

KATHERINE MANSFIELD: THE VIEW FROM FRANCE

Submitted by Geraldine Maria Kimber to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in French, April 2007.

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THESIS ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to assess the reason why Katherine Mansfield's reputation in France has always been greater than in England. The thesis examines the ways in which the French reception of Mansfield has idealised her persona to the extent of crafting a hagiography. I ask: what were the motives behind the French critics' desire to put Mansfield on a pedestal? How did the three years she spent on French soil influence her writing? How do the translations of her work collude in the myth surrounding her personality? Although several other scholars have discussed the Katherine Mansfield myth in France, this thesis is the first sustained attempt to establish interconnections between her own French influences (literary and otherwise), and the myth-making of the French critics and translators.

I have divided my thesis into six chapters. The first places Mansfield in the general literary context of her era, exploring French literary tendencies at the time and juxtaposing them with the main literary trends in England. The second chapter focuses on the writer's trips to France, demonstrating the influence of the French experience on her life and works. The third chapter highlights specific French literary influences and how these manifest themselves in her narrative art. In the fourth, I explain the workings of the writer's narrative art, so that when in the next chapter I study the translations via close textual analysis, it will become clear whether the beliefs and principles expressed in the original texts have been diluted during the translation process. The last chapter prior to the conclusion will follow the critical appraisal of her life and work in France from her death up to the present day, by closely analysing the differing French critical responses. The division of the thesis in this way will enable me to show how these various strands combine to create a legend which has little basis in fact, thereby demonstrating how reception and translation determine the importance of an author's reputation in the literary world.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page and Declaration	1
Thesis Abstract	2
Contents	3
Acknowledgements	6
Abbreviations	7
Introduction	10-15
1. Influences and Innovations	16-42
1.0: Introduction	16
1.1: Beginnings	16
1.2: The <i>Fin de Siècle</i>	18
1.3: Decadence and Symbolism	20
1.4: Modernism and its Roots	22
1.5: Eliot and Laforgue	29
1.6: Proust, Bloomsbury and France	31
1.7: Joyce and Gillet	35
1.8: The Modernist Short Story	38
1.9: Katherine Mansfield	39
1.10: Conclusion	41
2. Falling for France	43-83
2.0: Introduction	43
2.1: Why France?	45
2.2: Early French Influences	46
2.3: France and Murry	49
2.4: Relationship with Carco	52
2.5: Descriptions of France	64
2.6: Illness and France	67
2.7: Influence of Murry	70
2.8: Search for a Cure	73
2.9: Nearing the End	77
2.10: Death in France	80
2.11: Conclusion	82
3. Specific French Literary Influences	84-112
3.0: Introduction	84
3.1: Use of <i>Fin-de-Siècle</i> Techniques and Themes	85
3.2: Mansfield and Baudelaire	87
3.3: ‘Carnation’ and <i>Les Fleurs du mal</i>	91
3.4: ‘The Doll’s House’ and ‘Le Joujou du pauvre’	96
3.5: Mansfield and Colette	99
3.6: <i>L’Envers du music-hall</i>	106

3.7: Conclusion	110
4. Back to Basics: Mansfield's Narrative Technique	113-177
4.0: Introduction	113
4.1: Mansfield as Innovator of The Modernist Short Story	115
4.2: Mansfield's Personal Aesthetic Philosophy	118
4.3: Mansfield's Narrative Technique	120
4.4: The 'Nouvelle-Instant'	122
4.5: The Epiphanic Moment	128
4.6: Use of Literary Impressionism	130
4.7: The Incorporation of Symbolism	134
4.8: Sexuality as a Theme	139
4.9: Feminist Issues	144
4.10: Relationships	150
4.11: Portrayal of Children	153
4.12: Use of Humour	159
4.13: Sun, Moon and Sea Imagery	164
4.14: War and Death	170
4.15: Conclusion	176
5. Translating Katherine Mansfield	178-229
5.0: Introduction	178
5.1: Initial Editorial Bias	181
5.2: Translating the <i>Letters</i>	183
5.3: Translating the <i>Journal</i>	192
5.4: Narrative Technique in Translation	199
5.5: Use of the Action Verb	201
5.6: Translating Mansfield's Punctuation	205
5.7: Idiolects, Modes of Expression and Humour	209
5.8: Use of the Narrator as Stylistic Technique	218
5.9: Translating <i>In a German Pension</i>	221
5.10: Translating the <i>Poems</i>	222
5.11: Conclusion	227
6. The Critical Trend: The Development of the Legend	230-277
6.0: Introduction	230
6.1: Mansfield's Living Reputation	232
6.2: Mansfield's Death Viewed in England	234
6.3: Mansfield's Death Viewed in France	237
6.4: Reception of French Translations	242
6.5: First Signs of Disillusionment	245
6.6: Myth Continues Unabated	246
6.7: Irreverence Returns	249
6.8: Mythologising Continues	255
6.9: Hagiography Heightened Further	258
6.10: Fiftieth Anniversary of Birth	260
6.11: Further Attacks on Legend	262
6.12: Entrenchment and Solidification of Hagiography	265
6.13: Conclusion	275

Conclusion	278-282
Appendices:	283-296
Appendix A: Time Spent in France - Brief Chronology	283
Appendix B: Stories Written in France	285
Appendix C: Stories Set in France or Containing a French Influence	286
Appendix D: French Authors Read by Mansfield	287
Appendix E: Selected English /French Literary Chronology During Mansfield's Lifetime	289
Appendix F: Publication Dates for English/French Primary Texts	292
Appendix G: Jean Delisle's Characteristics of Literary Texts	293
Appendix H: Prominent Mansfieldian French Literary Critics	294
Select Bibliography:	297-316
Katherine Mansfield: Principle Works (in order of publication)	297
Principle Biographies in English	298
Critical Works on Mansfield in English	299
Other Works Consulted in English	300
Articles on Mansfield in English	307
Principle Works and Editions in French (in order of publication)	309
Principle Biographies in French	311
Critical Works on Mansfield in French	311
Other Works Consulted in French	311
Articles on Mansfield in French	313

This thesis is dedicated to Professor Malcolm Bowie (1943-2007)

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ABBREVIATIONS

All page references to Mansfield's stories in English are taken from the *Collected Stories* (London: Constable, 1945), and follow directly after any quotation. Unless stated otherwise, all page references to the stories in French are taken from *L'Œuvre romanesque de Katherine Mansfield* (Paris: Stock, 1955).

The following reference abbreviations are used as standard throughout the thesis:

Primary Texts

IGP	<i>In a German Pension</i> (London: Stephen Swift, 1911)
<i>Bliss</i>	<i>Bliss and Other Stories</i> (London: Constable, 1920)
GP	<i>The Garden Party and Other Stories</i> (London: Constable, 1922)
<i>Poems 1</i>	<i>Poems</i> (London: Constable, 1923)
<i>Dove's Nest</i>	<i>The Doves' Nest and Other Stories</i> (London: Constable, 1923)
SC	<i>Something Childish and Other Stories</i> (London: Constable, 1924)
J1	<i>Journal</i> , ed. by John Middleton Murry (London: Constable, 1927)
L1, i, ii	<i>The Letters, 2 Vols</i> , ed. by John Middleton Murry (London: Constable, 1928)
NN	<i>Novels and Novelists</i> , ed. by J. Middleton Murry (London: Constable, 1930)
SB	<i>The Scrapbook</i> , ed. by J. Middleton Murry (London: Constable, 1939)
L2	<i>Letters to John Middleton Murry 1913-1922</i> , ed. by J. Middleton Murry (London: Constable, 1951)
J2	<i>Journal, Definitive Edition</i> , ed. by J. Middleton Murry (London: Constable, 1954)
CL1	<i>The Collected Letters Volume One 1903-1917</i> , ed. by V. O'Sullivan and M. Scott (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984)
CL2	<i>The Collected Letters Volume Two 1918-1919</i> , ed. by V. O'Sullivan and M. Scott (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987)
CL3	<i>The Collected Letters Volume Three 1919-1920</i> , ed. by V. O'Sullivan and M. Scott (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993)
CL4	<i>The Collected Letters Volume Four 1920-1921</i> , ed. by V. O'Sullivan and M. Scott (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996)

- CS Alpers *The Stories of Katherine Mansfield – Definitive Edition*, ed. by Antony Alpers (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1984)
- Poems 2* *Poems*, ed. by V. O’Sullivan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988)
- NB1, NB2 *Notebooks, Vols. 1 and 2, Complete Edition* ed. by M. Scott (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2002)

Principal French Translations

- Félicité* *Félicité*, trans. by J.-G. Delamain, pref. by Louis Gillet (Paris: Stock, 1928)
- FGP 1 *La Garden Party et autres histoires*, trans. by Marthe Duproix, pref. by Edmond Jaloux (Paris: Stock, 1929)
- FL1 *Lettres*, trans. by Madeleine T. Guéritte, pref. by Gabriel Marcel (Paris: Stock, 1931)
- FJ1 *Journal*, trans. by Marthe Duproix, intro. by J. M. Murry (Paris: Stock, 1932)
- La Mouche* *La Mouche*, trans. by Madeleine T. Guéritte and Marguerite Faguer, pref. by Madeleine T. Guéritte (Paris: Stock, 1933)
- PA *Pension allemande et nouvelles diverses*, trans. by Charles Mauron and Marguerite Faguer (Paris: Stock, 1939)
- CN *Cahier de notes*, trans. by Germaine Delamain, intro. by J. M. Murry (Paris: Stock, 1944)
- Poèmes* *Poèmes*, trans. by Jean Pierre Le Mée (Paris: Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1946)
- VI *Le Voyage indiscret*, trans. by Didier Merlin (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1950)
- FL2, i, ii, iii *Lettres, Vol. 1: 1913-1918, Vol. 2: 1918-1919, Vol.3: 1920-1922*, trans. by Anne Marcel, intro. by André Bay (Paris: Stock, 1954)
- OR *L’Œuvre romanesque*, trans. by J.-G. Delamain, Marthe Duproix, André Bay, Marguerite Faguer, Didier Merlin and Charles Mauron, pref. by André Maurois (Paris: Stock, 1955)
- FJ2 *Journal: Édition définitive*, trans. by Marthe Duproix, Anne Marcel and André Bay, pref. by Marcel Arland, intro. by J. M. Murry (Paris: Stock/ Les Librairies Associés, 1956)
- FGP2 *La Garden-Party et autres nouvelles*, trans. and pref. by Françoise Pellan (Paris: Gallimard, 2002)

Nouvelles *Les Nouvelles de Katherine Mansfield*, pref. by Marie Desplechin
(Paris: Stock, 2006)

Principal Biographies

Alpers Alpers, Antony, *The Life of Katherine Mansfield* (London:
Jonathan Cape, 1980)

Meyers Meyers, Jeffrey, *Katherine Mansfield: A Biography* (London:
Hamish Hamilton, 1978)

Tomalin Tomalin, Claire, *Katherine Mansfield: A Secret Life* (London:
Viking, 1987)