Études de stylistique anglaise

8 | 2015

Stylistic Perspectives on Alice Munro's *Dance of the Happy Shades*

Searching for Lake Huron: Songs, Journeys and Secrets in 'Walker Brothers Cowboy'

Giuseppina Botta

Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/esa/876>

DOI: 10.4000/esa.876

ISSN: 2650-2623

Publisher

Société de stylistique anglaise

Printed version

Date of publication: 1 March 2015

Number of pages: 57-69

ISBN: 978-2-36442-060-1

ISSN: 2116-1747

Electronic reference

Giuseppina Botta, « Searching for Lake Huron: Songs, Journeys and Secrets in 'Walker Brothers Cowboy' », *Études de stylistique anglaise* [Online], 8 | 2015, Online since 19 February 2019, connection on 01 May 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/esa/876> ; DOI : 10.4000/esa.876

Searching for Lake Huron: Songs, Journeys and Secrets in ‘Walker Brothers Cowboy’

Giuseppina BOTTA
University of Salerno, Italy

The first short story of the collection *Dance of the Happy Shades* (1968) opens with a question: “Want to go down and see if the Lake’s still there?” (Munro, ‘Cowboy’1). The lake in question is Lake Huron, which adjoins both Michigan (U.S.) and Ontario (Canada). The relevance of the Ontario province in Munro’s oeuvre has been commented on by several critics. In his 1984 article, “Connection: Alice Munro and Ontario”, Robert Thacker, for example, highlights that “in her stories [...] the presence of Ontario’s past is not only recurrent, it is ubiquitous” (“Connection” 213). In Thacker’s analysis, the 1930s and 1940s Ontario country landscape is contrasted by Munro’s characters with the more metropolitan one of the 1960s and beyond. As it emerges, the geographical dimension interacts with the temporal one, and generates in the characters “moments of epiphany” (Thacker, “Connection” 213) which come to unveil their identities: “in order to understand who they are, her characters first must recognize where they have come from; almost always this is from rural Ontario, up by Lake Huron” (Thacker, “Connection” 213).

Such topophilia, a term with which the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan describes profound attachment to a specific place, has also been noticed by Reingard M. Nischick: in her works Munro “prefers to “map” a certain Canadian region: southwestern Ontario (sometimes abbreviated as “Sowesto”), more specifically the area around London, close to Lake Huron” (“Gender” 203). Nischick explains that such a predilection is for autobiographical reasons: “Munro’s longtime preoccupation with that particular region and her interest in local history and topography in her

writing are linked to her own life" ("Gender" 203). Munro was born in Ontario and, apart from a long period in British Columbia between 1951 and 1972, she has spent most of her life there. Nischick begins her essay "(Un-) Doing Gender: Alice Munro, "Boys and Girls" (1964)" by answering the opening question of Coral Ann Howells's book *Alice Munro* (1998), about the necessity of reference to the map of Canada to understand Munro's production. Nischick's answer is that such a reference "is not really necessary to appreciate Munro's fictional worlds" ("Gender" 203). In my opinion, this assertion underestimates the importance of geographical connotations in the author's production, which is interconnected with the questions of self and national identity. with an understanding of the location of story places on a cartographical representation, the reader will be better able to estimate and comprehend certain dynamics which occur in the narrative plot, including those linked to the processes of identity-formation.

In literature, the role of the geographical or cartographical elements, has been seen as a source of multiple possibilities for representation: "literary texts both operate within and help to shape the geography of their worlds" (Tally, *Spatiality* 99) and enable "the reader to generate alternative meanings" (Tally, *Spatiality* 99). Sheila Honess, for example, highlights the fact that literary maps "have been used [...] to connect stories with places and to express in two-dimensional visual form some of the spatial aspects of narratives" (*Literary Geographies* 85). She goes further, and associates narrative to geography: "[...] fiction can be usefully understood as a geographical event, a dynamic unfolding collaboration, happening in space and time" (*Literary Geographies* 32). At this point, it will be useful to insert a brief parenthesis about the notions of space and place and their relation to time. Space and place are generally used in common language as interchangeable terms, with reference to terrestrial extensions. However, if examined through the lenses of geography and philosophy, the two terms are far from being synonymous and their relationship becomes rather problematic. Space is an unlimited, indefinite and immeasurable entity, which copes with vagueness and vastness. As Tuan remarks, "The ideas "space" and "place" require each other for definition" (*Space and Place* 6). Their differentiation occurs when a space is segmented, circumscribed, bounded theoretically or physically, generating a place. The separation between the two notions, then, becomes clear-cut:

What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value [...] From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space and vice versa. Furthermore, if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place. (Tuan, *Space and Place* 6)

In *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces* (2011), the philosopher Bertrand Westphal emphasizes the reassertion of the spatial dimension over the temporal one which had dominated the literary scenery until World War II. Prior to 1945, space was an ancillary dimension, “an empty container” (*Geocriticism* 7), “merely a backdrop of time” (*Geocriticism* 7); it functioned as a framework for the occurrence of the temporal events. According to him, the aftermath of the Second World War constitutes the turning point for the so-called “spatiotemporal revolution” (*Geocriticism* 13): “time and space become less ambitious, more tentative: the instants do not flow together at the same duration; in the absence of hierarchy, durations multiply; the line is split into lines; time is hereafter superficial. The perception of historical time was overtaken by the relative laws of space-time” (*Geocriticism* 13). Westphal sees, in the passage to the twenty-first century, a rebalance between the temporal and the spatial dimensions which become interconnected and “inextricably meshed” (*Geocriticism* 26). On the analytical level, he conceives that there is a strong connection between literature and geography: “If it is the nature of geography to probe the potential of human spaces, it is also in the nature of literature to touch on space, because all literature is in space, regardless of its thematic developments” (*Geocriticism* 33). He identifies maps and mapping strategies as devices to explore the net of relationships between the writer and the construction of fiction, and suggests the application of a geocritical approach to the examination of literary texts.

As noted earlier, the relationship between space/place and identity is one of the main preoccupations of Munro's fiction. Each spatial dimension is endowed with an “identitarian essence” (Westphal, *Geocriticism* 188), through which the individual makes sense of him- or herself: “human identity [...] is inextricably bound up with the places in which we find ourselves and through which we move” (Prieto, “Geocriticism” 18). In the literary context, the creation of spaces and places implies a system of confrontation in the shape of Chinese boxes: the writer becomes a sort of cartographer and traces a map according to their personal vision: “writers map the real and imagined spaces of their world in various ways through literary means” (Tally, *Spatiality* 79). The reader confronts the

geographical component of the text, and, if possible, refers to cartographical representation in order to locate the given spatial coordinates: "the reader of a literary map also envisions a space, plots a trajectory, and becomes orientated to and within the world depicted there" (Tally, *Spatiality* 79). In the process of generation of their own map, the author transfers their personal motives and perceptions which endow the chart with subjective meanings. Such meanings will be part of the reader's reception of the place in question, and will provide them with the instruments to understand "the literary map in such a way as to present new, sometimes hitherto unforeseen mappings" (Tally, *Spatiality* 79). Thus, the modality and the object of representation will enact an endless generation of significance, which will provide the narrative with a "multifocal dynamic" (Westphal, *Geocriticism* 199).

In her works Munro "reveals a concern with the implications of space for identity formation and knowledge acquisition" (McGill, "Distance" 9). She portrays landscapes which possess a certain typicality, or which may be defined as typically Canadian, or typical of Ontario. In *The Influence of Painting on Five Canadian Writers: Alice Munro, Hugh Hood, Timothy Finley, Margaret Atwood, and Michael Ondaatje* (1996), John Cooke deals with the creation of national myth around Ontario between 1900 and 1965, which has made this area emblematic of Canadian identity: "the most powerful images of Canadian identity, most obviously those provided by Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven, have been provided by visual art" (*Painting* 2). As the art critic Joan Murray remarks, the members of the Group, J.E.H. Macdonald, Arthur Lismer, Frank Johnston, F. H. Varley, Frank Carmichael, A. J. Casson, Tom Thomson, Laurence Harris, "became the catalyst for a long revolution in Canadian art" (*Northern Lights* 11). They considered themselves to be rebels, and were considered as such by their public. In a manner similar to the writers and the poets of their days, they tried to distance themselves from the influence of English tradition. In the imaginative sense, the Group of Seven engaged with the landscape and assimilated it to their artistic forms. In fact, instead of merely transfiguring Nature, they selected its peculiar features and endowed it with mythic qualities. The challenge for these artists was to replace images of an assimilated land, Frye's "predigested picturesque", with images consistent with their personal experience. They translated the elements of physical landscape into imaginative forms, which corresponded with the painters' experience of them. If, on the one hand, it is true that art can be a mirror of the world,

on the other hand it is also true that art reflects, primarily, the inner places of the artist. As Murray notes, their “key ideas were grandeur and beauty, a sense of the sublime, vastness, majesty, dignity, austerity, and simplicity” (*Northern Lights* 12). They focused on the topographical shapes of the natural environment and tried to remove the vision of Canadian land as a hostile and unfamiliar environment.

Cooke detects in Munro a certain fondness for Alex Colville, Jack Chambers and other members of the Magic Realist school of painting, which, however, does not originate any “specific painterly style” (*Painting* 82) in her writing, which is much more oriented towards the world of photography. If we cannot speak of a pictorial manner emerging in her work, we can certainly discuss her practice of a “geographical meta-fiction” (McGill, “Distance” 10); according to Robert McGill “her stories meditate on their own strategies and implications in fictionalizing place, and they pay attention to the situated-ness of authors and readers, as well as to the ways in which one might come to learn about place through fiction” (McGill, “Distance” 10). The reference to specific areas and landscapes in her oeuvre has a double function: on the one hand, the presence of national traits in her settings orients the reader towards the Canadian collective identity. On the other hand, the sense of belonging to Ontario, which has an autobiographical origin, highlights the characters’ individual feelings and their struggle for self-perception.

In ‘Walker Brothers Cowboy’, narration starts *in medias res*: the reader observes the life of a family after dinnertime. The unnamed protagonist, who will appear as Del Jordan in Munro’s short story cycle *Lives of Girls and Women* (1971), accepts her father’s provocative invitation for a walk to the lake, in order to verify its effective existence. Such an uncertainty towards the presence of the lacustrine element can be ascribed to the crisis of values provoked by the advent of the Great Depression. Chronologically, ‘Walker Brothers Cowboy’ is set in the 1930s: “The nineteen-thirties. How much this kind of farmhouse, this kind of afternoon, seem to me to belong to that one decade in time, just as my father’s hat does, his bright flared tie, our car with its wide running board” (Munro, ‘Cowboy’ 8). After the crash of the American Stock Market in 1929, the world was afflicted by a severe economic crisis, referred to as the “Great Depression”. Canada suffered from the crisis as well: very high levels of unemployment, a fall in the value of money, high taxes, and low prices and wages. A general sense of discontent and displacement affected the individual, due to the collapse of all established

principles, beliefs and ideals which had been a sort of collective heritage. Such insecurity is translated in this short story through the reference to a generic geographical location, the lake, which proves to be an evanescent entity. Tuan ascribes the naming process the power to transform a space into a place. At the beginning of narration, the action focuses on the movement towards an indefinite destination which configures as a space:

"Space is given by the ability to move. Movements are often directed toward, or repulsed by, objects and places. Hence space can be variously experienced as the relative location of objects or places, as the distances and expanses that separate or link places, and – more abstractly- as the area defined by a network of places" (Tuan, *Space and Place* 12).

Later on the protagonist becomes more precise in her spatial description, and provides each place with proper names: "This is in Tuppertown, an old town on Lake Huron, an old grain port" (Munro, 'Cowboy' 1); "we lived at Dungannon" ('Cowboy' 2); "Sunshine, Boylesbridge, Turnaround – that is all his territory" ('Cowboy' 3). Apart from Lake Huron and Dungannon (a small village in the Huron county), none of the above-mentioned locations exist. This marks a clear separation between a past based on security and wealth, and a present which sees both the Jordans and the country as a whole struggling with precarious life conditions. Before the crisis, the family lived in Dungannon and Ben, the narrator's father, was a fox breeder who "sold their pelts to the people who make them into capes and coats and muffs" ('Cowboy' 4). With the advent of the Depression, the Ben's fox fur business has collapsed. On the textual level, this present time of shattered dreams is reflected in the impoverished conditions of Tuppertown, now the Jordan family's hometown: "The street is shaded, in some places, by maple trees whose roots have cracked and heaved the sidewalk" ('Cowboy' 1); "we pass a factory with boarded-up windows [...] Then the town falls away in a defeated jumble of sheds and small junkyards" ('Cowboy' 2). The town, like the whole of Canada, is going to ruin, and the displaced individual, essentially powerless, can only witness this disintegration. The "immanence of space's past in the present" (McGill, "Distance" 12) is represented by the harbor: "[...] the docks where we would go and look at the grain boats, ancient, rusty, wallowing, making us wonder how they got past the breakwater" (Munro, 'Cowboy' 2). This image of the grain merchant ships in decaying conditions exemplifies the impact of the Great Depression on the agricultural sector, which had seen a period of prosperity before the crisis. Such a decline also interests part of the

population; as it emerges from the text, the harbor area is crowded with vagrants, who represent a destitute and drifting humankind: "Tramps hang around the docks and occasionally on these evenings wander up the dwindling beach and climb the shifting [...] and say something to my father which, being frightened of tramps, I am too alarmed to catch. My father says he is a bit hard up himself" ('Cowboy' 2).

The main core of 'Walker Brothers Cowboy' is represented by the complex relationship between the protagonist's parents; the unresolved conflicts within and between Ben and his wife, generate a series of negative emotions (resentment, anger, indifference, frustration) which involve their children as well, and in particular their pre-teenage daughter. The mother blames her husband for the failure of the fox breeding business, which has caused the family to 'come down' the social ladder: "We poured all we had into it, my mother says, and we came out with nothing" ('Cowboy' 3). It seems that nothing can placate her dissatisfaction: "No bathroom with a claw-footed tub and a flush toilet is going to comfort her, nor water on tap and sidewalks past the house and milk in bottles, not even the two movie theatres and the Venus Restaurant and Woolworths" ('Cowboy' 4). She experiences the family poverty with great discomfort and opposes it through a total closure towards her husband, whom she generally ignores, and towards the rest of the society that shares their same destiny: "Many people could say the same thing, these days, but my mother has no time for the national calamity, only ours" ('Cowboy' 4). She uses a strategy of control on her children, and in particular on her daughter. Ildikò de Papp Carrington distinguishes Munro's characters into the controllers and the controlled, who are involved in situations which expose their "physical and psychological vulnerability" (Carrington, 99). As a reaction, the latter try to free themselves by "splitting [...] into two personae: the detached watcher and the experiencing participant" (102). In her relationship with her mother, the protagonist of this story acts as an uninterested watcher, who endures with scant patience her mother's attempts to mould her, since she is "her creation" (Munro, 'Cowboy' 5): "She has ripped up [...] an old suit and an old plaid wool dress of hers, and she has to cut and match very cleverly and also make me stand and turn for endless fittings, sweaty, itching from the hot wool, ungrateful" ('Cowboy' 1). According to Deborah Heller, one of the most recurring themes in Munro's writing is that of "a young daughter's failure, or inability, to meet the demands of a mother" (Heller, 7). Despite the girl's attempts to mirror the image of doll-like perfection that her mother aims for, represented by "wretched

curls and flaunting hair bow, scrubbed knees and white socks" (Munro, 'Cowboy' 5), she feels she will never satisfy her mother.

By contrast, her relationship with her father allows her to express her real self. She has, compared to her younger and querulous brother, a privileged relation with her father. She considers him to be a leading figure able to educate her, much more than her mother, who rather forces her to observe annoying and boring actions and rituals. According to Robert T. Tally Jr, narrative is "a form of world-making" (Tally, *Spatiality* 49), and as "narrators or writers survey the territory they wish to describe, they weave together disparate elements in order to produce the narrative" (Tally, *Spatiality* 49). In this short story, Munro gives to Ben the role of map-maker, since in his account of the origin of the Great Lakes he combines historical, geographical and even geological elements, associated with mimic movements. The girl-narrator reports:

He tells me how the Great Lakes came to be. All where Lake Huron is now, he says, used to be flat land, a wide flat plain. Then came the ice, creeping down from the north, pushing deep into low places. Like *that* – and he shows me his hand with his spread fingers pressing the rock-hard ground where we were sting. His fingers make hardly any impression at all and he says, "Well, the old ice cap had a lot more power behind it than his hand has." And then the ice went back, shrank back towards the North Pole where it came from, and left its fingers of ice in the deep places it had gouged, and ice turned to lakes and there they were today. (Munro, 'Cowboy' 3)

Caitlin Charman, comments on the autobiographical element which emerges in this passage, by highlighting the fact that "in this piece, and in later stories, Munro is still connecting her personal experience of the landscape" (Charman 272) to social and environmental questions: "She moves from an anthropocentric understanding of the region and its timescales to a glacial sense of time and place" (273). The movement which had triggered the two characters crossing of space is now blocked by this narration, which turns cartography into "a subject for storytelling" (Tally, *Spatiality* 51). It represents the suspension, the rest, the "pause", as Tuan puts it, which allows the transformation of a space into a place. After her father's narration, the protagonist's perception of time becomes gloomy and she feels profoundly unsettled: "The tiny share we have of time appalls me, though my father seems to regard it with tranquility. [...] I do not like to think of it. I wish the Lake to be always just a lake" (Munro, 'Cowboy' 3).

At this point, the narration concentrates on the family background and life. After the collapse of the fox breeding business, Ben reinvents himself as a door-to-door salesman, a “pedlar knocking at backwoods kitchens” (‘Cowboy’ 4), who sells diverse items for the Walker Brothers company: “cough medicine, iron tonic, corn plasters, laxatives, pills for female disorders, mouth wash, shampoo, liniment, salves, lemon and orange and raspberry concentrate for making refreshing drinks, vanilla, food colouring, black and green tea, ginger, cloves and other spices, rat poison” (‘Cowboy’ 3-4). The description of her father’s job and her observation of one of his working days, underline the protagonist’s admiration towards him; he shares with the figure of the cowboy, a sort of nickname he attributes to himself, a very strong relationship with the area he crosses during his daily paths: “Sunshine, Boylesbridge, Turnaround – that is all his territory” (‘Cowboy’ 3); “his Walker Brothers route” (‘Cowboy’ 6). Like the cowboy, he has his typical garment, which, in his daughter’s words, should make him recognizable: “He wears a white shirt, brilliant in the sunlight, a tie, light trousers [...] and a creamy straw hat. His salesman’s outfit, with pencils clipped in the shirt pocket” (‘Cowboy’ 6). He is a very creative person, who, during his solitary ways, entertains himself with songs he has invented: “My father sings most of the time while driving the car” (‘Cowboy’ 7) .

In this short story, music is strongly related to the crossing of spaces; as Tuan states “[s]ound itself can evoke spatial impressions” (Tuan, *Space and Place* 15). As a matter of fact, Ben admits that, while driving, the songs function as a palliative: “[...] it gives me something to do, making up rhymes” (Munro, ‘Cowboy’ 15). The act of singing works as a background to the description of the changing landscape during the work trip with their father, which the protagonist and her little brother undertake: “Even now, heading out of town, crossing the bridge and taking the sharp turn onto the highway, he is humming something, mumbling a bit of a song to himself, just turning up, really, getting ready to improvise [...]” (‘Cowboy’ 7).

During narration, there are three samples of Ben’s songs; the first one represents a sort of sung advertisement for his commercial activity: “And have all linaments and oils,/For everything from corns to boils” (‘Cowboy’ 4) . The second and the third show his comic abilities: “Old Ned Fields, he now is dead,/ So I am ridin’ the route instead.../Wisht I was back on the Rio Grande, plungin’ through the dusky sand” (‘Cowboy’ 7); “Where are the Baptists, where are the Baptists,/ where are all the

Baptists today?/ They're down in the water, in Lake Huron water, / with their sins all a-gittin' washed away" ('Cowboy' 7).

Music, however, appears in the final and most decisive part of 'Walker Brothers Cowboy'. After a long day of visits to potential costumers, Ben pauses at the house of Nora Cronin. Different from what happens the rest of the day, when the children are obliged to wait in the car, this time they enter the house of this particular 'customer'. Nora at first appears as a strange person in her tone ("[she] comes across to us and says in a flat voice, neither welcoming nor unfriendly, "Have you lost your way?"") ('Cowboy' 10)) and in her apparel ("She is wearing a farmer's straw hat, through which pricks of sunlight penetrate and float on her face, a loose, dirty print smock and running shoes" ('Cowboy' 11)). Her attitude is a bit too affable towards a salesman. During the narration Munro "emphasizes [the girl's] peripheral position, her innocent eye's incomprehension of the most powerful facts of life" (Carrington, 72) presenting her as a naïve young girl. She does not realize completely the kind of relationship between her father and Nora. But the reader assumes there has been a youth love between them or an affair. The protagonist sees this unconventional woman "as a sort of exotic Other" (McIntyre, 53) whose eccentricity causes some astonishment and perplexity in the narrator. Eventually noticing the picture of the Blessed Virgin on the kitchen wall, the girl realizes that the Cronins must be Catholics—for her, very much 'the Other'. She recalls a relative's euphemism for this religious 'impairment': "*She digs with the wrong foot*" (Munro, 'Cowboy' 14).

Her father's behavior when he is with Nora unveils to the young girl some unknown aspects of his personality: "She and my father drink and I know what it is. Whisky. One of the things my mother has told me in our talks together is that my father never drinks whisky. But I see he does. He drinks whisky and he talks of people whose names I have never heard before" ('Cowboy' 15). Such an observation intensifies "the child's sense of darkness and mystery in her father's life" (Carrington, 73). The fact that Nora suddenly changes her apparel and makes her appearance more pleasant, and her request to Ben to dance with her, do not seem to appall the protagonist, who, instead, "concentrates on her sudden sense of strangeness in a very familiar figure" (73). When Nora turns off the gramophone after Ben's refusal to dance, the narrative tension decreases and the story quickly comes to a conclusion. The pervading atmosphere of the returning journey is of disenchantment, characterized by an absolute

silence: “My father does not say anything to me about not mentioning things at home, but I know, just from the thoughtfulness [...] that there are things not to be mentioned” (Munro, ‘Cowboy’ 17-8). Silence, after all, is the absence of noise, which, in the musical context serves to make more evident the sounds which follow or precede it. It constitutes a sort of white space, without a precise outline, which alternates between one place and another. In this short story, the return journey represents a “soundless space” (Tuan, *Space and Place* 16) in which the protagonist acquires a maturity (and maybe also a mischievousness) represented by her self-imposed silence regarding certain events. She has already crossed the boundaries of childhood.

In ‘Walker Brothers Cowboy’ the spatial perspective coincides with the creation of the narrative universe. Physical space, at first an indefinite and undetermined entity, acquires the connotation of a place when, during narration, Munro avails herself of a specificity both in relation to the topographic and the toponymic element. The spatial axis intersects with the temporal one, in accordance with Westphal’s notion of ‘spatiotemporality’, in two cases: through the presence of the autobiographical element, exemplified by the representation of Ontario, which permeates the Munro oeuvre; and through the references to and the representation of the dramatic conditions of Canadian society after the Great Depression. The images of decay, despair and desolation belong also to the individual, who feels completely displaced in a hopeless present made of shattered dreams.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- CHARMAN, Caitlin. "Secretly Devoted to Nature": Place Sense in Alice Munro's *The View from Castle Rock*". *Critical Insights: Alice Munro*. Ed. Charles E. May. Ipswich: Salem, 2013. 259-275.
- COOKE, John. *The Influence of Painting on Five Canadian Writers: Alice Munro, Hugh Hood, Timothy Finley, Margaret Atwood, and Michael Ondaatje*. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1996.
- CARRINGTON, Ildikò de Papp. *Controlling the Uncontrollable. The Fiction of Alice Munro*. Decalb: Salem, 1989.
- HELLER, Deborah. *Daughters and Mothers in Alice Munro's Later Stories*. Seattle: Workwomans, 2009.
- HONES, Sheila. *Literary Geographies. Narrative Space in Let the Great World Spin*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- HOWELLS, Coral Ann. *Alice Munro*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1998.
- McGILL, Robert. "Somewhere I've Been Meaning to Tell You: Alice Munro's Fiction of Distance". *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 37.1 (2002): 9-29.
- McINTYRE, Timothy. "Doing Her Duty and Writing Her Life: Alice Munro's CVultural and Historical Context". *Critical Insights: Alice Munro*. 52-67.
- MUNRO, Alice. "Walker Brothers Cowboy". *Dance of the Happy Shades*. 1968. London: Vintage, 2000.
- MURRAY, Joan. *Northern Lights: Masterpieces of Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven*. Toronto: Key Porter 1994.

- NISCHICK, Reingard M. "(Un-) Doing Gender: Alice Munro, "Boys and Girls" (1964)". *The Canadian Short Story. Interpretations*. Ed. Reingard M. Nischick. Rochester: Camden, 2007. 203-218.
- PRIETO, Eric. "Geocriticism, Geopoetics, Geophilosophy, and Beyond". *Geocritical Explorations. Space, Place and Mapping in Literary and Cultural Studies*. Ed. Robert T. Tally Jr. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. 13-27.
- TALLY Jr, Robert T. *Spatiality*. London/New York: Routledge, 2013.
- THACKER, Robert. "Connection: Alice Munro and Ontario." *American Review of Canadian Studies* 14.2 (1984): 213-226.
- TUAN, Yi-Fu. *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes and Values*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1974.
- . *Space and Place. The Perspective of experience*. Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press, 1977.
- WESTPHAL, Bertrand. *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces*. Trans. Robert T. Tally Jr. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.