to Taos. In 1921 Luhan wrote to Austin that she'd appealed to the Harvey family to build a hotel near her home in Taos, to provide some relief from her constant stream of long-term houseguests (Luhan to Austin 1921 AU3577). The Harvey Company never built that hotel, but Luhan's desire to see one established in her beloved, remote village is evidence that her vision of the Southwest made room for the tourism industry, even if she didn't directly interact with it. It's also notable that Luhan was friendly with the Harvey family. That Luhan casually requested a hotel be built near her home—a contrast to the largely professional relationships maintained by the Harveys with authors like Austin and Lummis—marks her distance from the booster projects that drove Austin, Lummis, Corbin Henderson, and others.

Riggs, Toomer, and Lawrence all traveled through or stayed in Taos—Toomer and Lawrence as guests that Luhan had enthusiastically invited, Riggs as a member of Luhan's social circle. As Flannery Burke notes, Taos was in many ways an outpost of New York creative society in the early twentieth century, patrons and all. This was especially true of when Luhan was at the height of her powers in the 1920s and 1930s, when she organized the social events in which her artist guests mingled with local (often Native American or Latinx) artists. She also

helped newly arrived artists make connections with established creative circles in the area and frequently provided financial support or loans. Through her patronage and social shepherding, Luhan kept her modernist social circle functioning smoothly, or at least functioning according to her ideals. She also made the Southwest more fashionable.

Of course, tourists didn't need Luhan's encouragement to visit Taos and the rest of northern New Mexico. Their presence comes up in the writing and art of many of the people that Luhan hosted or befriended, including the three writers featured in this chapter. Even without a direct hand in commercial tourism's renderings of the place, however, Luhan's legacy shaped the marketing of New Mexico: as a haven for artists in search of inspiration. Her life in New Mexico predated the story of fellow iconoclast Georgia O'Keeffe, whose iconic association with New Mexico eclipsed her own. Today the Luhan home in Taos is a bed and breakfast—guests can choose to stay in rooms named for notable Southwestern artists including Willa Cather, Mary Austin, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Ansel Adams. Northern New Mexico is still marketed as home to creative communities—the area hosts many annual arts festivals and creative retreats—and commercial tourism frequently references Luhan as one of the state's most famous residents, a creative woman who found her life's work in the high deserts surrounding Taos.

#### **4.2 “YOU’VE GOT TO DE-BUNK THE INDIAN”: D.H. LAWRENCE AND THE SOUTHWEST AS A CIRCUS**

After reading Lawrence's *The Sea and Sardinia* (1921), Mable Dodge Luhan was convinced that Lawrence was “the only one who can really *see* this Taos country and the Indians, and who can describe it so that it is as much alive between the covers of a book as it is in reality”

(Burke 155). The writing that Lawrence *did* produce about the Southwest and especially Southwestern Indians, after Luhan persuaded him to come to Taos, is probably not what Luhan envisioned. Instead, Lawrence's Southwestern writing registers Lawrence's discomfort as a spectator, traveler, and outsider in the multicultural Southwest.

Luhan's relationship with Lawrence is probably the best-chronicled example of her patronage. Hoping that he would appreciate New Mexico as much as she did, she urged Lawrence and his wife Frieda to visit her in Taos. So began Luhan's letter-writing campaign to convince the Lawrences to travel west; she even sent them copies of her favorite books about New Mexico, including Charles Lummis's *The Land of Poco Tiempo* (1893) (Bachrach). The Lawrences, drawn to New Mexico and probably also to the promise of financial support from a wealthy and enthusiastic patron, arrived in 1922 and stayed for several years, traveling intermittently to Mexico and Europe. Upon their arrival, Luhan lent Lawrence a space on her property to live and write, and she later helped him purchase a ranch near Taos. She introduced him to her social circle, and he and Frieda became close to the Taos-based little magazine editor Spud Johnson and Santa Fe-based poet Witter Bynner. Luhan's financial support and social connections served Lawrence well, although he never completed the project—"a New Mexico novel with Indians in it"—that he'd planned to write with Luhan's encouragement and financial support (Burke 157).

When the Lawrences accepted Luhan's invitation in 1922, they'd been travelling for several years, with long stopovers in parts of Italy, Ceylon, and Australia. During Lawrence's time in the Southwest he wrote many essays about Southwestern culture (with a special focus on Native Americans in the area) and about Mexico, and he also began writing *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923), his major contribution to literary criticism. As Lee Jenkins notes,

it's significant that Lawrence composed his treatise on American literature—with a focus on antebellum writers who'd lived mainly on the East Coast—while surrounded by a community of writers in the borderlands of the Southwestern U.S. (Jenkins 7). Perhaps the borderlands of the Southwest attracted Lawrence in particular because he was intrigued by the idea that the Southwest was less cluttered by the noise of modernity. The mythology of the anti-modern Southwest appealed to Lawrence's long-held "preoccupation with bodily resurrection" and "the shedding of old skins and selves for new"—a pervasive theme in his writing (Baldick 253). Michael Bell understands Lawrence's anti-modernism to have been influenced by both Romanticism and Nietzsche; according to Bell, Lawrence "understood the central problems of modernity as [questions] about the nature of being" that could be answered through the "recovery" of ancient life (Bell).

Lawrence's philosophical pursuits surely shaped his time in the Southwest. His Southwestern writings are evidence of his particular focus on the Pueblo Indian ceremonies that often served as the subject of written and visual art and as an attraction for sightseers. Mark Kinkead-Weekes connects Lawrence's primitivism to his romantic readings of James Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking novels, which inspired in Lawrence "a psychic quest [...] to discover the lost 'Indian' within the self, a dimension of being that the defective white man desperately needs to recover, in order to achieve wholeness again" (Kinkead-Weekes CC). Lawrence wrote prolifically about the Southwest and Mexico, with a special interest in foreigners and tourists moving through the country. His Mexico-based novel, *The Plumed Serpent* (1926), depicts a post-Revolution Mexico as a violent, seething country that threatens to consume naïve foreigners. His collection of travel writing about the Southwest and about Mexico, *Mornings in Mexico*, shows encounters between tourists and Indians as either blighted by racial tensions or

reduced to artificiality and spectacle. This perspective is especially visible in the essay “Hopi Snake Dance” (1924), in which he reveals both his frustrations with commercial tourism and his own touristic expectations as an observer at a Hopi ceremony.

Lawrence attended the Hopi Snake Dance in 1924 along with a large group of his fellow tourists. The Hopi Snake Dance was a long-standing popular attraction in the area; since the 1870s, intrepid tourists, journalists, and locals had traveled to the Hopi Pueblos to watch sacred rituals involving the handling of snakes (Laird viii). While ceremonial dances at the Pueblos often attracted sightseers, the Hopi Snake Dance had an extra draw: it involved the ceremonial handling of live venomous rattlesnakes. Lawrence’s report on the spectacle estimates a crowd of thousands—scholars believe that the 1924 event probably actually had a few hundred spectators—lining the Pueblo’s plaza and crowding onto the flat roofs of adobe structures. He describes the scene:

Three thousand people came to see the little snake dance this year, over miles of desert and bumps. Three thousand, of all sorts, cultured people from New York, Californians, onward-pressing tourists, cowboys, Navajo Indians, even negroes; fathers, mothers, children, of all ages, colours, sizes of stoutness, dimensions of curiosity. What had they come for? Mostly to see men hold *live rattlesnakes* in their mouths. *I never did see a rattlesnake, and I’m crazy to see one!* Cried a girl with bobbed hair. There you have it. People trail hundreds of miles, to see this circus-performance of men handling live rattlesnakes that may bite them—even do bite them. Some show, that! (145-6)

Lawrence implies that all the spectators shared a motivation for traveling to a Hopi Pueblo: they were lured by the possibility of witnessing the injury that such a ceremony threatens (or promises). Phyllis Stanton argues that in his Southwestern writing, Lawrence recognized the

impossibility of objectivity in cultural observation, but he “ultimately exempted himself” from the pitfalls of tourism with the belief that “his observations were more accurate than the average tourist’s” (Stanton 61). As a result, Lawrence’s Southwestern writing focuses on both Native American people and the tourists who appeared to watch them.

The scene recalls the opening chapter of Lawrence’s Mexico-set *The Plumed Serpent* (1926), in which Kate, the Irish protagonist, attends a bullfight in Mexico City with an American friend. Kate’s American friend explains why he wants to attend the bullfight: “I don’t believe in them on principle, but we’ve never seen one, so we shall *have* to go” (1). Lawrence identifies this as distinctly American logic: “ ‘Never having seen one’ meant ‘having to go.’ [...] it was American logic” (1). American or not, this is also the logic that motivates sightseeing. The bullfight disgusts Kate—she is surprised to witness the bloody deaths of a bull and a horse in a spectacle that offered “no glamour, no charm” and at the hands of toreadors who were “[j]ust about as gallant as assistants in a butcher’s shop” (8). In *The Plumed Serpent*, this opening sequence foreshadows more brutality. Lawrence introduces readers to the danger and quotidian violence that sets the tone for the rest of the book, as Kate is drawn into a primitive authoritarian cult centered around worshipping the gods of Aztec religion, gods that Lawrence presents as monstrous figures.

We can also read this bullfight scene as a sort of alternative outcome for the Hopi Snake Dance, giving insight into how Lawrence might have represented the event if he *had* witnessed a priest being bitten by a rattlesnake. While the bullfight and the Hopi Snake Dance are both cast as letdowns for their spectators, the 1924 Snake Dance displayed no violence. There were no snake-related injuries, and Lawrence reported that some of the snakes were so gentle that they “had been handed to old snake-clan men in the audience, who sat holding them in their arms as

men hold a kitten” (169). The disappointment in this essay is palpable, but Lawrence was only unhappy with the outcome because he approached the event with the belief that the ceremony is less authentic if the Hopi priests maintain their mastery of the rattlesnakes. He offered a lengthy speculation about how the Hopi priests may have controlled the rattlesnakes:

Men who have lived many years among the Indians say they do not believe the Hopi have any secret cure. Sometimes priests do die of bites, it is said. But a rattlesnake secretes his poison slowly. Each time he strikes he loses his venom, until if he strikes several times, he has very little wherewithal to poison a man. Not enough, not half enough to kill. His glands must be very full charged with poison, as they are when he emerges from winter-sleep, before he can kill a man outright. And even then, he must strike near some artery. Therefore, during the nine days of the Kiva, when the snakes are bathed and lustrated, perhaps they strike their poison away into some inanimate object. And surely they are soothed and calmed with such things as the priests, after centuries of experience, know how to administer them. (175-6)

Recall that Lawrence refers to the snake handling as a kind of “circus-performance of men handling live rattlesnakes that may bite them” (146). By that logic, Lawrence and the other spectators have been cheated by the likelihood that the Hopi developed technologies to keep their Snake Dance safe and controlled—and therefore sustainable as a sacred act. This isn’t to suggest that Native Americans in the Southwest didn’t adapt their art and performances to meet the interests of tourists—as Elizabeth Hutchison has shown, Native artists were keenly aware of and responsive to the their customers’ tastes. Moreover, Pueblos opened some ceremonies, such as the Hopi Snake Dance, to the public with expectation of having spectators attend. Lawrence’s essay, however, suggests that the Snake Dance could not be meaningful if the Hopi were in

control of their interactions with the rattlesnakes. Rather, he'd expected to witness something that met his idea of a ritual that returned its participants to a primitive, "pre-Socratic world"—for Lawrence, this was the ultimate purpose of ceremonies like the Snake Dance (Bell, CC). In this sense, Lawrence reveals his own fantasies about the Hopi, a way in which he's victim to exactly the fantasies about Indian culture that must be "de-bunk[ed]":

[W]hite people always, or nearly always, write sentimentally about the Indians. Even a man like Adolf Bandelier. He was not a sentimental man. On the contrary. Yet the sentimentality creeps in, when he writes about the thing he knows best, the Indian. [...] There is that creeping note of sentimentality through it all [all Bandelier's writing about Indians], which makes one shrug one's shoulders and wish the Indians to hell, along with a lot of other bunk. You've got to de-bunk the Indian, as you've got to de-bunk the Cowboy. When you've de-bunked the Cowboy there's not much left. But the Indian bunk is not the Indian's invention. It is ours. (102-103).

Lawrence gives no guidance on how this de-bunking might happen. Instead, it appears to be enough that he acknowledges that fantasies are attached to the Indian. By naming the tendency, Lawrence implies that he has escaped the fate of Bandelier and other writers for whom "the sentimentality creeps in" when writing about Indians.

This essay appeared first in 1924 in *Theatre Arts Monthly* magazine, and it was later included in *Mornings in Mexico*. The fact that Lawrence's essay about Arizonan Hopi ceremonies ended up in a book ostensibly about Mexico evidences that Lawrence did not understand the Southwest as a region only within and in relation to the U.S. Rather, he saw the Southwest as the doorway to Mexico, the geography shared by highly visible and active Indigenous populations whose cultures crossed national borders. For example, consider that

Lawrence's essay "Taos" (1923), in which he describes Native peoples' "jeering triumph," was first published under the title "In Taos, an Englishman Looks at Mexico"—a title that positions Taos as a preview to Mexico, offering Lawrence a glimpse of what he could expect to encounter when he traveled farther south. (Burke 159)

Lawrence's conflation of Mexico and the Southwest is similar to the connections with the Southwest Lynn Riggs would make in his own Mexican-set plays. As I'll show later in this chapter, Riggs imagined that Anglo/American tourists would, in Mexico, find themselves sharing unexpected common ground with Mexican people. On the other hand, Lawrence imagined that Mexico would fully consume naïve tourists. In *The Plumed Serpent*, the protagonist Kate chooses to give up her identity and independence when she agrees to marry one of the leaders of an authoritarian cult organized around the pre-contact Aztec god Quetzalcoatl (Lawrence 417). Mark Kinkead-Weekes argues that Lawrence's characters who pursue Indigenous knowledge and experiences were in search of a knowledge that Lawrence believed "white consciousness [had] lost: relatedness to the cosmos through the senses, not in psychedelic hallucination, but heightening ordinary perception into an extraordinarily vital experience of harmony" (Kinkead-Weekes CC). However, Lawrence's Southwestern writing never shows a character *achieving* this kind of transcendence—not in his fiction, as Kate remains uncertain of her decision at the end of *The Plumed Serpent*, and not in his personal essays, in which Lawrence shows himself to be a skeptical observer of Indigenous ceremony and culture. The contrast between Riggs and Lawrence here suggests that Lawrence believed Mexico would have a sinister effect on white

foreigners—so much so that he couldn't imagine a positive outcome for a character like Kate, a woman who chooses to travel independently and explore Indigenous cultures.<sup>50</sup>

Lawrence's disillusionment with tourists is further underscored in a letter that he wrote to Spud Johnson just after he returned from the Hopi Snake Dance. He opens the letter: "One wonders what one came for—what all those people went for. The Hopi country is hideous" (25). Lawrence describes the ceremony as having "No drums, no pageantry"—also recalling Kate's disappointment with the bullfight in *The Plumed Serpent* (27). He continued:

What had we come to see, all of us? Men with snakes in their mouths, like a circus? [...] The Southwest is the great playground of the white American. The desert isn't good for anything else. But it does make a fine national playground. And the Indian, [...] he's a wonderful live toy to play with. (28)

Before Lawrence arrived in New Mexico, he and Frieda traveled in Ceylon. He wrote Luhan from Ceylon, confessing his discomfort with being among people who were not white. He explained: "I find all dark people have a fixed desire to jeer at us [...] But heavens, I don't see much in them to admire, either" (Burke 158). Lawrence's paranoia around people of color was not eased by his time in New Mexico and Mexico.

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<sup>50</sup> Lawrence's scorn for women like Luhan and Mary Austin, who pursued their interest in primitivism and found independent creative agency in the Southwest, has been documented. We can infer evidence of this tension in Lawrence's story "The Woman Who Rode Away," in which the main character, a thinly veiled fictionalization of Luhan, is drawn to Indigenous pre-contact spiritual practices and is repaid for her interest by being raped and murdered by a group of Indigenous Mexican men. The story repeats some of Lawrence's well-trodden themes, exploring the fate of a woman who attempts to give herself over entirely to a pre-contact ritual in the hopes of finding some higher fulfillment or truth. Lawrence's choice to conclude the story with her violent death, however, is suggestive of both his unchecked misogyny and his unsuccessful attempts to access that sort of pre-modern wisdom in the Southwest. See: Flannery Burke.

In “Taos,” he observed Pueblo Indians who took an “almost jeering triumph in giving the white man—or white woman—a kick” by excluding them from a tribal activity or ceremony (Burke 159). These observations get at some of the same themes that occur in the writings Toomer and Riggs, which also explored the region’s complex power relations and the ways the tourism industry turned imperialist legacies into a marketable regional mythology.

#### **4.3 “I STILL FIRMLY BELIEVE THIS IS THE GREATEST EARTH ON EARTH”: JEAN TOOMER’S DREAM OF A SOUTHWESTERN FUTURE**

The Southwest fascinated Toomer for some of the same reasons as other modernists—he found the striking landscape to be rejuvenating, and the region’s multicultural history interested him. Toomer had a career-long interest in racial futures that were not defined by color lines; this interest was no doubt partially rooted in his African and Anglo heritage. Toomer’s appearance was by most accounts racially ambiguous, and his life in segregated America caused him some significant stress. For these reasons, the Southwest’s multicultural, often-interracial social makeup appealed to Toomer. He depicted the Southwest as relatively harmonious, existing at a geographic and ideological remove from the rest of the country. Of course, this interpretation of the social order of the Southwest was not very realistic: there were plenty of racial tensions in the twentieth century Southwest, as well as a long history of Indigenous resistance to colonial

violence.<sup>51</sup> But it tells us how the Southwest figured in Toomer's imagination: as a kind of exception to social orders he'd observed in the eastern U.S. and in his travels abroad.

During one of Luhan's trips back to New York City, she met Toomer at an event featuring the Russian mystic George I. Gurdjieff. Both Toomer and Luhan were attracted to his teachings, which promised to help followers counteract the fragmentation of modern life through holistic practices, including physical exercise, gymnastics, ritual fasting, and meditative chores, in order to attain "universal consciousness" (Burke 99). Toomer visited Luhan in the Southwest in 1925 to help her plan a never-realized center for the study of Gurdjieff in Taos. Although the vogue for Gurdjieff faded, Toomer remained a friend of Luhan's and visited her intermittently through the next few decades. He grew close to some of Luhan's peers, including Georgia O'Keeffe, and visited northern New Mexico several times during the 1930s and 1940s.

Toomer's writing from these decades often attempted to explain what he had observed in the Southwest, turning to India, Chicago, New York, and the Deep South as points of comparison. In Toomer's unpublished play *A Drama of the Southwest* (1935), the Manhattanite Elliotts are new to the high desert and surprised by every adobe structure and they encounter and every uncooperative Indian they meet; nothing in their New York lives prepared them for these experiences. *A Drama* shares a narrative structure with parts of *Cane* (1923), especially the play "Kabnis," which is the final section of *Cane*. "Kabnis" follows the titular protagonist, a man of African and white heritage from the northeast who went to rural Georgia as a professor. Kabnis experiences both repulsion and attraction to the rural Deep South and is ultimately pulled into a cycle of poverty and desperation.

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<sup>51</sup> Taos in particular had a significant history of Indigenous resistance. Popé, the leader of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, planned the multi-Pueblo revolt from his home at Taos Pueblo. The rebellion successfully drove the Spanish out of New Mexico for 12 years.

*Cane* is frequently read biographically, as Toomer's chronicle of his own failed attempts to access and relate to the black experience in the Deep South. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Rudolph Byrd describe the social sphere of Toomer's childhood in Washington DC as a "liminal world of a mulatto elite" in which color lines were sometimes permeable and sometimes rigid (188). For example, Toomer's family lived in an otherwise white neighborhood, but Toomer attended a school for black children (184). Dekker argues that Toomer's writings about places, including *Cane*, shouldn't be read as biographical and should instead be understood as "a depiction of the struggle to relate to an alien culture" (Dekker 96). "Kabnis" is a story of unmet expectations and the slow wearing-down of Kabnis's ambitions to bring education and progress to the rural black South. In addition to sharing the theatrical structure of "Kabnis," *A Drama of the Southwest* also interrogates the thwarted expectations of travelers in a new place. However, *A Drama* is much lower stakes—Kabnis is frightened by racial violence in Georgia, while the characters in *A Drama* face inconvenient weather and unfriendly locals. In both works, regional differences are shown in high contrast.

Toomer also uses the framework of regional comparison in his Southwestern writing, with the Southwest frequently serving as an alternative to the dualism of North and South that directed his writing up to that point (Lutenski 22). More surprising, perhaps, is how Toomer framed the Southwest in relation to India. He wrote "New Mexico after India" after returning from a long trip abroad. In it, he notes that he usually arrived in the Southwest from "the eastern seaboard" and that in contrast New Mexico would appear to him as "a summit of ancient earth and historic peoples" (250). But after traveling through India, Toomer writes, "even the pueblos [of New Mexico] seemed to have a touch of the modern world, the Mexican village seemed to be

growing and changing as young things grow, Taos and Santa Fe seemed to be altering under the same impulse that created Chicago in some fifty years” (250).

Following up that trip with a visit to New Mexico, Toomer identifies the Southwest as a region unbound by the hierarchies of race he had observed in India’s caste system, which he calls a “social complexity” and “an intricate maze” that obstructed the nation’s progress (“New Mexico After India” 251). In “New Mexico After India,” we see Toomer’s investment in the multicultural Southwest as promising a more harmonious racial future. If social orders have held back India from greatness, Toomer argues, the Southwest’s lack of rigid structure may provide an alternative model. In the Southwest, Toomer writes:

The Indian is upstanding. The Mexican [-American] is upstanding. The Negro is upstanding. The white is upstanding. Let us each continue to upstand, and at the same time bend towards the other on the basis of common humanity [...] This is one possibility. The other possibility is that separatism here will increase [...]. In this case, we can look to India to see what we will become. (251)

For Toomer, the Southwest was still undetermined—in spite of its ancient human history and in spite of its oft-evoked reputation as a place that was quaintly frozen in the past. Toomer’s representations of the Southwest aren’t entirely rosy, as I’ll demonstrate. But he did idealize aspects of the Southwest, especially his belief that it was free from the troubling racial dynamics he’d recorded in *Cane*.

In this section, I look at two unpublished works by Toomer: his unfinished play, *A Drama of the Southwest* (1935), and a long essay, “The Dust of Abiquiu” (c. mid 1940s). Both these works participate in the insidious, if optimistic, fantasy that the Southwest existed outside of time and was home to a harmonious, racially and culturally diverse population. Versions of

this fantasy were common among modernist visitors and were often invoked in promotional materials about the Southwest. In expansive, sometimes contradictory mediations on place, these writings reveal the contours of Toomer's vision of the Southwest—one that focused on (and sometimes idealized) the region's history of conquest and its contemporary multiculturalism.

As Dekker and Lutenski have noted, the critical consensus about Toomer's body of work is that he largely abandoned exploring racial identity after *Cane*. However, as Toomer's Southwestern writings show, he was still studiously observing the dynamics of race and power during his travels in New Mexico, and he imagined the Southwest as offering a model of race relations that was unique in the U.S. Toomer's post-*Cane* work has received less scholarly attention and, as Carolyn Dekker notes, Toomer's literary legacy has been shaped by the likelihood that Toomer, of mixed African American and white heritage, chose to pass as white after the publication of *Cane* (Dekker "Striking" 92). Acknowledging that Toomer's identity does have relevance to *Cane*'s "place in an ethnic literature," Dekker argues that Toomer's post-*Cane* writing in the 1930s is still valuable as it "reveal[s...] a continuity in [Toomer's] career," since he continued observing issues related to race and region whether he was writing about rural Georgia, the U.S. Southwest, or another country (Dekker "Striking" 92). Emily Lutenski argues that Toomer's time in New Mexico helped form his interest in "emerging racial and interracial identities," and that the Southwest helped Toomer conceive of "a modern paradigm not of passing but of mixing, complicit with the model already being forged in the U.S. Southwest" through centuries of colonialism (Lutenski 22).<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Of course the mestizo identities of the Southwest are not nearly as simple as Lutenski's synopsis here—nor were they just being formed in 1930. In fact, racial hierarchies existed and were often quite rigid in the U.S. Southwest. However, those hierarchies *did* appear different than those in the eastern U.S.

Whether Toomer was evading a black identity or embracing a new kind of racial identity is beyond the scope of this project. However, Dekker's account emphasizes that Toomer manifested a fascination with the Southwest as the site of a social order and cultural history unique to the United States. Dekker reads *A Drama of the Southwest* as an examination of "the desires of an entire taxonomy of outsiders who come to Taos," offering a variety of Southwestern characters who were drawn to the Southwest to fulfill some abstract desire, such as freedom, a new beginning, new inspiration, or solitude (93). The play interrogates the promise of Taos and of the Southwest, chronicling the highs and lows experienced by newly arrived modernists in Taos. To that end, Toomer's play also explores the intersections of his characters' desires with the network of tourism and arts culture that had fully seized Taos and the surrounding area by the 1930s. Toomer visited the Southwest first as a guest of Luhan, who all but single-handedly created the idea of Taos that drew artists and, soon after, tourists to the area. Toomer's idealization of the Southwest was keyed to his hopes for a post-racial U.S. future, but insofar as he represented the Southwest as utopian, anti-modern, and creatively invigorating, his passion for the Southwest largely aligned with the vision that Luhan made so pervasive in modernist circles. While Toomer remained aware of patronage and consumer tourism, he explored the possibility of the Southwest as a space where substantive change could happen—he described the Southwest as "recently formed, unspent, active, still able to profit by meeting with the sun, winds, rain, and man" (250)—in contrast to the backwards, stagnant U.S. South, where Toomer's *Cane* suggested that nothing ever changed, *or* in the maddeningly ephemeral New York, where critical moods shifted with the wind, leaving once-fashionable artists, movements, or even ethnicities out of style.

Like many of the writers considered in this dissertation, Toomer at once critiqued the pitfalls and misconceptions of regional tourism and repeated some of the regional fantasies upheld by the tourism industry. Toomer's play, which follows a married couple vacationing in Taos, invites the audience to observe some of the social blunders and idealistic misconceptions that the newcomers have about the Southwest. Offering wry observations about the gulf between visitors' expectations and experiences in the Southwest, his characters' most ambitious proclamations about the Southwest are humorously undercut by the day-to-day frustrations of rural Southwestern life.

The protagonists of *A Drama*, Tom and Grace Elliott, arrive in Taos after driving from New York City; they will rent a home for the summer—not their first time in the area—and they are intent on buying their own land while they're nearby. This scenario is reminiscent of Toomer's own experiences; he and his wife Margery Latimer rented long-term vacation homes in Taos and also considered buying property there. Following the Elliotts' first days in Taos, we are given a slice of the life of transplanted Taos artists—the “neonatives” that Dekker describes—including the gossip inherent in a small, insular community and the frustrations that arose from an influx of newcomers and tourists to the village of Taos, emphasized in this play by chaotic road construction on Taos's picturesque plaza, as roads were refurbished to accommodate growing numbers of cars. By the 1930s, Taos was a popular side trip for Santa Fe tourists.

Indeed, the presence of tourists is a key part of the play's backdrop. Dekker writes that the play “suggests that any revelation to be found in Taos must be negotiated within a network of tourism and patronage, in which the earnest questing of pilgrims is always at risk of being cheapened” (*Drama* 14). However, Toomer doesn't draw such clear divisions between tourism,

patrons, and earnest pilgrims. In the play, it's both the network of tourism *and* the zeal of earnest pilgrims that cheapens or at least makes ridiculous the experience of Taos. *A Drama of the Southwest* is woven through with jokes about tourists' perceptions of quaintness and authenticity and the resistance of Native Americans in Taos, as well as examples of racism and prejudice that undercut the narrative of Taos as a harmonious and multicultural haven.

Tom and Grace Elliot are questing for an authentic Southwest—in the kinds of tourism they take up (such as Tom's desire to hear a Taos Indian perform one of the tribe's ceremonial songs) and in the kind of home they want to buy (only adobe will do). In these efforts to achieve an authentic experience, they sometimes reveal their ignorance and superficiality or make cultural blunders. For example, Tom attempts to emulate a Pueblo dancer, performing his interpretation of an Indian dance outside his home. When the Elliotts' landlord meets Tom returning, breathlessly, from his invocation of the morning sun, they politely pull Grace Elliott aside and tell her, "You mustn't encourage such antics in men. The Indians' dances are sacred to them. Mr. Elliot will be ashamed of himself" (77). As Toomer shows, however, Tom isn't ashamed of himself at all. Rather, he jokes to his landladies, "[After the dance], if I remember right, I am to develop at length certain ideas with respect to the wisdom of the Indians, the soundness of their psychology and art [...] this being the tremendous country it is" (77).

Here, Toomer takes a swing at the trend of modernist writers (including himself) who did exactly this—arrived in the Southwest, experimented to some extent with cultural appropriation or voyeurism, and proclaimed their respect or affection for the region's cultural offerings. Sure enough, a few scenes later we witness Tom watching a Taos Indian from far away. He praises the Indians' ability to "contemplate not only their individual lives and environment but their entire race history. Only from sculptures of the Buddha have I had such a feeling of

contemplative power. The impression is so strong that I'd even say that only among these Indians is the art of contemplation, the greatest of the arts, not lost" (117). Tom sees the tableau of a Taos man looking in the direction of Taos mountain and interprets it as evidence of great enlightenment. This is reminiscent of Lawrence's romantic—and ultimately unmet—expectations of Native Americans in the Southwest.

Tom achieves his own level of deep concentration, but it's not from contemplating Taos Mountain, as he'd intended to do when he rented a house with a view of "that black mountain" (70). It happens because he's watching a Native American man who is looking at Taos Mountain. The Taos Indian functions for Tom as a kind of spiritual model—someone holding the relationship he hoped to achieve with the outdoors. In this scene, however, Tom appears happy to project his desire for meaningful connection with Taos on to the silent figure of the Taos Indian. Tom is filled with admiration for this Indian's perceived connection—but of course, we have no indication that this man is having the experience that Tom imagines he's feeling. The stage notes specify that the Taos Indian was dressed in a traditional long white robe. That the Indian is cloaked in a blank canvas underscores the way that Tom constructs the Native people in Taos: as a space for projecting ideas and ideals.<sup>53</sup>

Dekker observes that from the play's opening sequence, in which we witness Taos Indians singing, the audience is in the position of "accidental tourists" (Dekker "Striking" 101). More than that, the audience is placed in a position that would be enviable to Tom, as the Taos songs, which he's led to believe are performed every night, remain elusive to him for the entire

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<sup>53</sup> This projection also recalls the behavior of modernists like Austin, who championed preservation (and often, imitation) of local Southwestern cultures and, in doing so, replicated the perspectives of the commercial tourism industry.

play. Even though he's told repeatedly by residents that the songs happen nightly, he cannot seem to witness a performance.

Before the Elliotts appear on stage, however, the play opens with three characters who function as a kind of chorus and set the scene of Taos for the audience. The chorus is made up of Buck T. Fact, a local Taos resident and "realistic person of some intelligence"; a "poet, import, and visionary" named Ubeam Riesling; and a character referred to only as The Interpreter. The Interpreter's first monologue articulates the central tension of *Drama*. The Interpreter says this:

People are coming, people from the East. They will find this land preinhabited, even as the first desert was; but they will come as if discovering Taos, planting their flag in this high earth. They will come southwestward, not on horseback or in a covered wagon but driving a motorcar. Even so they will strike experience here, as man ever does when his heart is freshly given to a place. First the Indians came. Then the Spaniards. Then the fair-skinned northern folk. So, in their turn, our man and woman come, moving in the restlessness of peoples—two people in search of their environment, two human beings seeking an answer to the question: 'What is my function in life?' (43)

Two things are notable in The Interpreter's words. First, Toomer begins the play by encouraging a sense of deep time, evoking "the first desert" and the origin point of Native people. As Dekker has noted, the set for the first scene in Toomer's play gave the audience little information about the century. The first stage notes begin this way: "Night-black, night of the New Mexican Southwest, a luminous black sky, and the stars seem close to earth. Into this quiet ecstasy the form of a mountain lifts [...] No lights show from the houses. No figures cross the plaza. No dogs bark. The only sounds are those made by the creek as it runs its course from Taos Mountain to the Rio Grande" (41). The only noises are the product of ancient geologic shifts that created

the Rio Grande and the Taos Mountain. The only signs of human life at first are the adobe terraces of the Taos Pueblo.

The nature of adobe, as we're reminded repeatedly in *Drama*, is that it has looked the same for centuries, being a traditional and Indigenous building material, and that it always looks new, as adobe maintenance requires an annual reapplication of outer mud to keep a building structurally intact.<sup>54</sup> When the curtains open on the Taos Pueblo, then, an audience familiar with the Southwest would know where they were, but they wouldn't know *when*. Second, *The Interpreter* shows us a repeated cycle of "discovery," conquest, and consumption. There's nothing new under the sun, we're told, even though the play follows tourists and artists in search of the novel.

Alongside *The Interpreter*, Buck T. Fact and Ubeam Riesling seem to exist as schematically opposed but equally extreme interpretations of Taos. Their exchanges are further evidence of Toomer's acute perception of the Southwest and the forces motivating his fellow Southwestern pilgrims. The script's notes explain that Ubeam is "a person of depth and dignity who does not belong to the art colony because he is above art," while Buckter "Buck" T. Fact is a "butcher, proletarian, and plazaboy [...] who does not belong to the art colony because he is below art." Categorizing them, respectively, as a visionary and a realist, Toomer uses these

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<sup>54</sup> A 1930 issue of the Taos-based little magazine *The Laughing Horse* published a short "how-to" article on the upkeep of an adobe home called "Adobe Notes." The article, authored by *The Laughing Horse* editor Spud Johnson, included maintenance advice that was likely quite practical for the magazine's local readers, as adobe was the most typical material for homes in New Mexico in the first half of the twentieth century. *The Laughing Horse* reached many of the modernists who arrived in the Southwest without much knowledge of adobe upkeep. Johnson's "Adobe Notes" came back into circulation in 1966 when it was reprinted as a standalone pamphlet. This reprinting coincided with the 1960s back-to-the-land movement, when many artists and bohemians (including actor Dennis Hopper, who purchased the Mabel Dodge Luhan estate) moved to northern New Mexico to live on farms and communes (see: Loeffler and Davidson, Rudnick).

viewpoints to explore the “network of tourism and patronage” that Dekker identifies in modernist-era Taos. Toomer inserts short scenes between Ubeam and Buck to mark each day’s passing in the play. In one such exchange, Ubeam greets the morning by facing East and proclaiming, “Hail to thee, rising sun!” Buck responds, “Sit down. The sun rose three hours ago” (74).

Ubeam and Buck debate the merits of Taos in the opening scene of the play, setting the scene for the rest of the play. Ubeam, the visionary, repeats one of the major selling points of Taos for the modernists who moved there: “The spirit of the Indian still lives in and dominates this land. Disappearing elsewhere, it is vital here” (42). This is a common assertion of the era—as I noted, Mabel Dodge Luhan always attributed her decision to move to Taos to the encouragement of friends who wanted her to make the preservation of Indian art and culture her life’s work, and Austin made similar claims. In Ubeam’s rendering, Luhan’s project was a success. He continues by addressing the off-stage Taos Indians: “Indians of the pueblo, you have charmed these mountains, you have filled the canyons with echoes, you have magnetized Taos. To this little cluster of earth-built houses the entire world comes” (42-3). To this, Buck T. Fact replies, “Comes and goes as fast as it can. It is amazing though, the way they come. License plates from every state in the Union, from Canada, and even from Europe, too. And why? What’s to be seen here? [...] Why should anyone come all this way to get dust in his eyes? As for me, it means a job. I’m the butcher at McNulty’s” (43). From Buck’s perspective, the appeal of Taos is entirely obscured by the tourism that also makes up the town’s economy; the tourists drawn to the Southwest are an unavoidable annoyance, like the dust and dirt kicked up by their cars.

Dirt—whether it’s called adobe, dust, earth, or mud—is a motif throughout the play, emerging repeatedly as emblematic of the consumerism of Southwestern enthusiasts. When Tom

tells his friend John, who has lived in Taos for several years, that he and Grace would like to buy a home in New Mexico, John describes the desire to own land in the Southwest as a kind of disease:

[T]he Southwest is in your blood. You've got to want some of its land and your own kind of adobe house. You get the fever. You want to do things with adobe. You want to mix the mud with straw, get your hands into it, feel it, work it. [...] It's easy to work, it's fascinating to work, once you start you can't stop. Often the fever gets out of hand and you add room after room to your house until the thing is too large and sprawling for any use. Then you start again and swear that this time you'll hold yourself to a simple little place. It's the strangest thing. (60)

John's description of adobe homebuilding is evocative of rampant tourism and of westward expansion, recalling the Interpreter's monologue about waves of "discovery" as new groups come to the Southwest. Consider John's emphasis on the ease with which land can be obtained and manipulated in the Southwest—"[i]t's easy to work, it's fascinating to work" with the land. Not only is the land available, it is apparently addictive—a house quickly becomes "too large and sprawling for any use," and the cycle is repeated again and again. This is a pattern that would have been familiar to Toomer, who'd removed himself from the Harlem Renaissance in part because he felt it had become compromised by the enthusiasm of white patrons who'd gravitated toward the vogue for black art and literature. Here, John forecasts the same trajectory for Taos and for the Southwest. By the time Toomer was writing this play, the Fred Harvey Company was regularly sending busloads of sightseers to the Taos Pueblo. John's language implies some worry about what a "fresh start" becomes when *everyone* is practicing the same fresh start in the same place—what will happen to Taos's remoteness and solitude if it's

suddenly full of artists, tourists, and patrons? A few lines later, however, John affirms that a pilgrimage to Taos remains a worthwhile endeavor: “I still firmly believe this is the greatest earth on Earth” (61).

In fact, the Elliotts’ adobe rental home presents their first real disturbance in Taos. Eager to dive into their new Taos lifestyle, the Elliotts insist on moving into their rental even though the house is still being repaired after suffering damage in a recent, heavy rainstorm. Reveling in the area’s much-celebrated silence on their first night in Taos, the Elliotts are suddenly interrupted by chunks of adobe mud raining down on them from their bedroom ceiling. The stage directions, combined with dialogue, are a little slapstick: “*Silence. Elliot suddenly sits bolt upright, startling Grace from sleep*” (72).

After asking his wife for a flashlight, Elliot says: “Something dropped from the ceiling. Here it is. Oh, hell. A piece of mud. [...] I suppose the damn stuff will fall whenever it feels like it” (72). Later, Tom confides to a friend that while he enjoys Taos, it isn’t as he and his wife imagined it would be. He explains that in New York the Elliotts had been “fed up with complexities [of urban life], the simplicity we would have here seemed too good to be true. There, a large if not elaborate establishment. Here a simple one-story, three-room house. There, three telephones. Here, not one. [...] In prospect it seemed surely delightful” (96). The Elliotts imagined a peaceful and idyllic time in Taos, but their dream of a Taos summer did not include such literal contact with the earth. Tom and Grace aren’t confronted by remoteness, silence, or the challenges of introspection—all experiences they’d expected to have in Taos. Instead, they’re confronted with mud—regionally characteristic mud, even—that falls “whenever it feels like it” (72).

In the above scenes, Toomer pokes fun at the pilgrims of Taos who no doubt understood themselves to be very different from bus-riding, sightseeing tourists. Toomer recognized the folly of his questing in the Southwest even as he reveled in his fondness for the region. Still, Toomer's keen sense of irony in *Drama* didn't stop him from describing the Southwest in truly prophetic language. As Ubeam declares early on: "something very great will come to growth in the Southwest" (43). The characters of *Drama of the Southwest* frequently use the language of tourism advertisements, proclaiming the Southwest to be an isolated, remote, rural region, a timeless place with little similarity to the rest of the nation.<sup>55</sup> However, as I've noted, Toomer was aware of the irony of praising a place for its timeless, unchanging authenticity even as that region grew a very modern and thriving tourist trade *based* on its reputation for being premodern.

Mud, adobe, and the Elliotts' desire to own solid ground are dominant themes in *A Drama of the Southwest*. Toomer remained captivated by dust, wind, and cavernous spaces in New Mexico, as his much later essay "The Dust in Abiquiu" (c 1947) demonstrates. He describes Abiquiu through its titular dust, at once earthy and ephemeral: "Sometimes the wind lifts [the dust] in a whirl skyward—Godward, some would say, but I think God is right here as well as up there. But the dust is right here, and more tangible than God" (242). Above all else, "it is ancient" (242). Toomer uses earthwork to point to the village's apparent remove from the passage of time. The first sentence of the essay muses over the archaic labor of the area: "Men still hoe their vegetable gardens. Is this not a reassuring fact?" (240). But the reassurance seems

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<sup>55</sup> Underscoring the Southwest's reputation for distinctive culture, Santa Fe adopted the slogan "the city different" in the 1900s. The slogan was a play on the "city beautiful" urban planning and architecture movement of the 1890s, which focused on building public green spaces in urban areas. Santa Fe's "city different" referenced the city's distinctive architecture, which was strictly controlled by zoning laws (Wilson 3, 122).

fleeting, because the rest of the essay finds Toomer contemplating the land of northern New Mexico in a way that reminds him repeatedly of apocalyptic scenarios. Concluding his meditation on Abiquiu's dust and its nearness to God, Toomer notes “[God] has not made Himself felt for a long time. Nor is there any present sign that He is going to make Himself felt before atomic bombs pulverize us” (242).

Toomer continues to explore the relationship between the sublime and the apocalyptic for much of the essay. To articulate his investments in the Southwest, he turns to epic conceptions of the region, including the origin stories of the Taos Pueblo, the scope of geologic time, and the possibility of a post-nuclear apocalypse. Writing about his view of a mountaintop near Truchas, New Mexico, Toomer describes a geographic landscape that calls to mind something apocalyptic.

He writes of a gorge that appears to him to be so massive that “the state of Pennsylvania could be dropped in, and you would see it only as a small rectangle on the floor of the crater. The entire North American Continent could be dropped in, and still the cauldron would be far from filled to its rim” (248). In Toomer’s rendering, the canyon functions as a black hole swallowing all of America. This imagery evokes the trope of the Southwest as timeless, implying that the mountaintop and gorge valley are untouched by human history. Toomer imagines that the Southwest’s geology exists outside of ordinary time and space, conceptually dwarfing the United States.

Elsewhere in “Dust,” Toomer writes of the region’s labor history, implying that it compared favorably with the history of agriculture-based slavery in the South and exploitative industrial labor in the Northeast. Toomer saw in the Southwest a social order that evolved differently from that of the eastern United States. It’s not that Toomer downplays the cruelty of

the Spanish and U.S. conquests of the Southwest, but he argues that attempts at large-scale capitalist enslavement have been foiled by Indigenous refusal. He tells the story of the Southwest's conquest this way:

A man came. He saw the fields and got an idea. He would get the Indians to sell him the fields, then get the Indians to work for him. Thus it ever was with men who have visions of establishing earthly kingdoms on this earth, themselves the gods. He finally go the fields, but he never could get the Indians to work for him. Southern planters without Negro slaves. Factory owners without wage slaves. (243)

For Toomer, the Southwest's was unlike any history he'd observed in his U.S. travels.

"Dust" isn't only a meditation on the Southwest's history. Early in the essay we're reminded that only a few miles from Abiquiu exists "the fatal strip—Los Alamos," home to the Manhattan Project, and the bomb's presence looms throughout the essay. Toomer tells us "I am not going to write much of dust," but he continues to muse about it in various forms—on roads, as mountains and valleys, as subatomic particles—for the rest of the essay. In fact, Toomer likely grew familiar with the village of Abiquiu through his friendship with Georgia O'Keeffe, who'd been fascinated with the village since the 1930s, eventually building a home there. O'Keeffe frequently painted a view from her home's front yard, looking down along a road into Abiquiu village proper.<sup>56</sup> Tourists visiting O'Keeffe country can see this view during a guided tour of her home; the guide may also point out the door to a bomb shelter that O'Keeffe had constructed in the front yard in the 1940s. According to local lore, O'Keeffe installed her fallout shelter on the advice of Robert Oppenheimer, whom O'Keeffe saw at parties in Los Alamos.

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<sup>56</sup> Good examples of this view include O'Keeffe's "Winter Road I" (1963) or "Mesa and Road East II" (1952).

In the 1940s, the presence of the atomic bomb changed the landscape of American culture and identity, and Toomer's late 1940s writings reflect this massive shift in relation to New Mexico's specific share in it. Toomer is sharp in his depiction of Southwestern pilgrims—he shows with equal clarity the Elliotts' longings for Southwestern transcendence and their humorous attempts to access authentic culture. Still, his writings manifest a questing for an ideal Southwest, both through the characters in *A Drama of the Southwest* and in his Abiquiu essay, to the extent that he sometimes romanticized the history of conquest in the region. It's not too far a leap to move from one's desire and longing for an idealized past to meditations on mortality—especially when nuclear bombs are being tested within a day's drive of your vacation.

#### **4.4 “THE SAME HILLS, THE SAME SUN, THE SAME ARID AND CRUEL EARTH”: LYNN RIGGS’S SOUTHWEST AS BORDERLESS INDIAN COUNTRY**

Like Toomer, Lynn Riggs interrogated the nature of tourism in the Southwest and the fantasies that drew travelers to the region. His plays offer subtle critiques of the settler-colonial fantasies that he recognized as the ideological basis for tourism in the Southwest. Riggs's plays—all of them set in the U.S. or Mexico— all take place on occupied or contested Native land. Riggs's plays, then, render Indian Country as a transnational space and present Indigenous experiences transcending tribal boundaries, because they are similar kinds of interactions with the settler.

Using this perspective to study Riggs's Southwestern plays allows us to draw out instances in which characters create their fantasy Southwest through assertions of colonial power: when tourists visiting Mexico City behave as if they were back home in St. Louis; when

newcomers to the Southwest describe Santa Fe as a cut-rate version of Spain; when characters on both sides of the border express frustration with Native people who do not live up to their idealized expectations. The Southwest, Riggs shows us, is as much an imperial fantasy as it is a geographic region. By the same logic, Riggs's writing also expands the imaginary of the Southwest into Mexican locations.

Riggs grew up in rural Oklahoma as member of the Cherokee nation amid Oklahoma's reservation and settler communities. Oklahoma, as Indian Territory, had been the destination of nearly 50,000 Southeastern Indians after the federal government forcibly removed them from their land, beginning in 1831. Riggs is best known for Oklahoma-set plays that reflect this history, attending to racial tension, mixed race identities, and contested Indigenous property.

However, the plays that Riggs wrote about New Mexico and Mexico are also studies of settler-colonial power and reflect Riggs's perspective as a Cherokee-European who moved through both Native and white social circles. In particular, Riggs's Southwestern plays explore the motives that drove both tourism and poetic fantasies about the region. Like Oklahoma, Santa Fe had a violent colonial history; however, Santa Fe was also a leisure tourism empire. Riggs wove his experiences with Santa Fe's deeply colonialist tourism structure into his plays set in both New Mexico and Mexico. Riggs's representations of the tensions between colonial and Indigenous interests reveal instances of resistance, as in his Santa Fe-set *Russet Mantle* (1935), and larger-scale decolonization efforts, as in his Mexican plays, *A World Elsewhere* (ca. 1934-37) and *The Year of Pilár* (ca. 1935-1938).

Riggs came to Santa Fe in 1923 at the invitation of his lover Witter Bynner, who had taught Riggs at the University of Oklahoma.<sup>57</sup> Bynner's guidance was important to Riggs's thriving in the Southwest. In addition to Bynner's academic credentials, he was well-connected in U.S. literary circles as a poet, a translator, and an observer of poetic innovation, serving as the president of the Poetry Society of America in the early 1920s. Bynner brought these connections to Santa Fe, helping to enrich the local creative community. The world that Bynner inhabited in the Southwest nourished and revived Riggs, who had been suffering from depression and bad health when he arrived in the Southwest. The 24-year-old Riggs fell into a comfortable life in Santa Fe. He worked several odd jobs in the city to support his writing, including a stint as the clerk at the Spanish and Indian Trading Company, which later became the retail space for Mary Austin's Spanish Colonial Society. Composing poetry and plays in his off-hours, Riggs circulated in Bynner's group of literary friends, which included Austin, Alice Corbin Henderson, and Mabel Dodge Luhan. Although Riggs only lived full time in Santa Fe for two years—and his relationship with Bynner was short-lived—he kept a home in Santa Fe for the rest of his life, dividing his time between coastal locations—Los Angeles or New York—and New Mexico. The Southwest remained an important creative retreat for Riggs, and he remained close to Bynner and his circle of friends.

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<sup>57</sup> The circle of New Mexican modernists included several openly gay men, including Bynner, Spud Johnson, and Myron Brinig. Riggs experienced a health crisis just before moving to New Mexico, which inspired him to briefly stay in a wellness clinic in Santa Fe (these were common in the area, which was a retreat for tuberculosis patients). His biographer speculates that this may have been a mental health crisis related to Riggs's homosexuality, though the details of Riggs's treatment and health are unclear. However, it was the case that Riggs began pursuing relationships with men, including Bynner, while living in the Southwest, and he continued to date men for the rest of his life (Braunlich).

Critics have largely discounted the significance that New Mexico played in Riggs's establishing a creative identity. Riggs only lived fulltime in Santa Fe for two years; he moved to Chicago in 1925 for a position teaching English, and from Chicago he moved to New York to oversee the production of his play *Big Lake: A Tragedy In Two Parts* (1925), his first Broadway-produced play. After *Big Lake*, Riggs received support from the Guggenheim Foundation to write another play; with this financial support, he traveled through France and Spain, then returned to live in New York. After *Big Lake*, Riggs continued to write critically acclaimed plays about Oklahoma, such as *The Cherokee Night* (1930) and *Green Grow the Lilacs* (1929), which became the basis for Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1943 musical *Oklahoma!*.<sup>58</sup> Riggs's success brought more financial stability in the 1930s, allowing him to travel back and forth to Santa Fe and to begin the process of buying land and building a home in the city (Braunlich 107). While based in New Mexico, Riggs also sometimes visited friends in Mexico City. The plays that Riggs wrote in this era, some of his first works not set in Oklahoma, reflect these visits.

Riggs's Santa Fe connection is integral to understanding his explorations of settler-colonialism and decolonization. In spite of an awareness of Santa Fe's flaws, the city and its creative community remained important to Riggs for the rest of his life. At a formative period in his career, he found a supportive circle of fellow modernists, including Bynner, Alice Corbin Henderson, and Austin. In his first two years in the city, Riggs began to establish the artistic and personal freedom that he had lacked in Oklahoma as a queer man of Cherokee-European descent. He wrote some of his most acclaimed plays while living in New Mexico, traveling back and

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<sup>58</sup> Riggs's Oklahoma plays sharply criticized the stifling nature of life in the rural Midwest—the musical adaptation of *Green Grow the Lilacs* is a departure from the original play, and *Oklahoma!* did not represent a turn towards more mainstream entertainment for Riggs. He did not, for example, begin writing Broadway musicals or sunnier depictions of Midwestern life.

forth to Mexico, New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. In these years Riggs wrote and produced his first published play, *Knives from Syria* (1927). He also wrote poetry, publishing his work in the literary magazine *The Nation* and in modernist little magazines, including *The Laughing Horse*, and *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*. No doubt Bynner, an acclaimed poet, and Corbin Henderson, poet and former co-editor of *Poetry*, helped guide Riggs's poetry to friendly venues.

Riggs's interpretations of the Southwest differ from those of his fellow modernists, and his critiques of tourism were especially incisive, perhaps because Riggs was more personally affronted by the colonial nostalgia that defined Southwestern tourism. For many of Riggs's fellow modernists, New Mexico represented a blank canvas on which to project their desires. However, Riggs never succumbed to this temptation. Instead, he wrote satirical plays skewering the bohemian and touristic cultures of the Southwest.<sup>59</sup> He also wrote imagist poetry that detailed New Mexican scenes through the perspective of an anonymous observer, but he refused to channel the kind of mystical longing expressed by Toomer and Lawrence.

For example, Riggs's poem "Spring Morning—Santa Fé" rejects the often-evoked timelessness of the Southwest. The poem, which shares an unnamed speaker's observations about a typical Santa Fe scene, is structured according to the hours of the morning. With lines such as: "The water in the acequia came down/ At the stroke of nine; and watery clouds were lifting/ Their velvet shadows from the little town;/Gold fired the pavement where the leaves were shifting// At ten, black shawls of women bowed along/ The Alameda; sleepy burros lay/ In the heat" (*TKNM* 49). Riggs follows some the conventions of including regional details that might count as quaint: burros, women in traditional Spanish-Moorish clothing, and acequias (a still-

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<sup>59</sup> *Russet Mantle* is the only existing play that Riggs set in New Mexico. In 1925 he wrote and destroyed *The Primitives: A Satirical Comedy in Three Acts* (Braunlich 18).

functional irrigation system established during Spanish conquest). These are images that commonly appear in visual and written work about the Southwest—we can imagine any of these images appearing in a Georgia O’Keeffe painting, an Ansel Adams photograph, or an effusive paragraph by Mary Austin. However, Riggs juxtaposes these romantic images with indications of modernity, such as the exactness of keeping track of time by a clock—the acequia’s irrigation flow began “[a]t the stroke of nine”—or the detail of the sun heating up a paved road. In his poetry and in his plays, Riggs represented the Southwest with a clear-eyed accuracy often absent in the work of his Southwestern peers.

Critics often portray Riggs as a tragic figure: a closeted gay man who was tortured by his Cherokee-European heritage. Craig Womack has implied that these insecurities discouraged Riggs from writing about many Indian characters (Cox 87). As James Cox has noted, however, this theory does not account for Riggs’ Southwestern and Mexican plays, which include some Native characters. Moreover, it’s difficult to measure the ways that Riggs’s writings reflect his feelings about his Cherokee heritage—and it’s certainly not useful to do so by simply counting the number of explicitly Native-identified characters, as is Womack’s method. Instead, reading Riggs’s plays shows that issues of Native sovereignty and identity were frequently addressed, both through Native and non-Native characters, with explorations of colonial history appearing in most of his plays.

It’s quite likely that Riggs felt conflicted about his multiracial identity. Riggs’s Cherokee heritage came from his mother, who reported 1/8 Cherokee lineage when she enrolled herself and her children in the Cherokee tribe just after Riggs’s birth in 1899.<sup>60</sup> Although Riggs’s mother

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<sup>60</sup> While Riggs’s mother’s claims to Cherokee lineage might sound scant, this sort of official enrollment into the Cherokee Nation was not unusual. Many Native people were encouraged to

died when he was young, he remained close to his extended family. Riggs grew up adjacent to reservation life and both white and Cherokee cultures. His Oklahoma plays reflect his familiarity with the vernacular language, folklore, and culture of rural Oklahomans, both Native and Anglo.

However, some of Riggs's plays that most explicitly engage race and Indigeneity are set in Mexico. As Cox argues, Riggs creates characters (Indigenous and not) who were not in despair or ruin—nor were his gay characters full of shame for eschewing heteronormativity. As I'll argue, the setting of Mexico is integral to how Riggs represented Indigeneity and colonial culture. Riggs's Mexico plays are consider settler-colonial borderlands, a context and position that Riggs knew well. The Southwest is a significant point of reference in these Mexico plays, since Riggs imagines its tourists' perspectives being more directly challenged by political instability resulting from colonialism throughout the Americas. Riggs's New Mexico-set *Russet Mantle* (1935) explores the transnational and colonialist fantasies that travelers sought in the Southwest (and especially in Santa Fe). *A World Elsewhere* (ca. 1934-1937), set in Mexico City, follows American tourists as their romantic ideas about Mexico are challenged. *The Year of Pilár* (ca. 1935-1938), set in the Yucatan, chronicles the culture shock experienced by aristocrats in the midst of an Indigenous revolution.

Riggs's *Russet Mantle* is a satire of Santa Fe's bohemian culture, which had taken hold in the city by the time Riggs arrived in 1923. The play gives us the most explicit sense of how Riggs understood key components of the creative culture that surrounded him, especially the

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enroll by the Dawes Allotment Act, which promised land allotments to Native people in the late nineteenth century. (The Dawes Act, which rewarded land allotments according to tribal populations, was designed to rob Plains tribes of thousands of acres of land). A 1/8 or 1/16 tribal lineage was common in the Cherokee nation. Moreover, the concept of quantifying tribal membership according to blood lineage was an invention of the federal government, not a reflection of tribal definitions of belonging.

tendency to romanticize and consume Native culture. *Russet Mantle* also shows that the Southwest was, for tourists and new residents, connected to both Spain and its former colonies, such as Mexico. After all, it had been a goal of the tourist industry to ensure that the Southwest existed in the American imaginary as an exotic space unlike anywhere else in the U.S., with its highly visible and active Indigenous and Hispano populations and its history of Spanish Colonial rule. *Russet Mantle* explores how visitors' expectations were informed by the ways that the tourist industry represented the Southwest.

The play is set on a chicken farm belonging to Santa Fe newcomers Horace and Susanna Kincaid—a setting likely inspired by Riggs's early job tending the chickens at Witter Bynner's Santa Fe home in exchange for his rent. It follows the romance of the Kincaids' idealistic young niece, Kay, and John, a young poet hired to care for the chickens. As in most of Riggs's plays, particularly his comedies, the most dynamically-written character is a woman who speaks candidly and enthusiastically about her sex life. *Russet Mantle* begins with a search for Kay, who along with her mother is visiting the Kincaids from Kentucky. We learn that Kay has spent the night with a cowboy named Scoot she met the day before on the Santa Fe Plaza. When Kay returns, Scoot in tow, she is delighted to have spent time with the locals and entirely unapologetic about her implied promiscuity. At her uncle's insistent prying, Kay recalls her night with Scoot this way:

Kay: [...] Now see here, Uncle Horace, what is it you want to hear—a little dirt?

[...]

Kay: [*Sitting on the table.*] Scoot and I sat on the *portal*—now get this, Uncle Horace—we sat very close together. He kissed me. What do you think of that?

Horace [*Triumphantly.*] I knew it!

Kay: And rather often, too. This went on for quite a long time. Naturally, we couldn't keep *that* up all night. So at last we went to bed.

Horace [*Who hadn't expected to hear so much*] You—went to bed with that man? [...]

Kay: It's the truth, so help me! There was only one bed, you see. But it was quite a large one. There was plenty of room. So we all three piled in together.

Horace: All three? Three?

Kay: Oh, I forgot to tell you! Scoot has a Mexican boy who lives on the place and helps him with the cattle. There being only one bed—I slept between them. (34-35)

One scene later, John appears at the Kincaids' door looking for a job; he and Kay are taken with each other right away, sharing a sense of humor and a distaste for the stuffiness of the Kincaids. Their romance serves to underscore their generational difference from the Kincaids. John articulates this when he explains his resistance to traditional models of middle-class success: "I didn't make the world. Our grandfathers made it [...] I don't like it" (48). John has moved to the Southwest in search of some alternative to the life that would be customary for him. We'll learn, however, that the Kincaids' move to Santa Fe was motivated by similar desires.

Using these mirrored relationships, the play examines the meanings that each couple attaches to the Southwest. Much of the play takes place in John's room, which is also the chicken coop. Horace and Susanna visit John one after the other—ostensibly to discuss his work arrangement—and both confide in him about what appears to be the dominant preoccupation of their marriage: Susanna's romantic past.

Susanna tells John of her first love, a man who wanted her to move to Spain with him. Susanna was scandalized by the idea of moving abroad with him because her lover had no network of support in Spain. The man she loved moved to Spain without her, and she met and

married Horace. When Horace arrives at John's room just moments after Susanna leaves, he also alludes to Susanna's past. He tells John that Susanna's former lover:

[...] was a dreamer—a wastrel, I guess. He had gone to Spain somewhere to live. She could never get him out of her mind. She thought of him constantly. She never loved me. Never! When the crash came a few years ago, we came out here to New Mexico. That was her doing. Why did we come *here*? *Here*—of all places? [*His eyes burn strangely.*] Have you ever been to Spain? [*Harsh and febrile.*] New Mexico is Spain, my boy—the same hills, the same sun, the same arid and cruel earth. We came to New Mexico, this is where we live! God! (83)

Cox reads this exchange as Riggs establishing transnational sense of the Southwest—as still part of the terrain of its former conquerors. If Horace and Susanna were attracted to New Mexico because they thought it was suggestive of Spain, then their motivations for moving there would reflect the state tourist industry's emphasis on Spanish-era history and culture. To Cox's observation I add that Riggs also highlights Santa Fe specifically as a place for the projection of many desires—much as Taos figures in Toomer's *A Drama of the Southwest*. It isn't only that New Mexico reminds Horace and Susanna of Spain because Susanna's former lover moved there. It's that the once-Spanish Southwest figures in Riggs's plays—including his Mexican plays—as a destination for characters who are filled with an unrequited longing or haunted by regret.

For these characters, the Southwest acts as a blank slate, but in a particular way. The artists that Luhan brought to the West saw the Southwest as a blank slate to inspire artistic inspiration, and Toomer's characters approached Taos (and Taos Indians) as a place to project longings for mystic and spiritual enlightenment. But Riggs wrote his characters' attachments to

the Southwest as deeply personal. For them, the Southwest was a place to mull over and try to regain something lost from the past.

The Southwest *does* serve as a fresh start for long-term houseguest Kay, who falls in love with John and is happy to realize she's become pregnant. Upon learning this news, Kay's mother Effie is frantic and asks Horace to organize a lynching party to avenge Kay's defilement.<sup>61</sup> Effie suggests that Salvador may be to blame, after Horace tells her he wouldn't know who to lynch:

Effie: Why, you certainly ought to! You know evehbody (sic). It must have been one of these natives. [*At the appalling thought.*] Oh! What if it was one of those savage Indians—maybe one from San Ildefonso? They's one here now. you! [*She advances on the smoking SALVADOR.*] You! What you doin' here anyhow? [*SALVADOR has risen at her approach, in astonishment.*] Give me that scarf! [*She snatches it.*] Go away! We don't want you!

[*SALVADOR backs up, runs across, flabbergasted by what is evidently an insane woman. EFFIE follows him.*] (109)

Riggs's stage notes ensure that the scene will be played out in a slapstick manner; he also ensures that Salvador will be the character with whom the audience empathizes in this scene. Cox reads Salvador as a contrast to the imagined "red and bloodthirsty" Indians that Effie is thirsty to see. Salvador is "stoic and nearly silent" (86).

However, Riggs doesn't only write Salvador as a silent contradiction to Effie's foolish expectations. The audience is given a clear sense of how Pueblo Indians might perceive Effie and

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<sup>61</sup> This demand is treated as a humorous overreaction, but there was nearly a lynching in Santa Fe in 1931, when a black man was accused of raping and murdering the author and Hispana cultural preservationist Cleofas Jaramillo's daughter Angelina. While the police stopped the lynching, the man was executed by the state shortly after his arrest. (Reed)

the Kincaids through Salvador's response to Effie, when he carefully backs away from an "evidently [. . . ] insane woman" and when he encounters Susanna. Addressing Effie and Salvador, Susanna explains "Salvador's one of our best friends, aren't you Salvador? How's your family?" (99). Salvador replies by asking her for a cigarette and then leaving the conversation (99). We learn that the family often returns home to find Salvador and other Pueblo Indians spending time in their courtyard, smoking the family's cigarettes. She sees no significance in the fact that Salvador and his friends usually leave as soon as the Kincaids arrive home. Salvador's stoicism and silence do not serve to bolster the stereotype of the "savage" that Effie imagines. Instead, when Salvador opts not to engage with the Kincaids, the audience understands his behavior as a form of refusal undercutting the Kincaids' naïve idea that they have seamlessly assimilated to a Southwestern lifestyle and befriended the locals.

Like *Russet Mantle*, Riggs's two Mexican plays explore the theme of imaginative ownership of place through the perspective of tourists and hopeful wanderers. The plays differ in tone, however—*A World Elsewhere* (ca. 1934-1937) is a light satire, while *The Year of Pilár* (ca. 1935-1938) is a family tragedy. Both take up Indigenous sovereignty and the relationship of colonial powers to Indigenous people in the context of Mexican history, with characters that treat Native people as spectacle, and those moments of touristic voyeurism are interrupted with outcroppings of local politics. These characters find that a military coup interrupts their cocktail hour, in the case of *A World Elsewhere*, or an act of Indigenous resistance spoils a party, in the case of *The Year of Pilár*. It isn't that Riggs's Mexico is particularly authentic, nor was it meant to be. Instead, Mexico figures as an imaginative landscape for decolonization efforts and colonial power struggles to play out in a way that the U.S. could not allow. Mexico functioned in Riggs's

plays much as the Southwest functioned for his characters—as a space to project their fantasies or dreams about place and power.

While *Russet Mantle* only follows upheaval in one family's established order, the two Mexican plays imagine upheaval on a revolutionary scale, with *A World Elsewhere* tracking the rise and nearly immediate failure of a military coup in Mexico City and *The Year of Pilár* imagining a Native-led revolution in the Yucatan. It's significant that Riggs did not imagine the same decolonization happening in the Southwest, although the U.S. Southwest served as a space for other transnational fantasies, such as Horace Kincaid's assertion that the Southwest could stand in for Spain. *Russet Mantle* suggests that Riggs viewed Santa Fe and the Southwest as having no space for acts of serious decolonization, perhaps because the crux of the region's tourism industry appeal was its history of colonial-Indigenous tensions. Yet Riggs situates Indigenous uprisings, failed right-wing political coups, and active conflict over landownership and governance all in Mexican territory. In these plays, the Mexican setting makes possible acts of decolonization that never appear in Riggs's Southwestern works.

Riggs's comedy *A World Elsewhere* follows a family of in Mexico City. The first act is a satirical survey of naïve tourists, while the second act takes a turn towards suspense after General Gonzalo Fernandez Aguirre, the leader of a military coup taking place in Mexico, takes up residence in the hotel and holds the American tourists hostage. Aguirre represents the hacendados—the aristocratic, land-owning class of Mexico—who want to reclaim the lands that had been distributed to working-class and Indigenous Mexicans in the decades after the Mexican Revolution. Aguirre expresses a longing for the past—in this case, a past in which the aristocracy had more power—and he centers that longing on the (re)possession of land in a once-colonial space. Aguirre warns the Bodine family that he'll expect sex from one of the women in the

Bodine group and implies that he'll rape Claire's seventeen-year-old daughter, Janie. Upon hearing this, Claire Kincaid takes charge and masterminds the family's escape. She performs a kind of rhetorical seduction on Aguirre through a long ideological argument about power, capitalism, and the nature of conquest, while her younger son escapes to the American Consulate to get help. The play ends with order being restored: the general is arrested and the American tourists hop into a taxi, relieved to be going home. Through their interactions with the general during their time as hostages, each character finds their ideas about Mexico and the United States challenged. Enthusiasm for the exotic is dampened, and the smug certainty of American exceptionalism is shaken.

In the play's first act we see the Bodine family's investments in Mexico as an exotic place to sightsee and buy souvenirs. Their behavior is reminiscent of the touristic perspective we've seen at work in *Russet Mantle's* Santa Fe, and in many other modernists' representations of the tourist Southwest. Claire and her daughter Janie are both dazzled. After a day of buying souvenirs—Claire's husband Phil remarks "We've bought out the city" (89). Claire implores Phil to move there with her; he resists, reminds her that he's tied to his career in St. Louis. Meanwhile Janie, dressed in a traditional embroidered dress she bought while sightseeing, tells her family that Mexico has affirmed her true identity: "I'm Latin, I feel it, I know it—I was meant to be dark and passionate, and throw kisses to bull-fighters..." (84).

Claire is nearly as enthusiastic as her daughter. When the family returns from their sightseeing and shopping, Claire meets and is enchanted by a newlywed couple who are also staying at the hotel. She calls them "a symbol. They're Mexico—the spirit of Mexico"—no matter that these newlyweds are Hedda, from Sweden, and Ramon, from New Mexico (103).

Claire looks to Ramon—apparently because of his Spanish name—to affirm her romantic, idealized fondness for Mexico:

Claire: Nobody agrees with me, I'm afraid—but I can't help feeling that Mexico can give us what we need—all of us—the spiritual food we're dying for. Do you feel that, Mr. Chaves?

Ramon [*After a second.*] It was my wife wanted to come here, Mrs. Bodine. I'd have liked Canada—or Sweden, where we met.

Claire: Oh! (105)

This is the first time we see Claire's romantic concept of Mexico being challenged. In this case, it's through Ramon, who acts as a stand-in for Claire's idea of Mexico. Perhaps Riggs's choice to make Ramon a New Mexican is a small wink at anyone in his audience that may have knowledge about the Southwest's position in U.S. culture—a reference to the state's history as a former Mexican territory and its difficulty being granted statehood because Southern politicians objected to the territory's large Latinx and Indigenous populations. The state's historic and ethnic ties to Mexico provide the basis of Claire's casual conflation of Mexico and New Mexico. This exchange is an instance of identifying shared, transnational aspects of the U.S. and Mexico. As the play continues, however, Claire and her family grow increasingly aware of the ways that Mexican values and politics are echoed in their lives back in the United States. In this process, the Bodines' romantic ideas about Mexico are largely dispelled.

Claire's surprise at Ramon's lack of interest in visiting Mexico foreshadows her greater disappointment in General Aguirre. Positioned in this play as the character who speaks for all of Mexico—after all, for the bulk of Act Two he is the *de facto* leader of Mexico—Aguirre represents a kind of brutal colonial capitalism that had been invisible to Claire up to that point.

And as we'll see, it's exactly Aguirre's capitalist drive that makes him familiar and sympathetic to other members of the Bodine party.

*A World Elsewhere* satirizes both provincial tourists who seem to actually *dislike* traveling, such as Claire's mother-in-law Mrs. Bodine, and earnest bohemian tourists who fall in love with their fantasy of a place and its art, such as Claire and her daughter. Both archetypes Riggs would have known well from his time in 1930s Santa Fe, both in his tenure as a souvenir shop clerk and as a member of the inner circle of Santa Fe modernists. Claire's novelty-driven zeal for "a Mexico that exists on postcards" and Mrs. Bodine's extreme provincialism are essentially perspectives formed from the same misinformation, perspectives in which similarities—economic, political, historical—are ignored in favor of an obsessive documentation of difference. The second act of the play teaches us, however, that both Mexico and the United States are more complex than any of the characters expected.

As I note, most of the second act revolves around General Aguirre's interactions with guests at the hotel, especially Phil, Mrs. Bodine, and Claire. Like the scenes in John's chicken coop in *Russet Mantle*, each conversation with the General serves to give us more information about the Bodine family and to underscore the similarities between their colonialist position as tourists and the General's position as neo-colonialist conqueror. The General speaks with Phil, Mrs. Bodine, and Claire, bemusedly sharing with them his thoughts on similarities and differences between American and Mexican culture. The General is driven by an extreme sense of machismo. Initially a humorous character, he becomes increasingly menacing after threatening Claire's daughter. The audience also learns that his coup has caused several deaths, and he has a storied history of murder. However, each conversation between him and the Bodines remains congenial and surprisingly intimate.

Phil and the general commiserate over the demands of their difficult jobs, while Claire and the general's lively debate has an undercurrent of sexual tension. Unexpectedly, it's Mrs. Bodine who gets along the best with the general—as Cox notes, they are “on the same privileged side of history” (91). When Mrs. Bodine appears in the hotel courtyard in evening clothes, presumably to have a social dinner with the General, Phil exclaims “Mother, you ought not be here!” to which she responds, “Good heavens, Philip, don't you know I've moved in military circles before?” She also acknowledges the similarities between a colonialist would-be dictator and the capitalist landowners like Mr. Bodine, who made a fortune developing land on the prairie in the late nineteenth century. Like Mr. Bodine, the general set his mind on a goal—reclaiming hacendado control of Mexico—and accomplished it.

In fact, Mrs. Bodine and the General get along quite well. Mrs. Bodine is relieved to learn the General is not a communist (General: “Hardly, *Senora*.”), telling him “I was sure *you* couldn't be one when you said you'd taken back your haciendas. I think that was right. They were yours, and your father's before you” (132). The General tells Mrs. Bodine that he felt immediately at ease with her, and Mrs. Bodine responds “I came down to give you a piece of my mind. And here I am wondering if you wouldn't visit us sometime in the states” (132).

Phil is concerned about Aguirre's interactions with the women in his party, especially as Aguirre's cartoonish charm turns toward a more menacing sexual aggression when he implies he may demand sex from one of the women in the Bodine party. In addition to worrying about his mother, who finds Aguirre delightful, Phil is particularly panicked by Claire, who made it clear to the general that she's willing to have sex with Aguirre if he spares her daughter Janie. When Phil goes to the General in despair over Claire's decision the General soothes him, offering him a glass of wine and tells him, “I don't like to see you in such a state on a such a beautiful evening.

You have skies like this in St. Louis?” Phil tells the General that he has never noticed: “the skies of St. Louis don’t interest me” (125-126). With some gentle probing, the General encourages Phil to articulate why he feels tied to St. Louis and to his job there:

Aguirre: No? But—excuse me—you are, as they say, breaking your neck to get back.

Why is this?

Phil: It’s my home. I live there.

Aguirre: But you don’t like it?

Phil: I dislike it very much.

The General proceeds to muse a little about the elusive promise of capitalism: “Your [American] business man—like yourself—he slaves away to make money, to have success [...] For what? So that there’ll come a time when he can have a life of ease, with no worry, no cloud, no pain. And does he get it? He does not” (126). The General’s observations leave Phil shaken (as does the prospect of the General sleeping with his wife), and he retreats even more panicked and befuddled than when he began his conversation. After this, the General loudly calls to summon Janie, though he’s doing it with the intention of drawing out Claire, who means to protect her daughter. Claire arrives right away.

Claire’s conversation with the general is the longest and the most strategic. She means to outsmart the general, or at least to seduce him as a means of distracting him from her daughter. It’s evident to the audience, but not to Claire, that Aguirre is only interested in pursuing Claire—he uses the threat of her daughter as a bargaining chip to get an audience with her.

Claire is playful, at one point observing the similarities between the general’s home city and hers: “San Luis Potosí. St. Louis, Missouri. A curious coincidence, the names, don’t you

think? Our origins are kin” (135). The line is there for a laugh, but Claire unknowingly echoes Mrs. Bodine’s observations about the common ground she shares with the general.

Although the play begins with meditations on Mexico’s distance and difference from the United States, it ultimately narrows the gap between the two countries. Riggs shows that the same settler-colonial motives that drove a conquest of the Americas drive the tourism in which Claire and her family take part and the General’s failed attempt to take Mexico back for the *hacendado* class. When the coup arrives outside the door of the hotel, Mrs. Bodine laments that political revolutions don’t happen in America. “Not much,” responds Claire. Riggs seems to be saying: the setting, players, and frequency of Mexico’s and the United States’ coups may be different, but the countries share the same fundamentally colonial power structure.

Riggs’s characters often return to the conclusion that capitalism is closely related to imperialism, insofar as both systems are built on the exploitation of the working class and insofar as the systems are difficult to escape. In *Russet Mantle* John laments that “I didn’t make the world. Our grandfathers made it”—resisting the idea of the career path expected by his middle-class family, John left his family and found work on the Kincaid’s chicken farm (48). In *A World Elsewhere*, Phil admits he hates his job (and in fact, he hates living in St. Louis) but sees his unhappiness as an inevitable side-effect of his life in the United States.

These themes are intensified in *The Year of Pilár*, which considers the effects of imperialist capitalism on Mexico’s *hacendado* gentry and its Indigenous populations. The effect in *The Year of Pilár* is a family tragedy, a kind of Yucatan gothic. The play opens in the Manhattan home of the Crespos, a wealthy Mexican family who were displaced by the Mexican Revolution, and follows the Crespos as they return to their home in the Yucatan for the first time

in a decade. The Crespos return at the urging of their daughter Pilár, who is eager to see her family's hacienda as an adult—when they left Mexico, Pilár was a child.

Pilár's parents agree that their children should return to the Yucatan, and they're under the impression that it is safe to return to their position of aristocratic land ownership. However, as the play unfolds it becomes clear to the audience that the Indigenous labor force is moving toward another uprising. Beto, an Indigenous (and self-identified Mayan) man who becomes the voice of reason for most of the play, witnesses an argument between two Crespo brothers and observes: "No matter who fights, what brother against what brother—it's the Indian who dies" (41). Beto's axiom doesn't come true at the end of this play, however. Instead, the family is driven from their hacienda and Pilár walks toward likely death. The outcome of the revolution is left uncertain. *Year of Pilár* shows Indigenous and colonial powers without the cushion of humor or the relief of satire—instead, the reader is given no relief from the family's careless complicity in the destruction of Indigenous culture and their disturbing deference to conservative dictators.

Riggs depicts the Crespos as the last members of a decayed family tree, one so rotted by (and complicit in) colonial corruption that the subsequent uprising—which signifies the certain ruin or death of most of the family members—seems inevitable. The message isn't subtle: the Crespos and other aristocrats brought this end on themselves. Early in the play, an Indigenous character named Beto predicts the Crespo family's future. Speaking to Trino Crespo, Beto says: "[Consider] your ancestors. And what happens after they conquer? They decay. Look at those haughty ones and wonder. Look at yourself. Who are you to instruct me?" (31).

The decay of the family is tied to this participation in preserving settler-colonial power. Early on, Pilár's mother Dona Candita fondly recalls her decision to let her toddler daughter spend a weekend with Don Porfirio Diaz, president of Mexico from 1884 to 1911. Ostensibly a

democratically elected president, Diaz rigged elections and intimidated his political rivals. While in office Diaz favored the interests of wealthy foreign investors and Mexico's class of aristocratic land owners. Dona Candita recalls Pilár's week with the oligarch:

Yes. Oh, you were like a little Shirley Temple—only an aristocrat! You were like the little Princess Elizabeth of England—and you knew your place too! [...] Once when you were little—not yet three—we let you take some flowers in to your grandfather, Alonso. He had company with him, if you please—the great Don Porfirio Diaz himself! They sent me a message, written out—“The little Pilár you will have all your life. Let us keep her for a week.” And a big seal, with ribbons! What could I do? When you came home—it was in a cart with two tiny ponies. And you wore a little lace dress from Paris. (25)

At best, this story illustrates a disturbing episode of abandonment in Pilár's childhood; at worst it hints at abuse and trauma, a possible reason for the feelings of isolation from her family that Pilár repeatedly expresses. This incident mirrors *A World Elsewhere*, in which the central tension of the second act is Claire's unwillingness to hand over her daughter to a conservative general whose sympathies are with the hacendados. Here, Dona Candita is so persuaded by the rightness of Diaz's regime that she is flattered by the request. She overlooks the vulnerable position of her two-year-old daughter, focusing instead on the prestige of receiving such an invitation from Diaz and the ostentatious gifts that he gave Pilár and her family.

The family returns to the Yucatan and some of the Crespo children embrace their aristocratic position. Pilár, her sister Josefa, and her brother Fernando treat the Mayan/Yucatan Indians with disdain, as they learned from their parents. When the siblings attend a party featuring a performance by traditional Yucatan musicians, they and other guests mock the performers. Riggs's stage notes are telling: “*The Indians have been getting up and leaving, the*

*song gradually being dropped by one after the other*” (39). Josefina complains: “[with a silly complaining wail] They’re leaving! Just as we get settled. We weren’t doing a thing, not a thing. Oh, the Indians—always insulting you without opening their mouths! It’s disgusting” (39). This scene recalls Salvador of *Russet Mantle*, the taciturn but expressive San Ildefonso (Kewa) Indian whose silence often serves to highlight for the audience the ridiculous behavior he observes. Josefina’s complaint is also an echo of Lawrence’s assertion that Pueblo Indians, by not explicitly seeking out his company, were “jeering” at him (Burke 159). These instances of Indigenous refusal recall Chadwick Allen’s concept of trans-Indigenous methods, wherein he compels scholars to use Indigenous “aesthetic systems and technologies” across national and tribal boundaries as a way of studying Indigenous literature (Allen xvi). Allen’s intention is to decenter the role of dominant settler cultures in reading and analyzing a text. Riggs’s Native characters in a parallel way manipulate stereotypes—the savage Indian, the stoic Indian—in the service of defiance and decolonization.

Riggs shows us that just as colonialist perspectives cross national boundaries in Riggs’s work, so do the forms that Native resistance take. However, only in this Mexico play does Riggs envision Indigenous resistance turning into full-blown revolution. In fact, the violence that Effie fears from Salvador in *Russet Mantle* will come to pass in *The Year of Pilár*. At the end of the play, a long-simmering Indigenous uprising begins. Pilár’s family is ushered away by Beto, who is a close friend and lover of Pilár’s estranged brother, Trino. But Pilár opts to stay at their hacienda, even though Beto tells her she’ll almost certainly be raped and murdered.

The uprising at the end of *The Year of Pilár* offers a stark contrast to the coup that takes up most of the second half of *A World Elsewhere*. Most significant is the ideological difference between the two political uprisings, as General Aguirre represents the interests of hacendado

class of landowners, while the Yucatan Indians in *The Year of Pilár* are resisting the exploitation of the hacendado/planation system. Aguirre's coup is a low-stakes threat—it's a source of humor in the play, and the audience gathers from his conversations with Mrs. Bodine that Mexico's system of colonial capitalism was already well established, even if some of the hacendado land had been reinstated to Indigenous people. (This is historically accurate—while Mexico did redistribute some hacendado land in the 1910s and 1920s, this process was slow and far from an overhaul of property ownership.)

Perhaps these ideological differences explain why Riggs wrote *A World Elsewhere* as a light, if piercing, comedy, while *The Year of Pilár* is a heavy-handed tragedy. *The Year of Pilár*, shows a true revolution of decolonization, wherein Native people take back their land and their agency by rejecting the hacendado labor system. The Yucatan riot is deadly because the system being overthrown was deadly—we learn throughout the play that Indigenous life has little value, and laborers are often overworked until their early deaths. The play ends with most of the major characters—save for those who are Indigenous or aligned with the Indigenous cause—either dead or completely displaced from their home and social position.

Lynn Riggs's Southwestern and Mexican plays are some of the most sharply observed depictions of tourism to come out of the modernist-era Southwest, though they're rarely acknowledged in studies of modernists living in the Southwest—Riggs is largely absent from works on the time period by Flannery Burke, Lynn Cline, and Lois Rudnick. However, his work offers an important perspective on other modernist fantasies about the Southwest. Riggs's characters who seek meaning through cultural tourism are left unfulfilled and find that they can't escape the woes of modernity by visiting a place famous for being removed from the modern world.

#### 4.5 THE SOUTHWEST AS FUTURE OR FANTASY

Lawrence arrived in the Southwest with expectations gathered from many sources—Luhan’s enthusiasm, the readings she’d sent him (including work by hyperbolic Charles Lummis), and the Southwest’s reputation as an exotic and wild place, which Lawrence would have likely encountered even before Luhan invited him to New Mexico. Moreover, Lawrence had been a career tourist for years before he came to the Southwest—he and Frieda had traveled through Europe, parts of South Asia, and Australia. Lawrence’s disappointment in the Southwest seemed to be tied to both his frustration with tourism and his discomfort with racial diversity—two features the Southwest had in surplus in the 1920s.

For Toomer and Riggs, as writers of color, the Southwest’s multicultural history had significance beyond its appeal to tourists (or artists) looking for something exotic. Toomer imagined that the Southwest might offer the possibility of a multiracial future outside of the race-based and colonialist power relations he saw in the Northeast and the Deep South. However, he also understood the instability of pursuing that fantasy in the present, as the protagonists of *A Drama of the Southwest* are never completely satisfied with their Taos experience. Ultimately, the Southwest’s present didn’t satisfy Toomer’s desires, either. He and his wife considered buying property in Taos and staying in New Mexico, but they decided against it and returned to their Pennsylvania home, where Toomer was forced to convince his daughter’s school that he was white “at an ‘inquiry’ [...] into whether or not his daughter could attend an all-white school” (Lutenski 26).

Riggs did not share Toomer’s optimism about the future of the Southwest. Instead, he saw the Southwest’s culture of nostalgic tourism—especially in Santa Fe—as having fostered a

doubled settler-colonialism: initially through the history of Spanish and U.S. conquest, then through the development commercial tourism, which encouraged tourists to reenact aspects of settler-colonial conquest as a matter of entertainment. This emphasis on colonial history allowed Riggs to blur the lines between the Southwest and Mexico in his plays. When his American characters visited Mexico, they found themselves very familiar with the mechanics of empire.

The Southwest's tourist industry presented it as a destination unlike any other, a region set apart from the rest of the United States and from modernity. This Southwestern fantasy was an invention based on the region's close connection to its Spanish Colonial history, and its active Native and Hispano folk cultures—both qualities that modernists took as evidence of the region's distance from influences of modernity. To make sense of this mythos-laden depiction of the Southwest, writers in this chapter called on perspectives of transnationalism. Putting the region in the context of other national histories and cultures, each author's work acknowledges or reveals the imperialism underlying this pervasive myth of the Southwest.

## 5.0 COWBOYS AND INDIAN DETOURS: HOW *POETRY* MAGAZINE IMAGINED MODERNISM IN THE SOUTHWEST

As we've seen in previous chapters, a dominant understanding about the Southwest emerged in the national imaginary from a confluence of creative and commercial interests, marked by the common ground that writers such as Lummis, Austin, and Riggs shared with the programming of the Fred Harvey Company. This chapter will explore the ways that the little magazine *Poetry*, an energizing force behind modernism, treated the Southwest as a space for modernist writing in the United States.

*Poetry's* interest was partly in the artistic potential folk traditions arising from Native American cultures and Spanish colonial legacies, conforming to the modernist investments we have seen so far, but the magazine also prominently featured poetry by and about cowboys. This fascination with cowboy poets, which relied on fantasies about the possibility of a truly populist creation and consumption of poetry, was importantly at odds with the merchandising of the Spanish and especially the Native American cultures of the Southwest.

Founded in 1912 by Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin Henderson, Chicago-based *Poetry* pursued the mission of democratizing poetry with an open submissions policy and a commitment to publishing new and innovative poets. Associate editor Corbin Henderson, who moved to Santa Fe in 1916, helped steer *Poetry* in the direction of Southwestern folk studies. *Poetry Magazine* regularly featured folk poetries of the Southwest, publishing those poems alongside more

typically modernist fare and in two special issues. These issues were designed to introduce the Southwest as an important aesthetic resource to the readers of *Poetry*, raising awareness about the region and perhaps enticing more writers and artists to spend time in the Southwest. As the tourism industry expanded and began to capitalize on—and collaborate with—the modernist writers in the Southwest, *Poetry*'s representations of the Southwest also had an important influence on how the region was marketed to tourists.

In the 1910s, then, Corbin Henderson and Harriet Monroe saw the Southwest as a rich source of aesthetic inspiration and a model of maverick poetic communities that existed outside of the reach and influence of the East Coast-based publishing industry—precisely the communities that *Poetry* hoped to build, committed as it was to bringing innovative poetry to the masses (Ben-Merre, “Introduction [to *Poetry*]”).

Later in her career, however, Corbin Henderson applied this same vision of the Southwest to more commercial projects. In 1928 she edited a slim anthology of poems, featuring many Southwestern, modernist poets who'd already appeared in *Poetry*, that was incorporated in a brochure distributed to passengers traveling through New Mexico with the Fred Harvey Company.

In her collaboration with the Harvey Company, Corbin Henderson was not attempting to reach new communities of poets, as she had been in her previous work with *Poetry Magazine*. Rather, she was using Southwestern poetry to introduce tourists to a modernist perspective on the Southwest. In this sense, modernist commercial collaborations were surprisingly in tune with *Poetry*'s mission to democratize poetry in the United States. This chapter will examine Corbin Henderson's (and *Poetry*'s) engagement with cowboy poetry as well as her later collaboration with the Harvey Company's marketing of Native American cultures in order to highlight the

ways in which modernist commitments to expanding the readership for innovative poetry vied and converged with the tourist industry's marketing of the Southwest.

### 5.1 BADGER CLARK, *POETRY*, AND “THE PUBLIC THAT ENJOYS AND CREATES FOLK-POETRY”

As I've argued in previous chapters, the Southwest had become a vivid part of the U.S. culture by the 1910s, thanks to the efforts of Charles Lummis and others. In 1915, *Poetry's* founder, Harriet Monroe, had a response to the Southwest very much akin to the responses of Austin, Luhan, Riggs, and Toomer, introducing the U.S. West as a largely untapped resource for American writers and artists (“Editorial” 87). Following a 1915 trip to the Grand Canyon, she urged poets and artists to take up the Southwest west as a topic of study:

Some day all this glory will belong to all the world. Who will be its interpreters to the world [...] ? Centuries ago the Egyptian desert inspired its people with an art so expressive that we still cherish it: who will meet the challenge of Arizona—a desert more varied, more richly painted, and cut to its granite heart with can[y]ons?[...] When we make these things our own, in spirit and truth, our art will cross the seas (sic), and our poems will be on all men's tongues.” (“Editorial Comment: A Nation-wide Art” 86-7)

Monroe suggested that this turn to the West was an inevitability—someday, she writes, “this glory will belong to all the world.” Understanding the Southwest as a potent source of inspiration, Monroe hoped that this resource would be used to fuel innovative artistic production.

The investment in the Southwest that Monroe voiced in this editorial was fairly conventional, but it points to how readily an arbiter of modernism could adopt the idea that the

Southwest was not only a distinctive geographic and cultural space but also a site for aesthetic inspiration and innovation. *Poetry*'s attention to the Southwest intensified and became more distinctive as a result of Monroe's associate editor Alice Corbin Henderson's being diagnosed with tuberculosis, which led her to move to Santa Fe in 1916. Corbin Henderson remained an editor at *Poetry* until 1922, and continued to be based in New Mexico, editing and writing poetry and essays, for the rest of her life. With her husband, architect William Penhallow Henderson, Alice fostered a dynamic network of writers and artists in Santa Fe. Where Mabel Dodge Luhan's art colony in Taos hosted many long-term visitors to the Southwest, the Hendersons were at the center of a group of active, resident modernists that included writers Witter Bynner, Lynn Riggs, Mary Austin, and visual artists such as Marsden Hartley and Gustave Baumann.

The Hendersons hosted many parties and salons with their Santa Fe friends, and Alice oversaw events to bring together the local poets. Together, the Hendersons helped refine the New Mexico-based Southwest aesthetic for a national stage. Alice's work with *Poetry* was the beginning of several ambitious editing projects she took up, including compiling the authoritative anthology of contemporary poetry about the Southwest, *The Turquoise Trail* (1928), and working extensively on the WPA-funded *New Mexico: A Guide to the Colorful State* (1937). William, who'd previously worked as a muralist for architect Frank Lloyd Wright, joined architects John Gaw Meem and Isaac Rapp, to help establish the architectural style known as Pueblo Revival, a mix of Indigenous and Spanish Colonial architectural features that determined (and still directs) the look of Santa Fe and the surrounding areas. Alice and William also collaborated to design a Santa Fe museum where Alice would serve as a curator, and to produce a book about the Penitentes of northern New Mexico.

In Corbin Henderson's varied projects, her interest in vernacular and folk culture is a through line. This interest coincided with many modernists' fascination with cultures outside the metropolitan areas of Europe and the U.S. The modernist tendency toward primitivism has been thoroughly documented and examined and in many ways took the form of resource extraction: modernist writers identified with the metropolis borrowed aesthetic forms and practices from cultures understood to be outside of modernity.<sup>62</sup> Corbin Henderson and *Poetry* were not averse to this kind of cultural appropriation, as we will see, but *Poetry*'s attention to the Southwest highlighted another important dimension of modernism: the promotion of lively, thriving communities of poetry, communities that extended beyond the familiar literary publics of the early twentieth century. The magazine's motto in its early years was borrowed from Walt Whitman: "To have great poets there must be great audiences too." In this respect, John Newcomb argues that the magazine's "greatest importance [...] was simply to create a space for contemporary American verse where none had been" by "forcefully emphasiz[ing] the living culture of the present over the reference for past canons" (Newcomb 26).

No wonder, then, that when Alice Corbin Henderson began to learn about the culture around her in New Mexico, she was especially excited by cowboy poetry. Cowboy poetry, which circulated through oral traditions among cowboy and rodeo-adjacent communities in the west, was indicative of a thriving and collaborative community of poets that had been almost entirely overlooked by mainstream literary culture. *Poetry*'s attention to cowboy poets begins in the magazine's August 1917 issue, which featured an "Editorial Comment" by Corbin Henderson about folklorist John A. Lomax's collection *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (1910). Corbin Henderson praised the collection and especially admired Lomax's research into the ways

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<sup>62</sup> See Torgovonik, Maria.

that these poems circulated through communities involved in cowboy life. She felt this was more than just an interesting study of folk poetry. It had something to teach the poets who appeared in her magazine:

[W]e are apt to forget that in this country there is a considerable public for poetry of which no account is taken in the yearly summaries of *The Publisher's Weekly*. I mean the public that enjoys and creates folk-poetry in the United States, a public much larger and more varied than we imagine. And I am thinking particularly of the public that enjoys the west and south-west—the cowboy songs, the songs of the rangers, songs of border outlaws, prospectors, hoboes, and other lonely outriders of civilization. (“Editorial Comment: Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads” 255)

This largely unappreciated reading public—varied, large, and fond of cowboy poetry—evidenced communities of folk poets that were overlooked by mainstream literary culture. Corbin Henderson and Monroe’s intent in *Poetry* was to circumvent the dominant poetic culture, which meant in effect the dominant *circulation* of poetry. Folk poetries such as cowboy poetry drew *Poetry*’s editors because they existed outside of mainstream literary culture.

John Newcomb argues that in the early twentieth century, poetry declined in popularity and fell out of mainstream publications and was consumed mainly in academic contexts or produced by hobbyist poets. Poetry was not considered a marketable art, and “the genteel custodians of the nation’s literary culture clung desperately to poetry as an anticommodity”—making it difficult to organize or professionalize poets (Newcomb 9). In this climate, the only widely marketable poets were the canonical “fireside poets” of the late nineteenth-century: “canonizing a single safely dead poet proved easier than devising new forms of support for living writers” (Newcomb 12). Newcomb notes that the 1912 publication of Frederick Earle’s

ambitious anthology of contemporary verse, *The Lyric Year*, “buoyed” Monroe’s hope that *Poetry* could help reinvigorate American poetry (16). *The Lyric Year* received an “enormous [positive] response” and “confounded assumptions that poetry in America was withering away” (16). Encouraged, Monroe believed that Earle’s success was “evidence of widespread interest in contemporary verse, which she believed would emerge if only poets had a chance to read and were not forced to starve in order to write” (16).

*Poetry*’s treatment of cowboy poetry flew in the face of the apparently dismal state of poetry. When Corbin Henderson celebrated the readers ignored by *Publisher’s Weekly*, she was imagining other ways that modernist poets could actively reclaim and reinvigorate American poetry. It is not surprising, then, that cowboy poetry was of interest to *Poetry*’s editors in 1917. Corbin Henderson offered the anecdote of a cowboy poet who made a profit from his poetry by selling it “not at bookstores or newsstands, but, like the old-country broadsides, at cow-camps, and round-ups and cattle fairs” (“Editorial Comment: Cowboy” 256). For Corbin Henderson, the story is important “because it shows that this poetry and this public constitute a world [...] distinct,” a world of readers overlooked by “the yearly summaries of *The Publisher’s Weekly*” because they are not part of the circuit of commercial publishing (256).

That readers of cowboy poetry existed outside the publishing industry’s reach meant to Corbin Henderson that their literary taste was more authentic—that instead of being subject to commercial trends, these readers sought cowboy poetry because they recognized themselves in the ways of life it represented. In Corbin Henderson’s anecdote, the “distinct” world of buyers for the cowboy poet consisted of an engaged, seemingly more authentic public—by virtue of being at cow-camps and cattle fairs, these readers are positioned as closer to the experiences that are the topics of cowboy poems. Corbin Henderson remained interested in cowboy poetry in the

decades she lived in New Mexico. In 1921 she recycled parts of this editorial in her introduction to her friend N. Howard Thorp's folklore collection *Songs of the Cowboys* (1921).

The same issue of *Poetry* that featured Corbin Henderson's editorial on cowboy poetry and the work of John Lomax also included an uncredited cowboy poem—one that Lomax had collected from his friend and fellow folklorist Henry Herbert Knibbs, but which he had not included in his collection of cowboy songs. In the following issues, Corbin Henderson did some detective work to locate the source of the poem and, in the process, to explore and praise the communities that produced and supported cowboy poetry. The uncredited poem, called “High Chin Bob,” marked the beginning of a year-long conversation in *Poetry* magazine about the circulation and creation of folk poems and the value of the Southwest as a place for innovative American poetry.<sup>63</sup>

True to *Poetry*'s dual interests in folk and innovative poetry, “High Chin Bob” appeared in the same issue as several of Ezra Pound's cantos and three works by Edna St. Vincent Millay. The poem wasn't attributed to an author, instead being simply credited as “Cowboy Song—Author Unknown” (“High Chin Bob” 227). Appearing in the same issue as Corbin Henderson's editorial about cowboy poetry, “High Chin Bob” served to demonstrate the genre's unconventional means of composition and circulation—it was rare for *Poetry* to share a poem with no known author—and to give readers a taste of the genre.

As the first poem called “cowboy” that appeared in *Poetry* magazine, “High Chin Bob” provided a good basis for readers unfamiliar with the genre. It's a ballad that follows an a/a/b/b/ rhyme scheme that could easily be sung, and it narrates a story rich in tropes of the Wild West. In about three pages, “High Chin Bob” tells the story of a cowboy on horseback, “high up in the

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<sup>63</sup> See Appendix A for the *Poetry* text of Clark's poem.

Mokiones” mountains. In the poem, High Chin Bob lassos a mountain lion, realizes he can’t kill the lion *or* let it go, and is forced to ride out the rest of his life dragging the leashed mountain lion behind his horse. The poem’s plot is in the vein of a tall tale—a mythically large mountain lion, an unimaginably long horseback ride. The poem’s hyperbolic tone is playful and self-aware. Near the end of the poem, High Chin Bob exclaims, “These heroes that I’ve read about were only fools that stuck it out” (“High Chin Bob” 227). The poem evokes the burden of myth in cowboy culture, using the metaphor of a mountain lion that can’t be shaken.

Corbin Henderson’s editorial also reviews Lomax’s collection, and it depicts the work of poets on the “cow-camp” circuit as revealing the creation of new contributions to folk poetry. She describes Lomax’s editorial hand in collecting the poems—although Lomax’s work is described as ethnographic, he had “in some instances selected and put together what seem to him the best lines in several versions of the same song” (257-8). Corbin Henderson mentioned this as a point of critique, but her objection is not that Lomax should have resisted conflating different versions of the same folk song; instead, she suggests that Lomax should not have left out “cowboy profanity or descriptive epithet” in his transcriptions. She objected to censoring profanity, but not to the editing and interpreting of cowboy poems outside of their traditional spaces of circulation.

Interest in “High Chin Bob” continued for several issues that year. In particular, the mystery of the poem’s authorship came up in correspondence between readers, Henderson, and, finally, the poet himself. In Henderson’s editorial on Lomax’s *Cowboy Songs*, she noted that “High Chin Bob” came to Lomax from author Henry Herbert Knibbs and that because the song doesn’t appear in Lomax’s book, “it has never been published so far as we know” (259). Henderson described the poem as a “classic of the southwest” in theme and style—having “a

swing, and a precision of phrasing” that she found skillful (259). It was a coup for the magazine to be first in printing the poem, to demonstrate to readers that *Poetry* had some access or insight into the activities of the cowboy-poets and cowboy-poetry enthusiasts that Corbin Henderson found inspiring. She concluded with praise for the unknown cowboy poet: “Whoever the unknown author may be, on whichever side of the Great Divide, he is to be congratulated” (259).

Corbin Henderson revisited the origins of “High Chin Bob” in the September 1917 issue, after learning from John Lomax that another version of the poem—the one with the title “Glory Trail”—had actually been published in a book by the cowboy poet Charles “Badger” Clark before *Poetry* published the Lomax version. This information, Corbin Henderson tells us, Lomax learned “just the other day”—another reminder that cowboy poetry is active and alive and that *Poetry* is innovative in its decision to publish such works (“Our Cowboy Poet” 319). The poem appeared in Clark’s book under a different title and with some different wordings. Corbin Henderson took this as evidence that Clark’s poem had found a life beyond his book, taking hold with other cowboy poets and being altered slightly in the process—thus becoming a living, evolving folk song. She praised this process of folk revision:

The circumstance is particularly interesting as it reveals how a folk-song comes to *be* a folk-song. It shows the folk-song in the process of growth, both by elimination and by accretion, for the changes made in this poem through oral transmissions are very interesting. I think the author himself would recognize that they add to the directness, vividness, and force of the song. [...] Slight as the changes are, they give life. (320)

The fact that this poem had been heavily revised by a community of cowboy poets made it a better poem in the eyes of *Poetry*’s editors. Corbin Henderson concludes her note with congratulations: “[...] we congratulated Mr. Clark in the last number of *Poetry*, hypothetically;

now that the hypothesis is removed, we congratulate him again. It is not everyone who wakes up to find himself a folk-poet, and that in less than a generation” (“Our Cowboy Poet” 320). For Corbin Henderson, only once Clark’s poem was adopted—and collectively revised— by other cowboys did it become a folk poem: that is “how a folk-song comes to *be* a folk-song” (320).

In the next issue, October 1917, the magazine shared some stanzas from Clark’s “Glory Trail,” to demonstrate the “revise[d]” quality of “High Chin Bob” as it had first come to them. Readers of *Poetry* were encouraged to perform a side-by-side comparison of the two poems. By focusing on the folk revisions, Corbin Henderson invites readers to notice a parallel between the work of oral folk culture and the editorial hand that guides *Poetry*. An uncredited editorial note further praises the folk version of Clark’s poem that circulated, noting that “the revisers [of “High Chin Bob”] unconsciously” changed qualities of the poem towards simplification (“That Cowboy” 56). These comments pay homage to the often un-credited labor of editors. This note recalls Corbin Henderson’s celebration of cowboy poetry’s engaged, participatory readership, insofar as it parallels cowboy poets with modernist little magazines—the commonality being readerships that are not mainstream and consequently are more desirable.

This wasn’t the end of the Badger Clark saga, however. In the November issue, Charles Badger Clark himself wrote to *Poetry* to address the poem’s different iterations and his own authorship. In his letter, Clark laid authorial claim to the poem, but he also offered his own account of its authenticity, explaining that while he’d authored the poem, he had drawn heavily on the stories and songs he’d heard while working as a cowboy.

Clark’s letter is just as much a construction of western identity as was the original poem, evoking the cowboy west that is associated with (and often the subject of) the genre of cowboy poetry. (Corbin Henderson’s interest in cowboy poetry was initially sparked by a poem set in

southern Arizona, perhaps a further indication of her particular investment in the Southwest as an environment that nurtured creativity.) In keeping with its true cowboy tone, Clark's letter confirmed for *Poetry*'s readers that his poem was the real thing: it came from an authentic source, and it was welcomed by the kind of authentic cowboy-poetry readers that Corbin Henderson found so exciting. Under the headline "Coals of Fire From the Cowboy Poet," Clark thanked *Poetry* for publishing his work and agreed with Corbin Henderson that the field-collected, "cowboy" version of his poem was superior to his own.<sup>64</sup> He also assured readers that there was not "a scrap of romance" about the origins of his poem:

One night around the fire, while I was cooking for an outfit on the drive, during the alcoholic disability of the regular incumbent, I heard the story of a cowboy, in the Chiricahua mountains, I think, who had roped a bobcat and dragged it to death. The same night Dave asked Bronc to sing a song (a real folk-song I reckon that must have been) which began with the words, " 'Way high up on Pecos stream;" [...] These fragments, with various amazing lies which the boys told of their prowess with the rope, went into my melting pot, however, and a year or so later the rhyme of *High-Chin Bob* resulted.<sup>65</sup>  
(“Coals” 110)

Clark ostensibly wrote in to straighten out the origins of his poem and, he says, to dispel romantic notions about the life of a cowboy poet. But his detailed account of the poem's origin is evocative of the romantic Southwest. He describes a campfire community full of boasting, hard-drinking cowboys telling stories in the rugged landscapes of the Southwest. As a tool of self-promotion, Clark's letter asserts his own authenticity, positioning him closer to the less

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<sup>64</sup> See Appendix B for Clark's entire letter.

<sup>65</sup> The version of "High Chin Bob" that *Poetry* initially published in its August 1917 issue doesn't hyphenate "High Chin," as Badger Clark did in his letter.

“sophisticated”—but still aesthetically valued—folk poets. When he wrote this letter, he was already a published author (he later became the poet laureate of South Dakota), so it’s likely that the prospect of sales as a result of his brief notoriety in *Poetry* also crossed his mind. Whether or not Clark had marketing on his mind, the poem’s evocative origin story still promises that the poem was drawn from lived experience. That Clark could account for the origins of the “various amazing lies”—and that the origins affirm popular assumptions about cowboy life—is the key to his legitimacy.

*Poetry* argued for making cowboy poetry a recognized part of the American folk canon. The fact that the poems came from working cowboys affirmed the idea that authentic folk poetry was drawn from lived experience, suggesting that the poems were formed from the “unconscious” participation of actual cowboys. Later, in a 1920 issue devoted to “New Mexico Folk-poems,” Corbin Henderson wrote:

[I]n the songs of western cowboys we have the next contributions of our native folk-poetry. Some of these were examples of what we may call the intuitive, unconscious strain of naïve folk-song; and some of the more sophisticated type, as shown in the later development of cowboy poems by men like Charles Badger Clark, Henry Herbert Knibbs, and others. (“The Folk” 265)

Corbin Henderson proposes an evolutionary timeline, from naïve folk-poem to more sophisticated cowboy poetry. This timeline suggests that unselfconsciousness and naivety characterized the authentic development of folk culture.<sup>66</sup> *Poetry*’s attention to cowboy poetry

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<sup>66</sup> Friedrich Schiller’s definition of the naïve, which posits that recognition of naivety is based on an intellectual, “moral,” sense of the real. Schiller uses the example of a very realistic-looking artificial flower—if observers are fooled into thinking the flower *is* real, then the effect of the naïve has been achieved at an intellectual level: “this sort of pleasure in nature is not an aesthetic

was part of modernism's larger turn toward primitivism, but insofar as it emphasized some folk cultures' innovative circulations, it differed from primitivism's assumption that folk and Indigenous cultures were either static and unchanging or nearing extinction.

Corbin Henderson's suggestion that the revisers collaborated unconsciously implies that they shared an intuitive sense of the truest cowboy aesthetic. According to this logic, the imagined cowboys who modified this poem did not carefully craft a revision, they "unconsciously" "simplifie[d]" the poem, reducing it to its essential cowboy-ness. Extending Whitman's maxim that great poets needed great readers, the magazine imagined that folk poetry readers and writers were bound together by an experiential sense of place.

That is, Henderson explained that the same readers that were buying cowboy poetry were *producing* cowboy poetry, a public that enjoys and creates cowboy poetry, counting for her as a "world distinct." Similarly, the cowboys who *heard* a song by Badger Clark and edited it through circulation—a game of "telephone" on the range—were involved in the production of a folk text simply by virtue of hearing and recalling the poem. If part of *Poetry's* project, and especially the editors' engagement with regional modernism, was to draw a line between themselves and East Coast literary circles, it's clear that it wasn't just an aesthetic difference they

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but a moral one" (21). Schiller grounded his sense of the naïve in the idea of childlike and primitive people, and proposed that the naïve poet is defined as such in part because of his inability to exist *within* the epoch—they are "[not] possible any longer in such an era or at least only possible in so far as they *fail to conform* to their age" (38). Part of the naïve's relevance to artists is in the potential for naïve poets to be "refreshing figures for the artist who studies them and for the real connoisseur who knows how to appreciate them" (38). This sense of the naïve as permanently removed from the epoch of the artists who interpret them characterizes the appeal of folk poetry for the modernists—in existing *outside* of a mainstream culture, they promised to exist out of the reach of the influences of modernity and literary trends. This belief was especially amplified in modernists' treatments of Native American poetry and art.

sought but a difference in circulation and understanding of readership. In the folk Southwest, readers were also contributors and texts were communal.

Corbin Henderson also helped establish Clark as an important cowboy poet to the readers of *Poetry*. Tracking Clark's publication history, it seems as if his appearance in *Poetry* had an influence on his career. His first book, *Sun Saddle and Leather* (1915), was self-published. Clark published his second volume, *Grass Grown Trails* (1917), through the Gorham Press in Boston, which also reprinted Clark's *Sun Saddle and Leather*. Through Gorham, both books got a wider distribution into mainstream bookselling venues. Clark received attention from Corbin Henderson for being part of a genre that thrived outside of traditional publishing networks; ironically, this recognition seems to have encouraged him to seek out more mainstream literary success. His books after *Grass Grown Trails* were published at the newspaper press in his hometown of Custer, South Dakota. It is unclear whether Clark sought more conventionally prestigious publishing houses for his subsequent books, but the alignment of his most professionally published book with his feature in *Poetry* is suggestive of the power of *Poetry*'s endorsement.

*Poetry* continued to feature poems about the Southwest—Mary Austin, Witter Bynner, and cowboy poet N. Howard Thorp were regular contributors through the 1920s. Cowboy poetry appeared again in two special issues in 1920 devoted to the Southwest in name and subject matter. January's "Poems of the West" and August's "New Mexico Folk-poems" each brought together several genres of folk poetry from the region, representing the coexistence of cowboy, Indian, and Spanish-language New Mexican poetic cultures.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Corbin Henderson's particular interest in cowboy poetry was also indicative of how Native and Hispano cultures were framed in the modernist era. These *Poetry* issues show the culture of

Earlier glimpses of the Southwest in *Poetry* are notable for deliberately placing voices of folk culture alongside more established literary authorities—say, an issue with a letter from Badger Clark published a few pages before a letter from Ezra Pound about French verse (Pound was the magazine’s “European Correspondent” in the mid 1910s). The 1920 issues continued to use the periodical form to comment on regional identity. In these issues, Corbin Henderson and Monroe imagined cross-page conversations among cowboys, Spanish-speaking New Mexican poets, and Native American poetic traditions. Notably, however, *Poetry* published very few poems by Native or Latinx poets—rather, they published translations of Spanish-language folk poetry and Native American songs or poems that were actually written by Anglo authors who claimed to be interpreting the lore and aesthetic principles of Native Americans. Still, these issues emphasize cultural contact and mixing in the Southwest, confirming this heterogeneity as a defining feature of what made the Southwest a special and aesthetically valuable part of the United States.

These special issues were part of *Poetry*’s larger effort to urge its readers recognize the Southwest as playing an important role in reviving the state of U.S. arts and letters. The notion of authenticity they promoted was contrasted with both the highbrow productions of established literary culture and the commercially successful productions of mass culture. Indeed, when Monroe wrote ringingly about the promise of the Southwest in 1915, she asked who would take up the challenge of representing it: “our poets and artists, or our journalists, photographers,

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cowboy poetry as a thriving and evolving genre, a contrast to both Native and Hispano folk cultures, which were treated as of a historical artifact. As we’ve seen in the case of Charles Lummis, Spanish-language cultures in the U.S. Southwest were frequently represented as a residual culture from a previous empire. Similarly, Native American culture was treated as either all-but extinct or irrevocably corrupted by contact with settler cultures, leaving only an archive from which white poets could draw inspiration or outright appropriate.

movies?” (“Editorial” 86-7). Although her phrasing suggested that it would be undesirable for the news media and fledgling film industry to dominate the presentation of the Southwest, over the next decade and a half, Monroe’s relationship to the material of mass culture would change. By 1929, Corbin Henderson, Monroe, and many of the other writers featured in this dissertation were collaborating with the Fred Harvey Company to address another reading community: commercial tourists.

## 5.2 TOURISTS AND READERS ON THE INDIAN DETOUR

By the time Corbin Henderson compiled an anthology of poetry for the Fred Harvey Company in 1928, she’d spent a decade living in Santa Fe as the Southwest’s tourism empire grew exponentially. The Harvey Company created *They Know New Mexico: Intimate Sketches by Western Writers* in 1928 to promote their latest extension of the Indian Detour. The Western writers they featured, including Witter Bynner, Harriet Monroe, Mary Austin, and Alice Corbin Henderson, were immersed in modernist networks extending beyond the Southwest. As their contributions to *They Know New Mexico* make clear, modernists and the Harvey Company shared an interest in training tourists to value “authenticity,” as they conceived of that concept.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Witter Bynner and Alice Corbin Henderson contributed writing to the official brochure distributed at Santa Fe Fiesta, with poetry and essays printed alongside full-page ads for the Harvey Company. The Fiesta blended modernist art exhibitions with tourist-friendly parades and performances. Mary Austin’s Spanish Colonial Arts Society was responsible for the preservation of the Chimayo chapel, a landmark for sightseers in New Mexico, and the founding of an annual Spanish art market, a popular event that remains a tourist attraction in Santa Fe (Reed 51). In *Poetry* magazine Harriet Monroe described the Harvey Company’s “sumptuous” El Tovar hotel; in an editorial for *The New Republic*, Austin praised the quality of visitor drawn to Santa Fe as “rather above the average” (Monroe “A Nation-wide Art” 86; Austin “Indian Detour” 195).

The brochure is one outcome of several decades of collaborations between the literary Southwest and the tourist industry in the region, collaborations in which authors participated in planning and promoting local festivals, supported the restoration of landmarks popular with sightseers, and praised Southwestern travel in the national press. Each of the essays in *They Know New Mexico* addressed a crucial aspect of a tourist experience: spectacle, such as performances of Spanish folk songs and Pueblo dances; merchandise, such as Indian-made pottery and craft; and cultural traditions, such as Native American spirituality and childcare practices. Taken together, they create a mosaic of popular Southwestern mythology, with tourists receiving all the information they needed in one pocket-sized collection.<sup>69</sup> The brochure also featured many republished poems about the Southwest. Those poems first appeared in traditionally modernist venues, such as little modernist magazines. *They Know New Mexico* both provides an efficient overview of the Southwest—with each essay addressing some aspect of that regional identity—and sheds light on the intermingling of tourism and literary modernism in the Southwest.

The brochure was a supplement for the Harvey Company's Indian Detour, a special program of guided automobile tours of Southwestern Pueblos and reservations. As we've seen in previous chapters, the Detour promised tourists a level of close contact and authentic

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<sup>69</sup> These promotional materials, which blended the genres of travel guide and ethnography, closely resemble another somewhat literary exploration into regional identity: the travel guides produced by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s and 1940s, especially those focusing on rural and regionally distinct areas. In fact, later in her career Corbin Henderson would contribute an essay on New Mexican literature to the 1940 WPA guidebook *New Mexico: A Guide to the Colorful State* (Cline 11). Involving literary authors in such projects was a strategy meant to emphasize regional qualities that might be missed in a report that focused only on the rote details of maps, driving routes, and census statistics. *They Know New Mexico* is one early iteration of this model of a comprehensive travel guide drawing on literary authors.

engagement with Native Americans that was unavailable on main railroad lines (Dilworth 151). Unlike tourists travelling by rail, the detourists could ask their driver to stop at any time to take pictures, explore, or purchase souvenirs from Native artists. The Harvey passengers were promised that they would not need to sacrifice comfort in their quest for authenticity and adventure: “the [Indian Detour passenger] has only to relax to the complete enjoyment of a memorable experience” (*Indian Detour: Santa Fe, Harveycars*, 6). As such, they did not have to drive the Harvey vehicles or consult maps in order to stay on their detour, and they never strayed beyond the parameters of an established route.<sup>70</sup>

Passengers were told that at the end of the Indian Detour, they’d know New Mexico as intimately as did the brochure’s contributors. The brochure upheld a powerful narrative in Harvey advertising which insisted that only by traveling with the Harvey Company would travelers see the real and wild Southwest.

In Corbin Henderson’s poetry anthology, the full title of which was “And the Poets: A Little Collection of Verses About New Mexico, Edited by Alice Corbin,” we see modernist interpretations of the Southwest incorporated into the local perspectives provided by the authors. While the brochure never uses the term “modernist” to describe the contributors, their affiliation with fashionable and innovative literary culture is underscored in the contributors’ biographical materials, which situate them in national literary networks. An introductory note to the brochure, authored by Harvey Company executive Roger Birdseye, explained: “Those who have contributed to the pages of this little book know New Mexico as few know it” (TKNM).

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<sup>70</sup> Even the uniforms of the Detour staff played into the fantasy of “detouring” into an exotic past: the Harvey drivers—always men—were dressed in full cowboy regalia; the couriers—always women—wore turquoise jewelry, long skirts, and Navajo-style velvet shirts (Dilworth 151).

Moreover, travelers on the Detour could achieve the same level of understanding through travel and careful study. Birdseye explained that with the aid of *They Know New Mexico*, travelers could find themselves “an honorary member of that intimate circle who really know New Mexico” (*TKNM* 3).

The Indian Detour, then, served as a shortcut by providing passengers access to the knowledge of an expert, or a local, through a Harvey-planned set of stops and a readable selection of essays and poems. Birdseye praised the Detour passengers for traveling so wisely, “[f]orearmed with the experience and impressions of others” (*TKNM* 3). Moreover, they would be following in the literal or figurative footsteps of modernist writers, making the Indian Detour not just an authentic way of interacting with the Indian Southwest, but also a highbrow pursuit. This collection, which situates modernist poetry for tourists’ consumption, fits Lawrence Rainey’s understanding of modernism as a “strange and unprecedented space for cultural production” in which writers and artists in some ways retreated from “the domain of public culture, but [...] also continued to overlap and intersect with the public realm in a variety of contradictory ways” (Rainey 3).

The collection included poetry by a few dozen acclaimed experimental and avant-garde poets associated with the Southwest, almost all of whom had appeared previously in issues of *Poetry*, including Carl Sandburg, Riggs, Bynner, Austin, and Alice Corbin Henderson herself. This roster reflects the overwhelming whiteness of modernist circles in the Southwest. With the exception of Riggs, there are no authors of color featured in the brochure. Additionally, most of the contributors had relocated to New Mexico in the decade preceding the brochure’s publication. Long residence is not necessarily an indicator of regional expertise, but it’s notable that the Harvey Company omitted several local New Mexican writers of color. For example, the

Harvey Company published no work by Anita Scott Coleman, a black author who wrote extensively about the Southwest and published in magazines including *The Crisis* and *The Messenger*, two important outlets for authors involved in the Harlem Renaissance (Davis and Mitchell 23). Coleman was born in Guyamas, Sonora, Mexico, in 1890 and spent much of her childhood and young adulthood in Silver City, New Mexico (Davis and Mitchell xxi-9). Another oversight was the exclusion of commentary by any Latinx and Hispana/o New Mexicans, such as Santa Fean cultural preservationist Cleofas Jaramillo. Jaramillo began working toward the preservation of local folkways in the late 1920s; she looked to domestic crafts as the foundation of Hispano New Mexican culture (Reed 112-113).

Likewise, the Harvey Company did not feature any essays by Native American authors, such as Zitkala-Sa (Yankton Sioux/Dakota), whose work appeared regularly in the national press in the 1910s and 1920s, or Francis La Flesche (Omaha), who published extensively about Omaha and Osage cultures as an anthropologist at the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology. Zitkala-Sa and La Flesche were from the American Plains, but their writing frequently focused on the U.S. government's Indian policies. This topic was controversial and current in the 1920s—the national press frequently printed stories concerning Indian policy, education, and activism—and had obvious bearing on the Indian Detour, which purported to educate travelers about the Native Southwest, past and present. Neither did the brochure include information about nor writing from the many Native artists working in New Mexico in the 1920s to produce innovative versions of traditional art forms. Those accounts of contemporary Native culture, activism, and artistic innovation would have compromised the Harvey representation of the Native Southwest as a static and unchanging community.

Instead, *They Know New Mexico*, and especially Corbin Henderson's poetry collection, brought together modernist stylings and regional motifs, coaching readers to appreciate the Southwest and the route of the Indian Detour for the same reasons that modernists did. She included some of her own poems in the anthology, including "Juan Quintana," a set of observations about a goat herder who is the neighbor of the speaker in the poem. Henderson's poem carefully aligns the bucolic anti-modern Southwest—wherein shepherding is still an important part of the rural economy—with the avant-garde, as the poet is on friendly terms with her goat herding neighbor.

Witter Bynner's poem "Spring Summons" also positions the poet within the local landscape. His poem tells of a moonlit scene in Santa Fe that is very familiar to the speaker in the poem. It concludes by inviting the readers to join the speaker: "Come, my friend,/ To the capitol of mountains and tomorrows,/ Where the sunny blood is cool with snow/ In a forgiven world" (44). The mention of "sunny blood [...] cool with snow" is a reference to the Sangre de Cristo (Blood of Christ) mountains that border Santa Fe, and its evocation of "a forgiven world" casts the Southwest as a fresh and uncorrupted place—a key component of its appeal for modernists and vacationers alike. Corbin Henderson also included a cowboy ballad by her friend Jack Thorp, an author and folklorist who'd published the anthology *Cowboy Songs* (1921), for which Corbin Henderson had written an introduction recycling many of the assertions she made in *Poetry* regarding cowboy poetry's dynamism and relevance to American poetic culture. However, Thorp's contribution to *They Know New Mexico*, "What's Become of the Punchers?" appears to situate cowboys in a past era. The speaker of the poem notes that most of his fellow cowboys had either settled into conventional retirement or died; the poem offers no sense of the future of the Southwest—or the future of cow-punching.

Finally, the anthology featured a few poems meant to evoke the aesthetics of Native American songs, including Mary Austin's "Prayer to the Mountain Spirit," (*TKNM* 49, 43). Ostensibly written on the model of Southwestern Pueblo Indian poetry—which Austin was studying in the late 1920s, in preparation for the 1930 expanded reissue of her ethnographic collection *The American Rhythm* (originally published 1923). The poem epitomizes the appropriative tendencies of writers engaging with Native culture. With lyrics such as "Young Man, Chieftain,/ Reared with the Mountain,/ Lord of the Mountain,/ Hear a young man's prayer!" the poem is more reminiscent of the stilted dialogue attributed to the Indians of cowboy and Indian films and dime novels than it is of any ethnographic knowledge.

It wasn't just Austin who made these missteps, of course. *Poetry* published an issue of modernist poetry inspired by—or mimicking—Native American poetry in 1917. Harriet Monroe's editorial note clarified that the poems were "not translations, but interpretations: they use subjects and rhythms drawn from aboriginal life" and encouraged readers of the issue to chant the poems "to the accompaniment of a posture dance and the strong beat of an instrument" ("Aboriginal Poetry I" 251). The implicit message of *Poetry*'s "Aboriginal Poetry" issue was that poets who claimed authority over Native culture could effectively play Indian, writing poems representative of Native experiences and traditions. This logic is symptomatic of the settler-colonialist tendencies perspective that guided primitivism.

Austin's "Prayer to the Mountain Spirit" was one of several poems in the collection that practiced Native masquerade, including another piece by Mary Austin, a poem by Natalie Curtis, and a poem by Corbin Henderson herself. In the context of the Harvey brochure, these poems bolster modernists' positions as intimately knowledgeable about the Southwest and tacitly endorse this kind of mimicry as available to the passengers of the Indian Detour. After all, the

Detour's main selling point was providing unfettered access to Native people on Native land. Like the Detour, these poems were presented as being *as close to* being Native as a cultural outsider could be. If we understand Corbin Henderson's anthology to have sought to cultivate a well-informed reading community of Southwestern visitors, then these poems are an insidious lesson in the practice of casual appropriation that buttressed commercial tourism in the Southwest.

The Indian Detour advertised access to "local" Indians and Indian culture as well as access to the experience of seeing the Southwest in the same way as its resident artists and poets—offering tourists access to Indigenous culture *and* to the local literati. The Harvey Company's promotional materials reduced both the Native Southwest and the Southwest's bohemian communities to the same level of artificiality, rendering them commercial attractions for novelty-hungry sightseers. In the promotion of the Indian Detour—and especially in the brochure that included Corbin Henderson's poetry anthology—modernists became another signifier of authenticity in the Harvey Company's depiction of the Southwest. The difference, of course, is that modernists were given significant agency in their representation. They opted to participate in the Harvey Company's commercial projects and received compensation for that choice. Southwestern Native American communities, on the other hand, were responding to the tourist industry that was forced upon them, insofar as it became the primary economy in the region in the early twentieth century after many Native American modes of subsistence were diminished or made impossible. Native artists, entertainers, and employees in the hospitality industry became part of the machinery in a tourist economy which the Harvey Company effectively controlled (Dilworth 146-149).

*They Know New Mexico* capitalized on the Southwest's reputation for fostering creative communities which thrived in part thanks to the efforts of some of the region's key cultural players, including Corbin Henderson. If *Poetry*'s mission was to create an alternative means of circulation and sales for contemporary poets by bringing poetry to new audiences of readers, then *They Know New Mexico* is an unexpected realization of this goal. However, Monroe and Corbin Henderson shared an interest in broadening not only the circulation of poetry, but the also its community of authors, as was demonstrated by their attention to cowboy and folk poets. Corbin Henderson's trajectory, then, shows her moving from craving poetry "of which no account is taken in the yearly summaries of *The Publisher's Weekly*" to incorporating poetry within the Harvey Company's marketing strategy. In this case, the shift from supporting the folk to marketing to the masses seems like a reversal. *They Know New Mexico* and the Indian Detour did not encourage the *production* of poetry—by either tourists or the Indians they'd made into a tourist attraction. Instead of actively participating in any sort of cultural production, tourists the Indian Detour were stakeholders in the culture only insofar as they were consuming it.

As we have seen, some of the same authors who turned the Southwest into a friendly space for modernist creative production were involved in marketing it aggressively for commercial tourism. How to reconcile modernism's participation in marketing the Southwest as a consumable product for tourists? Insofar as both Southwestern modernism and the tourist industry participated in a range of settler-colonialist and appropriative practices, it makes sense that some writers would have been comfortable with that aspect of commercial tourism. It's more surprising, perhaps, that Corbin Henderson and others offered their poetry to anyone who purchased a ticket on a Harvey Company sightseeing tour. However, as I've noted, it's not an illogical outcome of *Poetry*'s mission to democratize poetry, although the Harvey Company's

iteration simply *brought* poetry to the masses—the masses were not invited to participate in the production, circulation, or “folk” revision of the poetry that they consumed.

Perhaps one motivating factor for writers was that they simply saw that the tourist trade was not going away any time soon. (In fact, the Depression slowed down the Harvey Company’s growth, but the Southwest remained a popular destination in spite of the economic collapse.) If that’s the case, then we can read *They Know New Mexico* and Corbin Henderson’s poetry anthology as teaching travelers how to move through the Southwest with somewhat heightened sensibilities. *They Know New Mexico* coached travelers on how to see and observe the Southwest as its longtime residents did, although it should be noted that this almost-local perspective involved not a small amount of settler-colonialist entitlement. Maybe the Harvey collaborators, Corbin Henderson included, followed the rationale that they could not stop the booming tourist industry, so they might as well join it in order to exert some influence on how the Southwest would emerge from the Harvey marketing machine. Corbin Henderson, in editing for the Harvey Company, tried to represent the diversity of Southwestern culture by featuring a number of poetic interpretations of the Southwest. This had been exactly the purpose of the *Poetry* issues devoted to the Southwest, but in the context of *They Know New Mexico*, this editorial work served an industry that had found success by reducing the Southwest to a consumable fantasy.

## 6.0 AFTERWORD

I conclude this dissertation with a brief look at the programming surrounding the 1928 Santa Fe Fiesta and some reflections on what the case study of modernism's presence in the Southwest might teach us about modernism's reach in popular culture in the twentieth century.

The 1928 Santa Fe Fiesta featured events for tourists such as parades and souvenir markets, as well as displaying the work of contemporary artists, both traditional and modernist. The brochure that lays out the Fiesta's programming was published by the city of Santa Fe. It included contributions from many of the writers featured in this dissertation, including Witter Bynner, Alice Corbin Henderson, and Spud Johnson. The 1928 Fiesta blended tourism, cultural experiences, and commercial advertisements—this was typical of events in the late 1920s, the height of elaborate Southwestern tourism, especially in Santa Fe, which by the 1920s was ground zero for experiential tourism in the region. The brochure shows us that modernist figures, art, and writing were woven through the experience of a busy tourist weekend in 1920s Santa Fe.

The origin of the Santa Fe Fiesta, which is still the city's biggest annual event, is the 1692 Spanish Reconquest of New Mexico. The reconquest occurred twelve years after the successful Pueblo Revolt, in which tribes across New Mexico led an organized rebellion against Spain's occupation of their lands. As the Fiesta lore goes, the Spanish crown sent a royal decree in 1712 ordering a celebration of the "redemption of this ancient capital from the possession of

the Indians” (5).<sup>71</sup> In commemoration of this history, the Fiesta included a historical reenactment of the Spanish re-entry into the city. The brochure for the Fiesta included a historical account of Don Diego De Vargas’s reconquest of the city and an excerpt from De Vargas’s own account of his “Triumphal Entrada Into Santa Fe” (11, 15). These inclusions make clear that the Fiesta didn’t shy away from its colonial roots. Rather, the brochure served as a kind of reproduction of an important historical archive, grounding all the celebrations in the region’s colonial history. These commemorative practices are still part of Santa Fe’s Fiestas today, although recently this sanitizing language, and in fact the entire endeavor of celebrating a violent conquest, has elicited protests.<sup>72</sup>

The most notable convergence of modernist art with commercial enterprise at the 1928 Fiesta came in the form of an “All-Santa Fe Art Gallery”—a group art show set up in the storefront windows of Santa Fe’s main plaza, at the center of the old city and the starting point for almost all the Fiesta events. The exhibition of fifty artists from Santa Fe and Taos was described as a “unique feature” of the Fiesta, since it wasn’t part of the programming in previous years. This gallery was presumably designed to benefit both the artists and the stores that displayed artworks—the art was for sale, and of course each store also offered wares and souvenirs. The notice ended by asserting that the artists featured in this show were “among the most notable groups of artists in the world” and are “credited with originating and developing the only truly American school of art” (13). The brochure’s write up about the All-Santa Fe Art Gallery sums up the marketing of the modernist presence in the Southwest. When visitors to the

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<sup>71</sup> The reconquest was quite violent. Native men associated with the Pueblo Revolt were either killed or had a foot amputated as a form of punishment. See: Folsom, Franklin. *Indian Uprising on the Rio Grande: The Pueblo Revolt of 1680* (1973).

<sup>72</sup> See: Chacón, Daniel J. “Offended by Fiesta, activists plan protest.” *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 20 August, 2016 (online).

Santa Fe Fiesta observed the art of modernist painters, they experienced close contact with both avant-garde, highbrow cultural production *and* some of the Southwest's deeply-felt history of conquest, and its cultural traditions.

The literary Southwest also had a strong presence in the Fiesta. The same page of the Fiesta brochure that announced the All-Santa Fe Art Gallery also featured a poem by Alice Corbin Henderson titled "Desert Altars." The poem reflects on temporality and timelessness in the desert; a representative stanza expresses the themes in relation to the region's spiritual history: "The gods here endure/ Longer than sun-touched stone;/ Altars of moonlight and desert sun/ Lift feathered plumes in the silence" (13). On the opposite page of the brochure is a quarter-page advertisement for Corbin Henderson's 1928 anthology *The Turquoise Trail*. Readers are told they can purchase the book, which featured contemporary verse by "more than thirty poets who live or have spent some time in New Mexico and the Southwest—the old Spanish province of 'Nuevo Mexico,' " at any bookstore in Santa Fe (12). The anthology advertisement shared page space with advertisements for a curio store called the Thunder Bird Shop and a hotel on Santa Fe's Canyon Road; the hotel was located in a neighborhood that was also home to much of the city's modernist community.

Exhibitions of superlative examples of folk and local art in the festival were in keeping with Austin's ambition to educate tourists to recognize quality and authenticity, as well as her efforts to encourage local artists to maintain traditional art forms. A notice for the Spanish Market art show that Mary Austin founded in 1926 appeared alongside a notice for "The Indian Fair," a show modeled on the Spanish Market but featuring the work of Indian rather than Hispana/o artists. Both art shows had public displays during the Fiesta at the Palace of the Governors, a historic building that spanned one side of the city's plaza. At Austin's Spanish

market, visitors could view “samples of Spanish-Colonial arts and crafts” including “furniture, candlesticks, [...] tin boxes and lanterns, iron work, embroidery,” and the Indian Fair featured “[p]ottery, basketry, blankets, beadwork, leatherwork,” and other Native-made goods. Some of the works featured in these shows were for sale, and reproductions and more affordable versions of many of these products were available at gift shops all over the city.

Witter Bynner’s short contribution to the brochure is an essay titled “Artists and the Fiesta” in which he praises New Mexico’s “art colony”—by which he means the group of mostly white artists and authors living in Santa Fe and Taos—for helping sustain the festive atmosphere of the Santa Fe Fiesta. He posits that the New Mexico practice of holding town-wide fiestas is a vestige of the state’s Spanish and Mexican heritages—“it is probable that when people here were entirely of Spanish blood their fiestas resembled [even more] those south of the Rio Grande and [in Spain]” (17). As more Anglos arrived in New Mexico in the nineteenth century, Bynner explained, the Fiesta’s integrity was endangered because these new residents of the territory simply didn’t understand or have an interest in such celebrations. However, Bynner explains: “Within the last decade there has been a renewed vitality in the Santa Fe fiesta [...] owing largely to the presence in Santa Fe of a colony of artists and writers” and to the friendliness between Santa Fe locals and these artistic newcomers.

Bynner makes several claims on behalf of his community of Southwestern artists, most of whom were active in modernist networks and grounded their work in modernist visions of what art might do. He represents the modernists as having more in common with the non-white locals of New Mexico than they did with other white residents in the state, and explains that modernists’ “imagination, their sense of beauty, and their willingness to make monkeys of themselves are qualities more Latin than Anglo Saxon” (17). Having asserted his status as an

honorary local—echoing the logic of *They Know New Mexico*—Bynner then explains that he and his fellow artists played a crucial role in sustaining cultural treasures of New Mexico. Finally, this piece by Bynner takes for granted the collaboration between modernists living in the Southwest and the region’s tourist industry. The modernists put their energy into reviving the Santa Fe Fiesta because of their commitments to sustaining and promoting the traditions they considered to be authentic, but they also circulated their work as part of the touristic merchandising of the Fiesta.

Given the close relationship between arts communities and commercial enterprises at the 1928 Fiesta, it is fitting that the back cover of the brochure—the most desirable (and likely, the most expensive) advertising space—was taken up by a full-page ad for the Harvey Company’s Indian Detour. Modernist scholarship has been reluctant to engage the commercial dimensions of modernism. The commodification of modernist artworks has often been treated as an unfortunate byproduct of their being offered to the public. Scholars have been even less eager to explore the participation of modernist authors in overtly commercial enterprises. Yet the incorporation of modernist visions and projects in commercial materials can teach much about modernism’s impact on mainstream and mass culture in the early twentieth century.

A reasonable rebuttal to this argument would be that not all work by a modernist-associated author can be productively read and analyzed as having contributed to and participated in the modernist literary movement. However, this project argues that in the case of the modernist-era Southwest, literary modernism wasn’t an incidental factor in shaping the region’s commercial tourism; rather, it influenced the aesthetics and ideologies presented in the materials produced by modernists and intended for the promotion of tourism in the Southwest. Some of the most devoted (and respected) promoters of the Southwest used modernist tools to

sculpt a vision of the Southwest intended for and directed to the masses. Notably, the writers featured in this dissertation who promoted the Southwest in commercial materials often recycled pieces they'd first published in modernist venues, and these pieces often referenced modernist conversations. This circumstance troubles the idea that the aesthetics of modernism circulated exclusively within rarefied or fringe readerships.

In fact, as this dissertation shows, commercial tourism was an unexpected channel that brought modernist investments and forms to audiences that wouldn't have had access to (or interest in) low-circulation little literary magazines and urbane salons. Consider, for example, the poet Witter Bynner's contribution to *They Know New Mexico*, in which Bynner both praises tourists on the Indian Detour for their good taste and references the choreography of Isadora Duncan and the jazz scene in Harlem. Bynner assumes that his readers might know about avant-garde dance and contemporary jazz culture. Even if readers didn't understand the specific references, however, they'd gather that their time on the Indian Detour put them in the kind of company that sought out sophisticated and inventive cultural experiences. Thus, modernism was being marketed to audiences who were not necessarily actively pursuing or participating in modernist cultural production, but were still drawn to the promise of a cultural experience valued by the region's intelligentsia.

Several factors motivated modernists in the Southwest to promote the region through tourism and boosterism. They were motivated by a sense of stewardship; they wanted to control how visitors experienced a region that they valued highly. They were also driven by a strong belief that the Southwest, with its visual aesthetics rooted in Indigenous design, minimalist landscapes, and Spanish colonial folk imagery, had the potential to enrich and expand creative culture in the United States—so that well-informed tourists might become well-informed readers

and patrons, as was the hope of *Poetry* magazine. Most obviously, it seems likely that many of these authors were motivated to some extent by money—adobe houses don't pay for themselves, after all. But even those who didn't produce writing about the Southwest for commercial purposes still championed the Southwest's value to U.S. culture in ways that reinforced the leading discourses of Southwest tourism.

In a review of significant New Modernist Studies scholarship, Racheal Fest chronicles the expanded scope ushered in by the New Modernist Studies turn over the last decade. Fest does so by tracing modernism's influence and iterations across new temporal, geographic, and archival contexts. "This is a happy story," Fest writes, of a rarefied literary moment—and an associated scholarly field—given new life by the dismantling interventions and recoveries of scholars. However, Fest also identifies a "movement of contraction" that can be "tracked alongside" the rise of New Modernist Studies. Contrasting with increasingly diverse and exploratory approaches to literary studies is the enduring, perhaps even increasing rigidity of modernist studies' existence in what Latham and Rogers identify as existing increasingly exclusively "[with]in the intuitions of academia" (Latham and Rogers 156). Of course, the gap between the public and the university is by no means exclusive to—or even especially heightened in—New Modernist Studies. Fest makes clear that the tangled consequences of the New Modernist Studies ambition to expand the scope of academic study and its institutional impact may "help explain literary studies' broader disquiet" as the discipline becomes limited to "those (increasingly few) humanities academics universities employ" (Fest).

Perhaps the consideration of both the ideological and economic motivations that pushed modernist writers toward commercial work can open up another channel in which modernist studies can foster far-reaching cultural critique. The post-recession 2010s have emerged as an era

of the “gig economy,” in which labor is often temporary and compensated with hourly wages, and in which expectations for job security, unionized labor, and social safety nets have been profoundly eroded. Academia participated in this shift to precarity, as a large adjunct labor force and a gloomy job market were realities in the humanities well before the financial collapse of 2007-2008. Jobs in creative and academic fields are often framed as compensating the laborer mainly through valuable experience or a temporary opportunity with space for promotion, the subtext being that the job they’re doing is rewarding in ways that are not financial. While most academics acknowledge that a life of the mind has rewards that are not material, we can still recognize the insidiousness of this line of thought in devaluing the work of education, creativity, and cultural criticism. As I explore at length in the introduction to this dissertation, we see the ways that these assumptions about intellectual labor have shaped scholarly discourse surrounding the economic realities navigated by writers in the modernist era. To dismiss modernists’ involvement in profit-seeking—as strategic marketers of their own work, or as promoters-for-hire, in the case of many of the writers in this dissertation—is to accept the mythology that creative and intellectual labor does not require compensation, or that compensation somehow compromises the integrity of this labor.

In this framing, the modernists who turned to more commercial projects were perhaps finding a way to be fairly compensated for doing intellectually fulfilling labor. Authors who wrote for tourist publications reached a wide audience and shared with it a certain ethos about the Southwest—something important to them as numbers of tourists grew quickly in the 1920s and 1930s. They were also able to reuse their earlier work for these commercial jobs—case after case shows Austin, Corbin Henderson, Bynner, Riggs, and others republishing works that first appeared in little magazines or small-circulation chapbooks.

This is not to say that the commercial dimensions of modernism offer by any means a “happy story,” to borrow Fest’s phrase. It’s debatable whether tourism-related writing was a sustainable form of labor for modernists, since the tourism industry that they helped to grow altered and crowded the Southwest, a region for which these authors ostensibly believed themselves to be stewards. The story of modernists in the Southwest and the gaps in scholarship about their work point to both the constraints put on artists in the twentieth century and the ways that artists were complicit in building a national mythology about the Southwest deeply rooted in settler colonialism and imperialism, sometimes to the very real detriment of the people living in the Southwest. D.H. Lawrence called the Southwest a “playground” for white Americans who wanted to gawk at Native people.

It’s true that Lawrence’s writing about the Southwest lacked much nuance—for example, he did not acknowledge that locals and Indigenous people gained considerable agency through their strategic self-representation and often-deft manipulation of the tourism industry. But in my assessment of the Southwest in this era, Lawrence’s words embodied a truth. The tourist Southwest was at its worst a highly artificial space that encouraged voyeurism, exploitation, and a sense of colonial ownership because the tourism industry rendered the Southwest and its people into a collection of consumable and collectable products. We’re left, then, with another contradiction related to modernism’s long-standing, long-contested reputation as an eternally iconoclastic movement that rejected stifling tradition and narrow-mindedness: When modernist writers took on the promotion of the Southwest, they infused public culture with their own innovative visions, but they also replicated and gave new life to well-trod and insidious colonial perspectives.

## APPENDIX A

### “HIGH CHIN BOB”

Way high up in the Mokiones, among the mountain tops,  
A lion cleaned a yearlin’s bones and licked his thankful chops,  
When who upon the scene should ride a trippin’ down the slope,  
But High Chin Bob of sinful pride and maverick-hungry rope.

“Oh, glory be to me!” says he, “and fame’s unfadin’ flowers;  
I ride my good top hoss today and I’m top hand of Lazy-J,  
So, Kitty-cat, you’re ours!”

The lion licked his paws so brown and dreamed soft dreams of veal,  
As High Chin’s loop come circlin’ down and roped him round his meal.  
He yowled quick fury to the world and all the hills yelled back;  
That top hoss give a snort and whirled, and Bob caught up the slack;

“Oh, glory be to me,” says he, “we’ll hit the glory trail.

No man has lopped a lion's head and lived to drag the bugger dead,  
Till I shall tell the tale."

'Way high up in the Mokiones that top hoss done his best,  
'Mid whippin' brush and rattlin' stones from cañon-floor to crest;  
Up and down and round and cross, Bob pounded weak and wan,  
But pride still glued him to his hoss and glory drove him on.

"Oh, glory be to me," says he, "this glory trail is rough!  
I'll keep this dally round the horn until the toot of judgement morn,  
Before I'll holler 'nough!"

Three suns had rode their circle home beyond the desert rim,  
And turned their star-herds loose to roam the ranges high and dim;  
And whenever Bob turned and hoped the limp remains to find,  
A red-eyed lion, belly roped, but healthy, loped behind!  
"Oh, glory be to me," says Bob, "he kaint be drug to death!  
These heroes that I've read about were only fools that stuck it out,  
To the end of mortal breath.

'Way high up in the Mokiones, if you ever come there at night,  
You'll hear a ruckus amongst the stones that will lift your hair with fright;  
You'll see a cow hoss thunder by and a lion trail along,

And the rider bold, with chin on high sings forth his glory song:

“Oh, glory be to me,” says he, “and to my might noose;

Oh, pardner, tell my friends below, I took a ragin’ dream in tow,

And though I never laid him low—I never turned him loose!”

*Cowboy Song—Author Unknown*

Author Unknown, Cowboy Song. “High Chin Bob.” *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, vol. 10, no. 5, August 1917, pp. 225-7.

## APPENDIX B

### BADGER CLARK'S NOVEMBER 1917 LETTER TO *POETRY*

Correspondence: Coals of Fire From the Cowboy Poet

*Dear Madam:* A friend called my attention to the version of my *Glory Trail* appearing in your August issue, also to your editorial announcement that I was “unknown.” I mentally admitted the truth of the latter statement, but felt pained that my obscurity should be trumped about the country through the pages of your excellent magazine. Today, however, I saw your September issue and my wounds are healed. While I am in a good humor I will set an honest heel squarely upon the corns of my writing egotism and confess that you are right in saying that the cowpunchers’ version of the song is an improvement over the original.

During my years on the ranch in the border country I had no idea that more than one or two of my companions of the roundup ever read my poetical paroxysms. If I had, apprehensions for my personal safety might have made my life on the range a less perfect memory than it is. One night around the fire, while I was cooking for an outfit on the drive, during the alcoholic disability of the regular incumbent, I heard the story of a cowboy, in the Chiricahua mountains, I think, who had roped a bobcat and dragged it to death. The same night Dave asked Bronc to sing a song (a real folk-song I reckon that must have been) which began with the words, “ ’Way high

up on Pecos stream;” but Bronc couldn’t remember it. These fragments, with various amazing lies which the boys told of their prowess with the rope, went into my melting pot, however, and a year or so later the rhyme of *High-Chin Bob* resulted, much as Aaron’s golden calf came out of the fire after the Israelitish bracelets and earrings had been thrown in.

And so there isn’t an atom of mystery about it, nor a scrap of romance. Instead of being some mysterious, sun-tinged singer of the old free days who has now crossed the Great Divide and is drinking straight whisky and shooting holds through the roof of the Valhalla to which Wild Bill and Calamity Jane and Big-nosed George and the Apache kid and the other old worthies have gone, I am a drearily ordinary Western man who wears shoes and goes to church and boosts for prohibition, like most of the other reformed cowpunchers. Your kind words, though, rattle around in my heart as merrily as the ball on a roulette wheel, and I thank you for them.

*Badger Clark*

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