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Title: Reconfiguring the national canon: The Edinburgh edition of the Collected Works of Katherine Mansfield

Creators: Kimber, G. and Wilson, J. M.

Example citation: Kimber, G. and Wilson, J. M. (2013) Reconfiguring the national canon: The Edinburgh edition of the Collected Works of Katherine Mansfield. *Journal of New Zealand Literature*. 31(2), pp. 122-144. 0112-1227.

It is advisable to refer to the publisher's version if you intend to cite from this work.

Version: Published version

Official URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23724109>

<http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/6141/>



Reconfiguring the National Canon: *The Edinburgh Edition of the Collected Works of Katherine Mansfield*

Gerri Kimber and Janet Wilson

Gerri Kimber

In this article I will explore the genesis and creation of the four-volume *Edinburgh Edition of the Collected Works of Katherine Mansfield*,¹ of which I am the deviser and Series Editor. Janet Wilson will then go on to discuss the edition's importance within the wider New Zealand literary community, incorporating a study of the critical reception of Katherine Mansfield's work in the country of her birth.

Until recently, the sheer quantity of books needed in order to have an overall view of Mansfield the writer has frustrated scholars. There have been countless editions of her stories, but these omit many pieces not already collected and published in the volumes edited by Mansfield's husband John Middleton Murry after her death, from which nearly all previous 'collected' editions derived. The letters now have their own complete five-volume edition,² and the notebooks a two-volume edition,³ but for many years Mansfield's diaries and personal writing presented an equally frustrating problem. Murry's two editions of the so-called 'journals' (1927, 1954)⁴ were worked up and heavily edited from a mass of notebooks and loose papers used indiscriminately by Mansfield throughout her lifetime, with some notebooks abandoned and then reused years later. Margaret Scott took on the awe-inspiring task of trying to decipher this

mass of manuscript material—as well as Mansfield’s notoriously illegible handwriting—and subsequently published the *Katherine Mansfield Notebooks* in 1997. However, the contents were placed in only loose chronological order and the edition can sometimes present a challenge when one is looking for a particular quotation. The situation was so far from ideal that I used to wonder why no one had ever thought of compiling a complete edition of Mansfield’s writing. Murry had been in control of Mansfield’s estate for so long, but he had also been dead since 1957, and 50 years after his death seemed more than long enough to make an attempt at remapping Mansfield’s writing and to make her work available in the scholarly editions it deserved. Initially I only considered the fiction but soon decided that all of Mansfield’s work needed to be collected and reassessed. I was delighted when Vincent O’Sullivan agreed to come on board as co-editor for the fiction volumes.

It took me over two years to assemble the stories and fiction fragments. Not all Mansfield’s stories had been collected by Murry when he compiled his story collections and it soon became clear that the fiction could not be contained in one volume. I think this might explain why the Antony Alpers ‘Definitive’ edition of the stories,⁵ exemplary though it is in many ways, omits many stories under the guise that he did not think them good enough. In a definitive edition, one would expect to find everything, but it is entirely possible he may also have been constrained by his publishers because of issues regarding length.

Some curious omissions in the Alpers edition include ‘A Fairy Story’ (no reason given), which I think is one of the highlights of the Edinburgh edition. It was first published in the *Open Window* in December 1910 and signed ‘Katharina Mansfield’. It is a story written in the fantasy genre, yet with thoroughly modern metropolitan sections incorporated into the rather strange plot—a story years ahead of its time and yet this is the first time it has been collected in a Mansfield fiction edition. Other stories

omitted by Alpers include 'A Marriage of Passion' (1912), which he believed to be 'a coarse progenitor of "Bliss"';⁶ 'New Dresses' (1912) which he felt was too 'sentimental';⁷ 'The House' (1912), which he felt had 'little merit';⁸ 'Old Tar' (1913), 'Brave Love' (1914-15), 'The Aloe' (1916), and 'A Cup of Tea' (1922), amongst many others. There did not seem to be a specific editorial policy for these omissions, but instead they seemed to follow subjective personal opinion, which hardly makes the edition 'Definitive'. Nevertheless, Alpers's knowledge of Mansfield's stories, together with his notes, provided valuable material and he is effusively thanked in our acknowledgements. His volume contained 85 stories in one volume; the Edinburgh edition of the fiction contains 225 stories and fiction fragments in two volumes—a significant increase.

It is in the early period of Mansfield's life that the difference in content is most marked with regards to Mansfield's juvenilia, and where an exciting writer emerges which many readers may not recognise. Four such early stories came to light as the volume was about to go to the printers in July 2012, discovered in the King's College London archives. I was alerted to them by Chris Mourant, a PhD student then working on another project. Three of them are stories for children—part of a book Mansfield was working on in 1908 whilst still in New Zealand, with her friend Edith Bendall providing the illustrations. Nothing came of this project, and these stories ended up in the possession of Mansfield's life-long friend Ida Baker, from whom they were somehow acquired by Miron Grindea, editor of *ADAM*. The most significant story in this batch is one entitled 'A Little Episode', which can be dated to 1909. Alpers was not aware that a complete typescript existed when he mentioned the story in his 1980 biography (it has been ignored ever since, and the complete typescript not used by any other Mansfield scholar). However, he was working from a typescript held in Texas, which contains just very brief fragments of the story. He was able to conclude that 'In some way those fragments all seem related to the marriage

and the events that preceded it'.⁹ He was referring of course to Mansfield's marriage to George Bowden on 2 March 1909. This conjecture is entirely plausible and the story offers perhaps the most detailed approximation of events during that period in 1908/9, when Mansfield fell in love with Garnet Trowell, became pregnant, was rejected by him and subsequently married George Bowden, in order to provide respectability for herself and her unborn child—the firm biographical evidence for all of which was so systematically destroyed by Mansfield herself. The story, written whilst she was still in England in Spring 1909 and before she was taken by her mother to Bad Wörishofen in Germany, hints at her bitterness over Garnet's abandonment of her and their unborn child, as perceived in the callous portrayal of Jacques and his duplicitous behaviour towards Yvonne. The sentence 'By Lord Mandeville's pillow she saw a large bottle of Eucalyptus and two clean handkerchiefs' (1/543), also hints at her distaste for the fastidious Bowden and the reason for her escape on her wedding night. The years 1909–12 have always proved challenging for biographers, since Mansfield destroyed most of her personal papers from this difficult and painful time of her life, what she called her 'vast, complaining diaries'. And so what we are left with is scant information pieced together by successive biographers. However, thanks to the new edition, we now have more of a sense of her inner turmoil during this period.

In addition, our version of two long stories, both initially intended to be novels: 'Juliet' from 1906 and the even more significant 'Maata' from 1913, also contain significant biographical resonances. Mansfield began writing 'Juliet' while still a student at Queen's College. The date at the opening of 'Chapter I, October 14th', as our note states, 'makes it clear that the narrative was set on her birthday, reinforcing the fact that this is an early self-portrait' (1/60).

The story 'Maata' is possibly even more important in terms of biographical resonances. Appendix A to volume 1 presents the

careful plan for the novel Mansfield intended to write, based on her relationship with the Trowell twins and their family (1/520–8). While in Wellington on her return from London in 1906, she was infatuated with Thomas (Arnold), then in love with Garnet once they met again in England in 1908. The surviving fragments of the intended novel depart considerably from the synopsis, and are transcribed by Scott in the *Notebooks*, with no attempt to present them sequentially. Although puzzles remain, they are rearranged in the *Collected Fiction* to preserve the time-line Mansfield intended. This new version presents a unique glimpse into Mansfield's state of mind at this difficult time, containing her memories of the most painful period of her life up to that point: her relationship with Garnet Trowell and the pregnancy and subsequent still birth of the baby she conceived by him. Taken together, both 'Juliet' and 'Maata' represent two of the most exciting rediscoveries of the edition. When you add the bitterness and despair of 'A Little Episode' to the mix, a remapping of Mansfield's relationship with the Trowell family and the horror of the subsequent fall-out can now be made.

As noted above, perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the new edition is that it permits us to see—for the first time—the genesis of Mansfield the writer. We can watch her development, and see germs of ideas, first drafts, tentative beginnings, transformed into some of her most recognisable and important works. Everyone knows the ending of 'The Dolls' House' (1922): "I seen the little lamp," she said, softly. Then both were silent once more' (2/420). But that 'little lamp', which appears so magnificently and so unforgettably here, is the mature fruit of a seed that was sown many years before. There are 63 uses of the word 'lamp' in volume 1 alone and 36 in volume 2. If we narrow this down to 'little lamp':

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| <p>'Vignettes' (1907): 'Down below, in the Mews, the little lamp is singing a silent song. It is the only glow of light in all this darkness'. (1/78).</p> |
| <p>'The House' (1912): She stripped off her gloves and sat, hands folded in her lap, looking up at the green blistered door, and a little octagonal lamp hanging over the doorway. (1/305)</p> |
| <p>'The Aloe' (1915): 'Ooh!' Kezia flung out her arms – The Grandmother had appeared on the top step – she carried a little lamp – she was smiling. (1/477)</p> |
| <p>Volume 2</p> <p>'Prelude' (1917): 'Ooh!' cried Kezia, flinging up her arms. The grandmother came out of the dark hall carrying a little lamp. She was smiling. (2/61)</p> |

Throughout both volumes, lamplight is gentle, calming, seductive, comforting, warming, a metaphor for security and 'home', which reaches its apotheosis in 'The Dolls' House', whose defining, most memorable feature is its 'little lamp'.

Equally exciting is the number of Māori-related themes /words /characters revealed, particularly in volume 1.

Stories with Māori references

Volume 1

‘A True Tale’ (1903):

There were no white people living there, but tall, stately, copper coloured men and women, who sailed all round their country in great, carved canoes, and hunted in the woods for game, and very often, I am afraid, human people, whom they killed with ake-akes. (1/15)

“‘I was never happy”, Huia said’ (1906):

‘I was never happy’, Huia said, leaning back wearily and closing his eyes.

Radiana laid her hand lightly against his face. ‘That is because you do not know the secret’ she said. [...] The scent of the flowering jessamine clung round them with almost mystical sweetness. (1/61)

‘Summer Idylle’ (1907):

‘See, Hinemoa, it is hair, and know you not, should a warrior venture through the bush in the night they seize him and wrap him round in their hair and in the morning he is dead. They are cruel even as I might wish to be to thee, little Hinemoa.’ (1/69)

‘Vignette: Sunset Tuesday’ (1907):

A young Maori girl climbs slowly up the hill – she does not see me, I do not move. She reaches a little knoll and suddenly sits down native fashion, her legs crossed under her, her hands clasped in her lap. She is dressed in a blue skirt and white soft blouse. Round her neck is a piece of twisted flax and and [sic] a long piece of greenstone is suspended from it. Her black hair is twisted softly at her

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| <p>neck, she wears long white and red bone ear-rings. (1/93)</p> |
| <p>‘Rewa’ (1908): Rewa heard the sweet wild song of the pipiwharauoa. She walked rapidly, her head thrown back. She tore off a great branch of briar berries and swung them in one hand. (1/128)</p> |
| <p>‘The Woman at the Store’ (1912): ‘The only people who come through now are Maoris and sundowners!’ (1/272)</p> |
| <p>‘How Pearl Button was Kidnapped’ (1912): There were some men on the floor, smoking, with rugs and feather mats round their shoulders. (1/286)</p> |
| <p>‘Old Tar’ (1913): ‘By gum!’ the old man would mutter, lifting his worn head. ‘It’s a durn fine place . . . it’s a place to shake yer lungs out in – yer know, boy, my Pap bought this from the Maoris – he did. Ye–es! Got it off Ole Puhui for a “suit of clothes an’ a lookin’-glass of yer Granmaw’s.”’ (1/341).</p> |
| <p>‘Young Country’ (1913): ‘Hallo, Mrs Bead’ said Rachael. She buried her head in the Maori woman’s neck and put her teeth in a roll of soft fat. Mrs Bead pulled Ray between her knees and had a good look at her. (1/368)</p> |
| <p>‘The Beautiful Miss Richardson’ (1915): We are making cheap flannelette chemises for the Maori</p> |

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| Mission. They are as long as nightdresses, very full, with huge armholes and a plain band round the neck – not even a lace edging. Those poor Maoris. (1/434) |
| ‘The Aloe’ (1915): He had one saying with which he met all difficulties. ‘Depend upon it, it will all come right after the Maori war.’ (1/486) |
| Volume 2 |
| ‘Toots’ (1917): I don’t want the poor soul to feel that he has fallen amongst absolute Maoris. (2/16) |

The table above reveals how Māori characters are prevalent in early stories but have almost completely disappeared by 1913, except for minor generic references. In those early stories, Mansfield’s sense of place, of her roots in her native New Zealand, is striking. There are realistic characters drawn here, with Mansfield’s acute eye detailing clothes, surroundings, shapes, in order to bring them to life. And of course there is the story ‘Maata’, the name of her childhood friend Maata Mahupuku, where Mansfield herself takes on the Māori persona of the protagonist. Mansfield’s father had been an amateur Māori linguist and she herself had been on a six-week camping trip to the Ureweras in the North Island of New Zealand in 1907, where she had experienced at close hand the life of the Māori in the bush, in almost the last place in the North Island at that time which colonial expansion had not yet touched. Perhaps these stories reveal Mansfield’s search for the authentic, in a world where she increasingly felt herself isolated and ‘false’. Again, it is only here, in the *Collected Fiction*, that the full significance of this

Māori-inspired thread can be discerned. After a few years in England, it is natural that Mansfield's memories of New Zealand Māori fade and are no longer to be found in her fiction.

One of the original aims of the edition was to strip out any editorial intrusions by Murry. Mansfield published three collections of stories during her lifetime, but after her death in 1923, Murry published two collections of stories from manuscripts left to him in her will: *The Doves' Nest and Other Stories* (1923) and *Something Childish and Other Stories* (1924). In addition, further fiction fragments made their way into both editions of the *Journal* (1927 and 1954) as well as the *Scrapbook* (1939). Where Mansfield had not proposed a title for these stories or fragments, Murry simply made one up, and sometimes did the same even when she had clearly supplied her own title.

The editorial intention for the *Collected Fiction* was not just to draw from previously published collections as every edition of her fiction had done to date, but to map Mansfield's development as a writer, which could only be done by including every scrap of fiction she wrote, good or bad, long or short. As Kirsty Gunn notes in a recent review of the edition in the *London Review of Books*:

By giving us every draft and fragment in the order of their production – including schoolgirl jottings, ideas that never made it into print [...] the editors [...] are able to show us, on the page, the craftswoman learning what she needs to learn in order to be published and become well known, and then learning from those lessons in order to forget them. [...] there are [stories] that slowly, piece by piece, in version after version, arrive at the full expression of her ambition, where Mansfield can be seen for who she is: one of our great modernists, the creator of a narrative form so familiar to us that we barely think of it as one at all.¹⁰

With Angela Smith, I am now working on volumes 3 and 4 of the Edition—the non-fiction, and the diaries, to be published in 2014/15.¹¹ Once all four volumes are complete, both admirers and scholars of Katherine Mansfield will at last have a scholarly edition worthy of this exceptional modernist and iconic New Zealand writer.

Janet Wilson

The impact of the publication of the two-volume Edinburgh University Press edition of Mansfield's short stories on her reputation in the country of her birth, will be witnessed in the continued revising of early negative responses to Mansfield as outsider to the national tradition, and the reconfiguring of more recent perceptions of her, propagated by writers and critics like Damien Wilkins and C.K. Stead, as 'the Great Ghost' of New Zealand literature. This appellation embraces the spiritual, uncanny dimension in her writing and her eerie presence from beyond the grave—'a phantasmic and sometimes troubling sign of displacement'—as the hybridised European and (post)colonial blend of her literary modernism continues to unsettle the national tradition.¹² The initial negative reception of Mansfield's work in New Zealand reflected the bias and misunderstanding caused by partial knowledge and a distorted image of her as a miniaturist, 'feminine writer' (different from the French sanctification of Mansfield after her death, and from Lytton Strachey's sardonic description of her as 'a pad of rose scented cotton wool') as well as local literary agendas.¹³ Yet her legend has taken root as her New Zealand stories continue to be read as metonymic of a nation in process. Her formative influence on the country's emerging sense of its identity, the way she fascinates and disturbs, can be traced in the inspiration she holds

for artists, writers, film- and documentary-makers and playwrights.

Mansfield's reception in New Zealand by the generation after her death suffered from the same vicissitudes—either hagiography or denigration—as her posthumous reputation elsewhere.¹⁴ There was excessive adulation on the one hand, from women writers in both Australia and New Zealand, and on the other, a deliberate distancing from Mansfield, notably by Frank Sargeson as he assumed the mantle of father of the national prose tradition in the 1930s and 40s. During these decades and until the 1970s, Mansfield's reputation suffered from the ideological agenda of Sargeson and other cultural nationalists like the poets Allen Curnow, Dennis Glover, and A.R.D. Fairburn, then developing their own voice and direction. This generation's collective project of rewriting the terms of the existing colonial literary traditions led them to condemn her modernist, impressionist style as inimical to their ambitions for a cultural nationalism grounded in a celebration of the local and the real. As C. K. Stead argues, Mansfield represented a threatening 'burden' of influence at a time when the new Dominion was aiming to develop its own literary prose traditions independent of England and Europe.¹⁵ Their critical reaction extended to disapproval of her gendered style of writing and her perceived influence on women writers and readers. Sargeson noted:

Mansfield imposed this feminine thing on New Zealand and it had a great influence overseas too [...] it appeared to be right because it appealed to a lot of people. Now this seemed to be so strongly a representation of New Zealand. The mistake is that the writer's world is mistaken for a much wider world which it's related to [...]. But Mansfield [...] imposed a pattern on our writing and [...] hosts of young women wrote Mansfield stories.¹⁶

Sargeson disapproved of the widespread admiration and emulation of Mansfield's work among women writers in Australia during the 1920s and 30s, encouraged by the literary critic Nettie Palmer. Enthusiasts included the New Zealand-born writer Jean Devanny, who moved to Australia eventually, and, as Sarah Ailwood has shown, the Australian novelist Eleanor Dark;¹⁷ and in New Zealand writers like Robin Hyde and Gloria Rawlinson. Other imitators included the anonymous 'Dorian Gray' whose story 'It's Christmas Afternoon' won the *Auckland Star's* Christmas Story competition in 1936, demoting to second place Sargeson's story 'An Affair of the Heart'.¹⁸ Sargeson was never more effective in his self-appointed role as gatekeeper of the local literary culture than in manoeuvring Mansfield out of public favour on the grounds that her influence might move the entire national culture in the 'wrong'—i.e. impressionist—direction.¹⁹ He wrote to John Lehmann in 1939:

Our Kathie has had a bad influence on people who try to write out here. Our kicking off point should have been something resembling Huckleberry Finn – our material is somewhat similar to Twain's. But Kathie, who should have been born in England and only come out here on comfortably conducted tours, has led practically everyone down the garden path.²⁰

Here Sargeson is thinking of his own work, for he deliberately discarded his early attempt at modernist writing, in the manner of James Joyce's *Portrait of a Young Man*, and turned to American working class literary models. He even goes so far as to suggest that this antipathy justified a more extensive critical rebuke, continuing: 'Anyhow a good essay by a New Zealander doing a little gentle debunking of Kathie, so far as her colonial significance goes, wouldn't be out of place, and sooner or later it will come'.²¹

Sargeson's hostile reaction to Mansfield's influence occurs in the context of his coterie's celebration of physical strength and

pragmatism. They drew on entrenched stereotypes of the colony as the stronghold of the athletic, virile man, and favoured a sinewy and muscular realist style, denigrating what they perceived as the fussiness and miniaturising traits of women writers.²² Sargeson explicitly linked Mansfield to the ‘*feminine tradition*’, ‘the *minor tradition*’ (italics in original), which he traces to Samuel Richardson’s epistolary novel *Pamela* and associates with the writing of Jane Austen and E.M. Forster. Such writing is limited by ‘[a] tendency to be concerned with the part rather than the whole [...] to make your story depend for its effectiveness on isolated details and moments of life’.²³ Robin Hyde was probably closer to the truth, however, when she wrote in 1929 that ‘most of her tales were written in a subtle foreign language which is not yet fully understood out here [...] the language of twentieth-century art’.²⁴

Sargeson controlled literary opinion for at least two decades, a time when his own stories with their ‘authentic’ representations of Kiwi working class idiom were shaping the fashion for critical realism. So in editing the undoubtedly influential 1953 Oxford Classics edition of her stories, Dan Davin—also a realist short story writer and one of the so-called ‘sons of Sargeson’—discusses Mansfield’s fiction in his introduction in ways that imply a realist rather than modernist aesthetics. He refused to include ‘The Woman at the Store’ and ‘Millie’, now celebrated for their ‘regional’ realism, saying:

they are interesting for their suggestion of a direction her talent might have followed, had she stayed in New Zealand. But they deal with scenes she had glimpsed only superficially and characters whom she could not have deeply known – as indeed her failure to use their idiom in convincing dialogues goes far to suggest.²⁵

Davin’s misapprehension about Mansfield’s literary technique in this story is due to the preoccupation then with the sounds of the local vernacular—the laconic New Zealand male voice that

Sargeson had so brilliantly achieved in his early sketches—for her representations are of English working class speech. But he also exhibits a lack of knowledge about her encounter with regional New Zealand as recorded in her journals. Ian Gordon partly sets this right in his 1978 edition of the *Urewera Notebook* where he notes the fidelity in ‘The Woman at the Store’ to the account in that notebook of places that Mansfield visited on that trip, saying that ‘So close is the dependence of one text on another that she must have had the Urewera notebook open before her as she was writing’.²⁶ But of course the *Urewera Notebook* did not come into the Turnbull Library until long after Davin’s edition was published.

Another indication of the shift in perception between the pocket-sized 1953 Oxford Classics fiction selection and the spacious two-volume Edinburgh University Press edition, is the greater tolerance now for the incomplete work, or the fragment, a crucial distinction if we are to grasp Mansfield’s artistic preferences and practices. Davin excluded certain stories because they lacked an ending, and did not provide closure, saying: ‘The very absence of a beginning or an ending in these stories as in our lives challenges wonder. Yet they are fragments still; without an ending such stories are uncrowned’. In this he is not dissimilar to Antony Alpers who in his 1984 edition also favours the completed stories.²⁷ Such judgments have been challenged by W.H. New in his close readings of Mansfield’s stories, attending to the aesthetics of the fragment, and by Paul March Russell, who writes that the short story ‘can best be understood as a type of fragment [...] prone to snap and to confound readers’ expectations to delight in its own incompleteness, and to resist definition’, and additionally observes, ‘At the heart of the short story is the writer’s ability to make fragments of experience speak for the whole of life’.²⁸

It is clear that Mansfield, living most of her life in exile, could not voice the consciousness of the nation in its crucial moments of development as Pushkin did for Russia in the early nineteenth

century, a crucial time of westernisation, or as Sargeson himself did for New Zealand in the provincial era. She was seen as ‘a problem requiring a strategy’.²⁹ Yet her seminal importance was rediscovered during the 1970s, a time when the cultural milieu expanded and diversified, and a new generation was seeking alternative role models to those provided by male writers of the 1930s. In the field of criticism, the publication in 1975 of Vincent O’Sullivan’s ground-breaking essay ‘The Magnetic Chain’, followed by the landmark biography by Antony Alpers in 1980, introduced a deeper engagement with the question of her importance to New Zealand. This coincided with a more imaginative encounter with her work in dramatisations of her life, such as the *Two Tigers* by Brian McNeill (1973), Cathy Downes’s one-woman play *The Case of Katherine Mansfield* (1979), and adaptations of the stories for TV, radio and film.³⁰ Book-length studies by Cherry Hankin (1983), Gillian Boddy (1988) and Heather Murray (1990) followed, and in the 1990s, influential articles by Lydia Wevers (1993, 1995), Linda Hardy (1993) and Bridget Orr (1987). In 2006 Jane Stafford and Mark Williams wrote on her work in relation to the ‘Maoriland’ writing, the fashion for exotic representations of Māori life which prevailed between 1860 and 1914, and a steady stream of essays has appeared in the *Journal of New Zealand Literature* over the last decade.

In general, the New Zealand criticism shares (but is not exclusively concerned with) an attempt to define the specifics of her writing about New Zealand, noting the preoccupations with class and gender, the distinctive mix of Māori and Australian terms with local idioms, and details of setting and place. By the 1990s, a time when postcolonial theories of nation and nationhood were becoming current, the concepts of constructions of nation in her work and speculation about her influence on the national imaginary, took a new and favourable turn. Lydia Wevers, for example, referring to Homi Bhabha and Edward Said, points out that ‘her fiction [...] has come to

represent [...] a myth of place as potent as any we have generated by which to declare our nationhood'.³¹ Wevers's comment, that ideas of country or nation were also unformed and inchoate to Mansfield when she wrote 'the sod under my feet makes mine',³² identifies the critical problem; questions about the place of the nation in her work, and the place her work occupies in the space of the nation, are among the most tantalising that can be asked. They are even more pertinent because of the lack of critical consensus about Mansfield's pre-eminence in the nation's literary pantheon. Although the centenary of her birth in 1988 was marked by the first such celebration ever in New Zealand's literary history, for example, this was not without its detractors.³³

Literary and creative responses to Mansfield from the 1970s to the present day, far removed from the slavish imitation that Sargeson and his male peers disapproved of, further suggest that Mansfield-inspired experimentation reinforces her obliqueness to mainstream nationalism, as well as her enduring influence on its construction. Among the irreverent parodies, satires, generic counterpointings or ironic reflections about who she is, and what her art means culturally, is work from writers as different as Witi Ihimaera, giving a Māori view in *Dear Miss Mansfield* (1989), Sue Orr in her creative rewriting of 'The Doll's House' in her story 'The Open Home' (2011), Janet Frame's sly allusions to her as 'our famous writer' in *Living in the Maniototo* (1978), which are fully extended in her recently published posthumous novel, *In the Memorial Room* (2013), Bill Manhire in *The Brain of Katherine Mansfield* (1988), Riemke Ensing's intertextual explorations in *The KM File and Other Poems with Katherine Mansfield* (1993), and most recently, in the Gothic comedy *Mansfield with Monsters* by Matt and Debbie Cowens (2012).³⁴ The new semi-celebratory response also includes dramatisations such as Vincent O'Sullivan's *Jones and Jones* (1989), about Mansfield and Ida Baker, and the Australian playwright Alma de Groen's *The Rivers of China* (1989), about her last days in Fontainebleu. As Roger

Robinson wrote in 1997: 'Most literary energy has gone into challenging, subverting or displacing her status. Examples of canonising, sanitising or elevating her into a literary progenitor are hard to find'.³⁵ The decision to use a quotation from 'A Married Man's Story' as the epigraph for *The Auckland University Press Anthology of New Zealand Literature*, confirms the haphazardness of her pre-eminence, as the originally designated epigraph from Janet Frame could not be used; just as ironically, the quotation exhibits the miniaturism and fascination with signs and traces that was so disliked by Sargeson and his contemporaries.³⁶

In conclusion, apart from the opportunities for more detailed textual analysis that Gerri Kimber's section of this essay shows are possible, one new direction that might be explored with the help of the recent scholarly editions is the relationship between Mansfield's New Zealand and European lives. New Zealand provides the location for her beginning and end (in that most of her literary remains are now deposited in the Alexander Turnbull Library); what consists of the middle part—those years from 1908 to 1923—exists in a different world. Mansfield provides certain coordinates between these different phases of her life through her memories, reflections and attitudes, but a more critically rigorous integration of them requires one to examine anew the nature of her modernist experimentation. Jane Stafford and Mark Williams, in what seems to be a promising line of enquiry, have claimed that this has its roots in her New Zealand stories and sketches written before she left for England, and that there are greater continuities with colonial literary traditions than was thought,³⁷ while her late New Zealand stories contain the evocations of birth and origins that a nationalistic discourse requires.³⁸ Linked to this is the ghostly, flickering quality apparent in many of these narratives—for example, in the disembodied narrator of 'At the Bay'—and their static quality, an awareness of silence.³⁹ This limited access to/representation of particular moments in time (by contrast to the animation of

space) is similar to the work of other diasporic writers like Rohinton Mistry, an Indian-born, Canadian-based writer whose novels *A Fine Balance* and *Family Matters* present snapshots from a distance of Mumbai society frozen at a moment in time.⁴⁰ Mansfield's image of New Zealand, based on the domestic world of the late stories, then, is one of suggestion, of a hope deferred, both elusive and tangible, but with the potential to be reinterpreted, and as a seminal myth of belonging to underlie or underwrite other visions of the nation.

At a time when New Zealand is becoming increasingly multicultural and when different voices struggle to find new directions and identity formations within a contested space, Mansfield's voice, located both within and outside the nation, offers a model of dislocation which is appropriate to these mobilisations. To adapt Coral Anne Howells' comments on the Canadian literary tradition, the range of attitudes Mansfield inspires suggests that, with reference to Derrida's theory of the supplement, her work continues to disturb the dominant narrative, drawing attention to what is lacking or repressed, hinting at the need for reconfiguring the literary canon.⁴¹ To 'discover' Mansfield is to recognise the instability of the border between centres and margins, the movements between or across boundaries, to acknowledge a more mobile figuration of New Zealand and more diverse ways of articulating such multi-axial crossings. These positions in Mansfield's perceptions, built on distance from her subject matter and contemporary society, yet paradoxical intimacy, argue for the furthering of a critical discourse based around current theories of diaspora in order to re-examine and redefine her place within New Zealand articulations of nationalism. The new four-volume Edinburgh University Press edition of Mansfield's work will undoubtedly provide the incentive to develop such a critical strategy.

Notes

- ¹ *The Edinburgh Edition of the Collected Fiction of Katherine Mansfield*, ed. by Gerri Kimber and Vincent O'Sullivan, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012). All quotations from the edition are placed parenthetically in the text as volume number/page number.
- ² *The Collected Letters of Katherine Mansfield*, ed. by Vincent O'Sullivan and Margaret Scott, 5 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984–2008).
- ³ *The Katherine Mansfield Notebooks*, ed. by Margaret Scott, 2 vols (Canterbury: Lincoln University Press, 1997).
- ⁴ Katherine Mansfield, *Journal*, ed. by John Middleton Murry (London: Constable, 1927); Katherine Mansfield, *Journal, Definitive Edition*, ed. by John Middleton Murry (London: Constable, 1954).
- ⁵ *The Stories of Katherine Mansfield : Definitive Edition*, ed. by Antony Alpers (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1984).
- ⁶ *Stories*, ed. by Alpers, p. 550.
- ⁷ *Stories*, ed. by Alpers, p. 552.
- ⁸ *Stories*, ed. by Alpers, p. 552.
- ⁹ Antony Alpers, *The Life of Katherine Mansfield* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1980), p. 90.
- ¹⁰ Kirsty Gunn, 'How the Laundry Basket Squeaked', *London Review of Books* 35: 7, 11 April 2013, pp. 25–26.
- ¹¹ *The Poetry and Critical Writings of Katherine Mansfield*, ed. by Gerri Kimber and Angela Smith (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming 2014); *The Diaries of Katherine Mansfield*, ed. by Gerri Kimber and Angela Smith (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming 2015).
- ¹² C. K. Stead, 'Meetings with "The Great Ghost"', in *Celebrating Katherine Mansfield: A Centenary Volume of Essays*, edited by Gerri Kimber and Janet Wilson (London, Palgrave, 2011), pp. 214–28; Linda Hardy 'The Ghost of Katherine Mansfield', in *Critical Essays on Katherine Mansfield*, ed. by Rhoda B. Nathan (New York and

- Toronto: G.K. Hall & Co and Maxwell Macmillan Canada, 1993), pp. 75–92 (p. 78).
- ¹³ I.A. Gordon, 'Introduction' to Katherine Mansfield, *The Urevera Notebook*, ed. I.A. Gordon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 13.
- ¹⁴ See Gerri Kimber, *Katherine Mansfield: The View from France* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008) on the response in France.
- ¹⁵ Stead, p. 214.
- ¹⁶ 'Conversation with Frank Sargeson: An Interview with Michael Beveridge', in *Conversation in a Train and Other Critical Writing*, ed. by Kevin Cunningham (Auckland: Auckland University Press and Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 153.
- ¹⁷ Sarah Ailwood, 'Anxious Beginnings: Mental Illness, Reproduction and Nation Building in "Prelude" and *Prelude to Christopher*', *Katherine Mansfield Studies* 2 (2010), 20–38. Hyde lamented Mansfield's departure and death in the preface to her novel, *The Godwits Fly* (1938), and in her article 'The Great New Zealand Novel', labelling her 'Katherine the Great'; cited by Robinson, 'Mansfield' (2), *The Oxford Companion*, p. 341.
- ¹⁸ 'Frank Sargeson to John Lehmann, 23 March 1939', in *Letters of Frank Sargeson*, ed. by Sarah Shieff (Auckland: Vintage, 2012), pp. 21–22.
- ¹⁹ Stuart Murray, *Never a Soul at Home: New Zealand Literary Nationalism and the 1930s* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1998), p. 163.
- ²⁰ Shieff, p. 21.
- ²¹ Shieff, p. 21. Ironically, *Katherine Mansfield*, an independent essay and one of the earliest and fullest appreciations of her work, was published in 1936 by Arthur Sewell, Professor of English at the University of Auckland.
- ²² Stead, pp. 214–15, noting their 'undertone of irritation with Mansfield'; see also Kai Jensen, *Whole Men: The Masculine Tradition in New Zealand Literature* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1996), pp. 78–79. On Sargeson's negativity towards Hyde, see Shieff, p. 12, pp. 14–15.

- ²³ Frank Sargeson, 'Katherine Mansfield' and 'Conversation with Frank Sargeson' in Cunningham, p. 29, p. 173. He stresses that this tradition is not inevitably associated with women writers.
- ²⁴ Cited by Roger Robinson in 'Mansfield, Katherine' (2), in *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature*, ed. by Roger Robinson and Nelson Wattie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 342.
- ²⁵ D. M. Davin, 'Introduction', in *Katherine Mansfield: Selected Stories*, chosen and introduced by D. M. Davin (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. xiii.
- ²⁶ Gordon, 'Introduction', pp. 27-29.
- ²⁷ Davin, 'Introduction', p. xiii. See Alpers, *Stories*.
- ²⁸ W. H. New, *Reading Mansfield and Metaphors of Form* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998); Paul March-Russell, *The Short Story: An Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. vii.
- ²⁹ Stead, p. 225.
- ³⁰ Roger Robinson, 'Mansfield (2)' in *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature*, pp. 341-42.
- ³¹ Lydia Wevers, "'The Sod under my Feet': Katherine Mansfield", in *Opening the Book: New Essays on New Zealand Writing*, ed. by Mark Williams and Michele Leggott (Auckland; Auckland University Press, 1995), pp. 31-48 (pp. 31-2).
- ³² Wevers, pp. 31-2.
- ³³ Roger Robinson, 'Mansfield (2)', *The Oxford Companion*, p. 342, citing *Landfall* 171 (1989).
- ³⁴ Sue Orr, *From Under the Overcoat* (Auckland: Random House, 2011). See also C. K. Stead's 2004 novel, *Mansfield*, and Janet Frame's 2013 posthumous novel, *In the Memorial Room* (about the Menton Fellowship).
- ³⁵ 'Mansfield' (2), *The Oxford Companion*, p. 341.
- ³⁶ See the article by Jane Stafford in this volume.
- ³⁷ See Lorenzo Mari, "'How Katherine Mansfield was Kidnapped': A (Post)colonial Family Romance", in *Mansfield and the (Post)Colonial*, ed. by Janet Wilson, Delia da Sousa, and Gerri Kimber (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p. 94, citing Mark Williams and

Jane Stafford, *Maoriland: New Zealand Literature 1872-1914* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2006), p. 152.

³⁸ Elleke Boehmer, *Stories of Women* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 27.

³⁹ See Peter Mathews, 'Myth and Unity in Mansfield's "At the Bay"', *Journal of New Zealand Literature*, 23.2 (2005), pp. 47-61.

⁴⁰ See Janet Wilson, 'Mansfield as (Post)Colonial Modernist: Rewriting the Contract with Death', in *Mansfield and the (Post)Colonial*, ed. by Janet Wilson, Delia da Sousa, and Gerri Kimber (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), pp. 39-64.

⁴¹ Coral Anne Howells, *Contemporary Canadian Women's Fiction: Refiguring Identities* (London: Palgrave, 2003), p. 22.