

My Own Story, In Other Worlds:

Currents of Cultural Memory and Autobiographical Drift in Daphne Marlatt

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Introduction

This essay attempts to trace how what seems to be *not* a personal memory—that is an experience not shared or even stored in a common language—finds its way so deeply into our being that it becomes part of an individual life story. One might be reminded of the controversy over *Fragments*, Binjamin Wilkomirski's 1995 "memoir" whose main character survived the Holocaust as a child; an investigation by Daniel Ganzfried uncovered documents to suggest that Wilkomirski was a fabrication of Bruno Doesseker, a Swiss-born clarinet maker who had "never been to a concentration camp 'except as a tourist', and concluded that if *Fragments* was a memoir, it comprised other people's memories" (Bernard-Donals 1303). Despite the cleavage between historical fact and the events of the author's life that mark the text as false testimony and therefore perhaps subject to critical dismissal, it raises a question relevant to a consideration of Marlatt's writing: "can fiction serve effectively as a vehicle for memory" (Bernard-Donals 1305); or, even more specifically, can fictional autobiography serve effectively as a medium for cultural memory?

For Marlatt, what is '*not* a personal memory' is what she thinks of as "the unnameable, those momentary flashes we get which can be overlays of textures or smells, something that registers in the body but so subtly that we can't find an adequate name for/way of speaking it."¹ This is the story that is being reached for in Marlatt's first novel, *Ana Historic*, as she looks for ways to articulate the suppression of women's voices in history and in her own life; as it is in her last novel, *Taken* (1996), in which the personal history of the narrator's parents in the context of World War II informs her own:

So much i don't know, all that preceded me. Who she was. Who he was. The tentative deciphering of what gets passed along in body tissue, without words. Not so much their history even, but the ambiance of their lives, what they took for granted, the smell, the feel of their time my own beginning intercepted. I'm reaching for another kind of story, a story of listening way back in the body. And is this memory? Or fiction? (25)

In *Ana Historic*, local public records and a collection of family photographs speak to each other through Annie, as she attempts, through her writing, to shift the reading of history and her own life. The public and private archive both need to be re-read in order to open up and admit "the unspoken

urge of a body insisting itself into words” (AH 46). In every sense, then, *Ana Historic* is a “coming out” story. The voice of history is quoted throughout that novel as material evidence of the distance and distortion between that record and Annie’s own sense of women’s lives and bodies. At the same time that Annie, like Marlatt, questions the cultural codes which have formed her, “she is in the process of deforming [them] in the performance of a self on the stage of her text” (“Female Autobiography” *Labyrinth* 212).

Photographic Memory

In *Taken*, instead of public history being “privatized,” the personal is scrutinized for its connections to a broader social context (though not one that the narrator necessarily “identifies” with); family photographs and private correspondence are read backwards, back to when Suzanne’s parents were not yet her parents, but “travellers trapped in transit by the Japanese invasion of Malaya” (4) in

[w]ar time, black and white time, [when] whole cultures [were] reduced to dirty adjectives under the acrid developer of national will. What was one individual, one tiny life in all of that? (3)

At the same time, the narrator is reading forward, too, watching cultural memory being created out of the images of the Gulf War that now flicker on television, and then in the memory along with the wars of other times remembered only through photographs. “The camera,” says Edgar Reitz, “is our memory,” whether collective or individual. As Iain Chambers describes it, the photograph, along with film, newspaper, and computerized recall, is one of the media that have become “the collectors and custodians of individual and collective memory for those who able to access them [and] in becoming memory, are central to the performance of an imagined collectivity, whether it is local, ethnic, or national” (25). It is also one of the means by which both collective remembering and fiction can be provoked to initiate the articulation of those memories.

Marlatt has twinned writing and photography in many of her works, including *Steveston*, a collaboration with photographer Robert Minden, and *Touch to My Tongue* and *Double Negative*, projects with photographer Cheryl Sourkes, to whom *Ana Historic* is dedicated. In “Distance and Identity: Ten Years Later,” the afterword to the 1984 Longspoon edition of *Steveston*, Marlatt compares the poetic and photographic evocations of Steveston that resulted in the “double narrative” of the fishing town. Marlatt explains the initial impulse behind the collaboration:

[It was] to highlight the difference, the distance between our two “takes” [...] as photograph and poem witness in the imprint of place or person on the “taker’s” imagination. (92)

The poet and photographer were “clearly outsiders who knew nothing about fishing, nothing of the [Japanese] language [they] heard around [them]” (93) and very little about the culture they saw. At

the same time that their skin and speech located them “within a social mainstream Steveston people had felt on the outside of, particularly during the war when they were forced out of their homes as ‘enemy aliens’ and were sent to camps in the interior” (93), both Marlatt and Minden had felt themselves to be social outsiders, as well, for reasons of immigration and ethnicity, respectively.

In Marlatt’s case, the sense of being an outsider was particularly linked to language. In the transition from colonial childhood to suburban North Vancouver, her “foreign” lexicon of British English became a liability, rather than a mark of privilege. The poet recalls how her “immigrant imagination” began to grasp the mutable nature of the world and language when she moved to Canada:

When you are told, for instance, that what you call earth is really dirt, or what you call the woods (with English streams) is in fact the bush (with its creeks), you experience the first split between the name and the thing, signifier and signified, and you take that first step into a linguistic world that lies adjacent to but is not the same as the world of things. (“Entering In” 23)

Unlike Minden’s photographic eye which was drawn to specific subjects, primarily people, Marlatt, seeing herself as many selves and place as multidimensional, was drawn to the river, as the context of the lives their project was witnessing, and as she “pored over historical photos of Steveston and listened to the memories of fishermen who had started fishing with their father, the place [she] saw was superimposed on the place it had been” (“On Distance and Identity” 93). The photographs took her back to the moment of its taking, a specific temporal location; her poems sought to “gather up the scattered threads of past and present, [...] run[ning] though layers of time, levels of meaning, into their own conclusion” (93). That is, the threads of these other lives, with their voices and stories, ran into her own words and her own history.

Marlatt’s “memory” of the forced evacuation and relocation of Japanese-Canadians from the west coast in the wake of Pearl Harbor, which haunts the poems of *Steveston*, has a literary precedent in Dorothy Livesay’s *Call My People Home*, her 1950 “documentary poem for radio.” Livesay translated the Japanese voices of *issei* and *nisei* into English as testimony, as evidence put forth on behalf of those who lacked the language or the will to speak. Leaning into the private stories, Livesay gathered broken and bitter words “like scraps of bread left over” (14) to make public the injustices hidden in history. Almost twenty-five years later, Marlatt and Minden collaborated on their retrieval translation project for the provincial archives, interviewing the residents of Steveston and collecting their stories with the help of Maya Koizumi, their interpreter. Two books were published: one was *Steveston Recollected: A Japanese-Canadian History*, an historical artifact recording the interviews with Steveston residents in an English translation edited by Marlatt. The other was the long poem *Steveston* that merged the poet’s voice with interview fragments and

photographs to make discernible a design of dispossession and exploitation of human and natural resourcesⁱⁱ. In the collaboration of voices, Marlatt reads from where she stands “in this body at this moment in this place marked by, bearing traces of, the places, moments and people lived with, in and through to this point” (*Labyrinth* 206).

In fact, although the interviews of *Steveston Recollected* make rather frequent reference to the forcible evacuation of Japanese Canadians, *Steveston* is more reticent about that history, even as the “ghosts of landlocked camps” (“Ghost” *Steveston* 52) haunt each of the poems. Marlatt sees *Steveston* at the material “mouth of the Fraser where the river empties;” as a “onetime cannery boomtown;” and as the home

to 2,000 Japanese, “slaves of the company”: stript of all their
belongings, sent to camps in the interior away from the sea, wartime, who
gradually drift back in the 40’s, few who even buy back their old homes,
at inflated prices, now owning modern ranchstyle etc, & their wives,
working the cannery, have seniority now, located. (“Steveston, B.C.” 56)

“Slave of the canneries’,” the only poem devoted to the experience of internment, is propelled by photographs, beginning the plunge into historical and personal memory with the eldest son of a fisherman “dipping into his album” (35). The photographs conflate the poetic site of *Steveston* with memories of the family house (“the family ‘his’ worked for”) and the fishing boat, but the site of the story from where it is told is New Denver, the historical site of personal displacement, “[u]prooted from the flats, the muddy river, saltwind...

And so curiously pulled out of
the delta’s restraining ring of debt broken by mass theft
(seizure at government level), these impoverished “enemies of
the state,” transplanted & forced into new growth, shed a
mass of memoirs that evidence their real estate the four
walls testify to, over the years, room after room added, still
not finished. (36)

The family “immoveably settled here like some crustacean in “the still lake of our muddy & intermingled present” (36). Yet it was the mobility promoted by the flow and demand of commodities that brought so many people to work in so many parts of Canada as another commodity: cheap labour. The local histories of the *Steveston* fishermen in Marlatt’s long poem are tangled with the “global designs” of capitalism, just as they were caught in the nets of a racist history.

“Out there” and “in here”

In her encounter with material *Steveston*, Marlatt’s own life is joined with others, including

those directly linked with the historical fact of forced evacuation and internment, through place and cultural memory. The Japanese-Canadian community in Steveston is a very different version of the Asia she lived in as a child in Malaysia, but both co-exist in her memory, time-bound, each as “a place seen through the grid of my own perceptions/subjectivity at the particular time in my life when I encountered them”:

that Penang of the 40s and then, briefly, 1976, [...] that Steveston of the early 70s (including what i could find out about its past at that point) no longer exist in those ways & never did exist for others (not even for Robert) in exactly the way it did, or they did, for me. isn't what we see always the effect of an interaction between what's “out there” & what's “in here,” what i/we bring to it? (2002 Interview)

The “in here” of imagination that fashioned a romance with the other “out there” at an early age was linked to reading rather than actual experience. Long before the dawning of her gender/race-political consciousness, Marlatt's reading fueled “romantic daydreaming of self *as possible other* living completely different lives” (2002 Interview); one of her favourite English books was about “a young Indian woman who was the leader of a group of rebels to British colonial rule;” another was the “story of a European child during one of the medieval struggles with the Turks” who winds up in a Turkish camp and finds them “highly civilized”—there is a conflation of distinct cultures into a generic Oriental other in these childhood dreams, but they also indicate a fascination with what is unknown, or an urge to be someone else; that is, an impulse towards transformation.

Or an impulse towards translation, perhaps, because the romance of the other continued in language. As a child in Penang, it was the incomprehensibility of the “motley of languages spoken all around me” (2002 Interview) that held power and appeal for Marlatt. English was the official language she was learning to speak and write “properly;”

what was “improper” & the arena of teasing, joking between our amahs, was a sort of “wild” linguistic territory confined to the servants' quarters & the kitchen, which were officially offlimits for us kids but which I remember for that reason held a particular fascination for us [...] [T]he different language [...] implied a different way of being. (2002 Interview)

In *The Darker Side of the Renaissance* (1995), in which Walter D Mignolo discusses an earlier colonial conquest of the so-called new world, he states that “[m]isunderstanding was entrenched in the colonization of language” (71), and led to a colonization of memory as the histories and languages of subaltern societies were not listened to in their difference, were “not heard in the planetary production of knowledge,” going unrecognized as global (or universal) knowledge (2000 Mignolo 71). In fact, this is probably why the literary voicing of the Japanese internment in Livesay's *Call My People Home* and Marlatt's *Steveston*, precede the powerful rendering of that history in *Obasan* by Joy Kogawa to little effect. Dorothy Livesay declares her dramatic poem “ahead of its time” because

it “failed in its aim to rouse the wrath of the people” (*Journey* 173), but the impact of Kogawa’s novel almost thirty years later was not just a matter of timing, but of who was now listening, and to what. Aometimes the “real story” is found in translation.

“Our near and distant pasts” (MacLeod 234) those designated historical and those marked personal are inextricably linked with others we do not even have memories of, because “forgetting is one of the most powerful forces that shape national remembering” (Hamilton 23). Against the official archives created and preserved by the media runs daily experience, where cultural memory gives way to what Kerri Sakamoto has called “the hidden histories [of] people who went elsewhere, did other things than the people and places in the dominant narratives” (1998 Interview). From *Steveston* onward, Marlatt’s writing grows increasingly “personal” while at the same time the stories she writes grow bigger in their planetary implications to also include the ‘hidden histories’ of those beings and things ignored by cultural memory; that is, not only those with words unrecorded in major cultural archives such as the English language media, and also those without words.

The awareness of other languages that cannot be understood along with the intralingual fractures that appear in Marlatt’s English after her immigration to Canada are both personal experiences which confirm what Michael Cronin calls “the scandal of translation” by showing that “the origin is fragmented, that monoglossia is always provisional, that other languages precede, ghost or compete with the dominant idiom in any society” (28). The 2001 edition of *Steveston* by Ronsdale Press, for example, includes a new poem called “generation, generations at the mouth” that is reaching ‘for another kind of story, a story of listening’ way back in the body of the salmon, but it is also an explicit intertextual echo of “Sun & Moon thru the Japanese Fishermen’s Hospital (1898-1942),” where the empty General Ward is filled with those “dying or giving birth”

widow’s mouth (sea glinting just offshore), a
 mother’s hole? We’ve come to generations, generation, Steveston,
 at the heart: our death is gathering (salmon) just offshore, as,
 back their in this ghostly place we have (somehow) entered (where?)
 you turn & rise, gently, into me. (50)

This “ghostly place” is inside and outside, inscribed within one poem and reinscribed in another, locating it “offshore.” The ambiguity of subject and its liminal location is, according to Etienne Balibar, a result of shifting definition, a translation of terms still in progress. Balibar discusses these notions mainly in terms of the demographic and cultural structure within European borders, which have been affected by imperialism, immigration, and repatriation. But he recognizes, as well, that “[t]he historical insertion of populations and peoples in the system of nation-states and of their permanent rivalry affects from the inside the representation of these peoples, their consciousness of their ‘identity’” (76). If Marlatt is outside the specific memories she is writing about, she is perhaps

no more estranged than others with more apparent claims to them. As Richard Fung has noted, many Asian immigrants have “little organic relationship” to such reference points of Asian Canadian history as the internment, and the “concept of shared community and experience can no longer be taken for granted” by any groupⁱⁱⁱ (Fung 45).

Economic migrancy may be a more significant metaphor than cultural identity in a border-blurring world of global movement. At the same time, “economic fact is deeply rooted in the terrain” (“Given This Body” 72). That is, the history of Steveston is of lives moved by ‘economic fact’ as much as it is the story of

the delta [...] the mouth of one of the most incredible rivers in the world, in terms of salmon [...] There’s a dance, there’s a constant interchange, the natural term of which is the sea & the river – the tide pushing up into the river at high tide, & the force & velocity of the river pouring down into the sea. That’s the natural term of it. Then there’s the human term of it, which is who has the power? (“Given This Body” 72)

In re-writing her poem, the economic and racial inequality Marlatt made visible in *Steveston* are here made ghostly in the salmon that hover as “sonar streaks, impossible vision glitches” (*Steveston* 2001 61) The photograph still implicit, the poem asks, “what is the body’s blueprint?” The somatic memory of the salmon always led them back upriver to spawn; translated into a commodity for global consumption, the

clans of salmon, chinook, coho, gathering just off shore, backbones no longer intact, steam-pressured in millions of cans, picked clean barbecue leavings in a thousand garbage bags ripped open by cats, rats, they can’t find their way back(61)

But “the coho rivering just offshore are us” (62); the subject continues to shift, the definitions of ‘in here’ and ‘out there,’ to oscillate. For Marlatt, change and slippage, not permanence, are the principles of place: “changing ground changing channel ... the fish come and go, as the river does – land & water’s recreation of form outlasts this species’ need to fix it, own it” (Carr 140-1).

Fluid Memory

In *Steveston*, Marlatt was making connections with a cultural memory she knew only through reading and archival photographs, and drew it close through her own personal experience living in Asia, arriving in Canada as an immigrant, and feeling like an outsider. In *Ana Historic*, the narrator was looking for her own story in other worlds, that is, the past, but also in other words. Annie attempts to *create* cultural memory, inventing “a historical leak, a hole in the sieve of fact” to imagine lesbian lives left out of historical records, in a fictional act of recognition that lesbian love could be a part of her own life, too. This inter-relatedness is nothing new in life writing, as Nicky Hallett has noted, and has its “lesbian” precedent. “It was at the very heart of modernism, when Gertrude Stein

conflated the mutuality of auto- and biography in *The Autobiography of Alice B Toklas* (1933) and *Everybody's Autobiography* (1938)" (Hallett 159). But in connecting "the public act of performing a recognizable self" ("Accountability and Audience" *Labyrinth* 206) on the stage of history, Marlatt tangles lives marginalized by gender and sexuality into the history of early Vancouver, establishing a context that holds past and present lives as it holds both legends of sacred salmon and salmon rivers polluted with dioxins. The associative network that links language, somatic and textual bodies, and the environment is "a form of thought that is not rational but erotic because it works by attraction" ("musing" 45). Using etymology to trace the root and growth of words, and similes of sound and sense to draw words together and create shifts in meaning, Marlatt lets language call up connections as lovers do, through touch and provocation. As Pamela Banting has said, this use of attraction is a " 'translating forward' to form new alliances" (Banting 221).

In *Ana Historic*, as in *Steveston*, public archives are combed for information that was not considered worth remembering. It is up to the writer to imagine it into being. In *Taken*, the excavation is no longer of public archives, but of private ones. In both novels, Marlatt is bringing the past close, and making it present, through a resonance of place. Marlatt is not looking for the logic of cause and effect to understand the connections between history and her own life; nor is she looking for "signification" (*signification*), but "meaning" (*sens*) as Julia Kristeva distinguishes the two terms:

I keep the word "signification" for rationality and for all that contains univocal meaning, at the surface of consciousness. And I keep "meaning" for intonations, metaphors, affects the entire panoply of the psychic life, with which the psychoanalyst works but which expresses itself also in works of art... (282)^{iv}

In other words, to return to the notions of interiority and exteriority, Marlatt is rendering them porous as she does cultural memory, suggesting that it is as much what leaks inside us and pools in our own stories as it is part of history or the social sphere; and that the leaks occur through "the cleavages and polyphonies of individuals" (Kristeva 287).

The image that is taken by the photograph is not what Annie or Suzanne want to remember; it is only an indication of "how we looked or thought we ought to look" (*AH* 52), an "apparition" of ourselves as another, looked at image, "converting all action into the passive: to be seen" (52). The trickle of menstrual blood; the pouring of tea; the torrent of words constrained by a destiny script are all ways to activate an "aquatic narrative" that grows from the rhythm of the long river line of *Steveston*, the flow between history and imagination that carries memories, even those forgotten, just as Annie writes to call her mother back after she is gone; after shock treatment has taken her memory and her imagination and "the will to create things differently" (149). This interest in the secret, in a hidden narrative is something that Robert Kroetsch has identified as a feature of Canadian writing, which "conceals and reveals ... by a surreptitious 'glance' at another culture" (191). Kroetsch focuses

on anxiety in this process to call into doubt stories we take for granted about ourselves. Marlatt is also working with what is assumed as given, and needs to be questioned, choosing somatic memory to reach for other stories.

The fluid narrative is not a continuous flow, but rather a temporal and spatial drift. The presence of the river in *Steveston* is translated into the memory of a pool at the Penang Swimming Club in *Taken*, where amid the “wicker chairs, the bracelet sliding down her arm, their tall sweating drinks, [...] a larger history was sitting where they sat, turning a present already slipping from them. And through the tile and the concrete of that pool was still imprinted on the soles of my feet, it too was sliding into legend” (128-9). Two contradictory currents, the world turning, changing, becoming the future, and a different kind of place from that in which they were so immersed at that moment; and the world slipping, sliding backwards into memory. Or even as Suzanne wishes her lover here, she knows Lori gone, and “the peculiar dread of the about-to-be” is linked not just to loss, but to change; to “knowing that, even as i remember you in bits and pieces, i alter you into the ghost of someone you weren’t” (121). This same forgetting and alteration is at work in the larger cultural memory, too.

The Media is the Memory

“Who’s There?” were the first words of *Ana Historic*, a question focused on establishing identity and restoring personal narrative. The body grounds Marlatt’s writing, and locates it, but like that of the salmon, it is not ineluctably material. It is a liminal place, “occupied not by one but many selves, a place full of ghosts, those visitants from previous and other ways of being” haunting “the house of the self”:

For a woman writing autobiography, history itself becomes a ghost, one that is always disappearing only to reappear on the page ahead. Collective *and* personal. Because she forgets herself, she loses her self in this or that; or finds herself wiped out, erased from her place in history. (*Ghost works* viii)

Taken begins with “ghost leaves com[ing] up in the half-light;” there is nothing here as specific as memory, just a “memory-trace” (7), imagined more than remembered. If Marlatt’s first novel was concerned with her own story, *Taken* is trying to fit that story into history, into the news of war, which is where “her” story began, reaching with “half truths” that are not found in words, and writing them in the “half-light” of dawn.

In *Taken*, the photograph shares space with the moving camera, “cine pictures” of life before the children. Suzanne looks at early footage of her mother from that time “before the children” reading, like Roland Barthes, her own nonexistence “in the clothes my mother had worn before I could remember her” (Barthes 64-5). If that familiar person cannot be remembered, than it is

necessary to imagine them but “[t]o imagine them there is to situate them within a narrative that bombarded them daily by radio and newsprint” (29). To write them is to interlace “fiction and memory [until] it is difficult to tell the difference” (30). But cultural memory is being created out of the digital images of a high-tech war that Suzanne watches on television with Lori, her lover, creating an awareness of how social memory comes into being, and how lives are caught up in the fabric of connection through image not action. Amid reports of the Gulf War, Suzanne sees

[a]ll of us caught in the story, trying to read between the lines, we don’t meet the same fatality. These daily bulletins of war declare the real, necessary and willed. What will those who actually live through the “smart bombs,” the intricate laser-work of missiles go on remembering? And those who merely live with the news...? (30)

The war in the Gulf overshadows the private lives of the lovers, just as the past hovers over the present like a darkening cloud. Marlatt’s writing is intent on opening up a space, as a photographer like Lorie Novak might, “for the media images that [...] visually mark her as a generational subject shaped both by the public events she shares with her contemporaries and by her own familial narrative” (Hirsch 249). But at the same time, she is reaching beyond the stories of her generation and her own family, reaching into images and evocations of others, representing, as part of her own narrative of experience and imagination, the history that she was born into and the history that she has heard and read about; the history that she sees in the images of old photographs and those projected on the television screen from the other side of her world.

Suzanne’s mother Esme heard her father recite Kipling, while he read the newspapers—even the advertisements—supporting the war effort. She recognized that the war “was all about the comradeship men felt fighting side by side, risking their lives for each other. Their deaths had meaning, were written up in newspaper accounts, memorialized in poems” (91). But what of those not remembered? In naming the principles of journalism, its “freshness of news, brevity, comprehensibility, and, above all, lack of connection” (Baudelaire 112), Walter Benjamin has pointed out that these attractive attributes hide more than they inform. “[A]s so often with Benjamin, we are urged to recognize that seeing should not lead to believing when we read a newspaper. We should consider, rather, what fails to come into view, especially the network of social relationships that underwrites the news” (Bartolovich 192). Esme has a sense rather than an understanding of this when she thinks of

[t]he prisoners who were dying inch by inch [...] What about the hacked-up bodies of those women in the French doctor’s wardrobe in Paris, and all the disjointed bones. [...] why women, why was it always women whose bodies were found this way? And who were they? What lives had they been living that were stopped so abruptly [...] It was never they who were remembered, only their murderers. Dr Petiot, Dr Landru, Jack the Ripper. With or without war.

(91-2)

But Marlatt is not only intent on foregrounding forgotten women. Suzanne watches “the image of a greased cormorant struggling to lift itself from oil-thick waters in the Gulf of Bahrain (92), and it repeats and repeats in her head. Lovers leave, wars ebb, and lives go on “safe (apparently) from food shortages, stark grief, battered streets. We won’t know how we were changed by it. This “Mother of Battles” (104). Marlatt is calling the woman reader here, as she sought her out in *Ana Historic*, to assert a different version of cultural memory that remembers the women who were forgotten. In doing so, she must exercise a public voice. That is, whereas *Ana Historic* was really about “coming out,” letting private voice and somatic desire emerge in order to assert a social identity as a lesbian lover and a feminist writer, *Taken* is a site where Marlatt asserts a world view, neither glowing with possibility nor intent on the gaps left by a sexist history. Rather, Marlatt recognizes the future as a palimpsest, like the past, and asserts a porous relationship between private and public sphere that is “neither simple nor stable” (Lacey 12); and, extends the public sphere to include not just racial, sexual, or linguistic other, but the other than human.

Knowing that things change, not knowing how we will be changed by them is an anxiety that preoccupies Suzanne in *Taken*, that moves her to write her own story, to situate her thoughts in other worlds. And yet, “[t]o avoid disappearing in guesswork coloured by fear, loss, i write my history here” (116), she says, and mourns “the loss of being before knowing narrowed into the dangerously exclusive we label meaningful, or what counts” (116); that is, what is worth remembering and what is neither here nor there. The emotional diminution of Marlatt’s story engages the facts and translates their opposition to fiction to locate “here” in an “uncanny region [...] in which our utterances find (or fail to find) their various relations to the world and its other inhabitants” (Gould 24). In letting cultural memory drift into her own fictional autobiography, Marlatt chooses her own hidden histories to illuminate in the half-light between remembered history and fiction, evoking simultaneously “the extent of the cloth of connectedness” (“Self-Representation and Fictionalysis” *Labyrinth* 127) we are engaged in as a global community, and “the mesh of a net we refuse to see” (“Intelligence (as if by radio?” *Steveston* 46). We can fictionalize our own story in other worlds, in order to recognize the larger patterns of our lives, but the real challenge, Marlatt knows, is to internalize interrelatedness and interdependency enough to live it in this one.

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ⁱ From an e-mail interview with Marlatt, 16 September 2002.

ⁱⁱ *Steveston*, a 1976 radio play produced by CBC grows out of this collaboration, too. In that radio production, Marlatt's reading of her poems frames a drama that foregrounds the evacuation of the Japanese fishermen.

ⁱⁱⁱ Fung's remarks appear in an art catalogue of *Recollection Project*, a recent exhibition at the Gendai Gallery in Toronto. He goes on to say that "while the starting point for the exhibition was a repository of community memory – stored away in the old Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre – each artist [chose] to be inspired by a different aspect of the community narrative, working forward into their own preoccupations and aesthetic practices, rather than backward to recover some essential truth about the past" (45).

^{iv} Je garde le mot <signification> pour la rationalité et pour tout ce qui est signification univoque, à la surface de la conscience; et je garde le mot <sens> pour les intonations, les métaphores, les affects, enfin toute cette panoplie de la vie psychique avec laquelle la psychanalyse travaille, mais qui s'exprime aussi dans les œuvres d'art... (289)