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# Immigrant Cosmopolitanism: Jewish-American Immigrant Narratives and Modernist Cosmopolitan Aesthetics

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Immigrant Cosmopolitanism:  
Jewish-American Immigrant Narratives and Modernist Cosmopolitan Aesthetics

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in English

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## **Abstract**

I propose to show in this study how Jewish-American authors of mass media immigrant works from the first three decades of the 20th century utilize a form of modernist cosmopolitan aesthetics to challenge notions that these works are unworthy of study and appreciation. These authors, not happy with the classifications and aesthetics available to them as immigrant authors, borrow from other ideologies and aesthetic schools to create an aesthetic system meeting the needs of immigrant individuals. In theory, this system, which I have termed 'immigrant cosmopolitanism,' meets the needs of these individuals and capitalizes on the authors' diverse backgrounds and experiences. Only these authors can decide which aesthetics adequately relate their story, and they believe immigrant cosmopolitanism will give them the freedom to tell their stories in a way previously denied them. However, they find that no pure aesthetic, cosmopolitan, modernist, or otherwise, can fully convey their stories.

Pure modernist cosmopolitanism leaves little room for the integration of those ethnic details and personal experiences necessary for these texts to function successfully as immigrant novels. Therefore, these authors intend to find an aesthetic allowing them to tell their individual immigrant stories in a way highlighting their intellectualism and artistry. Immigrant cosmopolitanism allows them to relate their stories in the manner they desire and in a way representing immigrant lives: it is a hybrid of popular and intellectual, artistic and commodified, hopeful and cynical, and it ultimately fails to accomplish its goals (just as these Jewish-American immigrant authors fail in their attempts to be seen as something more than just immigrant authors).

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## Introduction: What is Immigrant Cosmopolitanism?

"Could he *understand*? Like a born Jew? A Jew understood a great ever so many things without being taught" (qtd. in Browder 152).

"A full or even adequate understanding of another culture is never to be gained by translating it entirely into one's own terms" (Dasenbrock 18).

Anzia Yezierska, the author of the first epigraph, makes a valid point that no group, nation, or culture can speak to all experiences, even individuals' experiences with modernity. Many previous studies have described the Jewish experience with modernity, but each study only claims to speak for the experiences of their focus group. As a result, these studies tend to classify immigrant novels and modernist novels in distinctively different ways, with only a few studies looking at both. After all, how can American born modernists share identical experiences with immigrant modernists? As Dasenbrock suggests, a true understanding of another's perspective cannot be gained through translation: in this case, the immigrant's experience translated through the perspective of American modernists and the American mass audience. Looking at these diverse experiences and perspectives and how they differ and intersect is still a worthy project, however. I propose to link these disparate experiences by examining shared aesthetics in order to show how and why immigrant novels have employed modernist aesthetics. Showing how even authors of popular or mass media immigrant works demonstrate modernist aesthetics helps dispel the notion that these works as a whole are less worthy of study and appreciation. Since many critics have looked at these works as either immigrant texts or modernist texts, and rarely both, they have overlooked the ways that these works are transitional texts hinting at future trends in immigrant literature. Scholars may find these works useful as a glimpse into this transitional period between realism and modernism in the history of the immigrant novel.

One quote from the Christian missionary text *Conservation of National Ideals* (1911) reflects the assumption guiding the thesis of this project: the assumption that the cultural contributions of immigrants are not as intellectually or artistically valuable as the products of "high" art.

When one considers that the vast majority of the population of the United States is made up of naturalized immigrants, or citizens whose parents were immigrants, *there is great danger that true American ideals will be lost sight of, and that the standards by which our forefathers founded American institutions may be lowered or changed* [emphasis mine] (5).

Immigrant texts have been devalued because of the belief that they are not easily integrated into American culture, and thus they occupy a potentially challenging outsider space. According to this logic, immigrant authors offer a double threat to dominant American culture: one, by being immigrants and outsiders; and two, by resisting dominant language and culture, and therefore, cultural unity and identity. Immigrants, then, threaten American culture and culture in general—and by extension, High culture. Several authors<sup>1</sup> address the devaluing of immigrant cultural products in their studies. Fewer, however, address how immigrant authors use value judgments as an impetus for intellectual and artistic resistance. Those who do<sup>2</sup> study these areas, focus primarily on diasporic identities and not on resistant aesthetic techniques and ideologies utilized by individual authors. Fewer studies yet look at Jewish American authors of popular immigrant fiction and how resistant aesthetics elevate the reception of immigrant texts. Those authors who do address the issue of experimental and resistant aesthetics<sup>3</sup> center their studies on canonical modernist authors such as Gertrude Stein and Abraham Cahan. Although these authors are indeed Jewish, their ethnic affiliation appears more incidental than a legitimate reason for their incorporation into these studies. None of these studies, however, look at less renowned authors such as Ludwig Lewisohn, Edward Alfred Steiner, Leo Rosten, and Samuel Ornitz and how

these authors challenge cultural assumptions and standards through "worldly" immigrant cosmopolitan aesthetics in order to "document their eminent eligibility to be an American" (Browder 143).

The authors featured in chapter one of this study, "Immigrant Cosmopolitanism Ideology" (Lewisohn and Steiner), and chapter two, "Immigrant Cosmopolitanism and Practical Application" (Rosten and Ornitz), manipulate aesthetics to increase the perceived artistic and intellectual value of their immigrant narratives through a form of cosmopolitanism incorporating immigrant realities and ethnic particulars. This shows the transitional nature of these texts, as they are unwilling to let go of the "old" realist and autobiographical conventions, which helped define previous works in this genre and equated them with commercial success; however, they are also frustrated by the limitations imposed by these conventions. I will argue throughout this study, that these authors, not happy with the current classifications and aesthetics available to them as immigrant authors, borrow from other ideologies and aesthetic schools in order to create an aesthetic system alterable to meet the needs of immigrant individuals. In theory, this system, which I have termed immigrant cosmopolitanism, meets the needs of the individual and to accounts for the authors' diverse backgrounds and experiences. Only these authors can decide which aesthetics adequately relate their story, and they believe this system will give them the freedom to tell their stories in a way currently denied them. The novels featured herein are not works neatly classifiable as immigrant or modernist texts: they occupy space in between.

The first author highlighted in this study, Ludwig Lewisohn (1882-1955), controversial critic, political writer, and author of several immigrant narratives, is remembered more for his non-fiction essays than his novels. One of his earlier novels, *Up Stream: An American Chronicle* (1922), met with little critical and popular success, largely because of the dual nature of his text:

intellectual and popular. If the critic or reader has a desire to "nourish [their] intellectual self" ("These" 231), then the popular elements and conventions associated with the immigrant autobiographical text<sup>4</sup> may seem at odds with this purpose. Furthermore, Lewisohn's focus on the political and intellectual, instead of the ethnic and strange, leaves those looking for entertainment alone wanting:

So far as his strictures are concerned, Mr. Lewisohn would have found a more serviceable vehicle in fiction . . . Surely the essential quality of criticism is disinterestedness, and of this, the autobiography of all literary forms has the least. ("These" 231)

Here, the reviewer hints at the autobiographical narrative's intimate connection with reality and with the audience. This works contrary to the distancing needed for criticism, resulting in the failure of Lewisohn's intellectual project; and "All this is to say that autobiography makes a poor basis, artistically, for propaganda" ("These" 231). Although this critic feels the novel's autobiographical form is not the most effective for Lewisohn's purpose of elevating the reception of this text, he does not see *Up Stream* as completely lacking in value. The critic defines *Up Stream* as a novel of human "experience" in order to reconcile this, instead of limiting it to the confines of the immigrant novel. In its use of human experience (intellectual and artistic) to contrast the negative effects of culture and society, *Up Stream* shows potential, according to this critic. Another critic for *The Independent* agrees with this assessment of *Up Stream's* potential, stating, Lewisohn "says many bitter and true things about the superficiality of our culture" ("Up" 311), but this does not necessarily ensure his text a commercial success. The reviewer for the *New Republic* argues Lewisohn fails to meet audience expectations regarding authenticity in his attempts to balance critique with a human story and human expressions:

Mr. Lewisohn turns from his factual record and with disconcerting frankness reveals what pain, humiliation, and bitterness . . . experience has cost him, his

instinct for self-dramatization tends to shake our faith in his *critical validity* [emphasis mine]. ("These" 231)

In other words, his "dramatization" and focus on the political over realism hurts his credibility. Although this critic considers *Up Stream* an intellectual novel in purpose, he still judges the novel by the standards of the immigrant narrative. He expects factual or realistic details gleaned from experience within the text, yet he disapproves of the sentimental and emotional nature also associated with immigrant novels because they affect Lewisohn's "critical validity." The critics appear to desire changes to the immigrant narrative genre, or they desire to see something entirely new from these authors. Likewise, all of the authors in this study see a need for transition and change, but they are not ready to abandon their ethnicity and their personal experiences completely to accomplish this.

Lewisohn, however, hopes to bridge the popular (immigrant narrative)/intellectual (critical, detached) divide through a type of modernist cosmopolitanism altered to incorporate the particulars of ethnicity and personal experience. On the surface, *Up Stream: An American Chronicle* details the progression of the protagonist from Old World to New World, from child to man, and from ignorant to intellectual. Geographically through his migration, ideologically, through his education--and in terms of literature, through a critical view of American and 'English' forms--the protagonist adopts a type of cosmopolitanism allowing him to question and transcend boundaries and limitations. As Adolph Gillis states in his biography on Lewisohn,

So far from accepting recognized standards of literature as the last word, this author [Lewisohn] bitterly assails those standards, and dares to declare himself a rebel against the conventions. . . . Mr. Lewisohn seems in no mood to accept our literary ideals on faith. (557)

In its focus on the politics of language, culture, and form, and through its commentary about the effects of politics on literature, *Up Stream* indirectly offers a form of resistance, yet it is not

immediately concerned with applying resistance to the text through literary techniques and form. Although *Up Stream* is not exemplary of modernist experimental aesthetics<sup>5</sup>, it does philosophically address the limitations of traditional immigrant narratives and ends on a hopeful note that a new generation of immigrant authors can rise to the task of elevating and reclaiming their literature--and literature in general--from commodification. In essence, there can be no reclaiming of these authors art from market forces because they cannot separate their texts entirely from reality or from cultural forces, which is their primary reason for resistance in the first place. The concept of modernist formal resistance is likewise challenged by Georg Lukács in his article "The Ideology of Modernism." He suggests that authors' attempts to represent their reality (or desired reality) ultimately determine their 'intentions,' or in the modernist sense, resistant intentions (170). These authors desire to be accepted as intellectuals, artists, and producers of high Art. Their intention is to find an aesthetic allowing them to tell their individual immigrant stories in a way highlighting their intellectualism and artistry.<sup>6</sup> However, they find that no pure aesthetic, cosmopolitan, modernist, or otherwise, can fully convey their stories. Therefore, these authors develop and follow their own form of modernist cosmopolitanism, immigrant cosmopolitanism. This aesthetic both allows them to relate their stories in the manner they desire, but it also is representative of their lives: it is a hybrid of popular and intellectual, artistic and influenced by commodification, hopeful and cynical, and it ultimately fails to accomplish its goals (just as these authors fail in their attempts to be seen as something more than just an immigrant author).

The second author featured, Edward Alfred Steiner (1866-1956), author of numerous treatise on immigration and education, is remembered largely for his assimilationist beliefs and his support for the ideals of immigrant uplift. Little reviewed and almost forgotten by scholars, most

critics see *From Alien to Citizen: The Story of My Life in America* (1914) as little more than an immigrant autobiography about an "average" man rising beyond the position of an "ordinary vagabond." Yet as one reviewer states, Steiner's tale is far from "an average record" ("From" 634). Although this reviewer for the *New York Times* does consider *From Alien to Citizen* an above-average immigrant novel, he still criticizes Steiner's use of conventions associated with immigrant autobiographies, such as a sentimental and emotional tone:

[FA] is purely a sentimental plea; the pictures which he draws are, many of them too florid and too highly colored with emotion to be very palatable to a people . . . but it arrests the attention, if nothing more, and bears the stamp of sincerity.  
("From" 634)

In this case, the emotional, dramatic aspects of the text detract from the realistic and provoking details readers expect of the immigrant novel. On the other hand, a reviewer for *The Survey* sees the emotional "warmth" of the text as appropriate for helping readers understand the "truth" of the immigrant experience. Although this reviewer also reinforces the idea of immigrants as "grotesque" and "repulsive," he still feels their "joy of living and will to live" garners reader sympathy. Like the reviewer for the *New York Times* article, this critic expects a measure of strangeness, crudeness, and barbarism from immigrant characters. It is only through an "inside view" that the reader can see Steiner's protagonist as something more than an average immigrant: he is a human caught up in circumstances beyond his control. He also serves as a barometer for his times. Yet this reviewer goes on to caution the immigrant against challenging dominant culture and criticizing the circumstances in which he finds himself, as it is a "power they [immigrants] do not understand, which they see working substantial injustice in only too many instances" ("Immigration From" 266). Steiner, however, understands the cultural and societal institutions influencing his circumstances only too well. Furthermore, Steiner anticipates how

critics will approach his text, reducing its impact and diminishing its value. He labors to disprove the notion of immigrants as "swarms" contributing nothing to society and nothing to the American literary canon: "I feel there *is* no call for them [immigrants], you say; therefore there *is* no call for them" ("Immigration From" 266). Essentially, if the reader expects nothing of the immigrant and his tale, nothing will come of it. Thus, the reader must be trained to see the potential of the cultural products of immigrants. He, therefore, works throughout his novel to create tenuous affiliations with artists, intellectuals, and the audience in order to gain sympathy and to increase the perceived value of his novel through a comparison of his elements with others.

*From Alien to Citizen: The Story of My Life in America* follows the immigrant protagonist's attempts to navigate the oppressive, confusing culture of the United States and institutions such as religion and education. Although the protagonist initially demonstrates assimilationist tendencies, by the end of the novel, he promotes a form of detached intellectual cosmopolitanism<sup>7</sup> incorporating diverse cultural elements. This cosmopolitanism allows the protagonist to remain critically separated from all cultures. As with *Up Stream*, *From Alien* utilizes the traditional immigrant autobiographical narrative form, following the protagonist chronologically from his childhood to his intellectual and artistic adulthood. Furthermore, by addressing issues of assimilation and the clash between Old and New cultures, Steiner also allies himself with traditional immigrant narratives; however, Steiner's text is devoid of certain ethnic markers such as Yiddish. By distancing itself from some ethnic limiters, *From Alien* attempts to convince the audience of its universality. Due to its supposed universal, human scope, the text can philosophize about other universal concepts such as beauty, art, literature, and spirituality. The use of universals is not an attempt to associate the text with commercially successful works-

-as the protagonist openly criticizes capitalism and its effects on all aspects of culture. Contrarily, it is an attempt to re-educate the audience about immigrants and the immigrant novel and to create space for the immigrant in the artistic and intellectual sphere.

The third author detailed in this study, Leo Rosten (1908-1997)--also known as Leo Q. Ross--a well-known author of numerous comedic and Yiddish reference works, is best remembered for his contributions to popular literature. Yet he also possesses critical, anti-commodification, and distinctly anti-commercial sympathies: "even when he is writing, Mr. Rosten confesses, the roles of creator and social critic keep alternating" (Mitgang BR 5). Rosten is both of these, progressive critic and proponent of intellectualism and author of many "low" fiction works. His most renowned work, *The Education of H\*Y\*M\*A\*N K\*A\*P\*L\*A\*N* (1937), according to *The Atlantic*, enjoyed bestseller status for six months. It was first published as a serial in fifteen episodes (Gelder) and later compiled into the novel used here. Kate O'Brien of the *Spectator* suggests it lost most of the "spontaneity" and originality resulting from its serialization when the first version was reconfigured: "Taken week by week in small doses in the *New Yorker* they probably carried spontaneity--but regimented here they sober us" (818). She also implies the format of the novel adds limitations not otherwise present in the story. In contrast, another reviewer criticizes the boundaries created by the serial format. He feels the form "confine[s] his Mr. Kaplan to the limited, perfectionist pattern of 'New Yorker' pieces" (Marsh 4). The serial format and limitations, in general, inhibit its artistic potential. "How [Rosten] might have flowered," he continues, "But such speculation is always profitless . . . [and] He now belongs to the ages" (Marsh 4). Marsh believes that no matter the format, stories are bound by limitations. At the same time, it is by overcoming limitations that stories can reach their true potential. Again, this shows conflicting views about the expectations for immigrant

narratives: average readers expect clichés and stereotypes, critical reviewers expect quality literature that meets genre standards, and authors want to create a new space for themselves and their literature. The authors featured herein hope that altered forms and aesthetics can create new potential and a new space for mass-market genres and can resolve the contradiction pointed out by Marsh.

Despite its supposed lack of potential, *The New Yorker* states Hyman was so popular, it sparked a sequel: "The Return of Hyman Kaplan" (1938). Indeed, of all the texts featured in this study, *Hyman Kaplan* enjoyed the most commercial success and critical attention from 1930s reviewers. The novel's popularity may be a result of its alteration of the immigrant autobiographical form, which had become an object of parody by the time Rosten published his novel (and Rosten's work is the least autobiographical of all of the works featured herein). It might also be a result of Rosten's status as a second-generation immigrant. As he is more assimilated into American culture, so too is his aesthetics. As they are more assimilated into American culture, it is not surprising that his novel would be the most popular with American audiences and critics. However, some critics feel the linguistic skill demonstrated by Hyman results from the marketing the text more so than from true ingenuity on the part of the author or the character, Hyman. However, Rosten does not lack control over the marketing of his text. As a reviewer for the *New York Tribune* states, Rosten manipulates existing techniques and affiliations to market his text as something beyond typical commercial fair (Marsh 4). Interestingly, the reviewer relates Hyman to Jewish modernist Gertrude Stein and her techniques--which Alyson Tischler author of "A Rose is a Pose: Steinian Modernism and Mass Culture" (2003) relates to marketing techniques. Unlike Stein, however, the reviewer argues Hyman "lacks the learning and discipline to support his *native* genius" [emphasis mine] (Marsh

4), or he at least lacks the learning to portray his genius in English to an English-speaking audience. If the authors of this study cannot be American intellectuals, then they can at least be worldly intellectuals. Rosten, then, manipulates language to portray Hyman's logic and genius, and he does so by "getting the exact word" and through "a lot of control" (Mitgang BR5). Almost all literary aesthetics consider control and exactness positive techniques. Furthermore, he carefully constructs the syntax and rhythm of the "dialect" Hyman utilizes. It is not the "grammatical dislocations," but Hyman's confidence in his language and skill making him interesting (Untermeyer 5). Unlike the reviewer from the *New York Tribune*, Untermeyer argues that Hyman demonstrates an "alien originality" (5), despite his lack of English skills; and this foreignness helps grab the reader's attention, as it reinforces notions about the linguistic skills of immigrants.

*The Education of H\*Y\*M\*A\*N K\*A\*P\*L\*A\*N* offers the reader a brief look into the classroom of Mr. Parkhill, an instructor attempting to teach immigrants the rules and vocabulary of standard English. Although the classroom limits the scope of Rosten's novel, the text expands beyond the boundaries of the classroom through the incorporation of "worldly" Yiddish words, phrases, and accents. In Hyman's speeches criticizing American society, culture, and its definitions of art, the reader receives glimpses of the world outside of the classroom and the dominant system of education. Although he tends to cloak his critique within grammatical and syntactical errors. By catering to audience expectations about immigrant language<sup>8</sup>, he makes it easier for the audience to accept the rules of his linguistic system. Hyman desires to elevate his speeches and prose beyond the commonplace, which he feels he cannot accomplish by using Standard English. Therefore, Hyman creates his own lexicon and language rules allowing him to circumvent limitations imposed upon his ideas by English and by cosmopolitan and modernist

aesthetics. Hyman is often the only one aware of how language works upon art, culture, and individuals, which alienates him from his peers. However, alienation is problematic, since as Josopovici suggests, aesthetically driven novels require a "willingness [by the audience] to play according to the rules laid down by the artist" (14). When a reader accepts the author's "rules," a novel is more likely to be a commercial success. Those novels engaging the reader succeed; and it appears novels are more commercially successful when they make their rules explicit to the reader, despite challenges to cultural standards. The rules governing the aesthetics of these authors meet the needs of their stories in ways that other aesthetics cannot. If the readers understand the rules, then they can see how they work for immigrant narratives. On the surface, however, *Hyman* is a comedic work, and readers often associate comedy with popular fiction. Yet through the manipulation of language, and by offering alternatives to dominant systems, *Hyman* allies itself with modernist experimental aesthetics and modernist cosmopolitan ideology while critiquing the limitations of popular fiction.

The final author featured, Samuel Ornitz (1890-1957), a second-generation Jewish-American immigrant, is best remembered for his film scripts. His fictional works, such as *Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl* (1923), have fallen out of favor with literary scholars and audiences alike. Originally marketed as a posthumous autobiography taken from an anonymous source ("Haunch" 11e), *Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl* met with mixed success depending on readers' interpretations of the work's authenticity. According to one reviewer for the *New York World* (1923), *Haunch* shows "a capable journalist's version of certain facts in the lives of several New York men who began life in the ghetto and died in the row of 'allrightniks' on Riverside Drive" (11e). To this reviewer, *Haunch* is a compilation of several immigrants' stories gathered together by a journalist who marketed them as one tale: "a novelist's pure flight of fancy from a nest of

three decades of newspaper clippings" ("Haunch" 11e). *Haunch* follows the conventions of the immigrant autobiography closely and is thus bound to expectations about the genre. In the case of this reviewer, he or she believes the anonymous billing of *Haunch* is a cover for the author's "fancy," since they cannot verify the truth of the author's tale ("Haunch" 11e). To Silas Bent of the *New York Times* (1923), on the other hand, the authenticity of the story holds less importance than the quality of the text. This valuing shows a shift in audience expectations from Steiner's novel to Ornitiz's. The earlier audiences desired authenticity above all, and later audiences are looking more at the 'quality' of the texts. For example, Bent states,

Let us set aside for the moment whether this is authentic autobiography. It is probably half fiction. The important point is that it is an extraordinary book . . . vivid and racy, alive on every page. (6)

The text's plot and style interests Bent more than its authenticity, but he too falls into the trap of judging *Haunch* by the standards of other immigrant texts and their tendency to highlight foreignness to titillate the audience. Overall, immigrant authors may be ready for change, but the audience of the immigrant narrative is not.

Even those reviewers admiring the style and quality of *Haunch*, consider the author's literary skill an undeniable clue that a "hoax" was perpetrated. For example, Leo Markun of the *New York Tribune* (1923) argues, "the book is the work of a poet, with the poet's gift of sympathy and understanding" (20). He further states,

He [the author] has torn part of the webbing from himself, other bits from men he has known, and he has managed to bind them skillfully together until they resemble the shedding of a single strong man. In other words, this is a hoax. (Markun 20)

Markun thinks the author possesses a measure of poetic skill. However, since *Haunch* is not the realistic story of just one man but is constructed from other sources, it damages Ornitiz's

credibility. Interestingly, all of these reviewers pick up on the constructed nature of the narrative--and it is not an autobiography in a traditional sense--but they do not give him credit for control of his work. Ornitz, however, not only controls his work but also uses audience expectations about immigrants and immigrant autobiographical novels to create a text questioning the limitations of form. Some reviewers of *Haunch* also comment on those literary elements going against conventions and expectations, but they consider these a failure in the autobiographical narrative form and not a deliberate attempt at resistance. In essence, "There are faults in 'Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl,' but there is genius in it too" (Markun 20). There may be genius in *Haunch*, but not enough to overcome the failure of credibility, and audience participation and acceptance is necessary for this genius to function. Without audience understanding, then, the narrative has no meaning and no purpose. Ornitz does have a purpose: to show how many distinctions between immigrant novels and other "high" literary forms are arbitrary and imposed by the audience. Ornitz takes this distinction to task indirectly in *Haunch* by incorporating cosmopolitan aesthetics, experimental techniques, philosophy, and linguistic games within the frame of a standard immigrant novel.

*Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl* details the protagonist Meyer Hirsch's development from instigator, supporter, and participant in the broken systems of the United States to a disillusioned and alienated adult. Instead of serving as a role model of intellectualism, artistry, or cosmopolitanism, the protagonist is the opposite: cunning, ruthlessly capitalistic, and limited in perspective. The reader hardly sympathizes with the protagonist. Only in the final moments of the novel, can the reader feel a measure pity for a character betrayed by culture and society. He is a common American, same as the audience. *Haunch* depicts a world broken and devoid of beauty, a world where dreams and progressive ideology cannot survive: a world with only brief

moments of music, poetry, and insight. *Haunch* warns of what comes when unbridled capitalism and cultural decay are left unchecked. Ornitz attempts to fight these forces by promoting a process-driven art that requires the audience to discover meaning. The modernist artist (and immigrant cosmopolitan artist) places the burden of understanding upon the reader, a reader who may not have an understanding of aesthetics and how they function (Josopovici 11, 12).

Additionally, through the incorporation of a loose stream of consciousness form and several estrangement techniques, the protagonist keeps his audience from allying themselves too closely with Meyer's negative attitudes and practices. The artist maintains a sense of uniqueness by estranging his art from reality and the everyday. Like other modernist techniques, this estrangement promotes a quality of 'otherness' within his art (Josopovici 11). *Haunch* offers estrangement to the reader as a method for reclaiming art and culture. It reflects his position as "other" (immigrant), and it separates him from mass culture. Overall, if one desires to reclaim intellectualism and artistry, Ornitz has some advice: do not do as the protagonist does.

*Haunch* shares an aesthetic with other canonical modernist texts, yet to define any of the authors in this study as modernist is misleading. Pure modernist cosmopolitanism leaves little room for the integration of those ethnic details and personal experiences necessary for these texts to function successfully as immigrant novels. Nor does it allow for the integration of popular elements needed to engage audiences and to meet some of their expectations regarding immigrant fiction and immigrant authors. The novel is not modernist in traditional ways, yet current studies about modernism consider it a phenomenon including racial, economic, artistic, and other minorities, complicating strict definitions of modernity and modernism. Recent studies have led scholars to think of modernism as a multi-variant phenomenon. Furthermore, several critics suggest that many modernisms existed simultaneously and definitions of modernism

change according to the critic defining it and according to the personal aesthetics of individual authors. Therefore, this study has focused more on the shared aesthetics and ideology between these immigrant cosmopolitan authors and canonical modernists<sup>9</sup>, than on questions of whether these works are representative of modernist, cosmopolitan, or immigrant narratives.

The authors described in this study, stand at the intersection of several modernisms: ethnic, aesthetic, experimental, and popular. They incorporate elements of ethnic experience with detached aesthetics and elements of the popular with the experimental. This process may reflect individual author's aesthetics, but it may also be a reflection of the cosmopolitanism or worldly ideology guiding their aesthetic choices. In his study *Ethnic Modernism* (2008), Sollors argues that any definition of modernism claiming to speak for all individuals and experiences is "imaginative," as one cannot truly "define all the different experiences of modernity" (60). Therefore, modernism was forced to develop "a multiethnic and cosmopolitan rationale for modern American art as the result of 'the fusion of different races and nationalities' that made American art the truly international" (*Ethnic* 207). If modernism is a system of resistant aesthetics moving beyond national boundaries and incorporating elements of many cultures, then under this definition, the immigrant authors featured herein demonstrate modernist aesthetics. However, they focus on a particular version of modernism: specifically, modernist cosmopolitanism. The distinction between these modernisms and cosmopolitan modernism is largely one of purpose. Each of the authors in this study demonstrates aesthetics similar to modernist cosmopolitanism, although the word 'cosmopolitan' rarely appears in their texts. Instead, the term 'worldly' more accurately describes their novels, as they attempt to move beyond the limitations of ethnic particulars. To the authors in this study, the particulars of experience function less as a means of maintaining Jewish identity and creating a community

with other Jewish individuals, and more as a formal tool for moving beyond boundaries. One way the authors of this study create artistic and intellectual affiliations is through shared aesthetics and, in this case, a shared cosmopolitan modernist aesthetic. Ethnicity is used as a basis for denying authors the title of artist and intellectual. Therefore, the authors of this study are understandably concerned with how these supposedly boundary-less ideological classifications (such as artist and intellectual) can separate them from personal experience. The authors in this study attempt to portray themselves as individuals beyond the limitations of culture, language, and ethnic experience. However, they are still individuals attempting to maintain a level of connection with those experiences defining them as artists and intellectuals, and ethnicity influences experience. On the other hand, they are "revolutionary" in how they offer direct and indirect challenges to societal institutions such as language, education, and the economy. Furthermore, each of these authors follows a strict system of aesthetics and not just a set of clichés or genre standards to elevate their works to the level of art (by their definitions). Too many scholars, high art has a resistant quality, and Rosten argues that fiction has a truly progressive and "rebellious" spirit:

Art begins with arrangement. . . . But fiction is born of rebellion: rebellion against the pointless, heartless, blundering, flukish, and unstructured happenstances of life. Fiction is the effort men make-to-make circumstances make sense. Fiction extracts meaning from . . . experience. It translates reality, as it were, into verity. In this sense, a story is a form of revelation. (*Many xi*)

If fiction, the medium used by the authors detailed herein, shows rebellion, then fiction is more than just a popular form, it is a potentially resistant medium. It allows authors to utilize their immigrant experiences in resistant ways to create meaning and to "translate" their "reality" into a story that can engage and instruct readers. On the other hand, to T.E. Hulme, Art must transcend the human and the particulars of experience. To Hulme, progress (and progressive art) results

from overcoming human limitations. Under this definition of art, immigrant authors must elide or remove ethnic details and individual experiences from their texts. Otherwise, they limit their works' potential as art.

The authors serving as subjects in this study appear familiar with definitions of art that deny them artistic distinction, such as those expressed by Hulme. Therefore, these authors utilize a form of cosmopolitanism, referred to herein as "immigrant cosmopolitanism," to justify their categorization as an artist and intellectual and their literature as valuable within the greater American cultural sphere. Possessing both "individualist and intersubjective elements" (Anderson 31), cosmopolitanism is a complicated ideology. In other words, individual values, purposes, and other national, transnational, cultural, and "intersubjective elements" come together to determine the boundaries of cosmopolitanism. It is also both a physical process of becoming worldly through the crossing of geographic boundaries (Walkowitz 29) and a mental process of becoming worldly through culturally and nationally non-specific intellectualism and artistry. In essence, it demonstrates an "intellectual and aesthetic openness toward divergent cultural experience" (Vertovec 64). At one side of the cosmopolitan continuum is a purely ideological and philosophical cosmopolitanism detached from the realities of cultural, societal, and national influences. On the other side is a cosmopolitanism demonstrated indirectly through the worldly or international aspects of characterization, literary techniques, and plot. The authors featured herein--Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz--take a more middling approach to cosmopolitanism by attempting to integrate a philosophical dimension with a practical application of idealism. The authors of chapter one, Lewisohn and Steiner, attempt to create a balance between individual particulars and the human primarily through affiliations with high literature and with intellectual and artistic communities. However, the authors featured in chapter

two (Rosten and Ornitz) focus more on the practical application of cosmopolitan aesthetics through linguistic and formal manipulations.

The broad nature of cosmopolitanism allows for the incorporation of diverse voices, politics, and ideologies. In reality, however, cosmopolitanism's expansiveness makes it difficult to handle, and any cosmopolitan project nigh impossible to accomplish. When an author sets an end goal or attempts to define the boundaries of cosmopolitanism, they shift and alter according to the one doing the defining. Therefore, the cosmopolitan project, without alterations making it more manageable, is doomed to failure. To make the cosmopolitan project manageable, each of the authors in this study set their own boundaries. They focus on a version of cosmopolitanism, which, in theory, allows for the integration of ethnic particulars and immigrant experiences without overwhelming individualism (immigrant cosmopolitanism). Immigrant cosmopolitanism attempts to balance traditional modernist cosmopolitan aesthetics (such as distancing and defamiliarization) with elements associated with immigrants and immigrant novels<sup>10</sup> (such as autobiographical elements and ethnic dialects). Informed by both the aesthetics of modernist cosmopolitanism and the particulars of immigrant experience and culture, immigrant cosmopolitanism allows these authors to market themselves as more than just immigrants: they are worldly individuals. As worldly has no national, cultural, or other clear-cut values or boundaries associated with it, the concept allows immigrant authors a space in which to manipulate form, audience, and overall literary value.

Immigrant cosmopolitanism, although never defined outright or identified by these authors, is shown throughout their texts. By promoting the aesthetics and "worldly" ideology of modernist cosmopolitanism, the authors of this study attempt to connect with the very American audiences who deny them intellectual and artistic credibility. Cosmopolitanism requires a

delicate balance. Too many concessions to the audience is an assimilative act requiring the sacrifice of the immigrant author's values, culture, and ethnicity, yet if the author cannot compromise, they risk audience disinterest or affront. However, the "worldly," broadly defined, allows for the negotiation of the personal with the cultural, national, artistic, and intellectual. In chapter one, the authors focus on classifications and affiliations determined by cosmopolitanism ideology and politics. In chapter two, however, the authors focus on the formal and linguistic elements affected by cosmopolitan ideology. Overall, these immigrant authors share a similar goal for their experiments: acknowledgment as artists and intellectuals and acknowledgment of the artistic and resistant potential of their "low" literary works.

The chapters of this study hint at what conditions must be met for the immigrant cosmopolitan experiment to succeed, according to Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz. First, the mass audience must be educated about intellectual and artistic potential and be able to make informed value judgments<sup>11</sup>. Yet focusing too much on the audience limits these authors' potential, as the audience expects certain things of immigrant narratives. When a novel strays too far from the prescribed format, then it risks losing the mass reader base. Readers expect immigrant narratives to incorporate foreign and ethnic elements: and Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz do so to appease the audience. However, the authors of this study use realistic ethnic details to meet their own rhetorical purposes, not to titillate the audience or to fulfill some tenant of Realism: not all details are included and only those suiting their needs. Although these authors incorporate elements of the personal into their texts, they use these experiences to manipulate aesthetics. Williams asserts that immigrants can force "certain productive kinds of strangeness and distance: a new consciousness of conventions and thus of changeable . . . open conventions"

(qtd. in Walkowitz 18). In other words, immigrant texts can both fulfill audience expectations and challenge them by forcing a reanalysis of conventions.

Second, authors must address long-held assumptions about immigrants, ethnicity, and culture. The authors of this study do address stereotypes about Jewish Americans, but the characterization of Jewish individuals in their novels also serves a rhetorical function. Through these characters, they create the "familiar" while still testing, questioning, and overturning assumptions. Additionally, all of the protagonists, in some ways, serve as a metaphor for modernist cosmopolitan aesthetics. The protagonists featured in chapter one illustrate the artistic and intellectual potential of immigrants and cosmopolitanism. They also demonstrate how the conditions of modernity limit potential through their struggles and failures. In chapter two, the protagonist Hyman represents linguistic potential and failure, and Meyer represents intellectual potential and failure influenced by commercial and market forces. Finally, the cosmopolitan project must meet a third criterion to function properly: it must have universal or human characteristics that expand its reach beyond the limitations of geography and individuality. By using universals, these authors create and maintain ties while bringing together the disparate and sometimes contradictory elements of the immigrant narrative. Yet universals must be balanced with the specifics of reality and with individual ethnic experience if they are to help cosmopolitanism function in a way meeting these authors' needs. The authors attempt to create this balance through a meshing of politics and ideology with the practical application of aesthetics through language and form: all in efforts to challenge standards and assumptions.

Each author attempts to fulfill these criteria in different ways, although they all work towards the shared purpose of gaining artistic and intellectual recognition for themselves and their texts. The authors of chapter one try to coerce readers into reconsidering their assumptions

about the linguistic skill of immigrants and the value of immigrant literature. To achieve this and to move beyond limitations, authors must train audiences to see in more universal and "human" ways through resistant aesthetics offering alternative perspectives to cultural and societal norms. Some limitations result from ethnic specificity and essentialized thinking and these share one common factor: they are products of audience assumptions. Due to audience preconceptions about immigrants and their literary products, these authors are viewed in reductive ways that overlook or deny their resistant potential. Yet the critical audience still desires "ideas, interpretive, critical, aesthetic, philosophical, with which to vivify, to organize, to deepen . . . knowledge, on which to nourish [the] intellectual self" ("These" 231).

Despite audience preconceptions, Lewisohn and Steiner at no point in their novels attempt to deny their ethnicity, and their cosmopolitan or worldly ideology allows for multiple attachments and perspectives on cultural and societal elements. Furthermore, they mix ethnic affiliations with artistic and intellectual affiliations. However, this cosmopolitanism is complicated because the worldly can negate the individual and vice versa, and the commercial and popular elements associated with marketing can stand in opposition to heightened aesthetics and intellectual principles. These contradictions may reinforce the idea of failure, but these authors utilize elements considered both high and low and both universal and individual when suiting their purposes.

Lewisohn and Steiner avoid reinscribing limitations upon themselves and upon their works by straddling lines and by never stating their affiliations openly. By removing cultural and ethnic referents (or "centers") and favoring universals, they make their texts more human and aesthetically motivated. Yet this act also limits the ability of immigrant authors to incorporate their stories, as "all referentiality is arbitrarily established. By giving a 'center' to a work"

authors reduce its potential (Vegso 13). Thus, the authors of chapter one create several centers working together to suit their purposes and to meet audience expectations. Overall, through utilization of an altered form of modernist cosmopolitanism<sup>12</sup> (immigrant cosmopolitanism) allowing for diverse experiences and perspectives, Lewisohn and Steiner create a philosophical (ideological), critical (resistant), and aesthetically oriented text highlighting their intellectualism and elevating their 'common' immigrant autobiography to the level of art. Although they do at times consider themselves worldly, they do not consider themselves modernists or cosmopolitans. Instead, these authors use those modernist cosmopolitan aesthetics suiting their purposes and affiliating them with the coterie of intellectuals and artists supposedly beyond the limitations of cultural influence.

The authors of chapter two, Rosten and Ornitz, likewise see themselves as part of the intellectual and artistic coterie, although their interest is more in distancing themselves from negative associations than in using cosmopolitanism to create affiliations. To accomplish this, they work to engage the reader and help them think critically about familiar systems and cultural beliefs through linguistic and formal games. Yet Rosten's and Ornitz's purpose is not entirely different from Lewisohn's and Steiner's, as their language games also serve as a means of denying and creating connections:

It is no mere matter of carefulness; you have to use language, and language is by its very nature a communal thing; that is, it expresses never the exact thing *but a compromise—that which is common to you, me and everybody*. [emphasis mine] (Hulme 50)

Language is shared experience, belief, and values that require compromise among diverse individuals to create meaning but shared or dominant languages have also been associated with the "common." Similar to the authors of chapter one, Rosten and Ornitz are concerned with the

lack of intellectual and philosophical dimension in commercial, mass produced literary texts. However, the authors of chapter two focus more on the practical application of their resistant and anti-market politics at the micro level instead of at the macro level favored by the authors of chapter one. The authors of chapter two attempt to accomplish this through the application of cosmopolitan aesthetics into the smallest components of the text: syntax, diction, language, and formal elements. By doing so, they create a system of politics, logic, and aesthetics informed by individual backgrounds, ethnic particulars, and human universals, which can be understood through knowledge of the protagonist and through narrative intervention. To understand this personal logic, however, the reader must know and follow the author's cues. When a reader cannot rely on their previous knowledge and assumptions, they will hopefully begin to think critically and view the familiar in ways they may not have been previously able. With the ability to think critically comes the ability to make informed value judgments about art and culture, and ultimately, about the intellectual and artistic value of immigrant narratives.

Overall, Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz show how even a modernist cosmopolitanism altered to meet the needs of immigrant authors (immigrant cosmopolitanism) can still fail in practical application. Cosmopolitanism is in some ways incompatible with their chosen form, the immigrant narrative. Each method embraced by these authors, whether macro or micro, requires a delicate balance for success. Although the authors in this study fail to achieve the desired balance, they still succeed in offering alternate perspectives and retraining the audience to think more critically about systems, culture, and norms: all in the efforts of elevating the form and content of the immigrant novel beyond the common. This failure is partially due to the broad and worldly nature of cosmopolitanism and any cosmopolitan project. Namely, to succeed, a cosmopolitan work should be philosophical, intellectual, aesthetically

driven, and detached, all while being involved in individual experience, audience perception, and meaning making. Furthermore, despite these authors' best intentions, the audience cannot fully understand art, intellectualism, and the immigrant experience as the authors know it. Therefore, the audience relies on previous knowledge about what constitutes real immigrant experiences and about what elements should be present in immigrant narratives; and the literary market can influence audience these perceptions. By losing touch with reality and the reality of market forces, then, a work loses significance (Henderson 8). *UP*, *FA*, *HK*, and *HPJ* use realistic or everyday details, but in ways attempting to portray experiential or lived truth. They use them for rhetorical purposes, such as showing the strangeness of the immigrant situation through language through a comparison with the dominant language of English. Yet the immigrant experience is foreign to most of their American readers, and as aesthetics require readers to judge texts by the rules and standards of the artist, the reader can have difficulty connecting with the subject matter and text as a whole. Henderson suggests it is through social and political action, demonstrated through literary techniques, that true progress is achievable, not through aesthetics alone: "Our chief interest in criticism [and literature], therefore, turns out to be a consideration of the 'ends' to which any writer leads us, and only secondarily the 'means' which he employs" (Henderson 8-9). The immigrant authors featured herein are likewise focused on the end goal: the goal of elevating immigrant narratives is far more important than the specific techniques they use to achieve this goal.

Some of the novels highlighted in this study may succeed in their immigrant cosmopolitan experiments more than others, but they all attempt to balance the subjective (low) with the objective (high), the story (low) with the aesthetic (high), and the realistic (low) with the idealistic (high). Indeed, with the exception of *The Education of H\*Y\*M\*A\*N K\*A\*P\*L\*A\*N*,

the novels featured in this study are largely commercial failures. Although several novels such as *Up Stream: An American Chronicle* are critically praised, they are still rife with contradictions. However, these authors never do claim they can solve the problems of modernity, immigration, or cosmopolitanism. Instead, they offer tools for coping with and resisting the negative effects of these phenomena, primarily by using their ethnicity as a device to control prose, language, form, and the audience. Therefore, this study will focus more on the shared aesthetics and ideology between these immigrant cosmopolitan authors and canonical modernists, than on questions of whether they represent modernist, cosmopolitan, or immigrant narratives effectively. Indeed, their cosmopolitan projects remain unfinished, but these authors believe with work and time, change will come and cosmopolitanism will effectively create new possibilities for the immigrant narrative. Essentially, "Ethnic [and immigrant] literature is itself a process" (Maitano 4). Although the authors featured herein may not successfully complete the cosmopolitan project, they at least begin the process in order to "set up new distinctions, make new boundaries, and form new groups'" (Sollors, qtd. in Maitano 13).

## Chapter One: Immigrant Cosmopolitan Ideology

Ludwig Lewisohn's *Up Stream: An American Chronicle* and Edward Steiner's *From Alien to Citizen: The Story of My Life in America*

"[L]iberty means progress--the liberty of individuals to *rebel against* the mass-life, to repudiate mass-thinking, to shatter the folk-ways, to be the *instruments of change*" [emphasis mine] (Lewisohn 201).

"It [great art] aroused an enthusiasm which was not merely the recognition of a superb artist, but a *tribute to human nature*. In its appreciation of this artist, the mixture of nationalities and races knew itself as *one human family* and was proud" [emphasis mine] (Steiner 120).

The quote above by Ludwig Lewisohn suggests that there is liberty in resistance and change. On the other hand, everyday specifics and common thinking constrain intellectual and artistic potential and hinder an artist's ability to become the detached aestheticians exalted by the avant-gardes and critics of the early 20th century. This aloof approach is a means of eliding cultural specifics, creating universals, and constructing essentialized categories while elevating concepts such as Art, Literature, and Intellectualism. This chapter details the complicated relationship of immigrant authors with a system of detached aesthetics and universals, namely, cosmopolitanism. In some ways, the problems cosmopolitanism poses for immigrant authors are the same as those posed by "experimental" modernism. Can cosmopolitanism be a means of overcoming limitations, or does it re-inscribe limitations upon art and language? Furthermore, what place do the particulars of ethnic experience hold in the world of Art and Literature?

The authors in this chapter attempt to incorporate the particulars of their immigrant, ethnic experience through the medium of the immigrant autobiographical form while negotiating the ideological boundaries of geography, art, and intellectualism. These authors are more than

just the sum of their parts: artist, intellectual, or immigrant. Literary critics often consider immigrant novels as mass media offerings in contrast to more commercially resistant and supposedly intellectual offerings.<sup>13</sup> Even Lewisohn supports this distinction in the epigraph: "mass life" leads to "mass thinking" and, therefore, intellectual and cultural stagnation. Freedom or "liberty," then, comes from progress and resistance to cultural assumptions and norms. Lewisohn can also be charged with promoting mass culture and "folk ways," however, especially in his choice to relate his story through the immigrant autobiographical form. By attempting to harmonize these two seemingly contradictory cultural spheres—mass and high literature-- Lewisohn creates an impression of utilizing only those techniques supporting his purpose. Indeed, both of the authors discussed in this chapter appear to utilize an À la-carte version of modernist aesthetics, choosing functionality over 'purity' through a form of practical cosmopolitanism ("practical idealism"). A lack of purity, however, is not a failure in skill, knowledge, or aesthetic quality, but the means by which these two authors market themselves as more than just "realist" autobiographers.

In its form, subject matter, and focus on the difficulties of the immigrant experience in America, *UP* can be considered an immigrant novel. Furthermore, by emphasizing the transformative nature of the character and the culture in which the immigrant protagonist finds himself, *UP* is an autobiographical narrative (Browder 153). The beginning chapters of *UP* detail one man's struggle against the current to arrive "UP" and to become a success in America. The titles of the second, third, and fourth chapters reflect this idea of assimilatory success: "The American Scene," "The Making of an American," and "The Making of an Anglo-American," respectively. In the plot's centralization of assimilation, *UP* resembles a number of other immigrant novels, but the initial subject matter about attaining the American dream eventually

shifts to center on larger societal concerns such as education (Chapters VI, "The American Finds Refuge, and Chapter VII, "The Business of Education"); assimilation (Chapter V, "The American Discovers Exile"); and culture (Chapter VIII, "The Color of Life"). This shift demonstrates a move from the traditional fodder of immigrant autobiographical narratives to a focus on more controversial subject matter, which in part, reflects Lewisohn's complicated relationship with American culture. On the other hand, it may show that autobiographies during the 20th century pulled away from the "conversion narrative" and moved toward "a literature much more ambivalent and ambiguous" (Browder 153-154). Ambiguity allows immigrant authors more freedom to straddle the imaginary line dividing assimilationist (mass media) and revolutionary ideals (intellectualism). The protagonist of *UP* wants to define himself as an intellectual and an American (assimilationist), but he also attempts to negotiate his personal interests and beliefs with larger cultural, national, and societal concerns. In the end, Lewisohn's story is almost completely stripped of individual particulars in favor of philosophizing on the nature and definition of art and the failures and future directions of culture (Chapter IX, "Myth and Blood" and Chapter X, "The World in Chaos"). Overall, the progression of the plot moves from particulars to universals, elevating the critical value of Lewisohn's novel through an expansive scope and by offering alternative perspectives through the inclusion of ethnic experiences. By moving beyond limitations, it transforms from an immigrant novel into a cosmopolitan one. Through the utilization of a form of modernist cosmopolitanism, Lewisohn creates a philosophical (ideological), critical (resistant), and aesthetically oriented text, highlighting his intellectualism and elevating his 'common' immigrant autobiography to the level of art.<sup>14</sup> This manner of valuing art resembles J.E. Spingarn's definition of "literary art" as art that "best transcends its represented objects and therefore reaches beyond sociological facts into ideals and

possibilities" (qtd. in Lutz 41). Lewisohn distances himself from the "objects" and "sociological facts" of his ethnic experience to focus on the potential of aesthetic choices and cosmopolitan ideology.

Written in 1922--during a time when the immigrant assimilation text enjoyed mass popularity--*Up Stream: An American Chronicle* is Lewisohn's most widely known work, despite his attempts to elevate it above other popular immigrant texts. By writing several novels questioning societal traditions and by advocating Zionism, first-generation Jewish-American immigrant author, translator, and critic Ludwig Lewisohn earned the reputation as an anti-establishment critic and writer.<sup>15</sup> Lewisohn considered himself more than just a political ("philosophical") author; he was also an immigrant writing novels about immigrant issues and the "Jewish question" through an immigrant's outsider perspective. Amanda Anderson suggests in her study *The Powers of Distance: Cosmopolitanism and the Cultivation of Detachment* that an outsider perspective is an inherent part of the "Jewish Question." She argues that an author's treatment of the "Jewish Question" is a form of literary detachment. Through detachment, authors can analyze affiliations and identifications critically: the "Jewish Question . . . obsessively considers questions of affiliation and disaffiliation, tradition and modernity, belonging and detachment" (22). She suggests this has led authors to see Jewish literature in two polarizing ways: either associated with traditionalism or associated with detachment (Anderson 22). Since Lewisohn and Steiner do not attempt to hide their ethnic affiliations, they are marked in readers' minds as limited by a Jewish or immigrant perspective. Distancing allows for multiple attachments, multiple perspectives, and an outsider perspective uninfluenced by American culture, however. According to Anderson, this does not necessarily separate these authors from Jewishness. Whether or not Lewisohn believes distancing is a part of his Jewish experience, he

positions *UP* somewhere between these two poles. Lewisohn no more wants to abandon the ethnic particulars of his immigrant experience than he wants to define himself solely as an artistic or intellectual cosmopolitan. Lewisohn, then, is not a modernist cosmopolitan author, but an author sharing an aesthetic with modernist cosmopolitans. It would be more appropriate to consider Lewisohn an immigrant cosmopolitan author utilizing modernist cosmopolitan aesthetics to affiliate himself with more intellectual or high art offerings.

By addressing conditions influencing artists and art during the modern period, Lewisohn allies himself with other modernist writers. *UP* is preoccupied with modernist aims such as reclaiming art from cultural decay<sup>16</sup> and elevating art beyond commodifying forces.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, *UP* attempts to create a connection with intellectual and artistic communities by focusing on artistic potential and by attempting to circumvent limitations. In *UP* and *FA*, the line between intellectual and artist are blurred, overcoming established bourgeois distinctions resulting from professional affiliations such as "scientific" intellectual versus "literati" (Hawley 588). With the blurring of these distinctions, immigrant authors justify their inclusion into the circle of artists. They see affiliation with artists of other cultures, experiences, and literary merits, as a means of expanding the scope of their novels beyond the perceived boundaries imposed by geography and ethnic particulars. They are not just Jewish authors, but authors and intellectuals supposedly above societal and cultural influence. Yet Lewisohn remains concerned about how a concentration on the artistic and intellectual can elide culturally specific referents and subject matter. In essence, Lewisohn trades one problem for another.

Cosmopolitanism can be of great use to the immigrant author because it creates a community in which an author can maintain a sense of individual and artistic power against the limiting forces of American mass culture. Overall, Lewisohn shows he is most comfortable with

a hybridized form of cosmopolitanism, one allowing for diversity and the questioning of monolithic concepts (intellectualism, culture, and art). Lewisohn's cosmopolitanism, in some ways, resembles Catherine Morley's definition of "Transnational or American" modernism. In her study *American Modernism: Cultural Transactions* (2009), she describes modernism as a "critical national and cultural self-examination which makes apparent ideological assertions and exposes embedded assumptions" (Morley 10). This definition suggests a form of modernism allowing for reflection on its own failures. In a similar manner, Lewisohn critiques cosmopolitanism by showing how it works negatively on the immigrant novel, making Lewisohn both a cosmopolitan and a critic of this aesthetic. Furthermore, according to Jessica Berman, author of *Modernist Fiction, Cosmopolitanism and the Politics of Community*, modernist cosmopolitanism is both complicit and critical of the limitations of cosmopolitanism itself. This critical aspect of modernist cosmopolitan ideology resolves some of the failures of the aesthetics in both Lewisohn's and Steiner's novels. These authors may not always achieve their stated goals, but, for the most part, they are aware of their failures. However, this awareness does not mean they take the time to explain the failures resulting from the conditions of modernity, which would be more useful if they were attempting to enact systemic change. Contrarily, the reader is left to resolve any contradictions or problems resulting from cosmopolitan politics. Yet modernist cosmopolitanism and immigrant cosmopolitanism questions the very idea of community and the ways it demands a level of consensus from its participants (Berman 13, 16).

Lewisohn attempts to connect with a cosmopolitan community in order to enlarge the scope of the novel beyond the limiting vision of the personal narrative alone, despite autobiographical texts' tendency to rely on individual experiences and perspectives. The parochial scope of autobiography is often associated with a lack of worldly experience and

knowledge, a form of "ignorance." In his essay "Provincialism is the Enemy" (1917), Pound calls for artists to fight against the "enemy" of narrow perspectives with knowledge about other cultures and the incorporation of foreign elements into texts: "[Provincialism is the] ignorance of the manners, customs, and nature of people living outside one's own village, parish, or nation" (qtd. in Lutz 42). In this, Lewisohn and Pound agree. With the incorporation of elements from various cultures, Lewisohn's vision becomes that of an insider and outsider, participant and spectator. Autobiographical novels are criticized for lacking political potential, as the true center of political ideology and action is in the community. Yet this overlooks the ways individuals can be political and how communal politics grows from individual efforts (Berman 6). Furthermore, Lewisohn's cosmopolitan or worldly perspective gives him an outsider vision, allowing for the level of detachment needed for critical engagement with societal issues. *UP*, then, is not just an autobiography but also the story of an immigrant individual's efforts to navigate the negative repercussions of modernity's<sup>18</sup> influence on art and intellectualism through communal or cosmopolitan ties. These communal ties, even those along the lines of ethnicity, are a starting point for action. The cosmopolitan community allows Lewisohn several allegiances, as it is composed of intellectual, artistic, and ideological components (Kofman 1, Anderson 30). Overall, Lewisohn hopes the audience sees his protagonist as a Jew, an immigrant, an intellectual, and an artist, categories that are not mutually exclusive according to Anderson.

Edward Alfred Steiner, another first-generation Jewish-American author, also concerns himself with bridging the perceived gap between mass-market immigrant novels and intellectual and artistic cosmopolitan novels. Like Lewisohn, Steiner is largely remembered for his critical works and not for his immigrant novels.<sup>19</sup> Steiner's 1914 novel, *From Alien to Citizen: The Story of My Life in America* was a well-received offering of the immigrant novel tradition. Little

biographical information is available about Steiner, but somewhat of his politics can be gleaned from the novel. On the surface, *FA* details the individual development of a Jewish-American immigrant in the hostile environment of the United States. The plot follows the journey of the protagonist from his childhood in the Old Country to his arrival in the United States. After his arrival in a new land, the novel details the protagonist's voluntary assimilation into Anglo-American culture and his subsequent realization that he will never fully assimilate, a condition he terms 'exile.' In his exile, the protagonist turns to fellow Jewish-Americans and the larger community of immigrants for comfort, but to succeed, he feels he must leave this community. The latter pages of the novel spotlight the protagonist's intellectual development and his increasing skepticism of systems, especially the academy. *FA*, in its entirety, progresses from the traditional and individual to the artistic, intellectual, and universal. In this sense, the macro form of the novel mimics the author's politics, although it is not always apparent at the micro level of language.

As *FA* progresses to its inevitable intellectual end, the audience's knowledge, too, progresses toward a more critical mode beyond limitations. However, Steiner, like Lewisohn, believes the aesthetics governing literary value must be balanced and mediated. Throughout *FA*, the protagonist maintains fluid allegiances<sup>20</sup> and remains migratory, shifting geographic, national, and cultural associations. Furthermore, the way the protagonist defines himself and the politics of the novel continues to change and progress with experience and knowledge. He literally moves beyond geographic boundaries, and the different experiences gained through his journey influence his intellectual principles. The protagonist and Steiner then become cosmopolitan individuals able to move beyond limitations of space, class, and culture--at least in his mind. Steiner's purpose throughout his text is akin to Lewisohn's in that Steiner attempts to

utilize aesthetic principles and cosmopolitan ideology to elevate culture and art by promoting change through artistic education. Through the lens of the protagonist, the reader recognizes the limitations Steiner associates with these boundaries; and when Steiner progresses intellectually, so does the reader. Towards the end of *FA*, the protagonist and the audience become increasingly skeptical of establishments crucial to the construction of the American self, realizing how these establishments enforce boundaries and limit intellectual potential. Despite his focus on aesthetics, resistant ideology, and human beauty (cosmopolitanism), Steiner does not want to define himself solely as a cosmopolitan or intellectual author at the expense of his Jewish heritage. Like Lewisohn, Steiner is an immigrant cosmopolitan telling of his personal experiences in America while exploiting aesthetics in order to promote his agenda of change. However, this agenda does come at the expense of the "Jewishness" or "immigrant-ness" of the novel. Cosmopolitanism may help his ideological agenda, but it hurts the novel's mass appeal, as evidenced by reviews of *FA*.

Despite all attempts by Lewisohn and Steiner to justify their inclusion into the modernist cosmopolitan community, they know their writings will still be judged in relation to other immigrant novels. However, they do not necessarily believe this judgment detrimental to the intellectual direction of the text. Indeed, in *UP*, Lewisohn's immigrant and other culturally specific references are almost afterthoughts to philosophical debate. Although more implicit in his politics, Steiner still defines himself as an intellectual, and a designation of intellectual is equally vital to the protagonist's identity. Despite only a final few chapters devoted to the successful integration of the protagonist into the intellectual community of the United States, more "intellectual" critiques of societal systems recur throughout the novel. The little time spent on the intellectual community may be a result of Steiner's attempt to avoid creating another

communal limitation. Furthermore, Steiner is far more interested in exposing the financial and cultural limitations imposed on immigrant individuals than in portraying the immigrant's attempts to assimilate into dominant American culture.

In the same manner, movement and travel expose how the financial situation of the United States limits the immigrant's ability to succeed and help Steiner expand the scope of his novel. The protagonist moves from exploitative job to job and from one immigrant community to another, gradually improving his living situation, if only a bit. This plot progression seems to support the notion of *FA* as an immigrant uplift text, in that the protagonist's life improves as the novel progresses; however, this geographical and ideological movement also resembles transnational cosmopolitanism. A greater knowledge of how boundaries function comes with each shift or change. Catherine Morley and Alex Goody assert in *American Modernism: Cultural Transactions* (2009) that challenging boundaries is akin to "critical national and cultural self-examination which makes apparent ideological assertions and exposes embedded assumptions" (Morley 10). In Steiner's novel, the protagonist moves physically from one geographic region to another and is subject to the cultural and ideological changes resulting from such a move. It is also an artistic and intellectual tale utilizing the movement of the plot to show the weaknesses of cosmopolitanism and to critique culture, social, and national forces.

Cosmopolitan communities allow for multiple allegiances, cultures, and experiences, encouraging what Bruce Robbins calls "multiple attachments, or attachment at a distance" (Berman 16). All of these communities are still subject to the predominant conditions existing in the United States, however. Therefore, Lewisohn is skeptical about even the artistic or intellectual community's ability to affect societal change and to elevate the importance of intellectualism in American culture. Steiner is an intellectual and an artist stuck in a time and

nation not appreciating him nor allowing him to reach his potential. However, he does hold hope that his story can educate his audience by offering alternative perspectives on such institutions as the economy. He also hopes somehow to effect change, if only through the alteration of audience expectations about immigrants and immigrant novels. This hope emphasizes Steiner's goal: not of telling a commercially successful tale, but of utilizing commercially successful processes to reach a larger "human" audience base, a base likely familiar with popular forms.

#### I. Lewisohn: The Long Battle Upstream Against Assimilation

Critic Alfred Kazin describes Lewisohn in a *New York Herald Tribune* review as

a curious and sharply memorable figure. Few writers command so superb a dignity. He startles majestically, he arraigns loftily, he draws centuries of learning and spiritual experience together in flashing, bitter, or tenderly wise generalizations. . . . one respects so unusual a nobility and so intense an effort.  
(2)

The greatest recommendation of Lewisohn, to Kazin, is his ability to challenge expectations. Whether the reader or Kazin believes Lewisohn fully achieves his goal of exposing stereotypes and moving beyond presumptions about immigrants and immigrant autobiographies is up for debate. Kazin's language elevates Lewisohn's work beyond triteness and mediocrity. Lewisohn is a "lofty" and "intense" author, despite his choice of subject matter and choice of the immigrant novel as the vehicle for his story. Furthermore, Kazin admires the "effort" in Lewisohn's writing, which implies comparable works of fiction are blindly following formal standards. This implication suggests that immigrant narratives are of poor quality and hold little artistic value due to their commodified elements.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, when Lewisohn demonstrates some manner of artistic value in his texts, he deserves praise for moving beyond limitations.

Lewisohn spends a great deal of time in his novel overturning expectations and moving beyond limitations by concentrating on controversial or resistant ideology. Although literary

resistance helps fight previous assumptions about the immigrant novel, Lewisohn realizes the more radical elements of his novel must harmonize with the potentially limiting particulars of his ethnic experience. As critic Bernard Engel suggests, centering a text around resistant elements can limit the scope in another manner: "The advocating of his [Lewisohn's] sociopolitical views in his short fiction sometimes limits its effect as literary art, but he considered the ideas desperately important" (n.p.). The definition of "literary art" described here is something beyond the political, a purely aesthetic text devoid of cultural, national, and personal influences more in line with Gautier's "art for art's sake" (qtd. in Morley 3). Furthermore, other critics, such as Nancy K. Harris, suggest that if a text questions everything without offering alternatives to current institutions, it seems a text without preferable method, belief, or system (Lutz 46). Modernist texts would fall under this definition, and although modernist cosmopolitanism is more in line with Lewisohn's goals, it still separates the immigrant authors from his experiences. These immigrant experiences, however, have been seen as out of place in a philosophical, experimental text. This perception leaves very little room for the immigrant author to enact change through their texts. The immigrant cosmopolitan author, then, appears little invested in societal change beyond words. The criticism in their texts is more for aesthetic effect than for actual political, systemic change (a problem leveled at cosmopolitanism in general).<sup>22</sup> Immigrant cosmopolitanism may only offer alternative perspectives, but this still helps the authors featured herein in their goal of offering an expansive worldview. Engel, similar to Kazin, considers valuable literature to have an expansive scope. Yet Harris cautions that when novels become too universal and controversial, it risks separating them from the personal and experiential (Lutz 46). Although falling more towards Engel in this debate, Lewisohn agrees with Harris in that the immigrant story should not be separated from the particulars of individual and cultural

experience. Critical distance may separate him somewhat, but he must be mindful of not separating himself completely from experience.

Removing specific cultural and historical referents from a text limits a novel's ability to relate the immigrant tale accurately, and accuracy--illustrated by reviewers' comments--remains an integral part of the immigrant novel. If reviewers' opinions represent their constituents' tastes, or if reviewers influence their readers' opinions about texts, then "realism" (or at least the appearance of realism) is necessary for marketing a work as an immigrant novel. If immigrant authors stray too far from reader expectations, then readers might be classify their works as belonging to another genre entirely. Therefore, Lewisohn uses ethnic particulars in his novel to market his text and to engage the reader, despite his protestations against commodification and American commercial practices. To promote his politics, he must first engage readers by dealing with their assumptions about immigrants, their culture, and about the immigrant novel itself. Lewisohn, then, is viewed in two different ways: either as an author utilizing aesthetics and ideology to elevate the commodified novel to the level of art or as an author writing in the realist tradition of immigrant fiction. Interestingly, reviewers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century see these types of authors as distinctly different. To Lewisohn, on the other hand, the "worldly," distancing, intellectual, and cosmopolitan aesthetics of his text do not hinder his ability to relate a personal, realistic immigrant story to his readers. By marking himself as a "cosmopolitan," Lewisohn attempts to reconcile the differences between distance and involvement, between experimentation and reliance on commodified forms and characterizations, and between resistance and assimilation. As cosmopolitanism allows for multiple affiliations and multiple perspectives, Lewisohn becomes an author, artist, and intellectual beyond the limitations of exclusionary categories.

Lewisohn wants "freedom," a state beyond limitations. The freedom espoused by Lewisohn is not freedom tied to national or regional boundaries; rather, it is artistic freedom. The limitations result from numerous societal, national, and cultural factors. However, the protagonist primarily concerns himself with those factors, such as commodification, that he feels influence the current state of art in the modern era. By exposing the negative effects of mass media practices, Lewisohn endeavors to "preserv[e] a posture of resistance," while still "operat[ing] 'in the world'" (Walkowitz 2-3). Much of this defiance comes from resistance to cultural norms and the negative effects of assimilation. This consciously resistant posturing resembles cosmopolitan literary techniques described by Rebecca Walkowitz. In her study *Cosmopolitan Style: Modernism Beyond the Nation* (2006), she suggests cosmopolitan authors "self-reflexive[ly] reposition" themselves in ways allowing for resistance, despite the national and cultural forces limiting their writings. This repositioning primarily occurs through a global [and anti-assimilative] perspective (Walkowitz 2-3). Thus, by pairing ethnic particulars and elements of an immigrant's birth culture with American cultural aspects, Lewisohn achieves a less limited, more global, and cosmopolitan scope for his text.

Cosmopolitan authors are critical of categories, classifications, and definitions, as all of these suggest consensus and absolutism. Moreover, Lewisohn is concerned with teaching his audience how to question limited perspectives. This cosmopolitanism attempts to utilize "nonexclusive" and "nondefinitive" thinking (Walkowitz 5) to show how conventions bind both intellectuals and artists. By demonstrating how to resist conventions and limitations, he puts forth the possibility that with education, systemic change is possible. Lewisohn is aware some critics will read his text as more of a political and resistant work than a typical immigrant novel, which is problematic since readers view immigrant novels and resistant novels as mutually

exclusive genres. Interestingly, Lewisohn rebuts this position in *UP* while trying to justify his style to readers:

both the novelist and the philosopher is only an autobiographer in disguise. Each writes a confession; each is a lyricist at bottom. I, too, could easily have written a novel or a treatise. I have chosen to drop the mask. (9)

Here, Lewisohn states his goal to be a novelist and a philosopher, an aesthete and an autobiographer, and an author promoting resistant ideology through the commodified medium of the immigrant autobiographical novel. He intends to be all of these types, and to Lewisohn, these types are not mutually exclusive. When he "drop[s] the mask," then, he collapses the distinction between the intellectual "disguise" and "autobiographical" disguise.

Intellectualism and mass-market appeal are all marketing techniques to Lewisohn, and audience reception determines which techniques he utilizes. The use of marketing techniques does not automatically imply that Lewisohn agrees with commercial practices, as Wicke argues modernist tastes are another type of consumption and subject to the same limitations as mass-market tastes. Value is determined by marketing, which is "the creative exercise of taste, in other words, consumption in a market economy that embraces aesthetics as well as machines" (Wicke 114). Whether high or low, all literature is a "commercial performance" (Browder 47). It seems nigh impossible, then, for Lewisohn and Steiner to achieve their stated goals of offering alternatives and educating the audience if everything is influenced by commercialism and no true Art or viable substitutes for systemic forces exist. Furthermore, educating the audience relies heavily on the audience's ability to understand and judge literature. No matter how experimental or literary a work, Browder argues mass audiences reduce literary products to their entertainment value and to "constructed artifact[s]" (150). This hurts the effectiveness of Lewisohn's and Steiner's modernist cosmopolitan project: if their texts are only judged by their entertainment

value, then philosophical elements detracting from the story affect the "realism" in readers' eyes. This problem becomes one of aesthetics, form, content, and audience reception. As Walt Whitman appropriately states, "To have great poetry [or literature] we must have great audiences" (qtd. in Materer 23). Therefore, critical perspective is needed from more than just the authors of immigrant novels.

In the opening pages of *UP*, Lewisohn addresses one assumption influencing the reception of his novel, that artistry and intellectualism are not a part of the commodified immigrant novel. Seemingly in agreement, the protagonist--and Lewisohn through the protagonist—believes that adherence to the limitations of a certain form "sacrifice[s]" artistic potential, denigrating those following conventions too closely. Contrarily, intellectuals, in their knowledge of how to resist conventions, are admirable. As the protagonist points out, however, limitations also bind intellectuals: "the novelist sacrifices to a form and the thinker to a system" (Lewisohn 9). All individuals are constrained by systemic limitations and by cultural traditions and expectations. Still, Lewisohn feels he must fight these forces, challenging audience and societal preconceptions about both the artist and the intellectual. This collapsed distinction between intellectuals and non-intellectuals allows Lewisohn to integrate himself into each sphere, but it ultimately contradicts his suggestion elsewhere in the text that true artists and intellectuals can move beyond these limitations. He may not be fully able to move beyond limitations, but he is at least aware of the difficulties of achieving this goal. Critical perspective is not just moving beyond limitations, it is also acknowledging one's inescapable influences.

This intentional positioning of himself as an intellectual through ideology and resistant politics and an artist through aesthetics validates his cosmopolitanism. According to Anderson, cosmopolitanism is an intellectual, aesthetic, and ethical idealism (30). By concentrating on

"polemical" issues and by questioning the cultural foundations underlying institutions, Lewisohn asserts his story's intellectual value to his audience. In this sense, Lewisohn falls under Anderson's definition of the cosmopolitan, although Lewisohn would not necessarily use this term to identify himself, describing himself as "worldly" or as a man of the world.<sup>23</sup> Under this definition, Lewisohn's text is considered cosmopolitan. However, this fails to account for non-intellectual elements (the autobiographical form, for instance), elements going against the ideals of high aesthetics (slang and ethnic speech), and ideas not supporting his anti-consumerism and anti-commercialism (promotion of business practices and the necessity of creating "low" art to survive).

On the surface, *UP* is a standard immigrant narrative. Common immigrant themes such as assimilation are present in *UP*, but they are rarely dealt with in a straightforward manner. They are glossed over in favor of a focus on critiquing societal institutions and on offering alternatives to stereotypes and audience assumptions about immigrants. Indeed, when the issue of assimilation is raised, the text usually relates it to problems affecting art and intellectualism. To the protagonist, a full acceptance of artistic and cultural norms equates with full assimilation into the dominant culture, requiring immigrants to abandon other cultural, intellectual, and artistic influences. The protagonist does not suggest one should remain isolated from all influences from the dominant culture. Nor should one cling too closely to one's native culture. Instead, he only seems to want to assimilate in so much as he wants to acknowledgment as an artist and intellectual by the mass public. Overall, he believes that "alienation from my own race . . . has been the source to me of some good but of more evil" (Lewisohn 49). The "good" resulting from separating an individual from his native culture may be in the sense of critical distance it lends the cosmopolitan immigrant author. This distance can also be problematic for

the immigrant author. As Keresztesi conjectures: "Is this distance a falling away from some original wholeness and source of creativity, or is it on the contrary a spur to creativity?" (62). Eliding the ethnic particulars of the immigrant experience in favor of the universal, according to Anderson, allows the cosmopolitan to focus more on the universal and the truth embedded in universal experience (11, 17).<sup>24</sup> Anderson suggests modernist cosmopolitans linked understanding of "social totality" with "promises of . . . progressive knowledge" and "possibilities of transformative self-understanding" (4). The more expansive, worldly, or universal the knowledge, the more potential there is for progress (individually and as a nation) and the improvement of literature influenced by culture. However, to Lewisohn, too much emphasis on universals overlooks the more individual and "realistic" elements of the story in the reader's mind: more specifically, how the past and how tradition affect the immigrant. Immigrant texts cannot be completely forward-looking or progressive without sacrificing elements of individual experience, arguably limiting the universal's ability to help the immigrant "transform" through "self-understanding."

Many of the more controversial ideas in *UP* tie to Lewisohn's personal ideologies and result from experience. Critic Eleonore Kofman suggests Lewisohn can be both a realist and portray an "authentic" immigrant experience and still be a modernist cosmopolitan in his text, as cosmopolitanism does not necessarily trump other affiliations. Cosmopolitanism allows for the incorporation of many ethnicities, races, and genders, a phenomenon Kofman terms "cosmopolitan indigeneity" (Donald 1, 2). Cosmopolitanism is an act or performance of the imagination. The imagination is not directly tied to a certain form, style, or affiliation (qtd. in Berman 3) and, therefore, cosmopolitanism is not. These authors, then, can choose or create an affiliation that is not wholly one aesthetic or another and reflects their lives and experiences with

modernity. Not surprising, then, an artistic and intellectual form allowing immigrant authors to maintain more than one affiliation is appealing. The author, then, can be progressive, intellectual, and interested in a greater understanding of self and personal influences.

The act of resisting assimilation by centralizing the text around ethnic particulars can be a defiant act. Assimilative acts (as opposed to full assimilation) can be resistant acts against traditional elements of culture. Lewisohn must allow for a certain number of assimilative acts for realism's sake. If he were not in some manner assimilated or familiar with American culture, then he could provide a credible critique of the culture, nor could he ever hope to counteract negative cultural influences by offering alternatives. The early chapters of *UP* follow the protagonist's rejection of his German and Jewish heritage in favor of English, Protestant culture. Through this, the protagonist believes he allies himself with a greater English literary tradition, although his choice may be due in part to American readers' familiarity with English instead of its artistic contribution. This alliance, on some level, is an act of assimilation and, therefore, limits his artistic values. He also sees it as connecting himself with a greater and supposedly more universal literature, expanding his value system. To the aspiring immigrant author, the ultimate achievement is skill with the English tongue and association with English literary talent: "I wanted above all things to be a power in the English tongue" (Lewisohn 108). However, he realizes this recognition may not necessarily overcome his classification as Jewish. It is more than just a desire to be considered English driving his assimilative acts. "English" culture offers alternate perspectives to those of his native culture. By integrating multiple outlooks, he becomes a more universal, cosmopolitan individual. Indeed, David Hollinger defines cosmopolitanism as the attempt to transcend particulars in favor of a more human or universal experience and human understanding (135). Although such a thing is hardly desirable to the immigrant author, even if

such a cosmopolitanism is possible. The protagonist does not want his language limited by lack of skill or by Jewish characteristics.

To portray truth fully, the protagonist cannot rely too heavily on one culture alone. With the novel's progression, the protagonist's intellect and his alliances and attitudes shift. He becomes increasingly skeptical that unquestioning affiliations with English and American culture can help him portray truth and human experience, so much so that he desires to return to his roots and his mother tongue, German. As language is closely tied to perspective, by shifting allegiances and languages, Lewisohn hopes to spark change. This change in perspective, he hopes, will help him more accurately portray truth in his novel. This shift begins when the protagonist turns to modern German authors as intellectual and artistic models. It is more than just mimicry for Lewisohn; it is a means of changing thought patterns. On the other hand, he sees a total reliance on the traditions of his native culture as limiting, in much the same way as a reliance on English literary tradition alone. His use of his mother tongue is instinctive and, therefore, requires little intellectual thought, which in turn limits "such powers of expression as I [the protagonist] may have" (Lewisohn 48-49). Cosmopolitanism "[cultivates a] far-ranging aesthetic experience, of education and erudition," according to Lutz. On the other hand, Lutz cautions against a "wide, overdetermined perspective" (Lutz 20)—a sentiment with which Lewisohn agrees.

Despite his critique of how cosmopolitanism can force another form limitation upon literature by valuing "wide" perspectives over other types, Lutz suggests the educational and aesthetic principles of cosmopolitanism are worthy projects. Wide perspectives offer greater potential as they allow for acts that are more resistant and experimental. Similarly, Anderson suggests there are both ethical and aesthetic aspects to cosmopolitanism: "cosmopolitanism

asserts an integral relation between ethical stand and intellectual practice" (31). Lewisohn believes it is his ethical duty to educate the audience about high art, alternate perspectives, and his experiences through literary techniques. He demonstrates how a shift in language can spark change in intellectuals and can also help "educate" readers: "Perhaps the shifting from one language to another caused this, perhaps a momentous change in my inner life which now took place" (Lewisohn 48-49). In this quote, Lewisohn explicitly pairs shifting life perspectives with language/literature. Lewisohn is not concerned with language at the level of diction or syntax but is more concerned with the connection between language and tradition (experience). Essentially, language and literary technique in his text relates and mirrors his experience. A change in language alters experience and how experiential particulars are included in the text. Overall, it is not that Lewisohn wants the audience to understand cosmopolitanism or modernism, but he does want them to understand those techniques that he feels he must use to tell his immigrant story.

This instinctive writing, he believes, will broaden his perspective making him more human and worldly. However, instinctive or "emotional" writing, by Walkowitz's definition, turns away from universal, human experience to ethnic particulars, which separates the author from his roots (22). Like Walkowitz, Lewisohn is critical of any literary method separating an author from tradition. For this reason, the cosmopolitanism serving as the foundation of Lewisohn's novel allows for the incorporation of both the local (personal ethnic experience and tradition) and the universal (human experience). In this sense, Lewisohn's turn from English tradition is less a distancing from tradition altogether and more a critique of American culture. Being the dominant language in America, English works oppressively upon individuals in similar ways as other dominant systems. Turning away from English literary tradition and domination becomes a resistant act. Lewisohn, thus, resembles other cosmopolitan intellectuals

in his attempts to resist the exclusionary and limiting forces of "superpatriotism," "Puritanism," and "commercial civilization" (Hollinger 136) associated with American culture.

By portraying himself as a cosmopolitan, Lewisohn avoids monolithic concepts of identity. To the immigrant, the old and new are inextricably intertwined, and this duality challenges national and ethnic categories. It is not surprising, then, that some form of cosmopolitanism worldliness, either conscious or unconscious, would appear in immigrant novels. This form of cosmopolitanism, according to Hollinger, is a personal, intimate, and rooted in individual intellectualism and resistance to exclusionary cultural and national forces. Avoiding all oppressive cultural forces such as stereotyping is impossible, however. Indeed, many resistant texts end up committing the same act against which they rail: "the peculiarity of many of these works is that they try to deploy both stereotypes and to revolt against tradition in all these ways at once" (Josephson qtd. in North 141). This failure suggests the difficulty of creating a truly resistant immigrant cosmopolitan that does not reinforce oppressive ideologies and systems. Lewisohn, and later Steiner, still believe the attempt a worthy endeavor, and its failure is the failure of full assimilation and acculturation, literary or otherwise.

As *UP* progresses and the protagonist's literary and artistic sensibilities evolve, there is an increasing desire to analyze, question, and break down supposedly definitive ideas to create an intellectual persona. The protagonist begins to construct his intellectual identity, and the organization of the novel mimics the politics of the novel: "What I wanted was ideas, interpretive, critical, aesthetic, philosophical, with which to vivify, to organize, to depend my knowledge, on which to nourish and develop my intellectual self" (Lewisohn 112). The protagonist reflects the progress Lewisohn hopes to see in the reader. True interpretive skills come from a change in perspective. Then, when the reader can see alternatives to dominant

systems and beliefs through the protagonist, they can see critically. When capable of informed judgment, the reader can begin to make informed judgments about art and aesthetics.

Furthermore, they can form their own beliefs and philosophies informed by aesthetic and political influences, essentially making them intellectuals. In essence, they become like Lewisohn himself and can understand him as he wishes them to.

The plot and literary techniques present in *UP* mirror Lewisohn's turn from assimilative acts towards more intellectual acts by centering more on cultural and systemic critique as the novel progresses. Much of Lewisohn's politics "philosophy" revolve around the concept of truth. These truths, he believes, are not always palatable to the average, non-intellectual, reader. Lewisohn announces his desire to portray the sometimes "devastating truth" in the opening pages of the novel:

The world is full of stories and many of the stories are true. But they are not true enough. An artistic pattern comes between the teller of the tale and his reality, or a vague fear of stupid and malicious comment or--especially in America--a desire to avoid singularity. Yet, somehow, we must master life or it will end by destroying us. We can master it only by understand it and we can understand it only by telling each other the quite naked and, if need be, the devastating truth. (Lewisohn 9)

This passage suggests several things about Lewisohn's personal, intellectual, and artistic philosophies: one, Lewisohn is aware his text will be judged on its perceived authenticity and realism, as well as his ability to avoid "singularity"; two, Lewisohn believes truth exists, but it is a truth predicated upon individual beliefs and limitations. Three, truth affects artistic quality and audience reception. These three conditions make it difficult for the author to portray truth in his writings, but realism and truth remains a vital part of Lewisohn's novel and other modernist cosmopolitan works. Therefore, he creates a new aesthetic pattern better suiting his philosophies. Considering Lewisohn's work in relation to other modernist texts becomes problematic, as realist

novels are associated with the "generic" and the "outdated" (Keresztesi xv). On the other hand, Lutz argues that "artistic realism" is an integral part of cosmopolitanism, even modernist cosmopolitanism. It creates "interconnectedness [to] local color and other literatures for artist and audiences" (27). Lutz further stresses the artistic quality of realism. In essence, more than just realism is important; realism must pair with artistry, something that Lewisohn tries to achieve in his novel. This approach seems to work in Lewisohn's text somewhat, but as it ties to his experience, it is not guaranteed to work for other authors.

Lewisohn also understands that realism is founded on the principle of lived truth. As lived experience is personal, 'realist' authors such as Lewisohn utilize the autobiographical form to connect with the audience in a manner of "intimate conversation" (Browder 150): one individual to another. Autobiographies likewise suppose a level of consensus among readers and the author (Berman 20). To express his philosophies to the reader, Lewisohn feels that he must make this connection, and the autobiographical form and immigrant modernist cosmopolitanism becomes a function of this necessity. Once the connection is established, he hopes to change how the reader perceives truth, artistry, and his story. Interestingly, by illustrating the conditional nature of truth, Lewisohn resists the classification of his novel as realist alone and an association with the genre's downfalls. Lewisohn may emphasize his text's truthfulness, but this truth is a personal one, which is complicated, continually altered, and challenged, leaving the reader with a partial understanding of the protagonist's truth. His story cannot be understood fully through realist modes alone. By claiming that experiential particulars affect truth, he contradicts the idea of a consensus with the average American reader, and the realist mode falls apart:

Thus if a text insists on the partialness of perspective, . . . we can understand its form to be undermining realistic consensus and to be questioning the self-complete communal perspective," opening up new possibilities "outside of those

available within the realist paradigm" (Berman 21).

The protagonist and Lewisohn may want to increase readership for his story, but he never encourages the reader to share his truth because they cannot understand it without education. Furthermore, *UP* is criticized for how its philosophical debates cause the ideology to supersede realism. Lewisohn's approach, then, links him to intellectualism, but he not necessarily with the critic or the reader.

By offering both a personal version of the truth and by detailing problems associated with definitive versions of truth, Lewisohn portrays himself as an intellectual revolutionary. Lewisohn likewise portrays himself as a revolutionary by attempting to elevate the artistic value of his text and by critiquing how commercialization and other mass-market practices affect Art. This portrayal shows a change in Lewisohn's self and not necessarily in culture or in any other systemic way. In his "merciless" approach, he exposes the negative conditions of modernity upon individuals. Like other immigrant authors, he portrays himself as "frankly merciless to the popular fallacies and the mass delusions amid which they [Americans] had to live" (Lewisohn 180). Lewisohn believes some literature refuses to look at the truth because the "pain" it may cause the reader, but he believes "we should look at pain as it is" (182) without embellishment or attempts to lessen its impact. Otherwise, the audience is left with their delusions about how society, nation, and culture function (Lewisohn 180). The biggest illusion, according to Lewisohn, is the American dream: that immigrants can succeed in America with hard work and determination. Another delusion he takes to task is the belief that art and artists can truly thrive in the commercial environment in the United States. The commodification of art and literature is so integral to American culture that there is no way for intellectuals and artists to succeed financially. Nor can he fully integrate into American culture. Lewisohn bemoans how a work of

high art or the intellectual text will never bring its author wealth, yet he argues literary respect outweighs monetary concerns. Lewisohn believes he must elevate the status his of art above mass culture--or beyond "industries of entertainment and amusement (Denning xvii)"--in order to receive respect. He attempts to achieve this through manipulation of form and by critiquing societal practices and influences. Lewisohn is similar to Gramsci in that he suggests, "A human mass does not 'distinguish' itself, does not become independent in its own right without . . . conceptual and philosophical elaboration of ideals" (260). Gramsci, here, is describing the organization of "organic intellectuals," but by this definition, Lewisohn would consider himself as one of these intellectuals helping to encourage human progress.

Through ideology, Lewisohn hopes to encourage 'freedom' from delusions by offering alternatives to common perceptions. Therefore, the audience can see immigrants as they actually exist (at least according to Lewisohn). The "mass" American life described in the epigraph, he suggests, is a result of consensus and lacks critical perspective about the familiar and common. Although the protagonist holds a pessimistic view about the audience's ability to resist "mass-life," he believes that the reading of his story will at least expose the audience to new individual truths and experiences. Lewisohn knows the uninformed audience, influenced by national culture, cannot appreciate his literary skill or the value of his novel without education in literary aesthetics. It is important to note that education does not mean formal education, but critical thinking allowing readers to assign value and evaluate art and aesthetics. When the audience learns and can judge the validity of certain perspectives, Lewisohn believes they will be capable of other forms of critical thinking. When the audience values immigrants and their art, immigrants will no longer pose a "threat." They will become more human and so will the techniques they choose to employ.

This phenomenon is apparent in one review incorporated into the plot of *UP*, which describes the protagonist as an artist addressing

the imperative demands of technique--both verbal and architectonic--[which] are never ignored, and which yet has no lack of rich human substance. . . . [his writings are such that a] mature mind can get nothing but good and which offers a singular satisfaction to the artistic perceptions (Lewisohn 148).

In terms of this review, *UP* successfully balances the aesthetics ("technique" and "artistic perceptions") with the "human." In this case, the "human" is the realistic elements of the immigrant story and the universal elements connecting his human sympathies to his readers. Both definitions of the human are vital to understanding Lewisohn's purpose (and as will be argued later, Steiner's). It is important to note, however, that the glowing praise of Lewisohn's aesthetic skill comes from a reviewer with "artistic perceptions," a skill Lewisohn does not believe the audience possesses because the delusions perpetuated by culture still influence them. Yet Lewisohn is far more interested in arguing about art than incorporating "artistic" qualities into his text, suggesting these are more than just artistic techniques to him. Interestingly, he does not incorporate his own touted sense of beauty into the text, despite his lambasting of cultural delusions and their effects on artistic perception: instead, they are only discussed.

Excessive literary affectation distorts truth, according to Lewisohn, but some "affectation" is necessary. H.L. Mencken agrees that misuse can corrupt ideas:

'the critic [may] be a man of intelligence, of tolerations, of wise information, of genuine hospitality of ideas . . . but then 'once he has stated his doctrine, the ingenious . . . begins to corrupt it.' (qtd. in Lutz 40)

Here, Mencken, like Lewisohn, contends that polemics and any misuse can skew the direction of ideas. Lewisohn would further argue that polemics distance the audience from ideas with their potentially contrary beliefs. In essence, a balance must be found between method (artistic

pattern) and purpose (finding and portraying truth, especially the truth of the immigrant experience).

Lewisohn's preference is for centering the politics of aesthetics over the practical application of aesthetic principles in his text. More importantly, he hopes to spark progress through a discussion of aesthetics, elevating culture in a way "mitigat[ing] our stark wretchedness of earth" (Lewisohn 186). By extension, he hopes to lessen the negative conditions of modernity (alienation, rootlessness, strangeness, instability, confusion) and "mass market [commercial/commodified] modernity"--to use Michael Murphy's term--upon the artist. Lewisohn has no wish to "preach" to the "converted"; he wants to inform the mass audience, and to do so, he must avoid jargon and heightened aesthetics, which Lutz claims "silence the masses" because they are "uninitiated" or uneducated about what comprises literature of value (16). Lewisohn chooses a commodified genre for his story and utilizes stereotypes and other devices to market his text to a mass audience, despite its political sentiments. Many critics argue (even Lewisohn himself) that commercial practices hurt the artistic impact and value of texts. If the reader supports mass literature and makes no attempt to educate themselves or to support high literary endeavors, then they only have themselves to blame if all that is available is "low," mass-market texts. Lewisohn agrees with this assumption: he utilizes mass-market techniques because it is a means of reaching the audience, but he is not pleased with the fact that he must do so. A mixed novel, low nor high, is preferable to a purely commodified one.

*UP's* aesthetics center on the concept of natural or instinctive beauty, which contrasts culturally accepted, commodified versions of beauty. Lewisohn believes narrow definitions of beauty go against human nature and limit artistic expression. To return to instinctive beauty, according to the protagonist, the artist or author must present unaltered truth, whether or not the

reader accepts truth or if it sells. The protagonist, then, must decide whether to compromise his artistic principles and tailor his literature to audiences complicit in the system, or he must risk financial suffering. In one particular instance, he describes how *The Atlantic*, a publication with a supposed intellectual audience, responds to his literary submission: "they were not unaware of the quality or significance of these sketches, but that even among the clientele of *The Atlantic* there were, they feared, not enough people who would care for them" (Lewisohn 139). The editors acknowledge his technical skill and the value of his literature; however, because he does not tailor his submission to reader expectations, it ultimately fails. Despite the protagonist's failure, he still chooses beauty and freedom. Although, the protagonist's actions do not, in this case, necessarily match Lewisohn's. In contrast to common literary standards about beauty, Lewisohn's beauty does not result from diction or form, but from the freedom of truth, experience, and progress (193, 196).

Throughout *UP*, the protagonist faces an ethical dilemma: whether to compromise his ideals and interests in favor of survival in a commercial world or to hold true to his ideals and risk commercial failure. No matter his decision, the draw of wealth does still influence the protagonist. Indeed, before a rejection from *The Atlantic*, the protagonist studied the "dishonest" "popular fiction of the day" (Lewisohn 139). Ultimately, he abandons the attempt because he sees popular fiction as

The stuff pretend[ing] to render life and interpret it and [it] has no contact with reality at any point. Dishonest, sapless twaddle, guided by an impossible moral perfectionism--a false perfectionism, too, since its ideals are always tribal--and strung on a string of pseudo-romantic love. (Lewisohn 139)

Interestingly, Lewisohn ties popular fiction to realist fiction in this passage. Realism, to Lewisohn, cannot adequately portray experience, and it is too tribal to be able to portray things

outside normal perceptions. In this passage, the protagonist serves as a mouthpiece for Lewisohn, engaging with reader assumptions about what constitutes literature of value: informing them that popularity does not always equate to value. In *UP*, realist elements abound, but the resistant ideas of the story take precedence over the immigrant-story plot elements from which the realism derives. Although this seems a failure in Lewisohn's purpose, he is still portraying his experience in the way he chooses. As he can portray himself as an intellectual and artist and show how his experiences make him this way, it is not a failure.

Popular fiction and its qualities ("twaddle," sentimentalism, "pseudo-romantic love") bothers him, but the realist novel's attempt to portray a monolithic sense of Truth accurately is even more disturbing. Lewisohn believes in truth, and this guides his purpose. He also knows the perceiver influences truth; therefore, no "perfect" form of truth can exist and anyone claiming to know Truth is "dishonest." Far from promoting mass-market practices, or attempting to write popular fiction, Lewisohn increases his credibility because he knows what he critiques first hand. He understands the system because he participates in it and sees its flaws. Even while participating in the system, he examines it critically. As James Hawley suggests, intellectuals "can no longer consist [just] in eloquence" but must "active[ly] participat[e] in a practical lie, as constructor, organizer, 'permanent persuader' and not just a simple orator" (588). Knowledge and experience give resistant ideas credibility. Eventually, he abandons more commercial writing to portray truth. It is his truth, and it may not match truths widely held by American society, but he is not desirous of portraying universal truths, just his own. Accordingly, Lewisohn maintains ethical and intellectual integrity despite his brief stint into the realm of popular fiction. Any attempt to know universal truths is a form of moralizing. Truth is culturally specific and "tribal," rendering a work of literature unable to speak for all readers. It is true, however that Lewisohn

sometimes does promote universality through his definitions of art, culture, and intellectualism, and this is another instance where his idealism does not always work in practice.

In order to move beyond the limitations of the realist mode, the protagonist turns to modernist fiction, just as Lewisohn turns to a more intellectual lifestyle:

Fragments torn from the context of life [or traditional or ethnic particulars] seemed to become organic, to lift themselves from the more inert mass of experience and to take on an independent existence. What I needed next was a method. I had never studied closely the technique of modern fiction. (Lewisohn 137)

To free himself from "mass experience," he must free his literature from traditional and contextual details and move towards a more process-driven (aesthetically driven) form of writing. Although this does not suggest he turns away from all particulars from his individual experience. After all, they are a part of his core self. The protagonist himself states, despite his 'consciousness of art' (22) at a young age, he refuses to "give up [his] old life" (Lewisohn 45). By marketing his text as a cosmopolitan novel, it allows him to utilize a more process-driven form while maintaining a link to the ethnic particulars of his experience. As Browder suggests, the autobiography is a marketing tool for a certain vision of the self (Browder 273). In the case of *UP*, the protagonist is using the autobiographical form to demonstrate his intellectualism, artistic ability, and worldliness. He also utilizes the autobiographical form as a means of connecting himself to a larger cultural and literary base. These various ways Lewisohn markets himself may seem to work against each other: for instance, the popular against the intellectual. However, marketing itself, Dettmar argues, can embrace the "material," the intellectual, and the "ideological" (Dettmar 2). One does not work against the other in a consumerist society; even the heightened aspects of culture are subject to marketing and other capitalist practices.

Lewisohn's association with intellectuals and intellectualism allows him to bridge the

perceived divide between immigrant and artist and between immigrant fiction and modernist fiction. By centralizing intellectualism, Lewisohn attempts to position himself as a cosmopolitan author. The protagonist of *UP* similarly defines himself as an artistic cosmopolitan. By maintaining critical distance by which he can offer alternatives to dominant systemic practices, Lewisohn demonstrates his intellectualism. Distance from American culture allows him to critique and offer alternatives to commodified artistic processes and for him to increase the artistic value of his novel through its supposed resistance to commercial influences. Furthermore, as will be discussed in more detail in chapter two, this distancing allows for the estrangement of widely held ideas and assumptions. Without critical distance, Lewisohn believes assimilating intellectually and artistically becomes inevitable. Accepting ideas without thought to the inner workings or effects of these ideas, no matter what the context, is considered a form of assimilation by intellectuals. Immigrants are both aliens in their new land and worldly individuals. Furthermore, in many immigrant narratives there is an interplay between belonging (usually within the ethnic community and family unit) and distance from these same affiliations. Through distance, immigrants can negotiate a place both within society and outside, while not relying solely on outdated traditions and without abandoning all ethnic particulars. It can be argued, however, that this distancing is also a convention or marketing tool of the immigrant autobiographical novel. As Browder argues, in these autobiographical texts, "ethnicity was a strategically employed weapon in the struggle for cultural survival, rather than an essential component of selfhood" (Browder 141). Even in *UP*, Lewisohn's affiliation as intellectual and artistic cosmopolitan trumps his Jewish and German ethnicity. Yet Lewisohn hesitates to remove all cultural and national references, partially because assimilation of ethnic uniqueness into mass American identity resembles the assimilation of unique and original aesthetics into commercial

fare. Therefore, although not entirely successful, Lewisohn attempts to balance the conventions of assimilation with distance and the unique with the commodified. Although Lewisohn does indeed leave some ethnic particulars within his text, he carefully relates these particulars to the larger human or artistic experience. This "planetary expansiveness of subject matter," according to Bruce Robins, is a form of cosmopolitanism "valu[ing] concrete intercultural exchange" (qtd. in Anderson 31). Lewisohn, an immigrant author utilizing cross-cultural aesthetics and integrating diverse national sensibilities through his text, demonstrates that he, too, sees the importance of cultural and national exchange.

In the final pages of the novel, the protagonist sums up his revelations regarding artistic, intellectual, and cultural assimilation:

For the basic truth of the matter lies here: If you drain a man of spiritual and intellectual content, if you cut him off from the cultural continuity that is native to him and then fling him into a world where his choice lies between an impossible religiosity and Prohibition on the one hand, and the naked vulgarity of the streets. . . you have robbed him of the foundation on which character is built. The slow gains of the ages are obliterated in him. He uses the mechanics of civilization to become a sharper or a wastrel. (Lewisohn 244)

To Lewisohn, assimilation--a shallow act separating immigrants from their heritages and the knowledge gained through centuries of learning--also limits the immigrant's potential and future progress. A lack of continuity leaves the immigrant author with limitations, specifically limitation of "religiosity" and "Prohibition." Furthermore, without potential, the immigrant becomes characterless and relies solely on the "mechanics of civilization." Lewisohn's sentiments reflect R. Emmett Kennedy's suggestion that civilization is artificial, a construct (North 21). If civilization is a construction, then any identity influenced by civilization would be a false performance devoid of substance. These mechanics turn the immigrant from independent and free to a "wastrel," a person wasting not only money but also potential. By incorporating

immigrant cosmopolitan aesthetics, Lewisohn hopes that he can build in more choice for himself and more potential intellectualism.

The plot and aesthetics of *UP* reflect Lewisohn's cosmopolitan aesthetics and his attempts to negotiate his ethnic birth culture with Protestant English culture while maintaining a level of detachment from both of these cultures. Negotiation occurs primarily through a harmonizing of universals (truth, art, culture, intellectualism) with individualism (Jewishness, Germanness)--a concept that will be revisited in the later discussion of Steiner's *FA*. The political philosophizing, to use Lewisohn's term, in *UP* suggests political action can begin at the individual level, particularly through artistic resistance to commodifying factors. Lewisohn also creates a community with other authors and scholars having similar artistic and philosophical beliefs. Berman suggests, in the case of cosmopolitanism, the community causes an "estrangement from the social power that ought to inhere in their affiliations" (8). Through an affiliation with the cosmopolitan community, the artist distances himself somewhat from the influences of one culture. Yet, as argued earlier, a complete distancing from society and politics is problematic, as an author's ethos is, in many ways, determined by his relationship to what he critiques, or by his authority about what he critiques.

As in most aspects of cosmopolitanism, a balance must exist between participation in society and critical distance from society. *UP* is not entirely successful in this manner, largely due to audience perceptions. Even if an author finds a perfect balance between all elements, he will still be read as either an immigrant autobiographical author or a more polemical, critical author. Lewisohn argues by constructing his version of cosmopolitanism (immigrant cosmopolitanism) along artistic, aesthetic, and imaginative lines rather than in political alliances, he can counteract the drawbacks of affiliation and distance. Lewisohn is not alone in his

skepticism of politics. Keresztesi terms this "response to high modernism's discriminatory politics" as ethnic modernism (x): ethnic modernism being a form of modernist politics allowing for the incorporation of issues and aesthetics unique to the ethnic individual. Even politics, according to Keresztesi, whether utilized in a "radical" manner or not, become authoritarian (x). As such, the immigrant author would want (at least on the surface) to avoid any manner of assimilative or authoritative ideology.

The imaginary boundaries of cosmopolitanism allow Lewisohn to alter them in ways suiting his purposes and his immigrant background. Consequently, cosmopolitanism becomes less a category, title, or achievement and becomes more of a representation of the immigrant experience and a resistant community. Lewisohn utilizes a form of cosmopolitanism allowing for difference while still connecting to intellectual and artistic communities. As James Knapp defines modernist communities in *Literary Modernism and the Transformation of Work* (1988), they create

a kind of resistance through turning away, an attempt to counter industrial monotony by creating alternative models for social value and behavior. Although such models could only shape the lives of eccentric subgroups within society, *that was often precisely what such groups intended* [emphasis mine]. (Knapp 20)

This definition of modernism's similarity to the cosmopolitanism espoused by Lewisohn (and later Steiner) is clear: distancing as a means of offering alternatives. It does not offer any means of truly systemic change, however, only a change in perspective. Furthermore, it truly only offers alternatives to "subgroups": in this case, immigrants within dominant culture. Lewisohn may be writing for a mass audience while some modernists focus their attention on the "coterie" of other modernists, but he knows that he really cannot enact change beyond the confines of his life and novel.

Like Lewisohn, critic Chantal Mouffe argues for the development of a "new cosmopolitanism" addressing the concerns of communal affiliation. According to Mouffe, new cosmopolitanism would "rel[y] on the contingency of borders to open the community to a wider network of differences" (qtd. in Berman 15). In itself, belonging to a community is not detrimental to the individual; however, a community cannot limit the potential of individuals by excluding difference. A "group" or "coterie" is defined by how it "consumes" or "chooses from the market, in a concerted effort of knowledge, taste, and power" (Wicke 116). In this sense, communal affiliations are exclusionary, and those with varying tastes and knowledge are excluded. Berman cautions against this form of communal cosmopolitanism that she terms "universalized communitarian theory." The act of assimilation along certain ideological lines automatically excludes those not ascribing to comparable ideologies. So much that assimilation and some communities can be "repress[ive]." "The fact [is] that the polity cannot be thought of as a unity in which all participants share a common experience and common values" (Berman 13). Lewisohn, being an immigrant, would be especially critical of ideology implying cultural or national consensus. In part, Lewisohn's and other immigrant's ability to resist dominant culture and offer alternative perspectives comes from the incorporation of difference through technique, plot, and experience. The resulting clash of cultures and ideas offers the audience new information. Lewisohn may lay claim to modernist and cosmopolitan politics, but at no time during *UP* does he fully separate his immigrant-ness from his artistic sensibilities. Lewisohn's difference is in his ethnic particulars, and he believes that aesthetics and ideologies--and the communities organized around these elements--should allow for the incorporation of difference. Whether he believes such a thing is possible is less clear.

Lewisohn avoids defining himself solely as cosmopolitan (and modernist) because he

desires to maintain a level of connection with societal politics (and resistant communities) and those issues affecting immigrant individuals (and authors). Furthermore, he is skeptical of the exclusionary politics resulting from cosmopolitan ideology and communal affiliations. *UP* demonstrates this skepticism primarily through the clash of two communities, the American and the Jewish. In the early pages of the novel, when the young protagonist's ultimate goal is assimilation, he discovers that the more integrated into American society he becomes, the further he feels from his fellow Jewish peers: "the old life grew fainter in its influence; it seemed hardly any more a part of this present experiencing" (Lewisohn 51). By extension, we also see traditional aesthetics becoming less a part of the present and his present life. A total move away from his own Jewishness, however, he claims, is "insensible" (Lewisohn 51). This may seem, on the surface, to contradict the protagonist's moves away from the limitations of his Jewish culture and parochial scope throughout *UP*; however, Jewishness is less of a tradition or heritage, here, and more of a system of difference: a tool to contrast dominant American culture. This example, by extension, then, demonstrates the clash between artistic or market assimilation and between aesthetic and ethnic difference. Lewisohn associates art intimately with ideology, and by accepting English speech, literature, and culture, one automatically accepts English (American) culture. He feels that one affiliation will ultimately overshadow or negate the other, and balance can only be achieved between these extremes with education and an acceptance of a more cosmopolitan approach to literature and aesthetics.

Throughout *UP*, Lewisohn switches loyalties, creating and denying communal affiliations while changing and critiquing ideologies. Although seemingly a flaw because it makes the protagonist appear indecisive, it also suggests Lewisohn's politics are easily swayed. More likely, Lewisohn constantly shifts and undercuts his definitions to demonstrate how novels

and individuals can free themselves from categorical and aesthetic limitations, especially those associated with market or commercial forces. Lewisohn--and will be argued later, Steiner--consciously manipulates loyalties and attachments depending on the needs of his novel (his immigrant story). Affiliation, then, is a tool: something used, but always with caution. Indeed, Robbins suggests allegiance "is a reality of (re)attachment, multiple attachments, or attachment at a distance, [and] the communities commanding such attachment may be described as cosmopolitan communities" (qtd. in Berman 16). Cosmopolitanism, especially, Lewisohn's cosmopolitanism, allows him the freedom of multiple affiliations, while also allowing for change. When he critiques how capitalism limits artistic potential, he is an artistic cosmopolitan. When he deals with issues of truth and the ethical dilemmas of assimilation, he is an intellectual cosmopolitan. When he critiques cultural norms and their effect on immigrant individuals, he is an immigrant author. When he tells his individual story, he is a Jewish immigrant. He is an individual and a member of several communities. Lewisohn becomes all of these things, and the cosmopolitan approach to his novel allows him to define and market himself in a way allowing for all of these seemingly contradictory affiliations. In essence, Lewisohn and Steiner, through the use and critique of cosmopolitan aesthetics, validate their own human, artistic, intellectual, and ideological value.

## II. Steiner: Between Alienation, Affiliation, and Assimilation

According to the *New York Times* article "Immigration: Three Interesting Books on an Important Problem" (1914), Edward A. Steiner, author of *FA*, states, "'If mine were an unusual case,' . . . 'this record would not be worth the making.'" This quote highlights a problem hinted at in the epigraph. True art speaks to the beauty of human nature, and through a connection to nature, the human family can bond. However, the masses do not appreciate art, as Steiner

believes it should be. Change must occur, and not just intellectuals must carry out this change. The laborers and the mass audience must also be open to change. Much in the way of Gramsci's "organic intellectuals," Steiner collapses the invisible divide between the educated elite in possession of specialized knowledge about Art and aesthetics and the uneducated masses touting the beauty of "human nature" and the "human family" (Steiner 120). With this distinction removed, it becomes the duty of all Americans to promote change by making connections and by changing their perspectives about what constitutes culture and art of value. To Steiner, the unique stories of individuals are of less importance than the stories of individuals representing larger communities. Steiner's focus is on the universal or communal over the individual or cosmopolitan aesthetics over individual aesthetic tastes. This turns further away from the level of individual particulars present in Lewisohn's text, but this does not imply a failure of immigrant cosmopolitanism. Instead, it shows how aesthetics can be altered to meet the needs of each author and his story. Steiner attempts to position himself as a universal individual, a protagonist who shares experiences with others. Thus, the protagonist of *FA* becomes more of an everyman character. The issues of importance to him, therefore, become important to all Americans and not just to immigrants. By creating a larger human community composed of all races and ethnicities, Steiner endorses "a world-wide outlook" (301). This "world-wide" or cosmopolitan perspective juxtaposes ethnic cultural particulars with American cultural particulars to offer alternatives or new perspectives on familiar (and potentially limiting and oppressive) American customs. In the guise of instructor, Steiner educates the reader about the systemic forces influencing American culture and immigrants attempting to navigate their newly adopted culture. He sees education as being the solution for the encroachment of mass culture on the arts (Denning xvii).

The author of "Immigration," however, responds to Steiner, pointing out that he hardly

portrays himself as a 'common' immigrant in *FA*. Rather, the artistic and intellectual concerns determine the plot of *FA*, more so than any desire to portray an authentic or realistic immigrant experience. Although not as extensively reviewed as *UP*, Steiner's novel and its cosmopolitan foundation appears subject to the same audience reactions. The audience and reviewers see Steiner's novel as an immigrant text. As such, a lack of realism is considered detrimental. Indeed, one reviewer of *FA* stresses that Steiner's protagonist is so far from an average character, the reviewer is tempted to reclassify him as something else:

Prof. Steiner cannot well push too far this claim that he is an average immigrant, for to rise from the position of the ordinary vagabond to that of professor in a progressive college is by no means an average record: but his plea for the others is little impaired thereby. ("From" n.p.)

The reviewer, here, picks up on some of Steiner's politics and how they relate to the immigrant experience, but he or she does not go so far as to discuss how those politics affect the novel and the construction of the text's aesthetics. He or she does mention that the novel is no "average record," and this implies it does not have "average" literary techniques and value. Furthermore, he or she makes Steiner seem worldlier through his intellectualism. The author of this review associates intellectualism with a college education, and this passage is problematic in its assumption that 'average' immigrants are not intellectuals. However, this distinction between education through traditional means and from other methods is not important in Steiner's novel. Steiner believes all people are capable of learning and with education comes critical and aesthetic judgment. Steiner, himself, offers the audience this education in *FA* through critiques of capitalism, consumerism, and the labor conditions under modernity although he frames these critiques within the commodified literary form of the immigrant novel.

Although less directly than Lewisohn, Steiner offers alternatives to the dominant cultural

practices existing under the conditions of modernity by juxtaposing the ethnic particulars with the dominant, showing readers other potential realities. Steiner's position on these systemic forces looks complicit at times, and at others, resistant. It suits his personality, his story, and his purpose to seem universal and human. It seems a failure on the part of the author, but Steiner's somewhat contradictory position may result from the clash of his cosmopolitan values with his desire to assimilate into American culture. Assimilation, to Steiner--like Lewisohn--is an aesthetic tool: a tool put away or utilize when the situation demands it. In many cases, assimilative acts are a means of connecting with his American audience. By couching his resistant subject matter within more commercial fare, he maintains a connection with the reader. Of note, however, is Steiner's skepticism about the average reader's ability to change and their ability to affect progress in the United States even when offered alternatives. However, Steiner maintains hope.

In addition to forcing the reader to question forces influencing culture, Steiner also attempts to distance the reader from commonly held assumptions about art, culture, and literature through the process of making the familiar seem foreign. When reconsidering these categories through an immigrant character's perspective, the reader must acknowledge the fluidity of categories and the influence of experiential particulars on these categories. Furthermore, as will be argued more thoroughly in chapter two, the immigrant perspective is a means of estranging the common and familiar for the audience. Therefore, knowing the ethnic particulars of the immigrant protagonist's experience is crucial for understanding his conception of these categories. Ultimately, Steiner does not redefine the boundaries of art and literature, but he does attempt to portray his novel as more than just another limited, mass-market offering. It is a novel of universals: a novel transcending boundaries--geographic, artistic, and cultural. He focuses on

the universal and "human," while maintaining a balance between the ethnic particulars of his personal experience and resistant politics. He also maintains a connection with the reader, and in these ways, Steiner displays intellectual and artistic cosmopolitan aesthetics within his novel.

Immigrant novels often follow the protagonist from childhood through their maturation artistically, intellectually, and mentally. They also follow the protagonist's full assimilation into dominant culture--or to the immigrant's final realization that he or she will never fully integrate. In the opening pages of *FA*, however, the protagonist attempts to distance himself from these reader expectations about the immigrant novel:

My story differs from others in that I came here somewhat past the most formative period of life, . . . [To] the sweatshop, the mills and mines with their grinding labour, the lower courts, the jail, the open road with its dangers, the American hoe, and the Christian Church. (Steiner 15)

Here, the protagonist remaps the novel around an intellectual maturation, instead of around biological maturation: from purely aesthetic appreciation to knowledge and critical judgment about aesthetic choices. Since he is older than many when his story begins, he may be less likely to change. His age may also account for some of the more assimilative gestures on the part of Steiner. By avoiding details about his childhood and the protagonist's birth nation, the author removes many of the ethnic markers upon which many audiences judge an immigrant novel's authenticity. If the novel is no longer an authentic detailing of an immigrant's experience, then it becomes a more universal text. However, popular audiences looking for the exotic and stereotypical in immigrant autobiographical novels consider this universalism a failure.

Although, Steiner does utilize first-person perspective in his text, he does not want this limited perspective to affect the "human" aspects of the tale he relates. He wants the audience to realize the narrator's cosmopolitan and intellectual nature. Yet by attempting to avoid one set of

limitations upon his text, Steiner ultimately falls into others. Another complication results from universalism's ability to trump individual experience. Keresztesi, in particular, is disturbed by "universalistic cosmopolitanism of Euro-Anglo high modernism" and the ways it trumps communal "cohesion" and elides cultural and national particularity (xii-xiii). Contrary to Steiner, she believes a cosmopolitanism allowing for difference is achievable, but not through a focus on universals. Despite his concerns about the nature of cosmopolitanism, the universal quality of the narrator becomes more apparent as the novel progresses, and the constant movement of the plot keeps the narrator from stagnating intellectually and artistically.

For Steiner, the limited setting of the Jewish tenement serves as a metaphor for the negative effects of boundaries on intellectuals. The tenement, explained by the protagonist, is a place of ignorance and poverty (224), a place separating immigrants from the rest of humanity: "The overcrowding in city tenements . . . is a serious check upon this elemental power to assimilate our mixture of human material [into the dominant culture and into human culture]" (Steiner 72-73). To Steiner, ignorance is a consequence of limitations, while intellectualism is cross-cultural, beyond limitations, and "human." Steiner demonstrates his cosmopolitan nature throughout the text through motion and travel. The greatest portion of the novel details the protagonist's journey from job to job, from place to place, and from one geographic region to another. At the end of the novel, he even returns to Europe. Likewise, the literary techniques and aesthetics shift and change as the novel progresses. Despite its constant geographic movement and changeable conditions, seeing this novel only as a travelogue misunderstands its purpose. Indeed, Steiner mentions all of this intentional movement is toward his goal of intellectual recognition (189), although economic factors occasionally pull him away from that path. Steiner's aesthetics are carefully constructed. The detours on his path to intellectualism all in

some way contribute to his practical knowledge. The practical knowledge Steiner gains helps him navigate the social and market forces plaguing him while also appealing to the 'ignorant' mass audience. Practical knowledge grounded in lived experience is an integral part of Steiner's intellectualism, which allows him to incorporate ethnic particulars. Anyone can learn about this practical knowledge and ideology--even the "rough laborer." Such is one of the founding principles of Steiner's cosmopolitanism.

Steiner gains practical knowledge from his labor experience. To Steiner, there are "real, fundamental, human values," to which mankind must aspire, such as hard work, but the conditions under capitalism hamper humanity's ability to achieve these values:

I often ask myself what the association with these rough labourers did for me. I have long ago come to the conclusion that I lost nothing and gained much. After all, I found down there at the bottom real, fundamental, human values. (Steiner 84-85)

Steiner's experience with labor can serve as a metaphor for the forces of labor, capitalism upon the author. Similar to the limited scope of the tenement, the protagonist sees the conditions of capitalism limiting intellectualism. Although laborers are termed rough, this passage implies a roughness resulting from labor conditions and not from stupidity. Roughness develops from ignorance about labor conditions and from the inability to view things critically (and aesthetically). These laborers are trainable, and with training and an intellectual/artistic foundation, they will be capable of critical judgment, especially about societal conditions. Steiner also justifies his intellectual development in this way. Furthermore, he believes intellectuals can learn from the common man, if only about the ways labor laws affect individuals; and in return, Steiner feels the need to instruct the laborers in more intellectual pursuits. Although Steiner carefully maintains distance between himself and 'rough' labourers, he

too has experience with manual labor.

Steiner's definition of intellectualism, then, resembles Gramsci's definition of "organic intellectuals." According to Gramsci, each class has its own demands and thus creates its own intellectuals. Organic intellectuals are distinct from "traditional" intellectuals with their "entrepreneurial qualities" and their desire to "organize" society and societal conditions in ways benefiting their own class (Hawley 588). Steiner, a laborer as well as an intellectual, attempts to change societal conditions by making laborers and the audience aware of these conditions, which benefits his own class: the immigrant intellectual and artist. Indeed, both Steiner and Lewisohn are doing this, creating their own hybrid, imaginary, cosmopolitan classification with its own techniques and ideology suiting each author's purpose.

In this sense, value does not come from a universal source, but from the ability to recognize their relationship to and contribute to the human, universal culture described earlier: "there are human values in these crude folk, and that all they need is the opportunity to develop them" (108). Like Gramsci, Steiner is critical of cosmopolitanism's tendency to overlook particulars in favor of universals (human values): "Cosmopolitanism was an enemy of the local commitments necessary for class solidarity, or any solidarity" (Lutz 54). It is true that there is a lack of full ideological and aesthetic solidarity among the authors featured herein, but they all do consider themselves immigrant and share similar concerns about art, culture, and intellectualism. In this way, they are united. Yet this still does not solve the problem of contrasting or contradictory stories and positions among immigrant texts. Ultimately, he is unable to resolve this problem within his novel, but he hopes that such a thing can come about with cultural change. Steiner's form of aesthetic cosmopolitanism is illustrated when the protagonist states in *FA*,

It [art] aroused an enthusiasm which was not merely the recognition of a superb artist, but a tribute to human nature. In its appreciation of this artist, the mixture of nationalities and races knew itself as one human family and was proud. (Steiner 120)

Art is not the product of one individual or the product of a certain ethnicity. It is the summation of the human experience. The appreciation of art, then, can bring together all individuals regardless of their backgrounds, or of their formal education (or lack thereof), or at least this is Steiner's opinion. Personal judgments may seem to work contrary to a universal approach, but Steiner utilizes these opinions in the same manner he utilizes universals: to create a human experience. Yet this all-encompassing form of art is a failure in practice, as possesses "temporal and universalizing dimensions" not considering the "spatial, cultural, or particular racial and ethnic aspects" (Keresztesi xvii) influencing art and experience. These universals are a means of connecting with the audience and with the intellectual coterie. If Steiner is an intellectual like any other, though, then his tale is hardly worth telling. Furthermore, if his tale were automatically considered "human" and universally accepted as a valuable text, there would be no struggle for acceptance in his novel or life. The novel, however, is littered with references to obstacles he must overcome to receive positive recognition for his writings and his intellectual capacity. Steiner is, to some degree, aware of cosmopolitan ideology's failures, but it is still a tool through which he can gain recognition and increase the perceived literary value of his novel. He can only hope to offer his own version of aesthetics and explain how cosmopolitanism relates to his life.

Steiner allies himself with modernist immigrant cosmopolitanism by critiquing the commodification of American culture and artistic expression that occur under capitalism. The practices of modern capitalism force the creation of "cheapened products" (Steiner 285) and

reduce art to a form of business where the artist is both seller and advertisement. Lewisohn and Steiner both utilize techniques to market themselves to their target audience. In this sense, they are also utilizing commercial practices. To be fair, however, Timothy Materer in his essay "Make It Sell! Ezra Pound Advertises Modernism" (1999), suggests that even token modernists and self-proclaimed anti-commercial, anti-marketing authors such as Pound utilized marketing techniques to reach audiences, even if only intellectual audiences. According to Materer, all creations are "commodities" and all "literary movements" are "advertising campaigns" (26). However, Pound and the authors of this study are targeting different audiences: one the intellectual elite, and the other the mass audience. To a certain extent, it is Lewisohn and Steiner's audience base, then, which determines their classification as "commercial" and "low" literature, more so than any use of marketing techniques.

Steiner also finds capitalism's increasing globalization and alienation of human beings from each other and from the processes of production problematic. Separating individuals from each other and from the "human culture" from which beauty springs separates individuals from great art, according to Steiner. Thus, "they have also cheapened the producers" (Steiner 285). This, to some extent, resembles the critical distance espoused by cosmopolitanism. Cultural, national, and societal forces exist in spheres separate from universal, boundary-less aesthetics. Art and culture, he suggests, should distinctly separate from the forces of capitalism and commodification, if it is to have any value. However, Steiner hopes with training and education, those abetting the commodification of art can resist these forces and use critical judgment when valuing art.

Throughout *FA*, Steiner describes the commodification of art, artist, and intellectual and demonstrates a progressive bent. He makes it abundantly clear he is not a businessman. Instead,

he allies himself with laborers. His stint as laborer gives him first-hand knowledge of the system and the critical judgment he needs to resist commodification:

I came into the world with little or no business sense, and barter was always more distasteful to me than the hardest, commonest labour; yet I think I proved of some value to my employer, if only as an advertisement. (Steiner 210)

The protagonist's ethnicity, as well as his immigrant status and intellectualism, is an advertising point. As Browder suggests, "ethnicity was . . . commodified for advertising purposes" (71). Turning him into an advertisement, ties him to capitalism. Here, stripped of all artistic and aesthetic substance, he becomes a flat image: something used and reproduced for business purposes. Steiner describes mass production or reproduction as "superficial familiarity," causing the audience to disregard a text's aesthetics due to familiarity. The protagonist is bound to advertising, as well as to systems of barter and business. Influenced by capitalism and money, business practices cannot offer something of equal exchange value to intellectuals or artists. Businesses, he believes, do not deal in idealism. Steiner, on the other hand, deals more in ideals than in application. Steiner's creation is far from a passive or mass-produced novel; it is resistant in its alternate readings of accepted cultural norms, but it does not go so far as to turn off its reader base by being too experimental. He does promote an ordered and aesthetically driven form, but he knows that aesthetic experimentation does not always sync well with the clichéd plots, forms, and characterizations of the popular immigrant novel. Steiner does acknowledge that this phenomenon affects the aesthetic quality in his art. Yet the value of his cosmopolitan aesthetics comes from ideas, not necessarily from their application. To Steiner, current 'art' remains too reliant on the ugliness of modern influences. Indeed, not even canonical high modernist Eliot could not avoid using clichés altogether, but he paired these with "a modern subject" illustrating his beliefs (Diepeveen 43). Although not to the extent of Eliot, Lewisohn

and Steiner also pair clichés, stereotypes, and other mass-market techniques with modernist subject matter. As argued earlier, even texts traditionally defined as high art are subject to commercial and market forces under the conditions of modernity. Steiner may not believe art can truly resist commodification and market forces under the conditions of modernity, but he believes that understanding aesthetics and the potential of art is a step towards overcoming these limitations.

Upon his arrival in America, the protagonist is incredulous; there is nothing in the city inspiring any sense of beauty. The city in no way shows the beauty or potential of humanity: “Artists have been inspired by the dense clouds of smoke and huge pillars of fire reflected in the murky river; but to me it is a vast, confused battlefield, without order and without beauty” (Steiner 101). The protagonist of *FA* constantly tries to match the ugly modern period with his sense of aesthetics. The noise, buildings, technology, chaos, dirt, and crowding all offend the protagonist's sense of order and artistry (Steiner 11, 12). Steiner's aesthetics function somewhat like Eliot's 'mythical method': "It is simply a way of controlling, or ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" (Knapp 132) and Steiner's life. The protagonist lacks control over of his life and artistic sensibilities. Order becomes a focal concern, and perhaps, it comes to represent the known, a point of reference by which he can understand the chaos of his new experience. However, he does not want to appear too preoccupied with personal opinions about art because these opinions are the opinions of an immigrant. To some, immigrants themselves are "unpicturesque" (Howe 12) and limited by their "ghetto parochialism" (*Forward* ix). Largely classified in terms of the immigrant novel, Steiner is aware his work may not be considered high art. He is likewise concerned with the audience associating him with low art,<sup>25</sup> thus devaluing his novel. Therefore,

Steiner portrays himself as an aesthete seeing beyond the limitations of environmental conditions. By instructing the reader regarding universals and by offering multiple perspectives, he demonstrates that he understands art and the aesthetics governing 'good' art.

To succeed, the protagonist must understand the forces affecting his success, and to fully understand and move past them, he believes English is necessary. Steiner finds intellectualism and idealism are his only real assets in the United States: or in other words, his linguistic ability. His linguistic ability distinguishes him from other immigrants, but this ability does not hold the same value for the larger community (Steiner 50). To Steiner, linguistic prowess markets itself<sup>26</sup>, but the forces of modern capitalism prevent him from supporting himself by wits alone. Ironically, since language is culture-bound, he only limits himself further. As North argues, "language cannot truly be freed from these [cultural and formal] limitations, and as such, by using the dominant language of English, these authors are tied to cultural and formal assumptions (142). In this sense, English does not tie to aesthetic success. Indeed, only by learning English can he "find some place suited to my attainments" (Steiner 68). He wants to create a space for himself in society and can only do so if he understands its rules. He finds that only a version of intellectualism and cosmopolitanism syncing with dominant systems and languages can be successful. Attempts to create a system of aesthetics removed from cultural influences is doomed to failure (cosmopolitan or otherwise), which may in part explain Steiner's defense of the cultural and ethnic particulars in his text.

Steiner knows the futility of fighting against the English language: language being an insidious force of dominant culture, infiltrating non-native culture whether he desires it or not:

This subtle force of a common language creeps in everywhere, just because it is not driven. It comes in by single words like yes and no, and modifies others, like *gemovt* and *gejumpt*. Then it comes by leaps and bounds until only a vestige of

the mother tongue remains. (73)

In German, the 'ge' is a past participle and demonstrates the author is thinking in German. However, as the novel progresses, his speech patterns, and his very thoughts and ideas change. By being passive, an immigrant risks losing his mother culture completely. Since he cannot fight the mixture of English with his native tongue, he seeks to learn a more academic version of the English language. With the exception of this passage, *FA* remains almost entirely devoid of Yiddish and Yiddish-English diction, although this is not standard in autobiographical immigrant novels. As will be discussed in chapter two, Yiddish can be a resistant force against Standard English and the ideological and cultural assumptions underlying the language. Steiner ties language to perspective, and the more intellectual the language, the more intellectual the perspective. The more intellectual the language, the more intellectual the life, as aesthetics in the immigrant cosmopolitan texts featured herein serve as metaphors for the authors' lives and experiences. Yiddish, then, would seem an appropriate choice in its cross-cultural, cross-national, and resistant qualities. However, Yiddish also re-inscribes ethnicity upon a text, reducing the text to its ethnic components, which can distance the reader from the subject matter through its strangeness.

By writing in English, the protagonist attempts to portray himself as an intellectual in the eyes of American readers. In part, this seems a failure because it limits the author's perspective and language; however, he also demonstrates an ability to utilize and think in more than one language. Indeed, he suggests that "intellectual alertness" results from individuals being able to "visualize a thought" in more than one language (Steiner 75).<sup>27</sup> For this reason, learning English is not just an assimilative act, but also an intellectual exercise allowing him to see in new and unexpected ways. Although Steiner hopes with training, they can begin to think critically, even

without the aid of knowing another language. Interestingly, even when Steiner utilizes the English language familiar to the American audience, he still manages to make it strange by utilizing British spellings: although this may not be intentional. In one passage, the protagonist utilizes a standard British spelling of 'labor,' suggesting the protagonist learned English from a non-American source or that he writes in a more formal, European, and transnational cosmopolitan manner: he is American, British, Yiddish, German, and cosmopolitan. Steiner also desires to instruct the audience in alternate perceptions of familiar things such as language. With an intellectual change and more critical thinking by the common man, perhaps there can be greater societal or cultural change. After all, it worked for Steiner. The protagonist puts this desire into practice when he develops English classes for laborers and men otherwise lacking in education. Although the reader is not informed about the efficacy of these classes or their outcome, it suggests Steiner believes laborers worth teaching or it would not be worth his intellectual effort. He believes them all "teachable" (Steiner 194). His exposure to labor helped him understand the intellectual failures and needs of the labor class and common people. He does not look down upon those individuals lacking education, but those lacking a desire to improve themselves through education.

Despite his alliance with the intellectual coterie, Steiner cannot forget the plight of workers, primarily because he too experiences the negative forces of labor upon individuals. The laboring masses are, in many cases, considered a distinctly different class than intellectuals, at least in bourgeois society, according to Gramsci (259).<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, Steiner, similar to Gramsci, argues for the intellectual capacity of workers and the existence of working class intellectuals (qtd. in Hawley 588). Although this may only to justify Steiner's position as an intellectual elite. Experience teaches Steiner that intellectuals have difficulty believing the

common man can appreciate the art produced by the formally educated. After all, "Modernists [and other intellectuals] were often writing their literature to and for each other; and even more consistently, for a commonly perceived modern audience and modern age" (Malamud 3).

Therefore, to appreciate high art truly, the common audience must be capable of thinking critically about the modern age, literature, and about rules and traditions. By showing the masses capable of understanding great art, he also helps justify mass culture as something to be improved because it caters to an audience capable of increased understanding. With a change in their literary responses, literature too can change. In one part of the novel, he asserts,

It would be a distinct shock to my Pittsburgh friends to know that these common folk appreciate the fine pictures which their brothers have painted and that they read poetry which their bards have written for them. (Steiner 115)

Understanding, then, does not something result from class or formal education: it is something taught. Steiner believes that for the masses to understand Art, they must first understand the art "written for them." However, more than just the working class must be educated.

Intellectuals can also learn "practical idealism" (197) from the laboring masses. This form of idealism, informed by experience and modern conditions, helps balance out abstract idealism's and traditional intellectualism's universalizing tendencies. The masses with their practical knowledge of labor conditions can teach much to those supposedly untouched by these conditions. If intellectuals understand the forces of capitalism upon the laborer, then they can see how these forces ultimately kill idealism. This phenomenon is illustrated when the protagonist finds himself choosing between a desire for resistance and a desire to support himself and meet his "immediate physical necessities": "This sympathy [for those resisting the government and its 'autocracy'] I was eager to express, but the immediate physical necessities silenced for a while my burning idealism" (Steiner 167). Despite his claim that intellectualism is more important than

subsistence, he knows living by intellectualism alone is impossible, and creating a purely intellectual text will ultimately be a failure without a balance with the commercial. Idealism does not support his most basic needs. He feels he must compromise his ideals to survive, suggesting that idealism cannot survive under the conditions of capitalism. The protagonist assures the reader, though, that despite his despair at his economic conditions, "[I] rejoiced in [the] intellectual atmosphere, which meant more to me than bread and meat after my recent stultifying experiences" (Steiner 171-172). In this sense, any resistant impulse present in his text marks it as a commercial failure; it can only succeed if he negotiates with the system and balances the resistant with the commodified and commercially successful. By creating a connection with other intellectuals and their writings, however, he can rejoice.

Despite Steiner's intellectual and artistic leanings, he does not define himself as a modernist cosmopolitan. Indeed, Steiner states identifications suggest "clannishness" (44) among intellectuals, limiting their ability to integrate into the larger human family (30). This exclusivity is a common charge leveled at cosmopolitans and modernists in general. By integrating mass-marketing techniques with heightened ideology and aesthetics, he helps increase

[his] readers' awareness of being part of an elite audience encouraged them to think of themselves more as individuals than a part of a mass audience, and certainly not as part of the general reading public. (Diepeveen 47)

Yet Steiner cautions against "extreme individualism" (173), which unbalanced by a connection to the (ethnic) community can be hurtful to the immigrant. Even the admirable anarchists who launch an "onslaught against organized government" are criticized for their actions (Steiner 173). Furthermore, Steiner is skeptical of movements separating intellectuals from the working masses, as workers can contribute to society by teaching intellectuals about labor conditions.

Steiner believes resistance springs from societal and communal conditions ("the body social") (174). Therefore, Steiner's cosmopolitanism focuses on a connection with large audiences capable of influencing culture through sheer numbers, instead of the "elite, effete taste-cultures" associated with other forms of cosmopolitanism (Lutz 49). It is important to note that even this focus on educating the masses is an elitist act. As Gramsci suggests, "Critical self-consciousness means, historically and politically, the creation of an elite of intellectuals. [Because] A human mass does not 'distinguish' itself, does not become independent in its own right" (260). Steiner offsets the problems associated with the "human" by his portraying multiple perspectives in his text, as opposed to one overarching ideology. Any one perspective by its nature would exclude others.

Indeed, Steiner is critical of the exclusionary nature of the modernist movement, but he finds it useful in its anti-capitalist, anti-commodification, anti-mass media ideals, saving individuals from "materialism." Yet modernists would condemn Steiner's novel since it exploits material practices such as marketing to reach a wider audience; however, as argued earlier, cosmopolitan ideology does allow for some criticism of its own ideals. Furthermore, he hopes that with national and cultural change, it will become less "harmful." If it is less exclusive and removed from the particulars of individual experience, it becomes a more useful intellectual tool. Steiner sums up his complicated relationship with modernist cosmopolitanism in the following passage: "Much of their [the intellectual idealist's] speech,"

was like the raving of madmen, but, after all, it was a fine idealism to which they tried to give expression, and this movement, harmful as it must have been in some directions, saved them from a gross materialism to which they were naturally inclined. (172)

As Lionel Trilling states, an "'impoverished' sense of reality [is one] in which reality is reduced

to a strict mimetic relation to materiality instead of including the reality of ideas" (qtd. in Lutz 13). Overall, Steiner attempts to avoid any definite classifications--whether cosmopolitan, intellectual, artist, laborer, or immigrant. Instead, Steiner defines himself as a freethinker. He carefully avoids allying himself too closely with just one ideal, school of thought, or movement, which may limit his audience base and scope and tie him to the problems associated with the application of ideology. He utilizes several movements and schools of thought to achieve his desired aims of educating the audience and creating space for himself in the literary canon. Furthermore, this piecemeal approach allows him to use those aesthetics matching his experience and those appropriate for his immigrant cosmopolitan ideology.

Overall, *FA*, like *UP*, ends on a hopeful note that there is potential for a new intellectual and artistic "spirit" in America. Steiner knows in that the early 20th century his cosmopolitanism is doomed to failure. He hopes it is achievable through a new progressive spirit: more universal and humanistic, one eliminating prejudice (17). Like Lutz, he believes that creating a useful and practical version of cosmopolitanism is an ongoing project: "the cosmopolitan project is always by its very nature incomplete" (Lutz 21). In hopefulness, Steiner has told his story, which he describes as a "new [intellectual] birth" and "a story which cannot be told too frequently" because of its progressive message (16). His arrival in the new world changes his perspective and exposes him to new ideals: he learns and alters his perspectives. He now has the knowledge needed to choose what to follow and what to criticize: he has critical judgment. He is thus a cosmopolitan in the sense of possessing an "up-to-date connoisseurship, of not so much knowing everything the world has to offer as *knowing the best* the world has to offer" [emphasis mine] (Lutz 47). It is impossible to know the entirety of the world, but with critical thought, he can assign value to art, aesthetics, and intellectualism. In the quote above, "New birth" can also refer

to the moment an immigrant arrives in America, the act of assimilating into American culture, or the moment the protagonist is bound by a new set of limitations. Steiner seems to support this ambiguous reading of the text. He wants readers to see him in all these ways, as an immigrant, progressive, and cosmopolitan intellectual.

Depending on the reader's perception of the "new birth," Steiner may advocate the importance of the immigrant tale or the importance of more polemical stories. Even if the reader sees *FA* as a more resistant text, it is important to note that Steiner remains skeptical about systemic forces and their effects on these new births. Steiner assures his audience he is not attempting to form a new type of "propaganda" or ideology removed from reality. He wants to evoke change that can withstand negative forces, but

The agencies which began the assimilative process were all anti-social, greedy for their prey . . . There was nothing left to do but walk up and down in impotent rage and inveigh against [a system] which permitted its newest and most potential human material to be polluted, if not corrupted, at the very entrance into its life. (Steiner 165-166)

To him, assimilative forces not only limit and corrupt but they also often lay the blame of society's ills upon the immigrant. They make convenient red herrings in their foreignness and supposed ignorance (Steiner 167). Furthermore, unreasonable concessions can restrict not only individual potential but also the ability of society to progress. Progress relies on potentiality, and limitations hinder potential. Steiner knows many of the trials he and other immigrants face are due to "the root of modern industrialism" and the lack of personal connections in capitalist systems (281). The reader is part of this system and by being too radical, Steiner risks isolating the reader already assimilated into the dominant culture. Therefore, he carefully avoids antagonizing his audience. He knows that in order to change, there must be knowledge, and to a certain degree, a reliance on the current system. Despite these societal ills, Steiner cautions

against "agitators or [those] inclined to demand unreasonable concessions" (Steiner 281). Unlike the authors of chapter two, he believes the best way to engage the audience is to meet them on their terms through the incorporation of ethnic and working class experience and by utilizing English. Whether the reader desires a novel of assimilation or a more resistant text, *FA* offers both.

Steiner sums up his novel in the following statement, "Have something to say and say it" (236). The something Steiner has to say is about the negative influences of modern culture and its capitalistic influences upon art and intellectualism, and he says it through the medium of the immigrant autobiographical narrative. By demonstrating his intellectualism, while maintaining his status as an immigrant, Steiner illustrates a form of practical, intellectual cosmopolitanism. He believes this method will connect him to potential readers and with the universal human family from which all human achievement and beauty springs. Without the ability to see themselves in an expansive, universal context, the audience limits their vision, making them unable to see the "real and less known America" (Steiner 244). Even when pushing unfamiliar and alternative perspectives, Steiner's politics are not necessarily at odds with familiar and clichéd aspects of the immigrant novel. Immigrants themselves write from an insider and outsider position, both subject to the new culture that they have adopted and able to compare it to their birth culture and any other culture with which they have contact. As Raymond Williams states, immigrants "experience their roles [in society and culture] as 'stranger' ("Metropolis" 2). Through a self-referential focus on particulars, modernists [and, in this case, immigrants] emphasized strangeness, distance, and a sense of alienation from the familiar ("Metropolis" 9). This theme of isolation and estrangement represents the artist and his position in the modern world: "Their self-referentiality, their propinquity and mutual isolation all served to represent the

artist as necessarily estranged" ("When" 72). It is not so strange, then, that Steiner and Lewisohn the immigrant autobiography and cosmopolitan aesthetics to convey their stories, as this form and system of aesthetics mimics their lives. The crux of his purpose is to tell his story:

to be myself always, when that self had something worthwhile to express, to be fearless but without venom; to love men without enervating sentimentality, and to be loyal to the truth at whatever personal cost. (Steiner 236-237)

Despite the conditions that he must endure as an immigrant, an artist, and an intellectual, he maintains hope. He hopes the masses, though uninformed, are still capable of change and improvement, and intellectuals should encourage these changes. This idea certainly smacks of elitism, and considering that intellectual elitism supposedly bars him from the intellectual inner circle, this seems an irresolvable contradiction. Can he be an intellectual and immigrant author simultaneously, or does one affiliation trump the other? Steiner attempts to resolve this problem by utilizing a form of cosmopolitanism. Although his text may not be experimental or entirely original, he relates a story contributing something, if only alternate perspectives to familiar cultural and societal institutions. He finds a more indirect, balanced form of cosmopolitan politics without the "venom" of other polemical (or experimental) texts more appropriate for reaching his audience and relating his message of hope and change.

#### Conclusions: Cosmopolitanism, Intellectualism, and the Universal

"I gained the esteem and interest of the community and regained a *world-wide outlook*; but I had lost my church, or rather, the church had lost me" [emphasis mine] (Steiner 301)

"I was convinced now, through experience and reflection, that my art product could not, in this age, commend itself to the strange minds of my countrymen" (Lewisohn 148)

Lewisohn's *UP* and Steiner's *FA* divides cosmopolitanism ("worldly" perspective or "world-wide outlook") into intellectual and artistic components that are elevated by idealism and

detached from oppressive cultural influences. To gain a new perspective on familiar cultural practices and societal institutions, Lewisohn and Steiner feel they must ally themselves with the progressive intellectualism and worldliness of modernist cosmopolitanism. They believe cosmopolitanism can be both a means of creating affiliation and of maintaining critical detachment, as well as a way to balance particulars with universals. It also functions as a type of resistance, a type of artistic worldliness, and a type of intellectualism. It can be all of these things and shift or change depending on the author defining the version of cosmopolitanism.

Cosmopolitan ideology is not without complications and has unintended effects on these texts and upon audience reception. At times, Lewisohn and Steiner seem to be agents in the societal and cultural aspects they critique. At other times, they appear resistant to such limitations, making them appear inconsistent. Furthermore, they even appear to contradict their own stated cosmopolitan goals by focusing overmuch on the immigrant, individual, and on small details of experience and reality. This begs the question of whether these texts can in any way be considered successful, either as a work of autobiographical immigrant fiction or as an artistic and intellectual cosmopolitan tale.

Both *UP* and *FA* illustrate how Jewish-American authors are concerned with the effects of ideological alliances on their immigrant identities. As mentioned in the epigraph above, Steiner believes that to be considered a part of the intellectual community, he must abandon the spiritual and religious training of his youth. This creates a sense of loss in the protagonist, which he attempts to justify by focusing on expansive perspectives and new ideologies. As Robert Pinsky argues, cosmopolitanism is an allegiance that supersedes influences such as religion: "To pledge one's 'fundamental allegiance' to cosmopolitanism is to try to transcend not only nationality but all actualities, and realities of life that constitute one's natural identity" (qtd. in

Lutz 51). Cosmopolitanism may seem positive in its inclusiveness. However, losing the ability to address the "actualities" of the immigrant experience, and more specifically, the ability to address assimilation and its effects upon immigrants, limits some of the resistant potential of these texts. Assimilation, whether artistic, national, cultural, or intellectual, limits potential; and it is important for the reader and the author to understand what is lost through assimilatory acts before they can hope to counteract it.

Thus, Lewisohn and Steiner attempt to manipulate cosmopolitanism in ways allowing for the incorporation of ethnic particulars and details about the immigrant experience. They attempt, but they ultimately fail. In theory, this resolves the problem of balancing universals with particulars. Yet in practice, one side overshadows the other or weakens the position of the other. When the balance breaks down, the authors can appear indecisive and this hurts their credibility. It is true that at *FA*'s conclusion, the protagonist returns to some of his former beliefs and practices, and ultimately becomes a professor at a religious institution. The protagonist is able to balance, to a degree, his past with his present and future, while also maintaining a balance between the particulars of his individual experience with the universal and cosmopolitan perspectives he gains through intellectualism. Yet as even Steiner himself argues, religion and the academy are associated with assimilation. Indeed, this is what Steiner is remembered for, his contributions to the academy, not his novels.

The acknowledgement of the intellectual and critical potential of immigrants and the common reader is one of the positive effects of the immigrant cosmopolitanism espoused by these authors. Balance exists naturally within the immigrant psyche: the immigrant subject is foreign and familiar, influenced by Old World and new. The juxtaposition of these seemingly contradictory forces within a text allows for critical analysis of each aspect individually and

together, as well as the interplay between these forces. Unlike the authors of chapter two, Steiner and Lewisohn do focus overly on the practical application of their politics in the text: expansive and worldly ideas are enough. The cosmopolitanism present in *UP* and *FA* fails in practice and fails to gain the audience recognition it works so hard to gain. Indeed, little is known about Steiner today, except about his professional academic life, and *FA* is largely forgotten after only a slight commercial success. His personal life appears to be a success story for his version of immigrant cosmopolitanism; however, its integration into the text itself is less successful.

Lewisohn, as illustrated in the epigraph, is likewise aware that his politics and nontraditional style may not be commercially successful. He believes this is, in part, due to the mass readers' or common Americans' beliefs, lack of intellectualism, and lack of education. Lewisohn describes his countrymen--which the reader must assume are native-born Americans, and potentially, his fellow Jewish immigrants--as 'strange.' This telling statement, distances him from other Americans, making these 'native' Americans seem unusual. It also has the unintended consequence of making Lewisohn appear that he does not fully understand the audience (Americans) and the culture influencing them. Throughout *UP* and *FA*, the authors must negotiate their politics with the reader if there is any hope of their cosmopolitan philosophies being enacted successfully, as immigrant cosmopolitan authors rely on audience education and participation. If a culture or society is to change, it hinges on its people and their critical judgment: their ability to see both negatives and positives and the ability to see alternatives to current practices. A balance between pandering to audiences and maintaining a connection with audiences must be created. Although it appears, in these texts that any concession to the audience automatically makes it a mass-market work in both critics and the readers' minds. During this period, many intellectual and artistic elites devalued literary pieces with a perceived resemblance

to popular forms: "modernism's founding ethos of heroic originality produced a naive modernist phobia about all things smacking of too close an association with the mass market and with marketplace values" (Murphy 64). Lewisohn and Steiner do indeed understand the elite audience's expectations regarding value; however, it is not the intellectual elite needing education. It is the mass audience and the primary reader base of the autobiographical immigrant novel needing to be taught. Lewisohn and Steiner have a choice: meet audience expectations in order to train them, which will potentially affect the resistant and experimental value of the text; or, they can write a text of value in the eyes of the artistic and intellectual elite, doing little to affect the mass audience. Both texts fall short of the truly experimental in terms of originality and separation from cultural influences. By focusing primarily on offering alternatives to the audience in a more subtle manner, it suggests a primary audience of those disliking truly experimental texts and overtly political novels. Yet their chosen audience does not stop these authors from criticizing how commercial or mass-market methods limit artistic potential and create expectations in readers about literary quality, value, form, and substance. As with other aspects of the cosmopolitanism in *UP* and *FA*, a balance is possible in theory but rarely works in practice.

Lewisohn and Steiner's choice of the autobiographical immigrant narrative as a vehicle for their modernist cosmopolitan ideals can also be considered a failure. Critics of the early 20th century considered the immigrant novel a realistic and proscribed form of literature having little intellectual or political value. Gillis illustrates this, when in *Ludwig Lewisohn: the Author and His Message*, he argues that Lewisohn is capable of creating "high" literature and praises Lewisohn's creativity and "gifts"; however, Gillis believes that the "autobiographical tendency" limits Lewisohn's artistic potential:

Lewisohn is a literary artist and, regretting that his autobiographical tendency has prevented his reaching that place as a creative novelist to which his natural gifts might have led him, recognizes with well-expressed enthusiasm the very real value of such [autobiographical] confessions. ("Ludwig" 81)

Yet Gillis reluctantly acknowledges that the realistic nature of autobiographies has some value, especially considering Lewisohn's subject matter. However, to Gillis, there is no bridge between "low" autobiographies and "high" literary offerings. Likewise, there can be no harmonizing the ethnic particulars of "low" immigrant novels with the universals of "high" literature. Lewisohn and Steiner, in contrast, believe immigrant novels should balance old with new particulars, as well ethnic particulars with universals in order to make their texts accessible to American readers: yet this contrasts modernist notions that audience participation is second to experimental qualities (Hilliard 770). Finding this balance is a challenge, if not impossible, as one reviewer for the *New Republic* asserts:

The young creators of new values come to grief so often not because their values are wrong, nor because their rebellion is not the very breath of the world's better life. They come to grief because they have no mastery of fact [or reality], because they carry with them the false old interpretations and conventional idealizations of man and future of human life. ("These" 231)

Here, new and resistant ideas separated from reality fail because they focus on universals and other interpretations that do not consider change. However, this critic, like Lewisohn and Steiner, finds the attempt to create a "world's better life" worthwhile. If such a thing is possible, however, remains unseen.

They may feel that a successful balance between the realistic particulars of experience, ideology, and aesthetics can be achieved: if not under the conditions of modernity, then in the future, when the educated can appreciate the artistic value this balance contributes. However, during the period in which Lewisohn and Steiner write, immigrant cosmopolitan ideology seems

little more than an artistic and intellectual dream detached from reality. If reviewers are representatives of reader sentiments, then ultimately readers see the texts as either too preachy or "polemic" to audiences expecting a titillating ethnic tale; or, they are seen as "philosophical" and artistic texts devalued through the use of the immigrant autobiographical form and subject matter. *FA* and *UP* are both of these--low art and high--and at times, these authors may contradict themselves or emphasize one element of their experience over another, such as their educational journey or their artistic experiences over their journey to the United States.

Overall, I must agree with the *North American Review's* sentiments regarding *UP*: Lewisohn and Steiner's works are "highly significant" in their attempts to expand beyond the boundaries of the autobiographical immigrant novel; however, this does not necessarily make them "great" novels, especially in these authors' inability to achieve all their stated goals. To be fair, however, these goals are difficult or impossible to achieve under the conditions of modernity. As Anderson asserts, critical distance and a balance between all elements of their novels, is more a desire than an actual state achievable by authors (6). Progress may be slow in coming, but Lewisohn and Steiner show the necessity of "the regeneration of the individual" (Steiner 298). This statement mirrors Michel Foucault's assertion due to the conditions of modernity, a new "philosophy of interrogation" is needed to deal with "man's relation to the present, man's historical mode of being, and the constitution of the self as an autonomous subject" (Walkowitz 6). Lewisohn and Steiner seem to believe that cosmopolitanism is the answer to this need through balance, engagement with several issues relevant to all readers, and a mediation of politics put forth with skepticism and caution, at least with social progress. Overall, the reader can agree or disagree with the politics of the novel and still enjoy it as an immigrant assimilation and success narrative.

In one of the final statements of *UP*, the protagonist justifies the politics of the novel: "All that I have written is true. It is true of America. It is true, in other degrees, of mankind" (Lewisohn 252). In this statement, he accomplishes three goals: one, he appeases the immigrant novel's reader by assuring them of the realism of the novel's ethnic particulars, a necessary element to maintain a connection with the mass reader. Two, he relates ethnic experience to national and cultural universals, implying immigrants and other Americans are subject to the same conditions. Three, he relates ethnic particulars to the experiences of mankind. By relating to humanity as a whole, the protagonist positions himself as a man of the world with characteristics and knowledge, free from the limitations of personal experience. To Lewisohn and Steiner, the process of becoming global (cosmopolitan) occurs physically through migration and internally when individuals expand their perceptions through diverse ideals, particulars, and beliefs. However, integration must begin at the individual level before systemic changes can occur (Lewisohn 240). Intellectualism should be integrated into all parts of human culture and with the incorporation of intellectualism, there is a possibility for critical judgment and change. Gramsci sums up their philosophy well when he states,

There is no human activity from which every form of intellectual participation can be excluded . . . Each man, finally, . . . carries on some form of intellectual activity, that is, he is a 'philosopher', an artist, a man of taste, he participates in a particular conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is, to bring into being new modes of thought. (Gramsci 259)

## Chapter Two: Immigrant Cosmopolitanism and Practical Application

Leo Rosten's *The Education of H\*Y\*M\*A\*N K\*A\*P\*L\*A\*N* and Samuel Ornitz's *Haunch,*

*Paunch, and Jowl*

The mass media are not characterized by endless inventiveness and variation. *But they are considerably more varied and inventive, given the built-in limitations, than we give them credit for.* Consider the limitations: neither life nor truth nor fiction offers infinite choices: there is only a limited number of ways of communicating the limited body of material; *audiences develop a cumulative awareness of resemblances and an augmented resistance to the stylized and the predictable; and even the freshest departures from routine soon become familiar and routine* [emphasis mine] (Rosten 220)

'Tell me, if you can, how do we know the people do not want good music and good poetry, if no one will bring good music and poetry before them. . . . that's what we managers are for--we knows what the public wants and we gives it to them's [sic]' (Ornitz 125-126)

Like the ideologically-driven authors of chapter one, Leo Rosten bemoans the limitations of popular or "mass" forms, yet he believes all forms of communication are limited. Within the confines of boundaries, however, is the possibility of "variation" and "inventiveness." This possibility assumes that audience expectations and their familiarity with popular forms do not ultimately hinder invention. Therefore, if any resistance can occur, it will require educating the audience about art's potential. After education about aesthetics and artistic value, the audience will hopefully come to expect and allow for experimentation. In his quote about limitations and the unoriginality of mass media, Rosten allies himself with a form of modernist cosmopolitan aesthetics promoting the new and experimental. On the other hand, Rosten argues that something ceases to be new once published and accepted by audiences.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, the authors of this study, especially the authors of chapter two, avoid creating wholly new or original forms of literature. No matter how fresh the literature, it will still be subject to popular culture and the

limitations associated with popular culture. Instead, Rosten attempts to revitalize the trite, the popular, and the expected. In this way, Rosten shows an awareness of how modernist cosmopolitan ideology can succeed in theory, but fail in practical application. In theory, the new is possible and within this newness, immigrant authors can create a space for their stories and change. However, these alterations allowing for originality require a change in audience perceptions and societal perceptions about art. This failure does not suggest, however, the cosmopolitan project unworthy of the attempt. Even if critics do not find the classification of these immigrant texts as intellectual, artistic, or cosmopolitan valid, Rosten and Ornitz do at least succeed in creating a tenuous connection to texts of other genres. This connection, in turn, links their novels to writings of more supposed literary worth: Lewisohn's novel becomes "polemic" and Steiner's novel "universal." Rosten is described as a "genius," and Ornitz's skill is called "promising." These authors may not always be happy with readers' responses to their novels, but at least the audience can see these texts as more than just immigrant novels. It is through the lens of moderation between mass culture and intellectual culture that a reader should approach Rosten's most popular writing: between the dominant culture and the immigrant's ethnic experience.

Rosten is not unique in his politics. Indeed, each of the authors detailed in this study attempts, to varying degrees, to ensure the "form and content [of the novels] speak the same language of modernity" (Keresztesi 92); or, more accurately, the form and content of the novels are all informed by modernist and modernist cosmopolitanism aesthetics. Modernist cosmopolitanism allows for the meshing of the experimental with the popular and expected in ways elevating content, form, and language: all this while maintaining a crucial connection with the mass audience. Furthermore, modernist cosmopolitanism allows the authors of this study to

connect with a larger intellectual and artistic community and with a universal human culture. Yet the circumstances of their ethnic experience bind these authors, and thus, they must find a means of incorporating these circumstances into their aesthetics. Certainly, in the practical application of their aesthetics, Lewisohn and Steiner ultimately fail to find an appropriate way to balance specifics with universals and a way to balance the popular with the experimental. This failure, however, may be due to the overwhelmingly broad nature of the cosmopolitan project established by these authors: as discussed in chapter one, cosmopolitanism can be an ideology that distances, creates affiliations, offers resistance, makes connections with universals, and functions as a philosophical approach, a language technique, and so forth. It seems impossible for authors to accomplish all of these things simultaneously, especially when some aspects of cosmopolitanism appear to contradict or negate others. Rosten and Ornitz take a more restrained or local approach in order to deal with the overwhelming nature of the cosmopolitan project. They focus primarily on the linguistic and formal elements of texts instead of attempting to incorporate elements of cosmopolitanism into every aspect of the document. The form of immigrant cosmopolitanism espoused by the authors of chapter two may not succeed entirely, but it has a far better chance of success at the micro level of diction, syntax, and language, than at the level of ideology.

In the *Education of H\*Y\*M\*A\*N K\*A\*P\*L\*A\*N*, Rosten utilizes the popular form of the immigrant tale and mass-market techniques such as of humor<sup>30</sup> to highlight the limitations of dominant English, especially its inability to offer true meaning or speak for the immigrant experience. To speak truly for the immigrant experience, Rosten feels a form of modernist cosmopolitanism allowing for the incorporation of ethnic specifics must be utilized (immigrant cosmopolitanism). The form of immigrant cosmopolitanism employed by Rosten (and Ornitz)

somewhat resembles the "everyday cosmopolitanism" described by Knott and illustrated by Lewisohn and Steiner in chapter one. Knott further suggests that 'common' language, such as the Yiddish utilized by Jewish-Americans, is a form of "everyday cosmopolitanism." Yet as this strips all "intellectual" and "philosophical" dimensions from cosmopolitanism, leaving only the physical movement between boundaries and meshing of cultural elements to tell the immigrant story, it is problematic.

Rosten and Ornitz do utilize many realistic elements of the "everyday," as well as stereotypes, to create a cosmopolitan aesthetic much like that described by Knott. They offer resistance to dominant systems and culture through manipulation of linguistic rules at the micro level rather than through affiliations (intellectual, artistic, ideological) at the macro level of the text. The practical application of cosmopolitan aesthetics seems integral to the successful balance of artistic and intellectual universals with ethnic particulars, as it limits the scope of the cosmopolitan project. Yet the integration of individual specifics and "typical" experience is a mark of realist literature, not the modernist literature, which rejects the common and defines particulars as meaningless details (Lukács 187). Lukács supports this assumption, stating, "fusion of the particular and the general . . . is the essence of realistic art" (189). By this definition, all the authors of this study are realist and not modernist cosmopolitans. On the other hand, the way these authors incorporate value and meaning into the "meaningless" details, elevates their art beyond the limitations of realistic literature. The assumption that these authors are utilizing factual details to portray 'reality' alone is also problematic. Instead, all of the authors of this study try to use only those elements of their experience serving a rhetorical or aesthetic purpose. By using ethnic particulars rhetorically, they hope to avoid utilizing foreign details in ways solely entertaining the audience or reinforcing audience expectations about the immigrant

autobiographical narrative. Rosten and Ornitz hope to accomplish this through linguistic and formal manipulations.

First generation Jewish-American immigrant Leo Rosten (Leonard Q. Ross), author of the immigrant narrative<sup>31</sup> *HK* was born in Lodz, Poland in 1908 (American National Biography Online). Best known for his contributions to comic writing and other popular mediums such as film, Rosten also produced several collections of Yiddish words and phrases: these collections, to a certain extent, position Yiddish within the American literary canon.<sup>32</sup> Although these publications stress the importance of Yiddish language, Rosten pairs his reference material with jokes. Overall, these writings are remembered more for their humor than for their educational information. Audiences responded to *HK* in much the same way, focusing on the humor over the more experimental techniques. It was generally well received by the general reading public,<sup>33</sup> yet its popularity was garnered primarily by the novel's comic bent, as opposed to any other technique.<sup>34</sup> Despite its being pigeonholed as a comic novel, *HK* contains significant experimentation through language. Through the utilization of Yiddish, nonstandard syntax and diction, misused clichés and idioms, and by questioning the logic underlying language, Hyman attempts to challenge and vivify the use of language. Despite his use of comic and popular elements in *HK*, the use of experimental language helps push against boundaries, thus expanding the text beyond some of the limitations placed upon it by genre and other formal components.

Rosten's novel, then, both consciously and unconsciously creates an art that is "strange or upsetting," according to Adorno's definition. It "ruptures boundaries of taste and convention" to suggest alternate experiences to dominant tastes and formal norms. To achieve this, authors must resist description (Adorno qtd. in Walkowitz 24). Yet in the case of the autobiographical immigrant novel, a lack of description leaves the author to rely on universals and assumptions

alone. As stated in chapter one, this is problematic since an immigrant author's ethnic particulars are an integral part of portraying his personal experience. Rosten, like Adorno, is concerned with high modernism's reliance on negation, contrast, and division in order to "disrupt" or separate literature from reality; therefore, experimentation must balance experience with realistic details to function in the manner Rosten desires. Readers have a number of expectations regarding characterization and the realistic content of immigrant novels. They expect tales filled with foreign and strange elements, and a lack of ethnic details might lead them to see Rosten's creation not as an immigrant novel, but as something else altogether. The authors of this study are aware that if they stray too far from the proscribed form of the autobiographical immigrant narrative, they risk losing their primary mass reader base. If misclassifications occur, then authors cannot hope to elevate the reception of the immigrant novel or increase their intellectual and artistic value in the eyes of critics and readers. However, when resistant techniques distance readers and overturn audience assumptions, a focus on universals can reestablish ties. Universals should be mitigated through the integration of individual experiences or universals will only function as another limitation upon a text. This balance must reflect in the politics of the text (ideological cosmopolitanism) and at the level of language (practical cosmopolitanism) if the immigrant cosmopolitanism promoted by Rosten and Ornitz can be successful.

Fellow Jewish-American author Samuel Ornitz, author of the immigrant novel *Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl*, was born in 1890 in New York to Polish immigrants. Similar to Rosten, Ornitz is best known for his mass media contributions, especially to the film industry ("Samuel"). Less known is Ornitz's contribution to the canon of Jewish-American immigrant literature, which has been buried underneath the political scandals attached to his name and under the sheer number of other mass media productions with which he became associated

("Samuel"). This lack of recognition may be due, in part, to *HPJ*'s initial publishing as an anonymous confession. The few reviews for *HPJ* available from the time of its publication imply that critics and audiences alike felt ambivalent toward Ornitz's stark and unusual creation.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, some of his unusual aesthetic and linguistic choices lead readers to believe someone other than an immigrant wrote his work, an artist of a "higher" caliber. Although atypical of the immigrant narrative in some ways, Ornitz also reinforces many widely received stereotypes about the working class, the unemployed poor, and about Jewish-American individuals in *HPJ*. To be fair, these stereotypes function more as a literary device fulfilling and overturning audience expectations than as a sincere and straightforward addition to Ornitz's novel.

Ornitz is concerned with the supposed lack of value and artistic integrity associated with popular fiction. Yet Ornitz, unlike Lewisohn and Steiner, is critical of the more idealistic aspects of cosmopolitanism, which confuse, alienate, and distance the reader from reality. However, *HPJ* also utilizes experimental language, such as stark, direct, and efficient diction paired with syntactical violations and Yiddish phrases and words, to test the limits of the tenement novel. Overall, Ornitz suggests through language and ideas framed in language that characters can move beyond limitations of form and characterization. Ornitz, like Rosten, may desire cultural and societal change, but he knows it is unlikely to happen, at least in the modern world. Therefore, if Ornitz wants to enact some manner of change, then he must do so at a practical level, such as syntax.

The syntactical violations make the language used by Rosten and Ornitz practically unrecognizable to English-language readers. Indeed, both authors are conscientious writers carefully manipulating audience reception through language both familiar and 'foreign.' In some parts of *HK* and *HPJ*, Standard English is so altered it resembles a foreign language. An author

can create space for his own meaning uninfluenced by standard language and dominant culture, when he or she defamiliarizes language. As Eliot argues, "the poet [and any author] must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, *language into his meaning*" [emphasis mine] (qtd. in Malamud 15). By being "indirect" and "dislocating" language from referents and culture, the reader must reconstruct referents according to the author's experience because it is with that the reader is left: thus forcing the reader into the author's "meaning." In addition, Eliot connects dislocation with universals or the "comprehensive," as they are a means of eliding specificity. This is problematic from the stance of the immigrant author, as their particulars are markers directing readers toward the author's meaning. Creating a new space for meaning is especially important to the immigrant author, who may feel separated from American culture and feel a need to resist dominant culture to maintain a sense of self and personal logic informed by experience. This dislocation or estrangement, then, must be balanced in a way allowing for the incorporation of individual experience. One way the authors of this chapter attempt to accomplish this balance is by utilizing Yiddish. Incorporating Yiddish into a text amplifies the estrangement<sup>36</sup> of familiar language, as well as provides a balance to linguistic experimentation.

Yiddish, in some ways, serves as a marker of difference and Jewishness--reinscribing tradition, history, and cultural norms upon the text. This inability to be truly original and able to move beyond limitations is also a failure of "experimental" or avant-garde modernists. As Sara Blair argues in "Whose Modernism is It? Abraham Cahan, Fictions of Yiddish, and the Contest of Modernity" (2005), even immigrant "avant-gardist" authors were "adrift within the very modernity their diasporic energies were catalyzing" (259). To be fair, this critique implies the possibility of authors separating themselves from the negative influences of modernity, which is

impossible. To combat the forces of modernity and to refresh their texts, Rosten and Ornitz utilize Yiddish within their novels. The article "Authentic Language and Authentic Reported Speech: Hebrew vs. Yiddish" argues Yiddish is not just a marker of ethnicity or tradition, but is also a resistant response and alternative language to traditional Hebrew (155). Since Hebrew is tied to history and tradition, some authors regard it as a limited language; therefore, some Jewish and Jewish-American authors consider the hybrid and fluid dialect of Yiddish as a means of updating or modernizing Hebrew. The article further presents Yiddish as a living tongue and not a fully 'complete' and 'stylized' language ("Authentic" 157), suggesting Yiddish as a language with evolving style. As Yiddish is a "dynamic vernacular," it is capable of altering to meet the demands under the "emerging realities of the American new" (Blair 263). It is not surprising, then, immigrant authors consider it a way to deal with their new experiences in America and their experiences with modernity.

Second-generation immigrants Rosten and Ornitz do incorporate Yiddish culture and language into their texts, unlike first-generation authors Lewisohn and Steiner. Yiddish to these second-generation authors is not a connection to their native culture, as they are American born. Yet Yiddish can still serve as a means of maintaining links with Yiddish culture should authors choose to employ it. To these authors, Yiddish has a secondary experimental function, and this secondary function does not always mesh with their primary function of portraying the immigrant experience. This goal to challenge or "disruption" English language standards--to utilize Frederick Karl's terminology--requires more than passive audience observation. The audience of these texts is required to recreate the historical and cultural references tied to language because they are "relocated" outside the familiar. This "'relocation' of the reader," as Karl suggests in his article "Modern and Postmodern, Modernism and Postmodernism," "has

long been the staple of Modernism” (16). This "relocation" likewise appears to be a staple of modernist and immigrant cosmopolitanism. In both *HK* and *HPJ*, "relocation" causes the reader to re-analyze these works' relationship to other Jewish-American immigrant offerings since other offerings may give clues as to how to decode the language present in Rosten's and Ornitz's texts. This may appear a failure on the part of these authors, as it cements the ties between their works and other immigrant novels; however, Rosten and Ornitz do not see this tie as detrimental to their purposes. By forcing the reader to recreate referents, the reader must read more critically than they may have otherwise, given the autobiographical novel's association with entertainment. By reading critically, the audience is more likely to re-evaluate and make judgment regarding the novel's aesthetic and intellectual value. The audience's ability to think critically about societal and cultural institutions is crucial if Rosten's form of immigrant cosmopolitanism is to have any positive effect on the reception of his novel. Furthermore, relocating the reader outside of referents positions the reader as a stranger without the background necessary to make dominant language accessible, much like an immigrant. Readers may be able to see things and interpret things in new ways previously unavailable to them.

If the reader focuses solely on the plot and characterization of Jewish immigrants in the text, both *HK* and *HPJ* appear to be tales about the assimilation of immigrant culture into accepted American culture, specifically through education. In *HK*, the Jewish-American protagonist, Hyman, attempts to negotiate the pitfalls, contradictions, and nonsensical rules governing English language and literature. Mr. Parkhill, an American language instructor, relays Hyman's attempts to 'master' (both through proficiency and through control) the English language. Through Hyman's mistakes and successes, the reader comes to question the traditions

of the English language. If the audience blindly accepts the rules governing standard English usage, then they must also accept the cultural assumptions informing these rules.

Throughout *HK*, Hyman demonstrates profound insight into the English language and its cultural and historical foundations, although Mr. Parkhill's contemplation on whether Hyman's comments are calculating or incidental causes the reader to be skeptical of this profundity. This ambiguity about Hyman's skills and purposes forces the reader to confront their own assumptions about immigrants: are immigrants capable of linguistic games at Hyman's level? Or, is this an instance of American born Rosten's inability to portray an authentic immigrant character and dialect? Furthermore, this ambiguity makes the reader confront their assumptions about the immigrant novel: can they be resistant and experimental?; can immigrant novels have heightened aesthetic qualities?; can they be intellectual? As Hyman becomes increasingly able to make informed decisions about language and literature, so does the reader, as they follow Hyman's education and thought process. Yet Rosten appears skeptical that the audience can make appropriate decisions without his intervention. Although this education is all part of Hyman's and Rosten's game with the audience, Rosten leaves nothing to chance. Therefore, he hints at Hyman's intelligence throughout the text. Hyman can always support his logic through experience and elaboration though it is not logic in a standard sense: both the circumstances of his ethnic experience and universals influence his logic. Even Mr. Parkhill's interruptions do not shake Hyman's confidence in his ability to portray experience accurately through language. Yet the filtering of Hyman's language through the medium of Mr. Parkhill, arguably, dilutes the radicalism of Hyman's language. Hyman's speech, when approached second-handedly through Mr. Parkhill, creates a level of ambiguity, placing the emphasis back on what the reader

interprets. This ambiguity also calls reader assumptions into question, so the reader can no longer rely on their own interpretations. Thus, they must rely on the author's cues to create meaning.

By involving the reader in a type of linguistic game, the text asks readers to experience Hyman's struggles with language and rules. Through this process, Hyman becomes more than just an immigrant: he becomes a human individual being subject to the same forces as the reader. Rosten portrays his protagonist as a type of everyman dealing with universal or worldly issues. Hyman knows about American culture, but he also knows about other cultures. Through a comparison of the languages associated with these cultures, the reader can begin to see some of the limitations of culture at the micro level of language. In this way, *HK* becomes a story of difficulty and experience: a story of those who struggle in the modern world. Bhabha terms this type of narrative cosmopolitanism "translational" (qtd. in Berman 17). In this translational cosmopolitanism, the immigrant individual translates, or writes, himself into more than one culture (17). As language is tied to cultural and societal systems, then immigrants gain a foothold into dominant culture by altering the dominant language in ways allowing for the incorporation of their own experiences. Furthermore, by translating instead of fully assimilating the dominant language taught by Mr. Parkhill, Hyman is able to maintain a sense of himself and his personal culture. He is an individual straddling or "writing" himself into more than one culture. This translation occurs at the level of ideas and at the practical level of language, and literally through Hyman's written and spoken assignments for his English class. Translational cosmopolitanism is an active form negotiating the distance between the old and past (Old Country) with the modern and present (American), and this negotiation creates a feeling of community with the reader (Berman 19). Rosten's cosmopolitanism, like Bhabha's translational cosmopolitanism, is a practical form focusing more on the actual use of cosmopolitan aesthetics to direct audience

perceptions about societal standards. Rosten does want the audience to see him as an artist and his stories as a production of intellectual artistry, but these ideological cosmopolitan goals are secondary to his practical goals, such as demonstrating the limitations of language and the cultural assumptions governing aesthetics. Practical cosmopolitanism likewise influences the aesthetics of Ornitz's *HPJ*, more so than ideological affiliations and ideological cosmopolitanism.

In *HPJ*, Meyer is the narrator of his own rags-to-riches tale with the added complication of narrator untrustworthiness. Meyer's actions and notoriety cause the reader to question the authenticity of his story. This distrust may be, in part, result from the intellectual and artistic quality underlying his logic. If the reader sees these skills as a literary device more than an actual possibility, this can hurt the author's credibility, although the audience must still reconsider their assumptions about immigrants and immigrants' language abilities. On the surface, Meyer is a man out to make money and succeed by any means necessary, which includes taking advantage of other Jewish immigrants. He contributes little to society and certainly little towards elevating culture. Thus, he seems incapable of the logical and aesthetic experimentation occurring throughout the novel. Since perceived authenticity is a major component of immigrant novels, inauthenticity causes the reader to question the text's relationship to other immigrant novels and to question the very language the narrator uses to relate the plot. Yet who determines what part of the immigrant experience is authentic? If the determiner is the immigrant himself, then there is no reason to think that he would not be capable of the experimentation that occurs. Due to this, the author and his immigrant protagonist must convince the audience of Meyer's linguistic and intellectual capabilities. To convince them it requires educating the audience about immigrants, the texts of immigrants, and the potential value of immigrant language. On one hand, *HPJ*'s

nonstandard syntax is a means of portraying the ‘uneducated’ nature of the characters and illustrating their estrangement from mainstream WASP culture. On the other hand, Meyer is fulfilling audience expectations about immigrants, while distancing himself from those same expectations. He is both complicit in the system and a challenge to it. In this way, Meyer is a metaphor for the way cosmopolitanism should function in these texts. Although Meyer may not be traditionally educated, he is able to manipulate language in a way that would challenge even native English speakers. Through his wits and language abilities, Meyer is able to rise to the level of criminal kingpin. Meyer's affiliation with and participation in the cultural decay of modernity (unchecked capitalism, commodification, commercial forces, and the diminishing value of art and high culture) may appear a misstep on the part of author Ornitz; yet the intimate knowledge of society's problems makes him better able to deal with them and increases the ethos of his opinions. He bases his judgment and speech on observation and experience instead of assumptions about culture and society. Meyer can thus, counteract some of the negative forces working upon him (and upon author Ornitz), to a limited extent. Therefore, he may be a metaphor for cosmopolitanism, but his downtrodden and lost position at the end of the novel implies that cosmopolitanism may work in theory, but not in the reality of the modern era.

#### I. Rosten: The Education of the Reader Through *The Education of Hyman Kaplan*

In an interview with Herbert Mitgang, Leo Rosten discusses his writing process, focusing on clarity, precision, and efficiency: “Getting the exact rhythm to a sentence of Kaplan dialect is next in importance to getting the exact word. . . . Kaplan requires a lot of control” (5). In the interview, Rosten suggests there is a ‘correct’ rhythm and ‘correct’ word to use depending on circumstances, and this requires a measure of knowledge about what is appropriate. Thus, the person or systemic forces determining what is correct have a measure of authority over those

using a language. By altering English, Rosten and his protagonist Hyman maintain some authority over their language and readers' responses to their language. Rosten's awareness of the processes controlling language allows him to manipulate them according to his purposes. This power play makes it appear that Rosten is allying himself with the elite and formally educated, although far more covertly than in the case of Lewisohn and Steiner. However, Rosten takes pains to ensure that his audience understands and enjoys his protagonist's linguistic games through authorial intervention, which connects him more to the mass audience than to intellectuals. He attempts to engage them in a practical manner through interaction and participation in a game. Unlike Lewisohn and Steiner, Rosten does not rely on a shared sense of humanity or shared values to engage his audience. This game with the audience may seem contrary to his cosmopolitan purposes, as it allies him with the masses and their culture. However, Rosten hopes, through education, even the masses to some degree can be intellectual. If the audience can be educated, then their perceptions about artistic value and intellectualism can change. Rosten does not go so far as to imply changes in the mass audience leads to changes within mass culture. Therefore, his alliances are in line with the practical cosmopolitanism he espouses. Rosten attempts to utilize experimental techniques to show how immigrant narratives share an aesthetic with other modernist cosmopolitan texts, but he does not attempt to reclassify his work as modernist, experimental, or resistant. Since Rosten did not justify his own cosmopolitan leanings in his writings, this leaves critics and readers to speculate about the purposes behind his promotion of a more practical form of cosmopolitanism.

Rosten's literary techniques, in many ways, mimic modernist techniques: specifically, direct and clear diction paired with poetic techniques of rhythm. Through these techniques, he demonstrates his control of language, proving that the experimental elements are not just a

consequence of Yiddish's strangeness to the American reader. Yet Yiddish is often associated with humor, which to some critics supersedes any potentially experimental qualities of the text. Irvine Howe further criticizes Rosten's use of Yiddish in a review of one of Rosten's reference documents.<sup>37</sup> Howe states that Rosten's narrative gives a false impression of Yiddish by removing the language from its cultural and historical contexts. In this sense, Howe argues that *HK* is nothing more than a book out to cause a laugh, diminishing the experimental qualities of the text. When a book has a basis in humor, the audience may see it as lacking any serious purpose. Even if audiences notice something strange, they may put it aside as something accidental or something done solely for entertainment reasons with no politics behind it. Contrarily, Stephen Whitfield argues in his article "The Distinctiveness of American Jewish Humor," that humor is an integral part of Jewish culture (247). Thus, it is not surprising Rosten uses humor as a means of negotiating the particulars of the Jewish-American experience with the dominant language of English in a way not putting off the mass audience. Whitfield further asserts that humor and wit are a means of protecting Jewish culture against the stresses and forces of hegemonic culture, primarily through an emphasis on intellectualism and high culture (251). If humor is an intellectual device, then the pairing of humor and Yiddish elevates Yiddish beyond a 'common' dialect or alternative to Hebrew.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, humor functions as a means of challenging English and the culture informing it in ways meeting and altering audience expectations. The entertainment factor may initially function as a hook for the audience, but after hooking them, Rosten can begin to educate and train them, which might change their perspectives toward art, culture, and society.

*HK* generally expresses humor through the unexpected and the strange, which overturns reader expectations and notions of familiarity. Yet the common, "mimetic," and everyday are

integral to making humor function in resistant ways: "the mimetic and the uncanny coexist to unsettle the conventions of immigrant realism and romance" (Keresztesi 72). The recycled, commodified conventions of the immigrant novel allow Rosten to connect with his audience, while he works to challenge standards and audience assumptions through the immigrant perspective. In this way, the "mimetic" and "uncanny" exist together in Rosten's text, which "unsettles conventions" and demonstrates his cosmopolitan sympathies. Through this pairing, the experimental appears a natural part of the immigrant text. One particular assignment exemplifies this, when the protagonist pairs the poetic with the commonplace. He also pairs non-standard logic with standard logic in a way causing the reader to view a familiar scene in new ways. In his speech, Hyman describes the natural surroundings around him: "De sky! De son! De stoss! De clods! De frash air in de longs! All is pot from Netcher!" (Rosten 27). On the surface, this scene is almost trite in its effusive description of nature, but the altered diction serves two purposes: one anticipated and one with unexpected results. Words such as 'stoss' and 'clods' are phonetic transliterations of the Standard English words 'stars' and 'cloud' into Hyman's Yiddish-ish dialect.<sup>39</sup> These transliterations maintain a level of foreignness through pronunciation and capitalization. Other examples in the novel show Hyman to have a tolerable competency in spelling and a serviceable vocabulary, thus, any mistakes present are for rhetorical purposes. Yet if Hyman were to appear too educated about English, then it would strain his credibility. Yet some of the "errors" remain outside of the audience's ability to recognize them. For instance, he capitalizes 'Nature,' a noun, as it would be in Germanic languages, but he does not capitalize other nouns such as 'stars' and 'sun.' The capitalization of 'nature' paired with the use of exclamation marks serves to elevate an everyday scene to the level of poetry. This suggests a level of wit and familiarity with poetic techniques that readers can overlook when they focus

overly on Hyman's misuse of the English language. Furthermore, the audience can gloss over these aesthetic choices if they have no knowledge about German language rules. Since knowledge of German is necessary to understand these linguistic manipulations, it implies that the uninformed mass reader may not be Rosten's sole audience base.

In *HK*, even the misuse of language can serve a double function: to entertain and elevate. The word 'clod' is, as already mentioned, a phonetic spelling of 'cloud,' an expected pairing with sun, sky, and stars. This secondary use of the word 'clod' leads the reader from a description of the heavens to a description of the earth, perhaps the earth upon which Hyman is hiking. This example serves as humorous, then, due to the common hilarity ensuing from misuse and misconceptions: misuse of language and misconceptions about immigrants' English abilities and the unexpected results from nonstandard use of everyday words. Readers must learn to look beyond the stereotypical and expected to see meaning and language as it exists for the immigrant individual. The recitation above forces the reader to view familiar vocabulary in ways they may have not been able without the intervention of Hyman. When Hyman continues to wax poetic about nature in his recitation, he mentions how he felt “*in de soul de trees, de boids, de gress, de bloomers all de scinnery*” (emphasis in original, Rosten 27). Interestingly, both the phrase 'in de soul' and the word 'Blumen' are italicized. 'Blumen' is italicized due to its being a foreign word in an English language text, yet 'in de soul,' although English is misspelled. Additionally, italicized words or phrases imply an ironic or non-literal reading of a word. If one thing is ironic, then other words, phrases, and so forth may potentially be ironic. Without the narrator's intervention, this irony might go unnoticed by the audience. Irony requires an alternate reading on the part of readers, and without education, it may be difficult for them to abandon their gut reading to see in a new way.

In addition to irony, there is also a level of ambiguity built into the passage, requiring active reading on the part of the audience. The audience may not read this phrase with the importance and elevation Hyman feels it is due, however. This implies that Rosten feels any text (or speech) by an immigrant may be unfairly valued and may not receive the artistic credit it is due. Whether these techniques imply irony, importance, or ambiguity, they all demonstrate conscious aesthetic choices drawing certain responses from the reader or involving them in a useful, entertaining linguistic game. When Hyman uses the foreign word 'bloomers' in his recitation on nature, it causes a great deal of amusement for his fellow classmates who are focusing on the English equivalent word for ladies' undergarments. Here, the students' conceptions of standard English causes the amusing mistake, not Hyman's quite logical derivative of 'bloomers' from 'blooms' and 'blooms' from 'flowers.' Here, he pairs the beautiful with the common: in this way, "The . . . beauty of poetic passion [aesthetics] and the mundane details of immigrant life [or life in general]," are contrasted, "creat[ing] a fantastic [uncanny] effect" (Keresztesi 75). Humor thus serves as a practical application of Rosten's cosmopolitan aesthetics. The humor ties in experiential circumstances and ethnic details with heightened aesthetics in a way connecting with the reader far more effectively than the detached cosmopolitan aesthetics demonstrated by the Lewisohn and Steiner.

This attempt to elevate the immigrant text occurs primarily at the level of language, and more specifically through Hyman's speeches. Hyman's educational progress reflects the unusual emphasis on, elevation of, and ironic logic underlying common words. Therefore, as the speeches progress, so does the audience's awareness of Hyman and Rosten's linguistic game. Overall, Hyman--and Rosten through Hyman--wants the audience to learn from and understand his process of improvement through education. With this education, Hyman and the audience

will be able to use and view language and culture in ways they may not have previously been able. In a later usage exercise, Hyman changes the audience's view on the common English word 'pitcher.' He makes use of the word in the sentence, "'Oh, how beautiful is dis *pitcher*'" (Rosten 37). 'Pitcher' is not a word foreign to English, but Hyman uses the word in a foreign and unusual way. In this case, the everyday object of a pitcher possesses aesthetic qualities, suggesting that there is art in all objects. The humor, then, comes not from Hyman's diction and portrayal of the pitcher, but from Mr. Parkhill's inability to respond or offer any logical rebuttal. Hyman is aware of how Mr. Parkhill views immigrants and Mr. Parkhill's assumptions about the linguistic abilities of immigrants, and Hyman plays to these assumptions in order to show how these preconceptions limit his perception. His assumptions also limit his ability to teach and communicate meaning to others effectively. In essence, Hyman becomes an immigrant per Mr. Parkhill's expectations, much like the "ethnic impersonator" described by Browder. Browder describes this act of putting on "immigrant-ness" as demonstrating the

playfulness inherent [to] the ethnic impersonator, a creativity that come from having a deep knowledge of the valences of ethnicity and race and a willingness to manipulate those for the sake of his or her own liberation. (Browder 11)

Here, Browder focuses on liberation from racial and ethnic boundaries, but the same argument extends to the liberation from linguistic and other cultural limitations, making this act of immigrant-ness resistant. The level of resistance allotted to this act by the audience depends largely on their willingness to accept Hyman's agency and his knowledge about matters such as aesthetics.

*HK* shows that Hyman possesses a poetic and dramatic sense of aesthetics, and this underlies his word choices. Through translation and a focus on the aural quality of words, phrases, and sentences, he also shows a keen sense of aesthetics. Readers of immigrant texts

expect certain ethnic details to figure prominently, and elements appealing to aural and visual senses help make these details more authentic for the reader. One of these details, Hyman's name, is still approached with this sense of aesthetic presentation. At the end of each assignment, Hyman signs his name so distinctively that Mr. Parkhill comes to see his name as an image: “[Mr. Parkhill saw the] image of his unmistakable signature, in all its red-blue-green glory. The multicolored characters were more than a trademark; they were an assertion of the individuality, a symbol of singularity, a proud expression of Mr. Kaplan’s Inner Self” (Rosten 13). Through his signature, Hyman emphasizes his interest in the aesthetics of sound and visual aesthetics. Each letter is spaced with a star (H\*Y\*M\*A\*N K\*A\*P\*L\*A\*N), causing the reader to take each letter and sound individually. By thinking only of the phrase or word, the reader sees it in relation to its context and connotations. This instead of seeing the word's true meaning separated from cultural, national, and other influences, which can warp meaning. Here, Rosten reduces two words to the phonetic level, reducing the likelihood of the reader seeing the word as just a "foreign" name. Alternatively, it could be just an unintended consequence of Hyman's dramatic presentation style. If taken at a glance, the name's strangeness to the English speaker may cause the reader to discount it and the protagonist. Through aesthetics, however, Rosten shows him to be more than a representation or stereotype and his name a gratuitous detail. Other instances occur later in the novel, when Hyman is more familiar with the rules of Standard English, show this emphasis on the aesthetics of words and sentences.

It becomes obvious that *HK* is not just relating the progress of an immigrant grappling with English, but a novel attempting to do something more. Rosten is attempting to create an intellectual and aesthetically motivated text within the confines of the popular immigrant form. Similar to the other immigrant authors described in this study, Rosten is familiar enough with

English and with the cultural influences underlying the language that he can manipulate it to achieve his cosmopolitan purposes. To create a bridge between high and low, Rosten consciously violates Standard English rules, forcing the reader to learn their native language anew: a process similar to that which Hyman endures. Rosten exposes the arbitrariness of language rules, that there is no real basis for these rules outside the standards of discourse: “outside discourse there is no fixed point from which one can establish metaphysical boundaries for linguistic signifiers” (Karl 13). As such, there is no logical reason Hyman's use of the language should be considered incorrect when taking into account his cultural background.

Hyman also demonstrates his unusual sense of aesthetics through violations of foundational English language rules. These violations, like the other linguistic and aesthetic manipulations in *HK*, cause the reader to reanalyze their position regarding categories and other institutions. Even Mr. Parkhill, to some degree, seems aware of Hyman's aesthetic sense. At the beginning of the novel, Mr. Parkhill remarks, “[Kaplan] had a keen sense of structure” (25) and punctuation. For instance, in a personal letter written to his brother, Hyman makes Mr. Parkhill aware of his intentional misuse of the English language. The salutation of the letter begins with “Hello Max!!!” (Rosten 50), a statement that his classmates and instructor Mr. Parkhill criticize. In his inimitable personal logic, Hyman responds: ““For de vay I’m feelink abot mine brodder?” Through this ‘mistake,’ Hyman shows how the rules of English cannot adequately express his meaning. Hyman feels English flattens the impact of his words. Therefore, Hyman intentionally uses punctuation incorrectly to elevate the emotional effect of his statement. As the novel progresses, Hyman is increasingly skeptical standard English rules can adequately express his experience. Language is more than just a system of rules to Hyman. If Hyman is to convey true meaning, he must create an entirely different system of language, or he must show how the

dominant system fails in order to justify the lack of true meaning in his statements. The fault is not with Hyman, but with society, culture, and the language influenced by them. It is important to note, however, that Rosten does not attempt to implement new language usages. He does create his own rules, vocabulary, and lexicography, but he does not require the audience to use it, as that would create the same problems for the audience that Hyman experiences with English. Just as English cannot adequately function for Hyman, he knows his own system might fail to function for the American reader. There is no dominant language for Hyman and Rosten, only a mixture of rules and vocabulary. To this Rosten adds elements of several languages and personal, ethnic, regional, and national particulars to help portray immigrant experience. This act is similar to the "transformative act of intercultural fusion" mentioned in *Accented America* (8).

Cosmopolitan acts take the elements from several language systems and fuse them to make a new, worldly system of meaning. Through knowledge of English and other languages, the reader can make better decisions about meaning and the aesthetics used to convey meaning.

Hyman's language choices are all carefully thought out, although the reader may not be privy to the why and how of his choices. In the construction of his sentences, Hyman follows an innate logic, a logic that does not always coincide with established rules:

It was Logic. A secret kind of logic, perhaps. A private logic. A dark and baffling logic. But Logic. And when Mr. Kaplan fell into grammatical error, it was simply because his logic and the logic of the world did not happen to coincide. (Rosten 153)

Hyman, ignorant about the established rules of English grammar, diction, and usage, creates an entirely new system of language better suiting his aesthetic sense. This sense of aesthetics incorporates his dramatic bent, his image-driven prose, and an original 'lexicography' (Rosten 55). When the audience understands the rules of his system, then they can better understand the

reasons why Hyman makes the changes he does. Furthermore, as narrative techniques, grammar, and other linguistic techniques create a sense of community among their adherents (Berman 20), audiences become a part of this community if they understand a language. Rosten likewise creates a connection with a more intellectual and artistic community. However, creating affiliations is less important than offering alternatives to limited dominant systems such as the English language. In this effort, Hyman's personal experiences shape Hyman's system of usage and largely ignores the difficulties the audience might encounter when attempting to decipher it. Hyman's techniques, like modernist techniques, are criticized for their difficulty, abstraction, and detachment from culture.

The logic, which Hyman's system of language is based on, challenges the limitations of Standard English. His syntactical and lexical manipulations push boundaries of understanding and familiarity, forcing the class and audience to re-analyze their relationship with the English language. The cosmopolitan tactic of expanding boundaries through alternatives and practical language resembles modernist attempts to divorce language from tradition:

Most of modernism is not so obviously in a different tongue, but it is constantly tending away from the straight and narrow path of conventional English, the conventional lexicon, conventional syntax, and other principles of linguistic association. Modernism is written in a language that is, in some way, fundamentally different from the language in which the antecedent tradition of English literature had been written. (Malamud 6)

Malamud acknowledges the connection between "modernist" language and the dominant tongue. If the purpose of linguistic experimentation is to be different from, offer alternatives to, or offer a means of moving beyond limitations, then an author must keep a base in the dominant language he is resisting. Furthermore, if the audience does not understand the language, they are unlikely to understand the alternatives offered to them. When the audience has a general understanding of

the rules, then they can be educated about alternatives, in much the same way Hyman is educated. Hyman narrowly avoids re-inscribing limitations by never outright advocating that the audience take up his system of language. Hyman fails exercise after exercise, yet as Mr. Parkhill admits,

[Hyman] seemed to be proud of the very number of errors he had made; of the labor to which the class was being forced in his service; of the fact that his ideas, his creation, could survive so concerted an onslaught. (Rosten 19)

If these were errors in the traditional sense of failure, it is unlikely Hyman would be so proud of them. His pride in his errors suggests he works under another system of value, one elevating experimentation and resistance over linguistic correctness. Hyman rarely acknowledges committing an error; contrarily, he only acknowledges that the rule is correct in Standard English. Only Hyman can determine which linguistic system suits his purposes.

One way Hyman alters English to suit his purposes better is by challenging the logic underlying English syntax. Hyman forces the reader to look at all the parts of a sentence, as well as the logic influencing the construction of the sentence; and hopefully, the reader will look at the information more critically. In one of Hyman's speeches complaining about his wife's morning habits, he challenges the very logic underlying syntax: "Avery mornink she got op six o'clock, no matter vat time it vas!" (Rosten 29). The class is understandably confused by the paradox in his statement that it can be both six o'clock and any time simultaneously. If the reader takes this statement at face value or focuses on the entire sentence instead of individual words, then its meaning might be lost. This potential for lost meaning reinforces Hyman's (and Rosten's) belief that Standard English cannot convey Hyman's story accurately. When the class point out the error of this statement, Hyman responds with his startling logic:

‘My wife gats op so oily in de mornink dat you couldn't tell vat time it vas, I couldn't tell vat time it vas, . . . Avery day in de contry she vas gattink op six o'clock, no matter at time it vas' . . . Would you know it was six o'clock if you vas slippink?’ (Rosten 30)

Here, even time is questioned, as Hyman's system of time is separate from his wife's. He furthermore shows the irrelevancy of some realistic details on logic. Rosten makes it clear through Mr. Parkhill's subsequent statement that Hyman's speeches are meticulously thought out and only given for a purpose. However, because it does create a paradox, this ‘dialectical’ and ‘metaphysical reasoning’ (Rosten 31) is not adequately reflected in Standard English. If Hyman is truly contemplating the dialectical nature of language and speech, then he is concerned with philosophy, which would tie him to the intellectual and artistic. Yet Rosten must convince the audience of Hyman's wit before they will accept Hyman's errors as more than just ignorance. In this case, Mr. Parkhill can decipher Hyman's meaning and the clever way he manipulates language despite Mr. Parkhill's ignorance about the rules of Hyman's linguistic system. Mr. Parkhill is not always so conscious of Hyman's constructions, however. Despite his cleverness and the carefully constructed nature of Hyman's linguistic choices, the success of his language depends solely on the reader. As will be discussed later, Hyman is not always able to convey his meaning to the mass reader, which argues against the efficacy of his personal linguistic system and its ability to articulate his experience to others. This system will only work for him, and he does not claim to speak for anyone else.

Hyman's statements are often difficult to understand because they require a process of translation to make sense, a translation not into another language, but from Hyman's unique system of logic: this system is comprised of fractured, altered, and hybridized English, Yiddish, and German. Fractured language shows the incompleteness of language and meaning. Altered

language offers alternatives to the dominant language and the possibility of change. Hybridized English likewise presents alternatives by meshing and comparing multiple systems. Finally, Yiddish and German offer a means of maintaining ethnic individuality within the dominant language. In *HK*, all of these techniques push the audience into seeing things similar to Hyman, or push them to translate what they see into his terms. Vegso describes this process of translation as the "linguistic displacements of transnational modernisms" (24). Hyman's translation process displaces the reader by separating them from cultural referents and by requiring them to reject Standard English rules in favor of Hyman's rules. This translation refers to the actual process the reader must complete for a full understanding of Hyman's speeches. First, readers must translate the non-standard spelling into sound, and a full appreciation of the logic underlying spelling comes from its aural quality. Secondly, the reader must translate the sentence through the lens of Hyman's ethnic background, more specifically, his accent. Many sentences are spelled according to the phonology of words, but this phonology is largely influenced by how these words sound to Hyman's immigrant ears. After the reader translates sentences at the level of diction, the reader must then interpret the syntax of the statement using what they have derived about Hyman's system. Hyman's perceptions and his linguistic game make English foreign. When something is made foreign, the reader can no longer rely solely on their assumptions and preconceptions to determine meaning. The novel's target audience is not 'intellectuals': an audience familiar enough with English syntax and the vocabulary of foreign languages to deconstruct the sentence as a scholar. The reader must apply rules borrowed from other languages to Hyman's speech, especially phonetic patterns. In essence, the reader is translator and must apply relevant rules to individual and cultural experiences to decode Hyman's system. Through Mr. Parkhill's internal

commentary and the language class' instruction, even the uninformed reader has the tools necessary for understanding Hyman's speech.

Here, Hyman is not caving to audience expectations, but creating new expectations about language. The audience coming to *HK* may make assumptions about the quality of the text and the purposes behind an immigrant author's use of Yiddish. Therefore, Hyman must address audience assumptions about the artistic and intellectual capabilities of immigrants, and by extension, immigrant authors. Rosten integrates Yiddish not just for an "ethnic" feel, but to elevate the aesthetic quality of the text through its style and ability to contrast Standard English. Through comparison with Yiddish, the 'foreignness' of dominant English is shown. To Rosten and Ornitz, Yiddish is "a highly stylized and lyrical language," although the "range of feelings and words . . . might remain hidden to an English-only reader [if] not for the narrator's mediation" (*Ethnic Modernism* 144). It is important that the author guides the reader through "mediation," as the audience may not be familiar with Yiddish and its potential.<sup>40</sup> Interestingly, more than just Yiddish becomes foreign to the reader: English itself becomes foreign. 'Foreignness' can serve as a basis for a 'universal language' and connection instead of enforcing boundaries between the new language and the native language (Vegso 26). Separated from one language system, it can be many. This ability to connect is more important than reinforcing differences and barriers between language systems. Yet the idea of a universal language is problematic when considering Rosten's techniques in *HK*, however. He attempts to create neither universal categories nor distinctions, nor does he attempt to enact societal change through language or create a new universal language. Universalism may help to create a connection with the audience, but ultimately, it functions to elide ethnic specifics, defeating the purpose of Rosten's new language: it cannot hope to speak for individual experiences.

Similar to the visual and translated quality of Hyman's speeches, aural aesthetics are equally important to Mr. Kaplan's ethnic performance. Language is more than just an exercise to Hyman, as it is to Mr. Parkhill. Hyman's speeches are performances: he designs them to be heard. The aural quality of the speech makes it seem more real: "Felt words rather than grammatical words are real speech, and these are the words that are listened to" (Payant 79). If words are realistic, then they help increase the author's credibility, and authenticity ties to commercial success and audience acceptance. Furthermore, Hyman [and Rosten] knows that to connect with his audience successfully, he must be "able to consciously manipulate the symbols of ethnic caricature" (Browder 158). Rosten must first engage with audience preconceptions before he can overturn them through clever language games. Hyman's treatment of his name both aurally and visually demonstrates the carefully constructed nature of Hyman's game and his keen aesthetic sense. Rosten connects the aural imagery of Hyman's statements with visual imagery, elevating the phrase from a flat reading to a full sensory performance. Even Mr. Parkhill begins to visualize Hyman's name in colors: "It seemed impossible, fantastic, yet Mr. Kaplan had pronounced his name in red and blue and green: H\*Y\*M\*A\*N K\*A\*P\*L\*A\*N" (Rosten 32). The visual pauses the stars create makes readers (and teacher) pronounce the name precisely as Hyman desires it, with each syllable and sound emphasized.

With an unusual name like Hyman, the American reader may not automatically know how to pronounce it. Hyman wants readers to pronounce it a certain way, and he wants them to read his story a certain way. Here, Hyman puts the reader in the position of an immigrant student unfamiliar with the foreignness of American names, just as immigrant cosmopolitanism puts the reader into the position of outsider. Furthermore, the colors red, blue, and green help the reader separate individual sounds. The reader must sound out the name slowly, dealing with each letter

and sound individually. They cannot associate it with the commonplace; even if the reader is familiar with this name, the aesthetic breaks down of his name forces readers to see and hear it differently. They receive a new perspective on something as innocuous as a name. Hopefully, with instruction, the audience will be better able to see language with an aesthetic sense influenced by culture and individual experience. In this example, we see the successful practical application of Rosten's cosmopolitan aesthetics. Yet it appears that this version of cosmopolitanism is only successful at the micro level and not on every occasion. To be successful, it requires acceptance and participation on the audience's part. If the rules are too obvious, he risks turning the audience away; if the rules are unknown, the reader cannot play. As such, the audience must perceive Hyman as knowledgeable and clever, but not so much that they cannot see him as representative of immigrant linguistic ability. The dominant English language is "thus a double bind for the American immigrant: speak it poorly and you are discounted; speak it well and you are suspected (Payant 79). Rosten, then, must play his game with the reader carefully. Hyman does not feel obligated to follow the rules of a language not allowing him to convey his ethnic experience or any true meaning adequately--as he sees it. There is a need, then, to create a space for his story, which he must tell through his own language, and immigrant cosmopolitan techniques help him create this space.

Another way Hyman integrates individual flavor, originality, and accuracy in his statements is through syntactical violations. According to T.E. Hulme, "Plain speech is essentially inaccurate" (52); and, therefore, it must be altered to relate meaning and experience. In *HK*, the standard English Mr. Parkhill teaches does not allow Hyman to express his feelings and experiences adequately. Therefore, Hyman creates his own lexicography, system of grammar, and syntax. This situation is shown when one of Hyman's instructors is forced to re-

analyze English syntax in terms of strangeness: “Mr. Jennings explained the meaning of the words. He treated them individually, collectively, conceptually. But he admitted that the phrase, as a phrase, seemed strange” (Rosten 111). Mr. Jennings understands both the definition and underlying conceptual influences of the words he uses, but when he describes these words together, the strange logic underlying colloquial phrases is exposed. Geography and experience limit colloquial phrases: they only have meaning for those with shared cultural and national influences. Indeed, most of the rules Mr. Parkhill and Mr. Jennings teach Hyman function like colloquial phrases when filtered through Hyman's viewpoint. These rules do not hold the same value or meaning for Hyman or Rosten. This defamiliarization of common phrases and rules no longer holding much meaning causes the reader must view statements in a new way, revitalizing the phrase.<sup>41</sup> Defamiliarization is present in all of the immigrant novels described in this study, although Rosten focuses more on the practical steps necessary for defamiliarization to function rather than the end goal of the defamiliarization: acceptance of the immigrant novel as a resistant form and the immigrant author as artist and intellectual. Interestingly, one critic for the *North American Review* writes about the strangeness and unfamiliarity of the immigrant experience presented in *HK*:

Most of all the record is the picture of an ‘alien’ soul and a reflection in that soul of our familiar things. And the strange thing—strange that it should seem strange!—is that this soul is not in its content alien at all. (714)

Here, "familiar things" made "strange" through juxtaposition with ethnic experience confronts the reader. Although less experimental because of its reliance on the common details of everyday life, this careful pairing of the ethnic and familiar helps the author maintain his relationship with the audience. Thus, the strangeness of everyday things might surprise the reader, but it does not put them off.

Defamiliarization also occurs at the level of phonetics. Initially, Mr. Parkhill believes Hyman's language errors result from his inability to "distinguish between 'a' and 'e'" (Rosten 5) or an inability to hear vowels in the same manner as a native English speaker. This particular error is one of ignorance, an ignorance of the standard rules of English. When one is ignorant of rules, then one must rely on "common" knowledge. Common logic can serve as an alternative to accepted rules, and it can be a means of connecting with the mass audience. Yet these errors do not all result from ignorance, but from an adherence to a foreign system of language. There is more to Hyman's pronunciation errors than can be attributed to the influence of Yiddish and German. These errors are a means of making the reader re-analyze words in terms of their aural quality. The sounds are familiar to the reader, but Hyman uses them incorrectly or takes them out of context in a way emphasizing strangeness: the strangeness of familiar sounds and English to the immigrant individual. On the surface, this focus on the immigrant perception of English may be what Sollors terms "naturalistic verisimilitude" (63) or realism. This is problematic because "reality" must be shaped and altered to fit individual cultures to be "authentic." If any reality is being shown, it is only an individual one. By exposing the arbitrariness of referents from "real" life, he disrupts common notions about language.

By demonstrating Hyman's linguistic skill, despite his struggles with Standard English rules, Rosten shows that the immigrant does have something to offer the audience: a new perspective. Hyman knows the words he uses and knows how they are pronounced, but only he can determine which word best suits the situation: "I don't understand why I'm hearing the words I do. Simms to me it's used in another manner" (Rosten 10). It is not something in which Mr. Parkhill can intervene, which explains his confusion when Mr. Parkhill attempts to correct him. Despite his lack of understanding here, Hyman is still confident that he knows how

to utilize language in a way conveying his meaning; Mr. Parkhill cannot say the same. Mr. Parkhill, similar to the audience, misunderstands Hyman and the reasoning behind his logic without authorial intervention. In this situation, the native English speaker Mr. Parkhill cannot understand Standard English due to his unfamiliarity with Hyman's accent. The narrator places him and the reader in a state of confusion about familiar words. Without Hyman's help, however, the reader may not understand the phrase, which limits the impact of its meaning. If the meaning is lost, then the incorporation of ethnic specifics and the linguistic manipulations are causing the same problems as the dominant language: they are creating limitations. Thus, Rosten creates a new language system balancing the ethnic and dominant to suit his cosmopolitan purposes and to create space for his story. If the author falls too far to one side, it reduces the resistant potential of the text: it will become another mass-market immigrant novel, or it will lose the audience and any hope of altering their perspectives.

Without balance, Rosten risks losing audience interest and participation in his educational, linguistic game. Hyman may seem a 'genius' with an intellect above his immigrant classmates and his teacher Mr. Parkhill, but he is still subject to the whims and perceptions of his classmates and the audience. Rosten breaks the characters and audience into three categories: the uninformed and logical (Hyman), the informed but illogical (Mr. Parkhill), and the uninformed and illogical (the other immigrants and the audience). Rosten takes great pains to distinguish Hyman's abilities from that of the other immigrants in his class. If Hyman were like the other immigrants, then he would be subject to stereotyping, and his ability to do what the other immigrants cannot would strain credibility. He must appear both authentic and clever beyond reader expectations. This inability to find a balance is a failure, however, if Richard Shepard in his review of *HK* is correct that "when Hyman Kaplan speaks, everybody listens, but few

understand." If the reader only "listens" or reads *HK* superficially, then there is no purpose behind Rosten's linguistic manipulations. Rosten must ensure that the reader understands his word usage and his linguistic games. Yet Rosten is not always able to do this consistently throughout the novel. The reader like the other illogical characters requires Hyman to explain his word choice, phrasing, and syntax in terms of his personal logic. Hyman's logic is not an easy or common logic, nor is it logic based on universals. Indeed, Rosten appears to be skeptical that any language can fully explain all experiences, unlike Lewisohn and Steiner, who utilize universals and English to create an affinity with the audience. Contrarily, Rosten believes confusion and strangeness can form a bridge between the reader and the subject matter. Once the audience acknowledges their ignorance about language and Hyman's ethnic, immigrant, and personal experiences, then they can begin the process of learning and changing their perceptions. In this way, it is the context and not the standard definition that determines how the reader perceives the word.

*HK* is regulated prose, even at the micro level. However, the manipulations present in Hyman's statements are not always consistent. For instance, the misspelling of the word 'people' as 'pipple' appears at some points in the novel, but not at others. On the surface, this inconsistency implies authorial laziness. This inconsistency also supports the interpretation that many of Hyman's mistakes are intentional. Rosten's inconsistencies draw attention to errors made, errors that the audience may otherwise overlook. They likewise draw attention to how literature is constructed and how it can fail through word choice, syntax, and other literary techniques. Hyman is fully capable of spelling 'people' correctly. The question then becomes, why does he not? Hyman hints at his reasons in the final statement of the novel, "I don't care if I don't pass, I love the class." Hyman is not concerned with passing or proficiency with English

rules and standards. He already understands the rules, but he chooses not to follow them. He is more interested in the language game between him and Mr. Parkhill (and the audience), or the game between his personal language and Standard English. This game of cosmopolitanism at the level of language is an interactive one: a game between the two characters, between the protagonist and the narrative voice, and between the protagonist and the audience. The ultimate goal of the game is a fresh perspective on the English language and American culture. Through the game, Rosten connects the practical aspects of language and culture to more idealistic aspects of art and intellectualism. Yet, in some ways, the practical trumps the idealistic. The hope is that with newly balanced knowledge about how language functions, readers can make informed decisions regarding language, art, and culture. Many of Rosten's manipulations rely on audience interaction, but no more than his use of Yiddish: action through the process of translation and interpretation and interaction as the reader negotiates their knowledge of language with Hyman's logic. This process may seem a failure in the sense that it trades one set of limitations for another: the dominant logic for Hyman's logic. Yet at no point does Hyman try to convert Mr. Parkhill, his classmates, or the audience to his system. Certainly, they can choose to, but ultimately, the choice is theirs. This offer of choice helps Rosten narrowly avoid creating the same oppressive situation he attempts to correct, but it does create another problem for the author. The audience can always choose incorrectly if given a choice.

Another potential failure is the use of Yiddish, which some see as a "common" language. Certainly, Rosten's having published several reference texts on Yiddish combining comedy with Yiddish vocabulary helped cement his relationship with mass culture in the reviewer's and readers' minds. Rosten's use of 'popular' forms, dialects, and techniques associates his texts with commodified culture. Despite this classification, his texts are not devoid of techniques associated

with high literature. For instance, Sollors argues, “the ‘translated’ quality of some . . . expressions makes them resemble avant-garde prose” (Sollors 63). Translation requires more than a passive audience experience: they must establish meaning by recreating referents and filtering their experiences through the author’s culture and linguistic system. They must accept alternatives to the familiar and common. Despite the resistant quality of translation, Yiddish scholars chastise Rosten for his use of ‘kitchen Yiddish,’ or as Rosten himself terms, ‘Ameridish’<sup>42</sup> (Howe 8, 29). Irving Howe laments that when ‘Yiddish is torn out of its cultural context, [it loses] its critical world of meaning and reference’ (Howe BR 29). In this sense, Yiddish becomes a hollow language devoid of meaning without Jewish, and more specifically, Yiddish cultural referents. As Jules Chametzky argues, “Human culture is the creation of forms and modes (of behavior, ritualizing, representing) that enable people to grasp, give meaning to, get through their lives.” By using a hybrid or altered form of both Yiddish and English, Rosten avoids forcing the audience to accept any one language or any language at all.

The scholars above are not criticizing Rosten's incorporation of Yiddish, but his use of an impure form of Yiddish. As has already been argued, no pure form of language suits Rosten and Hyman's purposes, so alteration and hybridization are necessary. Howe may agree with Rosten's sentiments that English has become flat, and Standard English usage no longer adequately suggests meaning in the modern world. On the other hand, Howe argues for adhering to "pure" Yiddish, even if Yiddish is a response to the perceived ‘traditional,’ ‘old,’ and ‘obsolete’ quality of Hebrew and its inability to describe modern life and experiences adequately ("Authentic" 156). Rosten does not use standard Yiddish, but an American-Yiddish hybrid, ‘Ameridish.’ In his hybrid approach to language, Rosten vivifies both English and Yiddish in a way requiring the reader to possess knowledge about Jewish and Yiddish culture. This act compares languages and

the cultures informing these languages, which presents the reader with several linguistic and cultural options. Unlike Lewisohn and Steiner, however, he feels that a more practical approach to this goal is appropriate for maintaining audience interest and participation in the valuing of art. Maintaining this connection and achieving his goals is nearly impossible at the level of ideas, though.

## II. Ornitz: The Worldly Education of Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl

The protagonist of *HPJ* describes his life and motivations in terms of a game: the “professional Jew” game. The protagonist becomes a professional in terms of skill; he becomes a professional in terms of manipulation; and he becomes a professional in terms of performance, putting on an authentic Jewish identity. This game resembles the one in *HK*, in that Ornitz plays his game with the audience through plot, characterization, and language. The first move in this game is the novel's billing as an ‘anonymous autobiography.’ *HPJ* is not a true autobiography in terms of characterization, plot, or authorship, yet *HPJ*'s publisher Horace Liveright believed his text would be more marketable as a “memoir.” One written by a deceased judge who supposedly took part in actual events. The company billed author Ornitz as a middleman involved with the novel because of his acquaintance with the judge (Miller). Therefore, the reader feels as if there is something not quite right about the text, although they may not be sure about what. Indeed, before *HPJ*'s author was widely known as Samuel Ornitz, reviewers were aware on some level that a trick or game was being played, noting the ‘faked’ and ‘inauthentic’ quality of the text. This inauthentic quality led reviewers to see *HPJ* as either a failure of an immigrant autobiography or as an offering from an entirely different genre altogether. As one reviewer for the *New York World* (1923) states,

The judge [Meyer Hirsch, the narrator and supposed author] writes too well for a judge and too clearly for a lawyer. There are many suspicious marks about this

book, so many, in fact, that the present reviewer has concluded that it is no biography at all. A capable journalist's version of certain facts in the lives of several New York men who began life in the ghetto and died in the row of 'allrightniks' on Riverside Drive. A novelist's pure flight of fancy from a nest of three decades of newspaper clippings. It could be any one of these. Anonymity covers a wide variety of sources (11e).

This review suggests that the writer's clarity, skill, and insight into Jewish life are not gleaned from personal experience. They are contrived to mimic the form and content of the immigrant autobiography and tenement novel. *HPJ's* author's literary skill hurts his ethos, making the ethnic details of the text appear inauthentic. This suggests that realism, intellectualism, and artistry cannot be easily reconciled, as ultimately the low and the high cannot exist simultaneously in one text. It is true, however, that Ornitz takes liberties with realism, as he is a second-generation Jewish-American like Rosten and not a first-generation immigrant like his protagonist; this may make his tale seem contrived. They are not trying to tell a story about factual events or about their experiences as a first-generation author. They are only trying to tell the immigrant experience as they know it, influenced by ethnic details and culture, as well as by American culture. Ironically, the details Ornitz utilizes to achieve his cosmopolitan goal ultimately cause the novel to fail in this reviewer's mind. It seems strange, then, that Ornitz does not take a more political and abstract approach to cosmopolitanism, but Ornitz is skeptical that cosmopolitanism can truly function at the level of ideas.

In contrast to a reviewer for the *New York World*, Silas Bent argues in his review of *HPJ* that there are a number of language errors suggesting a non-native speaker. The assumption is that an immigrant new to the rules and pronunciations of English would make more mistakes than a native speaker would. Therefore, to Bent, the language in *HPJ* makes the billing of the novel as immigrant autobiography seem more appropriate:

It is true that although he has good command of the English lexicon, he is woefully at a loss in the sequence of tenses, so that present follows past almost as inevitably as night follows day. If he had called in a trained writer to help with the manuscript this defect, we may suppose, would have been remedied; and there are passages, moreover, which could not have been written at second-hand; they happened to the man who wrote them, or under his very eyes. In part, at least, this must be autobiography. Yet the author has helped himself liberally to the privileges of the novelist. (6)

This review hints at three reader preconceptions about immigrants and immigrant autobiographies. One, the language errors are not intentional: they are not a result of any experimental purpose. Two, to maintain credibility, authors must experience or witness the events about which they write. Three, one can be an immigrant author or an experimental writer, but apparently, not both. Due to the author's supposed immigrant identity, he cannot possibly have any other reason for his errors than ignorance; they cannot be the carefully constructed manipulations of a skillful author. The tense errors cannot be the author manipulating time and representation.

Both these reviews assume a level of skill for native English speakers and a level of error for immigrant authors, reinforcing Payant's argument about the double bind of English upon the immigrant (79). Depending on if the reader sees these errors as intentional or unintentional, it changes the way the reader views the game and how the reader and reviewer classify the text. If the reader sees the errors as intentional, then the 'author' is an agent in the game; if the errors are unintentional, then the game is being played on or without the author. This question about authorial intention lessens the impact of Ornitz's game, as the game requires audience participation to achieve its ultimate goal of altering narrow perceptions. These readers' opinions seem unchangeable, in that they appear convinced of the unalterable nature of the immigrant or autobiographical immigrant novel. Therefore, any deviation from the traditional form of the autobiographical immigrant narrative would warrant classifying a text under another literary

genre. With these two varying perceptions on *HPJ*'s realism, authenticity, and literary value, it is easy to see the obstacles immigrant cosmopolitanism faces from readers. Overall, both *HK* and *HPJ* are seen as failures: not commercially, but as 'artistic' or 'intellectual' works. They are clever and possess moments of artistry, but they are still immigrant novels. It appears that the success of one of these literary classifications (popular, intellectual, etc.) hinges on the failure of the other, despite all of Rosten and Ornitz's attempts to balance the practical (commercial and popular) aspects with the more idealistic aspects of their novels through a form of immigrant cosmopolitanism.

The next step of the game comes as the narrator gives the audience a 'worldly' or cosmopolitan education: the audience needs to know the rules of the game before they can participate. This worldly education stands in contrast to the standard education provided through public schools, making it appear as if the author allies himself with the common instead of the intellectual. On the contrary, this alliance with the worldly is more a result of his cosmopolitan aesthetics and a critique of systems than a dismissal of the intellectual. Despite the anti-intellectual subtext to the novel, the narrator Meyer Hirsch is hardly an idiot, and he is far less ignorant than the 'dream-stupefied' intellectuals present in the novel. Meyer is clever with words, in touch with reality, and able to see through the forces of marketing, capitalism, and labor. In contrast, intellectuals, characterized by socialist and union sentiments, are versed in philosophy and more openly eloquent, but they are almost childish in their idealism and cannot truly function in the world Meyer portrays. These are not the practical intellectuals informed by the conditions of labor figuring so prominently in Steiner's novel; they are the "aristocratic aesthete[s]" described by Lutz (13). Detached from reality and with limited ability to affect societal change, they are idealists focusing little on the practical application of ideas for the

greater good. Here, Ornitz's own modernist cosmopolitan politics bleed through. Intellectualism and artistry are used when appropriate, but only if they can contribute something useful or practical. Meyer's world is one based on survival, the necessary, and the practical. It is not surprising, then, that Meyer's (and Ornitz's) version of cosmopolitanism merges the practical with the idealistic and the intellectual with the common. Meyer's representation of Ornitz's cosmopolitan perspective is problematic. Although Meyer can see how systems function, he still chooses to uphold them. This participation in the system can be either a failure of his character or a comment on the failure of any ideology (even cosmopolitanism) within the United States during the modern period. Considering Ornitz's skill with language and his critique of ideologues, the second situation seems more likely.

Meyer is far less verbose than the other intellectuals portrayed in *HPJ*. His thoughts are shown primarily through a spotty, stream of consciousness style and rarely through dialogue. His thoughts may not be considered intellectual, but they are clever, manipulative, and useful in the wild and dangerous environment Meyer inhabits. The limitations of his environment bind Meyer, like all the characters featured in this study. Meyer can move beyond these limitations through language, a language seen mainly through internal thoughts. These internal thoughts are a powerful means of contrasting audience assumptions, immigrant stereotypes, and the connotations underlying words and phrases. The audience does not just see the outside environment, but also within the immigrant and within his culture. Not just his thoughts, but Meyer's actions are also carefully calculated, precise, efficient, and direct. He does not waste time on things not helping him to achieve his goal of being powerful enough to manage the conditions binding him. Ultimately, he is only able to control these conditions temporarily. In the end, it is only through the comfort of the Yiddish culture and language that he can maintain some

semblance of personal power. Language is power in *HPJ*. At times in the novel, Meyer's struggles appear to represent the immigrant author's attempts to navigate the literary market, tying Meyer's opinions to Ornitz's. Like Meyer, Ornitz feels that he must be able to move beyond limitations to survive in the hostile literary market and to manage his work's reception. Yet Ornitz's manipulations can only help at the micro level of language and only in certain circumstances. The problems he critiques still exist and his approach hardly sparks societal change, of which Ornitz is well aware.

The profit-driven modern world Meyer inhabits reduces language to its exchange value. The spare, efficient, and realistic equate to success within the modern world and within the literary marketplace: “things . . . were but rarely treated as anything else but as things as they are” (Ornitz 52). Excess in this world is time, and the loss of time means a loss in profit. In the literary market, then, elements not needed to portray reality are a waste of the reader's time, and thus, they are unprofitable. Indeed, even thoughts must be useful: “Good ideas are good only if they show a profit. Bear in mind--have only profitable ideas” (Ornitz 51). This mercenary anti-intellectualism and anti-literary experimentation ties Ornitz to profit-driven writing. However, the ending of the novel complicates this notion. It is those things associated with personal experience and ethnic culture bringing him comfort, even though they do not relate to his success as a businessman. He and Ornitz thus turn from successful elements after they have been found lacking and return to a more ethnically inspired world.

The first way Ornitz regulates language in the novel is at the level of diction, more specifically, he utilizes direct and efficient word choice. As D.H. Lawrence suggests, “directness, that un sentimental and non-dramatized thoroughness . . . It helps one to understand the world” (xvi-xvii). Meyer's world is not one based on aesthetic or ideological principles. Language is a

tool for survival for both Meyer and Ornitz, and they both must alter their language to succeed in a world influenced by market forces. The language of *HPJ* is a spare, useful, and personal language, stripped of the sentimentality often brought as a complaint against the Yiddish of tenement novels.<sup>43</sup> This spare style may appear a failure on the part of Ornitz's aesthetics, as it is separating him from the very ethnic particulars serving to contrast the forces of the modern world and the modern marketplace. Yet for his cosmopolitan project to succeed, he must address audience expectations. After all, as Meyer suggests in the novel, no one can escape the influences of the market. If as Wicke suggests, the

*market* means . . . the abstract space of the exchange of goods, commodities, and finally money, or its phantom representation in futures, then it has no location, since the abstract space of the exchange of goods is *all-pervasive, even in our dreams.*" [emphasis mine] (109)

The market influences even the dreams and principles of intellectuals, and it influences language and aesthetics. Meyer knows this, and, therefore, does not attempt to remove his language from these forces; contrarily, he attempts to write from within the system, if only indirectly or metaphorically. The failure, then, is not Ornitz's skill, but the cosmopolitan project at the cultural and societal scale. Ornitz is neither anti-art nor anti-intellectual, per se, but he knows that idealism is not a legitimate way to survive in the modern literary marketplace. Overall, Ornitz is critical of how intellectualism is often divorced from the practicality necessary for survival in the modern world. This critique of intellectualism makes Ornitz appear complicit in the very system that he critiques, but to avoid the pitfalls of a negative system, authors must have an intricate understanding of its workings. In this way, *HPJ* is not just a mass-market text, but also a work that is "a manifestation of market savvy in very practical terms" (Murphy 76). Ornitz knows his audience, and detached ideology and intellectualism is not popular with the common reader.

In many cases, Ornitz addresses the issue of language metaphorically, addressing literary and intellectual problems without allying himself directly with the impractical Jewish intellectualism shown in *HPJ*. One of the primary metaphors for Meyer's aesthetic leanings-- combining the high and low--is music. Music, and all artistic pursuits such as writing, gives Meyer a vehicle for critiquing what he sees as intellectual pandering: liking something because of its supposed cleverness and not its actual artistry. Intellectualism, like music, is another kind of performance where individuals act and buy according to elite tastes, in much the same way the common audience buys into popular forms. Meyer links 'elite' taste with profit and questions the elite's purported distaste of popular forms. Here, elitism is a fashion and is therefore tied to market values. To maintain their position as elite, individuals must remain removed from the masses and their culture no matter the artist's beliefs or the cost (Anderson 5). The elite described here are not the intellectually detached individuals admired by cosmopolitans. Instead, they have turned detachment into another form of marketing or "fashion." To avoid becoming one of these "cultured people," Meyer and Ornitz believe the intellectual elite must utilize mass culture in a manner affecting change. Pure idealism and a "pure use," to use Andreas Huyssen's term, is an unattainable goal. This sentiment reflects Ornitz's opinions regarding the balance between idealism and practicality; he believes that idealism needs a basis in reality to function in the modern world. Musician O'Brien's cynicism about the status of music during the modern period reflects this philosophy:

O'Brien said there was nothing original in music. Man understood only a few sounds. He sneered at musicians' technical flourishes and intricacies, declaring it as not music but rather a limited parlor game. A melody, a tune, was music; nothing else (Ornitz148).

To O'Brien, technical skill and artistry comes from simplicity, and all additions to basic sounds are just artistic games, accomplishing nothing but to inflate the artist's ego. Within this

simplicity, O'Brien also sees 'infinite possibilities.' In other words, the most basic of sounds are capable of great possibilities. The intricate flourishes do not create originality because originality is contained within the music itself.<sup>44</sup> As described earlier, Rosten argues that meaning exists in the smallest components of language (syntax and phonology), and through these components the author can reclaim some power over their writings. Ornitz believes the same. Furthermore, Meyer argues that simplicity allows O'Brien to integrate what Meyer calls 'Semitic colors and figures' (Ornitz 148). Simplicity allows authors to take music and literature back to a time before mass-market forces influenced it. It also allows for greater potential, as it is not limited to those elements that are commercially popular or audience approved. This potential does not suggest, however, that there can be no commodified elements in the text, as that is impossible, but it does suggest the possibility of something produced outside commodification.

Through the vehicle of music, the reader is acquainted with Ornitz's beliefs about language serving as a means of survival, artistic expression, and potential resistance. Arguably, these thoughts about music are the narrator's, not Ornitz's, but these observations contain none of the usual sarcastic wit Meyer employs when describing anything not offering some personal gain. Even if this were the case, *HPJ* shows Meyer to represent both the author and his opinions about the literary market. The observer, whether Meyer or not, admires O'Brien and his beliefs without belittling the artist as 'dream stupefied.' The difference, then, appears to be an individual's ability to manipulate popular culture in ways increasing its value and potential. In this case, the dream stupefying them is the idea that original' and non-commodified art can be created, even under the conditions of modernity. The incorporation of the self can help make art more original, not any other formal component. This fact may in part explain Ornitz's use of Yiddish and the incorporation of ethnic specifics into the text. They have a resistant quality in

that personal experience offers a contrast to assimilative cultural experiences. What the narrator seems to admire, then, is O'Brien's ability to alter clichés and the commercialized in ways seemingly new, without the pretension of calling it 'original.'

If the reader takes the above statement on music to be a metaphor for the writing process, then Ornitz seems to imply three things about language: one, most 'original' uses of language are only games because originality is an innate part of language. Two, it takes more skill to use simple language in new ways than it does to cover the language with technical 'flourishes.' Three, art and language are enough unto themselves. Adding complications or burying language in philosophy contributes nothing to the art's value. Indeed, it works contrarily to these cosmopolitan author's purposes, as it separates them and the content of the novel from reality and the audience. Ornitz, himself, experiments with language through the integration of Yiddish and ethnic particulars, yet he is not trying to create a pure art or idealism. Instead, Ornitz attempts to elevate the value of his work while using language in ways suiting the historic and cultural conditions under which he writes. He is under no illusions that he can create a pure or non-commodified version of ideology or literature.

Yiddish, then, in its ability to help him incorporate his individual, ethnic culture, serves to resist assimilation. In *HPJ*, Ornitz utilizes Yiddish in an efficient manner, stripped of sentimentality while refusing to translate for the non-native Yiddish reader. At the beginning of the novel, Meyer feels the need to accommodate the reader by translating Yiddish words and phrases such as "shidach (a match)" (Ornitz195). Meyer is still immature and careless in this part of the novel, and so too is the reader who follows him. They must be informed and led because they do not know enough about this foreign world to recreate the referents necessary to understand it. Furthermore, this accommodation matches the narrator's personality at the

beginning of the novel, before his late-in-life epiphanies about how his world and its systems function. Initially, Meyer is willing to do anything to succeed in the 'genteel' world, even if it means selling out his heritage and the Yiddish language to the genteel audience. It seems that Ornitz, too, is willing to sell out initially in order to hook his audience. By the end of the novel, however, Meyer no longer feels the need to accommodate his audience and refuses to translate. For instance, the last line of the novel is "Gedamfte brust und patate lahtkes" (Ornitz 300). Meyer repeats the phrase "Gedamfte brust und patate lahtkes" like a mantra at the end of the text, almost as if it were something to save him from the manipulative, exploitative, capitalist life that he has so far led. Many of the negative effects American culture has had on Meyer are the result of assimilation, ideological, linguistic and otherwise. The implication is that the audience cannot experience the phrase as Meyer does, so translating phrases belittles its meaning. The phrase is best taken in its original form, untranslated and unaltered. This lack of translation may appear to complicate Ornitz's cosmopolitan project, as it does not consider audience reception.

True experimentation is achievable through the utilization of language in its original form, without flourish. According to Michael North in *The Dialect of Modernism: Race, Language, and Twentieth-Century Literature* (1994), any form of "vernacular and dialect distortions of the language are a resource to be mined" by modernists and others (25-26). The phrase would not hold the same weight in English, as they audience would tie it back to American culture and assumptions through the process of converting it to familiar English. This process is different from the translation occurring in Ornitz's text, as it does not offer any alternatives to the familiar: the familiar only comes to replace the foreign. Furthermore, since the phrase is untranslated, it requires more than a passive reading from the audience, involving them in the language game Ornitz is playing. The audience must construct meaning from context and

from what they know about Meyer without authorial intervention. This indirect manipulation allows Ornitz to train the audience in his aesthetic sense without relying on exclusionary and abstract ideas or affiliation with polarizing and exclusionary groups or ideologies. If Ornitz's game is to have any effect, though, the audience must see things in new ways; therefore, they may not need the translation. Perhaps, at this point, he believes the reader can begin to see things through Meyer's eyes, unfiltered through the lens of the familiar.

On the other hand, the use of Yiddish in a text is associated with individual power within an assimilative system or the dominant culture; therefore, it has a somewhat resistant quality. Yiddish is power to control one's story to and how the audience perceives that story. Indeed, an example of this occurs when Meyer remembers how he felt about Yiddish as a child, that it was an intimidating and powerful force. A power Meyer returns to in his powerless state at the end of the novel. As a child, Meyer describes the Yiddish language as 'intimidating' and admires those who can harness its power:

It is not just Yiddish--guttural, jargonish, haphazard; but an arresting, rhythmical, logical language. . . . Yiddish, the lingo of greenhorns, was held in contempt by the Ludlow Streeters who felt mightily their Americanism (Ornitz14).

Despite the contempt second-generation 'Ludlow Streeters' feel for the Yiddish language, this person has courage enough to hold onto his language, a courage that Meyer does not feel as a child. If Meyer is somewhat representative of Ornitz, then Ornitz may feel that too much reliance on Yiddish will disconnect him from American culture, which is problematic when he must maintain a connection with his American readers. Furthermore, if Meyer represents Ornitz and his second-generation immigrant status, then some connection to American culture is necessary to relate Ornitz's experiences. By the end of the novel, though, when Meyer has nothing more to lose, he finds courage to reconnect with his heritage through language. He is a powerful man at

the end of the novel, despite his unhappiness, and those in power determine value. He feels Yiddish will help him reclaim himself and his heritage, making it valuable.

The translation of Yiddish phrases also works in a more complicated fashion, arresting the flow of sentences and calling attention to phrases the passive reader could easily overlook as background or ‘ethnic flavor.’ Stopping for translation mid-sentence is jarring for the reader. In a similar way, Ornitz’s use of ellipses in sentences pauses and shocks the reader. Then the reader is less likely to read only at the surface level or to overlook the elements such as diction and syntax. In essence, they will read the story in the way he desires. Take, for instance, the following lecture about Meyer’s bad habits, where the word ‘bar mitzvah’ is translated:

Until you were bar mitzvah (confirmed) I was responsible to God for your sins and to man for your acts. Now you must bear your own burdens. You steal from me, you refuse to study and you refuse to learn the buttonhole trade. You act like an outcast, therefore be an outcast (Ornitz 42).

The stop created by the translation of ‘bar mitzvah’ causes the reader to re-analyze a seemingly typical parental lecture, which they may have otherwise glossed over. The strangeness of the phrase draws attention to the way translation alters and estranges language and even leads the reader to question the validity of other translated phrases, affecting the reader's perceptions. This strangeness suggests more is going on than just the mention of a Jewish ceremony to give the text an ethnic flavor. Ornitz questions the very intellectual act of translating here, and as mentioned earlier, the assimilative qualities associated with the act. At times, translation is a means of pulling the ethnic and individual into the dominant discourse. However, by the end of the novel, however, Ornitz moves beyond the level of translation, letting words and phrases stand for themselves and hold value in themselves.

The dialect's impact changes when Yiddish is translated or not translated.

Commodification and mass-market forces diminish Yiddish's impact in the novel by tying it to

exchange value. Meyer observes this situation when two of his acquaintances trade language and information as a commodity: “Berel and Barney have been teaching each other, swapping a Yiddish lesson for an English one” (Ornitz 90). Yiddish, here, becomes currency, which will buy something of value from the dominant culture. Interestingly, they trade Yiddish for English, valuing English (the standard, the dominant) over Yiddish (the ethnic, the individual). Furthermore, Meyer describes how capitalism exploits even the act of translation--and by extension, literature. The translation of the sign on Meyer's office door into three languages allows him to exploit people from several backgrounds (Ornitz 204). Both Meyer and Ornitz work within the system they critique, but they do not necessarily endorse it. Within the limitations of translated phrases, Ornitz finds a way to question boundaries governing language and the ways readers react to language, especially ‘foreign’ languages. Through the act of translation, Ornitz startles or stops the reader, shocks the reader, confuses the reader, and even in some cases, accommodates the reader.

*HPJ* likewise questions the limitations of syntax and form through the utilization of non-standard punctuation and a loose stream of consciousness form. Furthermore, through the experimental stream of consciousness form in the novel, Ornitz draws attention to the ‘fakeness’ or constructedness of such experimental techniques in novels. The form of stream of consciousness requires more than a passive reading on the part of the audience. Not only must they attempt to give structure to what they are reading with little authorial intervention, but they must also work with the thoughts of an individual who is foreign to them. The audience does not have the referents or structure to help make finding meaning simple. In addition to stream of consciousness, Ornitz utilizes ellipses to keep readers in a state of incompleteness or tension.<sup>45</sup> Ellipses place emphasis on the spaces or silences between words and suggest something left

unsaid. The reader must then use what they know about Meyer, his culture, and circumstances to create meaning from what is left out. The ellipses also help the reader to make connections between words, and in some cases, traditionally unrelated words. They call attention to the artificiality of the form and language utilized in the text. Thus, Ornitz suggests that novels can be experimental or resistant without calling attention to the experimentation, and this indirect experimentation does not necessarily negate "modernistic" or resistant qualities: "'Modernistic' . . . [in the sense that] it has no contemporary references, no stylistic tricks, nothing overtly 'experimental.' But it could seem modern in the context . . . simply by avoiding certain nearly inescapable stereotypes" (North 10). Ornitz is critical of the standard tenement novel and the stereotypes associated with immigrant novels. He is likewise critical of texts experimenting solely for experimentation's sake, especially when it contributes nothing practical to the text.

Despite the 'faked' quality of the text, resulting from the immigrant author's unusual skill with the English language, reviewers Silas Bent and Leo Markun feel the overall quality of *HPJ* does not suffer. Bent describes the novel as "extraordinary" and Markun describes it as "genius." For all of their praise of its intellectual and artistic qualities, they still consider it a failure of an immigrant novel. According to Bent the artificiality, "is odd, and perhaps characteristic, [in] that the writer takes [upon] himself and his associates the glory of initiating such a lot of innovations" (6). When too overt, the experimentation or innovation contrasts realism, hurting the perceived authenticity of the text. This emphasis on self-reflection and experimentation over ideologies espousing eternal newness is a modernist cosmopolitanism critical of its own limitations and limitations in general. Ornitz is far more interested in merging cosmopolitanism with the practical and the ideological in ways that connect the reader to the immigrant experience and helping the author move beyond limited perspectives.

In order to manipulate formal constraints through chronological and structural elements and to manipulate audience reception by allowing them to see into Meyer's head, Ornitz utilizes a loose stream of consciousness style.<sup>46</sup> This style may appear unusually experimental ("stream of consciousness modernism") for a mass-market form ("immigrant realism") (Keresztesi 77). These are not mutually exclusive forms: there is resistant potential in the popular, and the experimental cannot be entirely divorced from market forces. To achieve this balance, Ornitz does not use the stream of consciousness style throughout the text; he only uses it when it best suits the narrator's purpose. Meyer does nothing without a purpose. The stream of consciousness form allows the author to place the reader in the immigrant protagonist's mind, increasing Meyer's credibility and to increasing audience sympathy toward Meyer. Without a connection to his emotions and an understanding of Meyer's motivations, the impact of the novel's ending is diminished. If the reader does not sympathize with Meyer, they will distrust or ignore his commentary about American culture and capitalism. The effect of the stream of consciousness style appears at the beginning of chapter III after Meyer views a sign translated into three languages. On it, Meyer sees the word 'lawyer' and slips into stream of consciousness:

Mine has been a bad night. My mood is in the throes of misgiving. Here is my office. *But yesterday, I pridefully beheld it, and today, I see it shamefacedly* as a pirate's' ship. . . . *I am in terror of the dream-stupefied. I have breathed the scents of their poppy fields. . . .* People like to patronize a crowded shop. *It is the herd instinct, the fear to be alone, act alone; the fear to try the new. . . .* Deferential good mornings, stepping back and making way, raising of hats, eager, solicitous glances, servile holding out of hands, and awed whispers of 'here he comes,' are balm to my sick, dropping spirit. I pass through the congested sitting room. It is like being bather with healing oils. . . . *I plunge into a sea of troubles, other people's troubles, and peace comes to my soul. My brain clears. The poppy scents are dissipates. I am again Meyer Hirsch.* [emphasis mine] (Ornitz 204-205)

It is not that Meyer enjoys others' suffering, but the common people going about their day without thought offers a contrast to the "poppy dreams" or the illusions of intellectuals, bringing

him relief. Meyer is always careful to not endorse intellectualism as a fix for the common people outright, and he also does not endorse anti-intellectualism. His position seems somewhere in the middle, endorsing intellectualism informed by reality (a form of immigrant cosmopolitanism). To bring intellectualism to his reality, he feels he must overcome the audience and common man's "fear to try the new." It seems, at least in this passage, that he can do this. He moves past the audience and the crowd, and this may be difficult, but the reward is personal power and a sense of self not fogged by delusions perpetuated by culture, society, and idealism.

Meyer's controlled thoughts draw attention to the careful constructedness of the stream of consciousness form. Although it is not a traditional form of stream of consciousness, this is not a result of a lack of skill on Ornitz's part. On the contrary, it is due to Ornitz's manipulating the form in a way allowing for greater audience understanding. There is a set direction and some structure to this stream of thought. In its quick forward momentum, and in its strange references and combinations, it resembles stream of consciousness. As with all of Ornitz's techniques, he carefully avoids being too extreme in his experimentation. The audience, whether a college-educated intellectual or a common person with street smarts, can understand what Meyer is saying in the passage, despite its strangeness. If the audience is not able to understand, then they may not be able to see the indirect critiques underlying this passage. Meyer is attempting to create a pattern of thought going beyond the clichéd and expected. When dealing with another individual's thoughts, it is hard to rely on assumptions and biases to understand them and their motivations. Therefore, this form, relying on individual thoughts, is a means of moving the audience beyond the limitations of their assumptions and experiences. He exposes readers' expectations by reversing them, and once the reader is aware of their assumptions, Ornitz hopes that they will consider alternatives and expand their worldview.

Throughout *HPJ*, Meyer Hirsch manipulates other characters and the audience by marketing a certain position on art, ideology, and the creative process: a form of modernist cosmopolitanism informed by the specifics of ethnicity and the immigrant experience. Ornitz wants to teach the audience about the value of intellectualism and artistry. The audience influenced by market forces and commodification become "consumers" with only a vague sense of value and standards: "It is obvious that the more general and the more vague are the consumers' standards and aims the more easily the producer can control his demand and guide it into specific lines" (Hazel Kyrk qtd. in Wicke 115). Due to the audience's lack of critical judgment and lack of ability to make informed decisions regarding literary taste, they must be "guided." Ornitz, then, is not only changing the audience's literary perceptions but also guiding their reception of his text, hopefully ensuring its popularity and success. Meyer uses audience manipulation as a part of a personal game and to affect a certain outcome. Meyer mocks those who cannot see ideology as a tool to achieve certain ends by artists and intellectuals. In *HPJ*, the character of Avrum comes to represent the failures of intellectualism. He is an intellectual who wholeheartedly believes in the ideas he embraces, but Meyer describes him as a fool ready to fall under the weight of reality: "First he wanted to prepare their [the Jewish people's] minds, then he wanted to prepare their hearts, after which he saw the Utopian millennium. Sometimes he wanted the extreme folly of sincerity" (Ornitz 215). Avrum may want to affect change, but he has no clue how to accomplish it beyond the step of ideas, and he does not appear to think about the mechanics of making this change happen. In contrast, Ornitz makes small changes at the micro level of language and form, but he is not confident these small changes, or even ideas, can cause societal and cultural change. Ornitz believes art should be something useful and achievable, not just an intellectual or artistic exercise: there is value in practicality. Meyer (Ornitz) does not hate

Avrum's sincerity. Indeed, he seems to admire it, but he sees Avrum's idealism as unbalanced by reality and experience.

Meyer's uncle Philip's unbridled greed and ambition partially influence Meyer's opinion of Avrum. As Philip states, "Avrum's talk . . . was a fine example of the self-deluded vaporings of the dream-stupefied" (Ornitz 215). Philip, like Meyer, sees these delusions as an inability to deal with reality. To Philip, reality is money, while, to Meyer, reality is the hostile world not allowing for idealism because it lacks practical value. Interestingly, for all that Meyer calls others dream-stupefied, he is the one who slips into dream states illustrated through a stream of consciousness form. This level of thought shows Meyer capable of intellectualism and a manner of artistry, yet he knows these things will not bring him wealth or success. By extension, mouthpiece Meyer shows Ornitz is capable of creating a text incorporating elements of intellectualism and artistry, but Ornitz knows that in order to succeed the literary market, he must balance it with a practical attitude. He must be able to meet the needs of his readers and the expectations of the market. Meyer's, and Ornitz's, critique of Avrum, then, is more a show of pity that Avrum's principles cannot survive the harsh world of the tenement. They both know "The order of the day was [and is to]--PLAY THE GAME AS YOU SEE IT PLAYED" (Ornitz 227). In other words, to survive, one needs to play the game by established rules, and for a while, Meyer (and Ornitz) does play the game and plays it successfully. More than the reader must play by another's rules to navigate the game successfully. Rosten and Ornitz likewise play a game with culture, language, and the marketplace, and neither authors nor the audience appears to have much of a chance of winning the game. Overall, the game played by the authors and audience is a zero-sum game, with no one truly getting ahead. The end of the novel shows this when the game ends up destroying Meyer. It suggests that these 'games' of assimilation, integration, and

manipulation ultimately destroy dreamers and artists. Although it would be too much to argue that the cosmopolitan game or project destroys Ornitz, it does suggest the game will ultimately end in failure or that it will have unintended results. Yet Meyer hopes the 'money craze' will not influence "the new generation" as it has him. Likewise, Ornitz believes in the potential for change under the right conditions.

### Conclusions: Cosmopolitanism, Intellectualism, and Practical Application

Most intellectuals do not understand the inherent nature of the mass media. They do not understand the process by which a newspaper or magazine, movie or television show, is created. They project their own tastes, yearnings, and values upon the masses who do not, unfortunately, share them. . . . A great deal of what appears in the mass media is dreadful tripe and treacle inane in countenance, banal in style, muddy in reasoning, mawkish in sentiments, vulgar, naive, and offensive the mean of learning or refinement (*Worlds* 219).

In the literary marketplace, according to Rosten, perception is regulated by "those who own or operate the mass media" (219). Both Rosten and Ornitz attempt to regain some measure of control over the reception of their texts, but Rosten knows that altering audience perceptions is not as easy as "changes in ownership or control" (219). They do not want to be the new purveyors of Truth; they only give their truth and try to create a space in which they can relate it in the manner of their choosing. Even if Rosten and Ornitz construct their prose and manipulate their audience's views carefully, culture will still influence the audience--the very culture viewing literature in ways these authors hope to change. As one of Ornitz's characters states in *HPJ*, "the public wants . . . fancy smut and a lot of bare legs" (228). In other words, their tastes and expectations focus on entertainment value over quality. Meyer, and through him, Ornitz, gives the audience just this, entertainment. It is an act going against his nature and his cosmopolitan project, though. Ornitz knows, however, audience expectations must be met in

some fashion before the reader is willing to engage with some of the more resistant or controversial aspects of the text. They do maintain hope that the audience will see things in new ways, which may result in readers reanalyzing the familiar and accepted. Whether the reader continues to improve their critical thinking and their intellectual and artistic growth is out of the authors' hands, however. If the epigraph above has any truth in it, then the mass audience will resist intellectual values, opting to value things "offensive to men of learning or refinement" (*Worlds* 219).

In *Worlds of Leo Rosten*, author of *HK* Leo Rosten places himself between commercial artist and intellectual, neither espousing the potentially 'inaccessible' aspects of modernist cosmopolitanism, nor completely adhering to commercial or 'mass media' forms. In the epigraph above, Rosten maintains the high/low distinction: high (intellectually and aesthetically motivated), and the low (anti-intellectual, recycled, and common). He believes that in order to elevate culture, the intellectual writer must understand the nature of mass media. Furthermore, the success of Rosten's (and the other authors') cosmopolitan project relies on the mass audience. Like Lewisohn and Steiner, Rosten believes resistance can come from popular culture and popular forms, but only if an author or artist understands how to manipulate them. The question becomes, then, can Rosten himself move beyond the limitations and failings he attributes to others? At the level of language--more specifically, through syntactical manipulations, a new lexicography, and other linguistic manipulations--Rosten does achieve a measure of success.

Furthermore, by utilizing the autobiographical immigrant novel form as well as comedy within his text, Rosten appears to understand the thing he criticizes: mass media and commercial forms. He knows popular forms well enough that he can elevate these forms by manipulating visual, aural, and language aesthetics, elevating them beyond 'banality.' Furthermore, Rosten

attempts to raise the 'conceptual level' of popular forms by challenging standard logic through the creation of a personal logic. Thus, Rosten appears to utilize popular forms for two reasons: one, to prove that mass media forms can be artistic and that 'elevated' forms can be commercially and critically successful; and two, Rosten asserts that literary forms are static and when an author tries to 'make it new,' it is an effort in futility. By focusing on the failure of newness and originality, Rosten hints at the failure of the cosmopolitan project. All experimentation and resistance is doomed to reinforce popular and commercial forces eventually. Rosten does not condone popular or mass-market practices, but he feels the most effective way to approach the cosmopolitan project is by manipulating popular forms. He can connect with his audience, primarily through the popular technique of humor and is able to affect some change in their perceptions, if only to make them see familiar things as strange. If the audience will use this change in perception to think more critically about language and other systems remains to be seen. If the reviews are any evidence of reader's opinions, however, it seems like the more resistant aspects of the text failed, as they see them as inappropriate in the immigrant novel. Therefore, Rosten's focus on language and logic within a commercial form is not surprising. Rosten is far from being unique in this sense, all of the authors featured in this study use popular or commercially successful forms to maintain a connection with the audience. As Keresztesi states, "ethnic modernist [and ethnic modernist cosmopolitan] authors often freely recycle previously popular genres and modes of representation to 'make it new' (in a manner not quite the same as Ezra Pound's)" (Keresztesi xiii). It is new, not in the sense of original invention, but in the sense of strangeness, foreignness, and the unexpected. Unlike Lewisohn and Steiner, Rosten does not feel that intellectual and artistic affiliations are enough to affect change. By this suggestion, mass media and high literature are so far removed from each other that the mass

audience's assumptions and tastes cannot be reconciled with intellectual goals. The success of the cosmopolitan project attempting to balance the popular and intellectual is, therefore, doubtful.

Through experimentation with language and logic, Rosten can push beyond the limitations of form and familiarity. Rosten himself states in *The Many Worlds of L\*E\*O R\*O\*S\*T\*E\*N*, that he “[is an] artist . . . engaged in a life-long struggle to free [himself] from the prisons of the familiar” (205): in this case, the familiarity of language. Language is also a dynamic force allowing authors to question artistic limitations. By defamiliarizing English through the integration of Yiddish, by utilizing new spellings and definitions, by distorting syntax, and by questioning the rules underlying the English language, Rosten ‘relocates’ his language outside of boundaries and rules. In this way, Rosten attempts to give “us back the world we had lost through force of habit” (*Many* 16). Throughout *HK*, Rosten's techniques cause the reader to reanalyze the familiar and popular by making them strange and by making it difficult to understand with only a cursory reading. By exposing how the rules of the language function, Rosten also forces the reader to reconsider rules they may have never questioned before or rules may have taken for granted. On the other hand, Lukács, in “The Ideology of Modernism,” argues alterations in language are contingent upon a language standard and a baseline of familiarity. Otherwise, the reader cannot fully understand, as the estrangement of language requires a point of comparison. Through the comparison of the familiar with the ethnic, foreign, and strange, the reader is able to see differences they may have otherwise overlooked: “literature must have a concept of the normal if it is to ‘place’ distortion correctly; that is to say, to see it *as* distortion” (Lukács 180). As evidenced by reviews of *HK*, the audience views this meshing of the distorted with the familiar as a failure. It does not meet audience expectations about immigrant novels and the linguistic abilities of immigrants. Yet as Lutz argues, these works are “attack[ed] on

authenticity, which in most cases is not the point . . . *Theirs is a perspectival argument*" [emphasis mine] (28). Authenticity is only useful to these authors as a means of meeting audience expectations, and these authors know the beliefs and values shown in their texts are "perspectival." Therefore, these authors must convince the audience to participate and attempt to see things from their perspective.

One way the reader is encouraged to participate in *HK's* game is by Rosten's placing of the reader in the position of an immigrant student attending an English class. Many of the rules presented in the class are familiar to these students. However, there is a great deal the students do not know, which creates a state of confusion and uncertainty throughout the novel. Indeed, all of the characters are kept in a state of confusion by their modern environments. Although through a newly established lexicon, rules, and vocabulary, the audience can deal with the confusing world Hyman inhabits. As Malamud says, "the new language must communicate to and through a world of alienation, confusion, distortion, acceleration--a world turned upside down" (Malamud 12). Hyman is the only character who has the confidence to maintain his sense of self within this confusion because Hyman is the one who directs language and logic in Rosten's text. He speaks to the confusion by making the reader feel it and distortion, but he helps the reader through the confusion through authorial intervention. The educational structure causes distortion in that it applies structure and other rules to language when there is no innate part of language requiring these rules to make meaning. Therefore, in a manner reminiscent of Pound, Rosten

attempt[s] to render those structuring languages visible to us as arbitrary and artificial rather than 'natural' and thus invisible. By doing so he might *place himself outside the power of those codes*, mastering them instead by the self-reflexive act of language. [emphasis mine] (Knapp 36)

Hyman is in control of his language and how the audience relates to it, which gives him a measure of influence over perception. However, Hyman creates a new system of rules, which is

the very thing he attempts to undermine with his linguistic experimentation. It is important to note, however, that Hyman does not force his language system on the reader. It is a means of helping the reader see the familiar in new ways, but he does not require the reader to change their diction, syntax, and so forth. Although Rosten never fully removes himself from the "codes" he resists, he is at least able to show some manner of alternatives to these codes, relying on the reader to make choices.

The reason Rosten cannot fully circumvent the rules and governances of language is because he trades one system of rules for another: the dominant rules for rules created by immigrant Hyman and informed by immigrant culture. This trading one set of rules for another does not negate all resistant potential, however. Rules still govern the languages of immigrants, no matter how foreign. Immigrant languages in their "fluidity" allow for greater alteration and experimentation: essentially, it allows for the incorporation of immigrant experiences and ethnic particulars. In "The Metropolis and the Emergence of Modernism," Raymond Williams argues that the language of immigrants is a naturally fluid and influenced by national, regional, ethnic, and personal factors (9). Furthermore, through the act of translation, immigrants view common language in unfamiliar, culturally specific ways, leading Sollors to argue that the "translated" quality of some . . . expressions makes [immigrant texts] resemble avant-garde prose" (Sollors 63). Without similar cultural, national, and personal experiences to that of the immigrant characters, the reader is separated from referents. This functions in the same way as some avant-garde literature, forcing readers to use clues from the text and from what they know about the author's beliefs, aesthetics, and cultures to make meaning (Sollors 20). In *HK*, Rosten demonstrates this technique with Yiddish-isms (or altered Yiddish) separating language from Yiddish, Jewish, and American cultural contexts.<sup>47</sup> Despite Rosten's utilization of modernist

defamiliarization techniques, he does not hold to the theory that all language should be unclear<sup>48</sup> or difficult to interpret. Contrarily, Rosten attempts to use accurate and efficient language in ways helping the audience understand how he questions rules. Through clarity of language, the reader can understand without referents, but the reader must recreate the context of words and phrases. The reader of *HK*, then, can hardly be passive: they must make decisions and interpret according to their reading experience. Rosten does require a level of effort from the reader. Since the success of his cosmopolitan project relies on the reader, however, if the reader cannot create meaning, then the project fails. Rosten, in a middling manner, caters to the mass audience and causes the audience to create their own meaning. When asked to make aesthetic decisions about the function of language, the audience is indirectly educated by being presented alternatives in a practical environment conducive to learning. However, education does not automatically equate to action. These novels give the audience alternate perspectives, but alternate perspectives do not always create new viewpoints about such things as art and culture. Therefore, the technique may work in theory, but fail in practical application.

In his novel *HPJ*, Samuel Ornitz is likewise concerned with educating the audience but approaches this education through the medium of a game. This 'assimilation' or survival game has self-serving rules that support the dominant system familiar to the audience; however, the audience may be less familiar with how language affects these rules of the dominant culture. *HPJ* makes the audience aware of these rules by bringing attention to the 'faked,' contrived nature of his text primarily through humor: everything is questioned and undercut. The supposed contrived nature of the text has led critics to question its authenticity. However, this question of authenticity is unimportant to a text placing emphasis on the resistant techniques and language over the actual plot and subject matter. If characters and experiences are less important, then

their authenticity is not the top priority. When not distracted by the realist conventions of immigrant texts or the sentimentality of Yiddish, readers can focus on the experimental qualities of the text. In this way, the ‘errors’ in diction, syntax, and other ‘ethnic’ markers are not limiters upon the narrator’s speech, but a game played with reader expectations about non-native speakers. Through this, the narrator educates the reader about boundaries limiting language, those intentionally imposed and those incidentally created through comparison, stereotyping, characterization, and form. The resistant and experimental mixed in with the ethnic and personal in the text creates a world where cosmopolitanism should be able to succeed. This immigrant cosmopolitan world consists of both the personal and the worldly: the lives of Jewish immigrant attempting to survive in the United States and the ‘worldly’ elements of intellectualism and artistry. In this world, all of these connect to systems and affiliations beyond the regional, national, and cultural.

This world is portrayed primarily through Meyer's eyes. Meyer is both a Jewish stereotype and a stand-in for corrupt individuals in America. Meyer’s evolution from money-grubbing street urchin, to lawyer, to disillusioned man, disenchant the reader with the succeed-at-all-costs attitude Meyer embodies throughout most of the novel. Yet Meyer is more than just a stereotype of the capitalistic American or the money-conscious, business-friendly Jewish stereotype: he also has artistic and intellectual inclinations. Meyer may not be an artist by profession, but through his association with other artists (the “dream-stupefied”), the reader sees Meyer's interest in art and language and his admiration of heightened aesthetics. Despite the cold, stark, and ugly environment that spawns Meyer, dialogue with other characters reveals his true thoughts about beauty. The mocking of artists and idealists throughout the novel is more a function of Meyer’s early training than his personal feelings about the ideas intellectuals and

artists support. Contrarily, he is even more critical of philosophy and its ability to distance individuals from reality. He does not believe true idealism can survive the world in which he exists, as the modern world keeps individuals powerless and unable to enact change. There is hope, however, in the immigrant's culture and language. As mentioned earlier, Meyer considers Yiddish beautiful and powerful, and his personal power and authority comes from the ability to understand and appreciate Yiddish. Yiddish is both common and intellectual, and it offers a measure of power to its speakers. As I.B. Singer is quoted as stating in "Towards an Appreciation of American Jewish Humor" (2005), "In a figurative way, Yiddish is the wise and humble language of us all, the idiom of frightened, hopeful humanity" ("Towards" 41). Yiddish serves as a link to "Humanity," but it also slows, stops, and confuses the reader, especially when left untranslated.

*HPJ* likens Yiddish to music, instilling it with a sense of aural beauty in a way very similar to Language in Steiner's *FA*: "I prefer . . . musical Yiddish with its poetic flexibility" (Ornitz 253). Language, like music, is inherently beautiful and does not need complications to make it worthy of appreciation. Technical artistry and skill comes through controlled simplicity. Furthermore, originality is a natural part of music, and thus language. The more skilled the musician or author is, the more he can utilize originality and simplicity in ways appearing new by integrating himself into it. *HPJ* critiques the complications resulting from the search for eternal newness, as well as complicated techniques utilized for the sake of nothing more than being complicated. Experimenting for experimenting's sake alone does not help change audience perceptions, and it does not change culture or offer viable alternatives to systems. Experimentation, to Ornitz, should have a purpose, such as exposing audience preconceptions to increase the likeliness they will be able to make critical decisions about art, literature, and

aesthetics. In this way, Ornitz both shares an aesthetic with modernist cosmopolitans and is critical of modernist cosmopolitanism simultaneously, making his particular flavor of modernism (immigrant cosmopolitanism), a modernism aware of its own limitations.

Although Ornitz is aware of the failures of modernist cosmopolitanism, this does not mean that his text is without fault. Despite, Ornitz's use of several modernist techniques, *HPJ* is not entirely devoid of clichés and stereotypes. Those techniques present are arguably utilized in a manner exposing how they too can limit a text and force assimilation upon readers and characters. This act of assimilation ultimately appears to destroy dreams, beauty, idealism, and original thoughts in *HPJ*, as it forces acceptance of limitations upon individuals and upon art. Ornitz regrets this destruction, and it is apparent that it is only through the personal and the experiential that change will occur, if only on a small scale. The immigrant experience can serve as an alternative to the dominant culture. Like the modernists he criticizes, however, Ornitz does not offer any true alternatives to oppressive systems or beliefs. He offers only the hope that the audience will take his teachings and apply them to view culture and society critically, thus enabling the audience to visualize change. This method is ultimately a failure, however, as it relies heavily on the audience reception and their desire to take action. Even if the audience sees a need for societal and cultural change, this does not mean they have the desire or power to enact it.

Whether or not they can truly enact change, Samuel Ornitz and Leo Rosten both envision themselves as defenders of culture in an era where beauty and art suffer due to eroding cultural definitions and limited acceptance of Art. Despite their association with popular and mass-market literature, they still see their texts as distinct from other mass-market works, primarily because they do attempt to incorporate the resistant and experimental into their texts. Neither

author believes they can elevate art solely through avant-garde experimentation and other audience-inaccessible forms. This middling position suggests the most effective way to educate the masses about art is by understanding and manipulating them instead of divorcing art completely from audience reception and interpretation. In this way, *HK* and *HPJ* maintain a position between the avant-garde works and mass media or mass-market forms. Furthermore, Ornitz and Rosten's focus on experimentation also places them in a central position between more extreme proponents of modernism and proponents of popular forms. This experimentation comes primarily through language. Since readers already expect strange and incorrect usage by immigrant authors<sup>49</sup>, this form of experimentation may be more acceptable to readers familiar with the immigrant novel.

By utilizing cosmopolitan aesthetics, Ornitz and Rosten indirectly connect themselves with a community of intellectuals and artists beyond geographic boundaries, in a similar manner to the authors of chapter one. Rosten and Ornitz utilize a more practical version of cosmopolitanism than that espoused by Lewisohn and Steiner. In theory, the focus on the practical and realistic aspects of experience helps counteract the problems associated with a cosmopolitanism centralized around affiliations, yet the practical version of cosmopolitanism is ultimately also a failure in application. This attempt to balance the "worldly" or cosmopolitan with the "particulars" of ethnicity may seem an effort in futility, and their cosmopolitan experiment does ultimately fail in its goals. Yet all the authors of this study feel it is worth the attempt, if only to gain some recognition for immigrant fiction as a potentially resistant genre. Overall, Ornitz comes closest to achieving this balance between philosophy and the practical and between the universal and specifics of experience (creating immigrant cosmopolitanism). However, this does not automatically gain him the recognition he desires for his fiction, as

audiences and scholars have almost entirely forgotten him. The "genius" quality of Rosten's texts has also been forgotten, despite the more experimental and critical aspects of his novel. Creating a cosmopolitanism meshing with the goals of the immigrant narrative is still a valid exercise, according to these authors. However, it is fated to fail, as any attempts to renegotiate boundaries and resist limitations will ultimately reinforce their influence over artistic value. According to William Carlos Williams in *Imagination*, an author may attempt to be all things and do all things without creating new limitations, but these are all "hooks" or catches (Keresztesi 63). They hook neither the fish nor the goal but hook themselves. Yet there is hope:

In the Ghetto there was a large, growing idealism . . . art, literature, music, social science and politics in the pure meaning of the word--calling the new generation--to me a strange generation, so different, so alien to my understanding . . . the new generation, this queer stranger, seemed to be creeping upon me . . . what is their meaning . . . what do they want . . . where will they end . . . (Ornitz 297)

### Conclusion:

#### Is a Balanced Immigrant Cosmopolitanism Aesthetic Possible?

"Our cosmopolitanism is always more of a desire than it is an accomplished fact" (Lutz 21).

To the authors featured in this study, cosmopolitanism is far more than a "worldly" outlook or the mark of a cultural connoisseur; it has artistic and intellectual components informed by reality, philosophy, and idealism. Cosmopolitanism has "ethical or philosophical dimensions, . . . regarding questions of how to live as a 'citizen of the world'" (Vertovec 63). The ethical dimensions of cosmopolitanism are concerned with educating the ignorant and holding to personal politics and truth. The philosophical dimensions concern art, intellectualism, and human culture. These are brought together in a way that creates an individual not limited by any one perspective, culture, nation, and so forth. Cosmopolitanism's definition and boundaries change according to personal definitions, and there is no one aspect that can exist uninfluenced by other aesthetics and philosophies. Therefore, the authors featured in this study attempt to make cosmopolitanism more "real" by integrating their own stories. Yet stripping all philosophical dimensions out of the text to focus on the real would be to leave only physical border crossings, and nothing conceptual. Furthermore, a worldly focus alone can overlook how individual ethnic particulars are vital for the proper functioning of immigrant cosmopolitan aesthetics. As Keresztesi states, distance from the "reality" of the immigrant experience caused "Cosmopolitanism in the twentieth century [to gain] a more definite and pejorative meaning . . . *the empty signifier of the 'cosmopolitan' is filled with antiforeigner, anti-stranger, anti-immigrant, and ultimately anti-Semitic significations*" [emphasis mine] (69). Cosmopolitanism is an "empty" ideology without individual particulars and referents to give it meaning. It is the

immigrant's story that gives immigrant cosmopolitanism meaning, and if there is any realism, it is individual and "perspectival." With the anti-immigrant and anti-Semitic connotations of cosmopolitanism, it seems strange that Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz choose it as the vehicle to deliver their stories. The immigrant authors featured herein do not use a pure cosmopolitan aesthetic in their works, however. Instead, they use those elements of cosmopolitanism matching their purposes.

Despite presenting alternative perspectives, cosmopolitanism does not have the desired effect of elevating the immigrant narrative, at least in the mass reader's mind. Failure is not a problem for these authors, however, as they do not believe cosmopolitanism can enact change at the "mass" level. The cosmopolitan project is ultimately just a hope for change and a new space in which to tell their individual immigrant stories. The hope for change and focus on inclusive, expansive ideas are themselves a worthy end goal. As the epigraph suggests, the value of cosmopolitanism is not in its accomplishments, but in its ideas and goals. In this sense, texts espousing cosmopolitan sympathies should be judged by their ideas and not necessarily by how well authors can affect change or incorporate pure cosmopolitan aesthetics into their novels. Since cosmopolitanism is more of a performance and imaginary space for Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz, it allows them to pick and choose techniques to create affiliations and to demonstrate their experiences with modernity. Therefore, to these authors, cosmopolitanism becomes more of a representation of the immigrant experience than a category, title, or achievement. The representative nature of cosmopolitanism may also explain why these authors believe so strongly in an aesthetic they know is flawed.

Many of the failures of *UP*, *FA*, *HK*, and *HPJ* result from a disconnect between practical application and ideology. This disconnect creates questions regarding the efficacy of their ideas:

whether a new, non-commodified literature is possible and if a balance between experience and resistant ideology is achievable. Yet they have value in their individual immigrant stories and their ability to address issues plaguing immigrants. The value of their art should not be determined by successful results and audience reception alone, but by the attempt itself.

The overwhelming nature of cosmopolitanism makes it nearly impossible for these authors to succeed in their experiment, at least with the techniques available to them. They are expected to express their selves, their epoch, and high aesthetics in their art: "to express himself./Every artist has to express his epoch./Every artist has to express the pure and eternal/qualities of the art of all men (Williams qtd. in Keresztesi 26). Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz are writing under the conditions of modernity, and thus, their personal experiences and their artistic works reflect these conditions. The authors featured herein try to express their experiences as well as the nature of humanity and art, but they have the added complication of proving their own artistic and intellectual qualities through a commercial medium. Each of these authors believes in the potential of culture and the value of literature, but under the conditions of modernity, this potential is not yet realized. Although Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz see themselves as defenders of high culture and immigrant literature, they feel they do not currently have adequate tools to force societal change. Cosmopolitan aesthetics does offer a tool for resisting the negative forces of modernity (commodification, commercialization, and eroding cultural values) upon literature, however. This tool can be used or put away depending on their needs. Their ethnicity and experiences are likewise a tool for achieving their ends. Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz value process over final product and ideas over effective application of cosmopolitan aesthetics in their novels. If the authors are trying to offer alternatives to standard English rules, for instance, then they must put away their heightened ideals to keep a

basis in the dominant language. Otherwise, the reader may have no concept of how to deal with their changes. At times, the authors make it clear that English cannot accurately convey their meaning. So, therefore, they will use it when appropriate and use another language system if needed. Only the immigrant authors themselves can determine what language best conveys their meaning. They may offer a change in perception, and there is power in perception. Through their perceptions, they can offer convey certain stories and meanings.

The authors of chapter one (Lewisohn and Steiner) attempt to offer alternatives primarily through affiliation, philosophy, and intellectualism, while the authors of chapter two (Rosten and Ornitz) offer alternatives through language games and the defamiliarization of cultural norms and societal rules. Ultimately, neither method successfully demonstrates how cosmopolitan ideology and aesthetics can guarantee a change in perception or offer alternatives beyond suggesting the possibility. Through the immigrant cosmopolitanism adopted by these authors, the audience is at least presented with options. With an education about aesthetics and critical judgment, readers can make informed decisions about these options. Without education, the mass audience is left to the whims of the literary market and other cultural forces. Furthermore, by manipulating audience perception, they can control the marketing of their texts and persons somewhat, and thus the reception of their works. Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz's participation in market forces is not a failure. Instead, it is all a part of modernist cosmopolitan aesthetics: "being modern--and by extension even being *modernist*--was not about market *phobia* at all, but precisely about market *savvy*" [emphasis in original] (Murphy 64). All of the authors believe that some participation in the systems corrupting culture is necessary if they are to control the reception of their texts. Although the authors' focus on marketing makes it seem as if

they have given in to uncontrollable forces, it is more a means of maintaining contact with and directing the reader:

To recognize one's own embeddedness in commodity culture is not only to risk encouraging resignation to dominant social forces; it is also at least potentially, to call *self-conscious attention to the terms of one's own ideological and historical construction* [emphasis mine] (Murphy 78).

Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz all consciously draw readers' attention to authors' historical, cultural, and personal influences. They, furthermore, make the reader aware that their "worldliness" is, to a certain extent, a performance and their cosmopolitanism an illusion. They know culture influences all art and knowing something makes it easier to resist. Overall, as Murphy argues, "Truly modern aesthetic success in essence, it turns out, simply *is* marketplace success, nothing more or less" (70). Modernists and other cosmopolitans are successful in different ways and in different markets, but markets still influence them. They are not blindly participating, however.

By using marketing techniques to influence audience perceptions, they assume that the audience will receive a greater understanding of the realities of immigrant life in the modern world. The success of these authors' cosmopolitan experiments rests on the shoulders of the audience. If the audience cannot move past their preconceptions and expectations, then there is little hope that they can alter their perceptions enough to view art and literature in new ways. Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz are aware that accommodating the reader will define them as authors of "low" literature, but they know the modern world does not allow for anything else. With this lack of surety, it seems strange these authors would take on the immigrant cosmopolitan project at all, but achieving a successful outcome for the experiment is not their goal. Their ultimate goal is to give the audience the tools for critical thinking and with these tools, the audience might change their views on immigrants and immigrant literature.

In addition, the authors featured herein use marketing techniques to engage the mass audience looking for entertainment without literary complications. These authors hope to trick the audience into abandoning their assumptions and into learning critical thinking skills. Furthermore, by engaging the reader's interest and by telling stories of individual struggle, survival, and practical learning, they hope to remove the taint of exclusionary ideology and elitism from their texts. Through the incorporation of foreign and ethnic particulars into their texts, Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten and Ornitz do succeed, to a certain extent, in giving the audience a "greater sense of the complexity of life." They accomplish this through a "manipulation of others' essentialist beliefs about race and ethnicity" (Browder 10-11). In addition to the complications resulting from audience participation and reception, another failure of the cosmopolitan project comes from the authors' use of universals to create affiliations. To establish a cosmopolitan aesthetic, the authors and audience must reach a level of consensus about what constitutes art and truth and "participate in a particular conception of the world" (Gramsci 259). Furthermore, through the immigrant writer's attempts to create unity with other artists, intellectuals, and the American reading public, they assimilate artistically, ideologically, and culturally. When their ethnicity and other particulars work to distance the reader too much from the text, universals can work to reestablish ties. Problematic, though, is universalism's implication that a consensus is achievable and desirable amongst these groups. To all the immigrant writers featured herein, assimilation equates with acceptance, whether of linguistic rules, culture, or market forces. It likewise requires authors to ascribe to a number of aesthetic "rules" or "principles" to be seen as valuable. Blind acceptance of systems and assumptions limits potential, as it assumes the current situation is desirable and necessitates no changes.

Overall, Ornitz's text comes closest to successfully integrating cosmopolitan aesthetics, but *HPJ* is hardly the most successful in terms of popularity, market reception, and critical attention. This success is partially due to Ornitz's protagonist Meyer and his successful representation of cosmopolitan aesthetics and the immigrant author's struggle with the literary market. All of the protagonists in some ways are metaphors for cosmopolitan aesthetics, but Meyer is truly the only character who learns, grows, and can regain some agency through his manipulations. Overall, he shows how immigrant cosmopolitanism should work, but in reality does not. Despite Ornitz's limited success, *HPJ* was still a commercial failure. On the other hand, *HK* had the most commercial success, and this may be due Rosten's ability to get the audience to accept Hyman's rules and "philosophy." Hyman is a powerful character, but grows and changes little in the text. At the end of the novel, Hyman leaves the reader with the idea that he enjoyed the class. As this is an English class focused on the rules of standard language, his acceptance of the class is particularly disturbing considering Rosten's politics (provided readers take Hyman's statements at face value).

The lack of commercial and critical success in general for the other novels suggests that one cannot reconcile the assimilative with the diverse in a way that does not negate these author's politics. Therefore, Lewisohn's, Steiner's, Rosten's, and Ornitz's failure does not surprise: if any aesthetic is "forced to reconcile its competing desires for diversity and unity: it would cease to be" (North 144) resistant at all. In contrast, scholars have suggested that cosmopolitan ideology allows for multiple attachments, for diverse backgrounds and stories, and for divergent politics. These authors' immigrant ethnicities come to trump all other affiliations in readers' and critics' minds, however, and thus, their cosmopolitanism. Despite this, none of the authors featured herein denies their ethnicity. They do attempt to pass as an artist and intellectual, but not as

another race. To "pass" as an intellectual, these authors tend to elevate philosophy and process, perhaps because critics privilege the human and comprehensive in cosmopolitanism:

Writers were praised for their literary accomplishment in aesthetic terms--style, interest, clarity, balance, harmony, and so on--which necessarily shade into assessments of cosmopolitan *comprehensiveness* in their depiction of 'life,' especially the life of specific local populations. *These populations, in turn, are important not for their specificity, which becomes 'incidental,' but for their 'humanity'* [emphasis mine] (Lutz 34)

Their protagonists especially come to embody this 'humanity' and 'comprehensiveness,' as well as cosmopolitan aesthetics in general. By elevating humanity over individuals and universals over specifics, it becomes clear that their protagonists are representations and not "authentic" identities. This representative quality is problematic when authenticity is one of the most important factors used to determine the effectiveness of immigrant narratives. The question of authenticity is perhaps unfair to these authors, as their end goal is not in portraying authentic immigrant experience. They do not attempt to portray the immigrant experience, just their own experience in a way achieving their goals. Using the same principle to elevate their texts that is used to devalue them seems contradictory and illogical, and even the personas are conflicted and confused throughout these novels. The often-inconsistent politics may be, in part, a result of Lewisohn's, Steiner's, Rosten's, and Ornitz's immigrant backgrounds and sympathies clashing with the distancing nature of cosmopolitanism. They want to belong, but only if they do not lose themselves. Thus, they attempt to alter modernist cosmopolitanism to create a space in which they can incorporate individualism and personal experience, but how this is accomplished varies between authors.

While Lewisohn and Steiner spend portions of their novels waxing philosophically about the potential of cosmopolitan aesthetics without attempting to incorporate them into the formal elements of the text, Rosten and Ornitz utilize linguistic games to manipulate aesthetics in ways

requiring audience participation in the creation of meaning. They hope, through language and aesthetics, they can create a space for more artistic and intellectual freedom because it allows for change. Language gives its user some agency, and when an author controls language, they can manipulate perception and other factors depriving them of freedom. This particular philosophy aligns with other experimental authors' philosophies:

The avant-garde in general counted on the American language *to preserve difference and to open up new freedoms*, while also building a new unity. How any language, no matter how flexible, might do this was a question they never managed to answer [emphasis mine]. (North 134-135)

Like avant-garde authors, Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz fail to make it clear how this freedom is achievable in the reality of dominant American culture. They may not be able to achieve freedom from negative cultural influences fully, but they can resist them. Much of their experimentation comes through resisting, much more so than through actual change. Immigrant authors want to “Disorient the conventions of national literature and cultural distinctiveness by adding new experiences” (Walkowitz 2), creating a critical cosmopolitanism offering alternatives through new experiences. They incorporate their own experiences to balance the problems of affiliation because balance naturally exists within the immigrant. The immigrant must hold on to the old while learning the new, and the immigrant must change his perspective while filtering what he perceives through the lens of background and culture. Yet this is an overwhelmingly broad project.

Therefore, to make the overwhelming immigrant cosmopolitan project manageable, Rosten and Ornitz focus on only a few aspects of language. Rosten uses visual and aural aesthetics to make his new, personal system of logic more accessible to readers and to convince readers to interact with his literature in an active way: they have to deal with conceptually. Also, through irony and ambiguity, he makes conscious aesthetic choices drawing certain responses

from the reader and involving them in a useful, entertaining linguistic game. On the other hand, Ornitz focuses on the constructed nature of language and texts. He does this primarily through a process of translation and by exploiting the nature of fiction and culture. *HPJ*, like other novels, “attempt[s] to undermine itself as a [universal] reality by stressing its fictional basis, questioning itself by other texts, by commentators, or even by authorial intrusions” (Karl 13). The authors featured herein do not take issue with integrating realistic elements in their novels, but they do find that the values and assumptions associated with realistic elements limit their texts. Ornitz takes this technique a step further by showing the arbitrary nature of language and culture by utilizing a Yiddish dialect and leaving it untranslated. This lack of translation creates a state of confusion in the audience, forcing the reader to recreate contexts, referents, and meaning: not a standard meaning, but one informed by the experiences, values, and aesthetics of the authors. The reader can accept Ornitz's manipulations and the ensuing confusion because they still reinforce immigrant stereotypes, especially assumptions about the linguistic abilities of immigrants: they are strange, foreign, and their language incorrect. Of all of the texts in this study, Ornitz is the most overt about using stereotypes to address audience assumptions leading to some commercial success for his text. They are not incidental or approached in a way that leaves the audience to find them. They are dealt with straightforwardly and overturned in the end. No matter if it is used rhetorically, the incorrect language usage may make readers less likely to accept immigrant authors as “Writers with the courage and the talent to infuse English with new rhythms, new histories, new angles on the world” (Rushdie 8). ‘Courageous’ writers is what Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz set out to be, though.

The choice of a ‘low’ literary form (the immigrant narrative) by these authors is a poor one if they want their works to be considered experimental, high literature, as the

autobiographical immigrant narrative form limits their stories and politics. Autobiographies are limited in perspective, which is a poor way of conveying the worldly and universal. Furthermore, the autobiography is individualistic, and cosmopolitan politics applied at the personal level do not always apply to the universal level. What is important, however, is that they "are always faithful to the conception of a limit" (Hulme 44): in this case, the limitations of autobiographical formal elements. They cannot be all things, accomplish all things, and overcome all problems and limitations. The success of their experiment requires delicate maneuvering, which may not be possible in the modern world. Therefore, they must create space within the literary field in which the immigrant cosmopolitan project will succeed, and they do attempt to create this, at least on the personal level. They know that immigrant cosmopolitanism's success at the national or international level is less likely, however. It is not a space that currently exists; it is illusion and hope alone.

In their inability to create a perfect balance through immigrant cosmopolitan aesthetics, these authors appear indecisive and contradictory: at times using high aesthetics and at others low, sometimes portraying reality and sometimes waxing philosophic. The texts' attempts at balance are seen as a "lack of commitment" to any formula or genre. Scholars have criticized cosmopolitanism in general as a vacillating ideology, a progressive sensibility, or an elitist 'pedigree.' Therefore, some liken the term 'cosmopolitanism' to an insult (Lutz 49). Indeed, indecisiveness is in the very nature of cosmopolitanism. On the other hand, this "indecisiveness" can function in a way encouraging resistance: cosmopolitanism, "without promoting either side, without suggesting 'an underlying unity,' . . . gives us 'a greater sense of the complexity of life'" (Lutz 35-36). This greater "complexity" comes in the form of alternate, clashing, and diverse perspectives, which the audience can choose to endorse or disagree with and still enjoy the

novels as a whole. In the case of Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz, they try to avoid taking sides. Their texts contain diverse politics, but they fail to provide a unifying idea by which the audience can make sense of these authors' politics: each author has their own rules and philosophies. Overall, these authors fail to adequately defend one political, intellectual, or artistic position, but Lutz suggests this is not surprising, as cosmopolitan authors, "Instead of settling these debates . . . opt for an oscillation between the sides, a kind of contrapuntal, unresolved Bakhtinian symphony of cultural voices and positions" (Lutz 28). Overall, many critics praise cosmopolitanism as a pretty ideal, but impractical or impossible to achieve in reality. For instance, Robert Pinsky argues, cosmopolitanism, like many ideologies, is an 'illusion':

"To pledge one's "fundamental allegiance" to *cosmopolitanism is to try to transcend not only nationality but all actualities, and realities of life that constitute one's natural identity*. Cosmopolitanism has a nice, high-minded ring to it, but it is an illusion, and like all illusions, perilous' [emphasis mine]. (qtd. in Lutz 51)

This opinion resembles Meyer's opinion of the "dream-stupefied." Meyer and Ornitz are not oblivious or "stupefied" as the other authors at times appear to be. That Ornitz is aware of the way even aesthetics espousing freedom and a space beyond limitations can ultimately reinforce limitations, is another success of HPJ over the other texts. Despite its flaws, Ornitz still sees cosmopolitanism as a useful tool and is ready to exploit both its successes and weaknesses. The peril of cosmopolitanism comes from its inability to create any true change: it only gives hope, a hope incompatible with the modern world. Yet to the authors featured herein, hope is valuable because it is progressive.

Ultimately, a number of complications arise from attempting to define a work by narrow aesthetic, philosophic, and ideological terms. Here, I offer not a definitive view on these first and second-generation Jewish-American narratives, but a new perspective: a means of reclaiming

these works and revitalizing them through an intersection with cosmopolitan ideologies (immigrant, ethnic, modernist, and traditional). However, traditional cosmopolitanism is incompatible with the immigrant novel, in its focus on ethnic particulars and the "actualities" of lived experience. As cosmopolitanism is ultimately incompatible with the goals of the immigrant cosmopolitanism espoused by Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz, it can only exist as an 'illusion.' As North argues, "the promise [of a multicultural or ethnic modernism, or any ethnically-motivated modernist cosmopolitanism, is] never fulfilled. . . . the Americanist avant-garde demonstrated instead a persistent inability to understand how race [and ethnicity] fit into its conception of modern America" (North 129), which leaves no space for the authors detailed herein. It is true that these authors are not modernist, but they do share some aesthetic elements with other modernist authors.

The inability to successfully apply cosmopolitan aesthetics in their texts appears to pass the responsibility of enacting a successful cosmopolitanism onto others, leaving it unfinished. However, Lutz argues, the unfinished, "failed, partial, or incomplete" nature is a part of the cosmopolitan experiment "prompt[s] us to larger and larger overviews" (31, 46). The cosmopolitan project is therefore not a complete failure. If Hyman represents the immigrant authors featured herein, then arguably, these immigrant authors, like Hyman, do achieve a measure of success through the integration of cosmopolitan aesthetics. They are able to gain the reader's attention at the expense of their ultimate goal of elevating the reception of their texts. Interestingly, the back cover of the 1965 Harcourt-Brace edition of *HK* asserts, "it is a foregone conclusion that a mind as inventive and indomitable as Kaplan's will win out in the end." It is true Hyman wins in his linguistic game with Mr. Parkhill, his classmates, and with the reader. He emerges victorious in his battle of wits with the English language, but the force of Hyman's will

does not guarantee he will win the larger game: the immigrant cosmopolitan game where the stakes are literary recognition and acknowledged artistic and intellectual value. This game does create space within the literary sphere where such a thing is possible under the right circumstances. Like Hyman, Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz win the battle and lose the war. However, the hope is that with altered national, cultural, and personal values and perceptions, such a project can be feasibly completed in the future. As such, these authors will be "instrument[s] of change" (Lewisohn 201).

## Notes:

1. See Boelhower, Sollors, Cowart, Tuerk.
2. See Baumann, Boyarin, Cheng.
3. See Blair, Tischler, Moore, Walden.
4. See Boelhower, Bolton, Lenart-Cheng, Weintraub for a detailed explanation of the autobiographical form. It is important to note, that in the case of the authors featured herein, the autobiography is less of a guiding principle and more of a literary tool. As Browder argues, "Autobiography [is] an important vehicle for persons trying to free themselves from the strictures of a subordinate racial or ethnic identity" (4). To Lewisohn, Steiner, Rosten, and Ornitz, autobiographical form and formal elements are a means of overcoming limitations, creating new connections, and offering new perspectives.
5. See Konzett, Murphy, Mellard, Soto, and Wilmott for more information about the connection between modernism and experimentation. To the authors of this study, experimentation is not an attempt to be new or original. Instead, it is an attempt to alter, manipulate, or change dominant systems.
6. According to Rita Keresztesi in *Strangers at Home: American Ethnic Modernism Between the World Wars* (2005), the "advocates of literary high modernism have been unable and sometimes unwilling to account for ethnic and minority texts as modern [or modernist]" (ix).
7. See Anderson for a more detailed explanation of cosmopolitanism and detachment.

8. According to Raymond Williams, "To the immigrants especially, with their new second common language, language was more evident as a medium--a medium that could be shaped and reshaped--than as a social custom" ("Metropolis" 9).
9. Cosmopolitan ideology shares an aesthetic with modernist ideology: among others, a focus on formal resistance and aesthetic experimentation; anti-commodification and commercialization sentiments; self-reflective techniques, and a desire to overcome limitations whether formal, ideological, or aesthetic.
10. Immigrant novels are plot-driven, generally centralized around one individual's story, and often address issues of immigration and assimilation. Other common themes are "American uplift" (43) and a "shared destiny with America" (Sollors 44). They also share themes with modernist works, such as urbanization, industrialization, secularization, and migration (Sollors).
11. Even as late as 1993, the *Norton Anthology* associated "'popular' literature" with "semi-literate" audiences (Dettmar 5).
12. Immigrant cosmopolitan authors, such as Lewisohn and Steiner, utilize the immigrant narrative as a vehicle to promote worldly or culturally/nationally/racially-detached literature (art) through aesthetics and ideology.
13. See Melnick.
14. True Art, according to Lewisohn and Steiner, has formal, ideological, and aesthetic elements. Overall, Art attempts to resist limitations.
15. See Ross. In her biography of Lewisohn, Ross suggests Lewisohn's "personal publicity and changing critical values later adversely affected Lewisohn's literary reputation."

16. Michael North argues in *The Dialect of Modernism: Race, Language, and Twentieth-Century Literature* (1994) that during the modern period many modernists believed beauty and language should be reclaimed from individuals using non-standard English (13, 32, 138).
17. According to Ronald Schleifer, modernists are responding to conditions allowing for the "enormous multiplication of commodities' and the 'altering [of] various disciplinary practices such as "production," "wealth," and "use"' (qtd. in Keresztesi xv).
18. Here, the effects of cultural decay and capitalism during the modern era. To this definition of modernity, I would add Keresztesi's definition of modernity as historical and social forces powerfully influenced by the emergence of multiculturalism and imperialism in the United States (xi, xx).
19. Reviews such as the *New York Times* article entitled "Immigration: Three Interesting Books on an Important Problem" (1914) focus more on Steiner's status as a professor at Grinnell College than his immigrant background.
20. Laura Browder links ethnicity to performance, whether authentic or impersonated, in her work *Slippery Characters: Ethnic Impersonators and American Identities* (2000). Shifting allegiances in Lewisohn and Steiner make it appear as if their ethnicity is a performance for the audience, as is described by Browder. However, the shifting in these novels is more as a means of deconstructing boundaries and categories.
21. Commodified works lose value in that commodities support "oppressive [commercial and capitalist] ideology" upon the reader and author alike (Dettmar 81).

22. Within his work *Cosmopolitan Vistas: American Regionalism and Literary Value* (2004), Tom Lutz argues for the existence of "inadequate cosmopolitans," where the authors present a "contingent" or "partial" worldview (46).
23. Lewisohn does not use "worldly" in a materialistic sense but describes it as tapping into a universal or worldly "spirit" governed by a sense of truth and morality. It also has an intellectual angle in that he describes worldly individuals as being "true lovers of the ideal" (141).
24. Cosmopolitanism suggests Truth exists, and it is based on worldly ideology or universals. As Kantian cosmopolitanism suggests, "A truth, to be beautiful, must be a whole truth." However, it also argues for the stripping of all "didacticism" from texts because it turns them into "half-truths" (Lutz 39). In contrast, Lewisohn argues that an educational component is necessary for expressing his truths to the audience. It is important to note that at some points in the novel Steiner describes "human" or universal groups, and at other times, he utilizes the term 'cosmopolitan' to describe a "[mix] of many races, splendid new stock to quicken the life of the nation" (265).
25. Steiner addresses how low or mass-produced culture is "flat" and without "individual style." Indeed, Horkheimer and Adorno go so far as to argue that mass-market practices negate the resistant, experimental, and new potential of art (Dettmar 2). In other words, it has no "use value" (Dettmar 80).
26. Here I use Wicke's definition of "'Marketing' as a practice [with] specific set of techniques and a vocabulary dedicated to its mysteries" (109).
27. "Thought-disassociations" are a common modernist technique (Josephson, qtd. in North 141).

28. "When one distinguishes between intellectual and non-intellectuals, one is referring in reality to the immediate social function of the professional category of the intellectuals, that is, one has in mind the direction in which their specific professional activity is weighted, whether towards intellectual elaboration or towards muscular nervous effort" (Gramsci 259). Here, profession ultimately defines intellectualism and the amount of labor or physicality associated with the profession.
29. Irving Howe, author of "The Characteristics of Modernism," supports this supposition, stating, "modernism does not establish a prevalent style of its own; or if it does, it denies itself, thereby ceasing to be modern" (209).
30. Although Rosten arguably utilizes humor in a subversive way, questioning standards and limitations, he and many critics still consider humor a "low" or mass-market form of literature. Initially, to avoid associating his name with mass culture and literature, Rosten utilized the pseudonym Leonard Q. Ross (Mitgang 5).
31. *HK* is an immigrant narrative under the following criteria: one, a first-generation immigrant character relates the events of his life in a semi-chronological, semi-autobiographical manner; two, the text addresses the position of the immigrant within the dominant culture and their relationship to dominant systems--here, education and language. The text, furthermore, deals with issues and themes common to immigrant novels: namely, assimilation, isolation, and the failure of the "American Dream."
32. See Rosten, *The Joys of Yinglish* (1988); *Hooray for Yiddish: A Book About English* (1982); *The Joys of Yiddish* (1968).
33. According to *The Atlantic*, Hyman Kaplan remained a bestseller for six months.
34. Rosten's name was ultimately associated with humor. His skill with humor even earned

him accolades from the National Conference of Christian and Jews (Golub).

35. See Markun, Bent.
36. In *Ethnic Modernism* (2008), Sollors addresses the relationship between modernist 'defamiliarization' and Naturalist 'verisimilitude' (63): distancing from the familiar to create meaning versus drawing on the natural, realistic, and familiar to create meaning.
37. Howe, Irving. "Modern English-Yiddish Yiddish-English Dictionary." *New York Times* 15 Dec. 1968: BR 8. *New York Times.com*. Web. 6 March 2012.
38. For more information regarding the relationship between intellectualism and humor, specifically through parody and wit, see Stephen J. Whitfield's "Towards an Appreciation of American Jewish Humor."
39. Rosten defines 'Yiddish-ish' or 'Yinglish' in the *Joys of Yinglish* (1988): Yiddish-ish is a hybrid English-Yiddish dialect. In *Joys*, Rosten focuses primarily on the Yiddish familiar to most native English speakers and Yiddish already integrated into the American English lexicon.
40. Werner Sollors describes a similar phenomenon present in *Call it Sleep*: "Roth represents the Jewish immigrants' Yiddish as *good* English--for Roth a highly stylized and lyrical language--and their English as broken English. . . . a full range of feelings and words [present in Yiddish] might remain hidden to an English-only reader were it not for the narrator's mediation" (144).
41. According to Raymond Williams, in "What is Modernism?," through a self-referential focus on particulars, modernists emphasized strangeness, distance, and a sense of alienation from the familiar (9). Furthermore, this theme of isolation and estrangement represents the artist and his or her position in the modern world: "Their self-referentiality,

their propinquity and mutual isolation all served to represent the artist as necessarily estranged" (72).

42. Rosten also uses the term 'Yinglish' to describe the American English-Yiddish hybrid dialect present in *HK*.
43. As one reviewer for the *North American Review* states, the "emotional intensity" of Lewisohn's novel does not work "harmoniously" with his "protest" ("Up" 714-715). As Ornitz's work shares a modernist cosmopolitan aesthetic with Lewisohn, it is not hard to believe reviewers would feel similarly about the incorporation of sentimentality in Ornitz's text.
44. Karl Frederick states, "Ideas alter their antecedents to such a degree that at certain points the original impulse is submerged, and the new appears" (29).
45. According to R.L. Trask, the use of ellipses implies that material excluded from the text can be derived from the surrounding context. However, in the case of Ornitz, deriving meaning from context is not always an easy task.
46. This stream of consciousness technique is also utilized by fellow Jewish-American (and arguably modernist) author Henry Roth in *Call It Sleep* (Sollors 142).
47. Like many proponents of New Criticism, critics often promoted ambiguity and complexity over clarity used to aid audience comprehension (Lutz 45).
48. Raymond Williams: "The writers are applauded for the denaturalizing of language, their break with the allegedly prior view that language is either a clear, transparent glass or a mirror, and for making abruptly apparent in the very texture of their narratives the problematic status of the author and his authority" ("When" 70).
49. See Bent.

Definitions:

Aesthetic Modernism: Aesthetic modernism is a progressive artistic and intellectual phenomenon resulting from class politics and shifting perceptions about culture and value in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It reacts to perceived cultural stagnation and a lack of originality. To counteract eroding values, aesthetic modernists attempt to create new forms and techniques that position art outside limiting factors such as tradition, commercialism, and the everyday. It utilizes techniques such as estrangement, experimentation, and resistance to create an aesthetic system that addresses the needs of artists under the conditions of modernity. To aesthetic modernism, the individual and subjective hold less importance than techniques and forms that can be divorced from limiting factors. As immigrant narratives are driven by the personal, this form of modernism leaves no vehicle by which the immigrant might tell their stories.

Cosmopolitanism: Cosmopolitanism is a broad system of aesthetics and affiliations, focusing on the “worldly” and universal. This imaginary community of intellectuals is organized around monolithic concepts of beauty and truth, which supersedes ethnicity and experience, in favor of the “human.” It is both an artistic aesthetic and a performance, functioning to assimilate individuals along ideological lines.

Immigrant Cosmopolitanism: Immigrant cosmopolitanism alters modernist cosmopolitanism further in order to portray the nature of the immigrant experience. It is a hybrid, practical aesthetic pairing the detached with the human, the popular with the intellectual, the ethnic and individual with the universal and human, and the hopeful with the cynical. It is also a transitional space between high Art and mass media. As such, cosmopolitanism becomes less

of a category, title, or achievement, and becomes more of a resistant community and representation of the immigrant experience itself (hybrid, fractured, ambiguous, assimilated, and so forth). The immigrant authors featured in this study, use cosmopolitan aesthetics not as an all-encompassing ideology, but as an aesthetic tool: a tool to be put away or utilized when the situation demands it. Like general cosmopolitanism, it has been used by authors as a way of marketing their text and opening up a space in which they can define themselves according to their own rules and experiences. By using those cosmopolitan techniques relevant to their individual experiences, immigrant authors create a philosophical (ideological), critical (resistant), and aesthetically oriented text highlighting their intellectualism and elevating their 'common' immigrant autobiography to the level of art. Unlike the other versions of cosmopolitanism, immigrant cosmopolitanism relies heavily on audience participation, and it must sync with dominant systems if it is to elevate the value of the immigrant text in the eyes of the reader.

Modernist Cosmopolitanism: In contrast to broader forms of cosmopolitanism, modernist cosmopolitanism is a more detached and local system reflecting the conditions of modernity. Instead of using “worldly” aesthetics to create affiliations, modernist cosmopolitanism uses aesthetics to contrast dominant systems. Through multiple attachments and perspectives, this version of cosmopolitanism offers alternative and shifting perspectives through an outsider view. This critical distance allows practitioners of modernist cosmopolitanism to both utilize cosmopolitan ideology and be aware of its faults. The modernist cosmopolitan author is aware of his position as insider and participant in, as well as outsider and observer of the cultural elements they critique. Modernist cosmopolitanism cannot fully divorce an author

from cultural influences, but it does offer up the possibility of such an act. As such, it is not a complete or completed ideology.

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