

# ■ Wild Cosmopolitan Gardens: Some Notes towards a Cosmopolitan Sense of Place<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

For many critics, a sense of place is crucial in order to achieve a global environmental awareness. Yet in a globalized world, how do we develop that sense of place, which traditionally was rooted in a home place imbued with local values? Many modern and postmodern subjects can no longer identify a home place, and cultural critics are precisely addressing issues of placelessness or non-places as a characteristic of contemporary society. Yet if we do not care about place, how can we care about our home, the earth? Val Plumwood speculates on the characteristics of a place-sensitive society, and Ursula Heise argues in favor of a sense of planet, developing what she calls eco-cosmopolitanism. This article addresses the dilemma of the contemporary cosmopolitan subject with regard to a sense of place. I posit four possible characteristics of how a cosmopolitan might perceive place and show place sensitivity, illustrating them with a series of texts written by cosmopolitan writers. While still a work in progress, the article suggests a possible starting place which might allow for a future formulation of a cosmopolitan sense of place.

**Keywords:** sense of place, cosmopolitanism, ecocriticism, place-sensitivity, travel, multiple sensitivities, multiple allegiances

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*“What will this place give me, do to me? What landscapes, what houses will it leave in my dreams? What layers will it add to the collage of my identity, my skin, my permanent passport?”* (Morales 192)

Much of this article concerns wishful thinking and personal experience. It is still a project, a search for that traditional sense of place by someone who doesn't have roots in a specific place. I was not brought up in an environmentalist tradition, or with any particular interest in place or nature. I am a daughter of immigrant parents whose hope for the “promised land” came true. Much of my childhood was spent moving among American cities every 5-7 years (Washington D.C., Chicago, Des Plaines, Bowling Green) and traveling to Europe. I visited museums and cathedrals, the “landmarks” of culture, yet remained totally oblivious to nature, except the patterns of fields from airplanes. My adult life has also meant changing cities and homes, though primarily within Spain.

Graduate studies led me to a comparative study of sense of place. As a result, I was plagued by the insistent idea that roots and a sense of place implied staying in one place, setting roots in a determined place, town, environment, and knowing the nature around you. But as Scott Russell Sanders asks himself in *Staying Put: Making a Home in a Restless World*: how can one experience place or rootedness when one's home of childhood memories no longer exists? Traditional ecocritical literature places an emphasis on the “natural” local, on being “tied” to a place, knowing the history and evolution of every hill, knowing the names of local flora and fauna, and living in tune with the seasons. This seems to be the case of not only most nature writing but also much ethnic American literature, which has become my field of expertise. As Ursula Heise comments in *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet* (2008), the environmental rhetoric of ecocriticism in the US continues to be intensely engaged with questions of the local, invested with much of the utopian capital which celebrates a “sense of place” and remaining impervious to any kind of antiessentialist perspectives that recent cultural critiques have developed (8). She points out the contrast with contemporary cultural critiques and counter critiques that question the role of the local, regional, national and global in identity formation, running from hegemonic nationalisms to emancipatory projects of hybridity and cosmopolitanisms (5) and addressing the seemingly ultimate postmodern non-places, such as hospitals, malls, and airports. One of the major insights of these theories is the “emergence of new forms of culture that are no longer anchored in place” (10), and she proposes developing an eco-cosmopolitanism where we could “envision individuals and groups as part of planetary ‘imagined communities’ of both human and non-human kinds” (61). She further points out the need to explore the cultural means by which our relationships to nature are formed and perpetuated as well as how these perceptions

influence our multiple identities (61).

But how? If, to a large degree, the environmental imagination seems anchored to a specific place, where does an immigrant, a daughter of immigrants, a cosmopolitan academic living in urban areas derive a sense of place and develop a deep relationship with our earth others? How do we globalized citizens acquire that sense of planetary imagined community? This latter question has launched me on this quest. Previously it had been two writers whom I addressed in my dissertation, James Baldwin and Rudolfo Anaya, that had made me question and reassess my relationship to the earth and my sense of place. So, as a literary scholar, I have turned once more to literature in the hope that both critics and creative writers might suggest ways to develop this sense of place, alternatives to that traditional sense of place, grounded in a home place.

Mitchell Thomashow makes the following observations in *Bringing the Biosphere Home* (2002), which, though obvious, had never struck me: why are we so obsessed with rootedness in one place? We are all transient. Who is a native? How far back in history do we need to go to establish the conditions of indigeneity? We assume that animals are clearly attached to nature and place, yet many species migrate regularly and do not anchor themselves to a specific place. Thomashow asks where rootedness resides. He affirms that it remains a question of spatial and temporal scales of perception, the confluence of habitat and history (loc. 2262).<sup>2</sup> Perhaps this perspective allows for an exploration of sense of place in a globalized, cosmopolitan world. We might look to our similarities with earth others and focus on animal migrations. As Geoff Dyer states: “Birds in flight . . . are not *between* places, they carry their places with them. We never wonder where they live: they are at home in the sky, in flight. Flight is their way of being in the world” (qtd. in Iyer 80). Perhaps we need to reassess our way of perceiving the world and how we live in it.

As increasing globalization affects our lifestyles, it becomes increasingly difficult to remain in our previously neat little boxes of a local or national identity. The challenge of identifying the origin, nationality, cultural or linguistic identity of cosmopolitan subjects, including writers, becomes daunting. Our definitions of national literary traditions likewise are becoming obsolete, particularly with contemporary writers. It would seem that our multiple allegiances and subjectivities refuse to be constrained. Does our passport necessarily match our cultural identity, or the place we carry out our profession? Increasingly people have more than one passport, more than one nationality, more than one home. How can we make

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<sup>2</sup> “Loc.” refers to Kindle e-books’ “location.”

them fit into the little boxes that one has to check to identify oneself. Similarly, how can we claim to remain within one discrete, recognizable field of research (as in one national literary tradition), when the subjects we study are spilling over? The rapid pace of the globalizing process makes these allegiances shift ever more quickly, and it is now common to find people of every imaginable origin in the least likely places and to find people with the most surprising multiplicity of origins. For someone raised in the American Midwest and then deliberately transplanted to Spain, the exponential explosion of Asian peoples in every corner and profession has certainly been a noticeable one in the last decades. Different Asian peoples have made the Western world home, as highly qualified professionals, small shopkeepers, and unskilled labor. With them, as with all immigrants, come extended family networks, creating sprawling cosmopolitan diasporas. The traditional migratory pattern perceived in the West, East to West, South to North, has been completely disrupted. Many cities are beginning to lose their intrinsic national character, becoming truly global cities that cater to this surge of cosmopolitan subjects.<sup>3</sup> Diasporas no longer tend to move once and stay. Today the rule is one of sojourning in multiple places. With these transient lifestyles, how are we to develop a sense of place? Thus, the objective of this article is to explore some possible characteristics of what a sense of place might be for our contemporary cosmopolitan subjects. I will do so using an initial sampling of cosmopolitan writers/characters.<sup>4</sup> This work in progress, though necessarily incomplete, hopes to raise some initial findings.

The issue of transience is one of particular relevance to our society. Traditional diasporas in which peoples have migrated to a new land, usually implied staying in that land rather indefinitely and not perceiving themselves as transient (again, the issue of temporal scale is relevant here). But, here I will focus on a relatively newer phenomenon, made more frequent due to the increase of speed and facility of travel, which is that of the cosmopolitan subject. In the conclusion of *Global Diasporas* (1997), Cohen tries to establish a kind of taxonomy of the diverse experiences of transnational communities that are often designated as “diasporas.” One analogy he uses is that of the garden.<sup>5</sup> For this article, my

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<sup>3</sup> For a study of contemporary diasporas and cosmopolitan trends, from the perspective of the social sciences, see Cohen, *Global Diasporas* and Vertovec and Cohen, eds. *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism*.

<sup>4</sup> I would like to thank Dr. Scott Slovic for his suggestions as to possible writers and works.

<sup>5</sup> Cohen’s garden presents five types of diasporas with examples: 1) Weeding, or the victim/refugee diaspora, where a group is perceived to be too numerous and needs to be uprooted through deportation, genocide and such (ie. Jews, Africans, Palestinians); 2) Sowing, or the imperial/colonial diasporas where groups are sowed by scattering seeds/colonies and businesses (ie. Ancient Greek, British, Spanish empires); 3) Transplanting, or groups who migrate for labor or service; people are uprooted and sent abroad and replanted (ie. Indentured Indians, Chinese, Turks, Italians); 4) Layering, or the trade and business

conclusion adapts this metaphor, also used by Thomashow, where the garden becomes both metaphor and a physical possibility for a cosmopolitan sense of place. Vertovec and Cohen in their *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism* (2002) argue that the newly revived term of “cosmopolitanism” suggests the following characteristics simultaneously: cosmopolitanism transcends the nation-state model, mediates between actions and ideals which are both local and global, is culturally anti-essentialist and is capable of representing complex repertoires of allegiances, identities and interests (4). They highlight six perspectives on cosmopolitanism, some of which are particularly important for this study: it is a socio-cultural condition and a philosophical one, entailing a worldview; it implies two types of political projects, a striving toward transnational institutions and the acceptance of multiple subjectivities, allegiances, loyalties and affiliations; it can be understood as an attitude or disposition, a way of engaging with the world which is open to diversity; and it can be perceived as a type of practice or competence, the ability to make one’s own way into other cultures through listening, observing, intuiting and reflecting and participating in many worlds (9-14).

The term cosmopolitanism has often implied a certain degree of elitism, particularly with regards to the voluntariness of displacement and diaspora. It is true that many migrations are not strictly voluntary, if not completely forced. However, often enough they are subject to a degree of choice, even if that choice means choosing between poverty and lack of opportunity at home and the risk of the unknown with the hope of a better opportunity. In that decision remains a degree of choice and a special attitude or character. If the first generation has been successful in establishing itself in the new land, the second generation certainly has greater choices. Sarah Philips Casteel illustrates that many immigrants to a new land, undertake a second migration, often within the new land (in either the migrating generation or more frequently in the next) to a new place, one of choice, shaping a different diaspora, which she terms “second arrivals.” In this second migration, they often engage in “alternative forms of emplacement” that is not always recognized (Introduction). The increasing numbers of these second-generation immigrants, who have maintained cultural/emotional ties to the old country but have likewise adapted to their new country, are the origins of many cosmopolitans, many of whom have risen to the middle or professional classes through the educational opportunities of the new land, or at least most of

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professionals, a method of propagating vegetatively by taking cuttings and grafting groups while maintaining close ties to the parent plant/group (ie. Venetians, Lebanese, Japanese today); and 5) Cross-pollinating, or the postmodern cultural hybrid, where pollination comes from both physical migratory waves and from airwaves such as music, internet (ie. the Caribbean peoples, today’s Indians). For details, see Cohen *Global Diasporas* 177-79.

them have that aspiration and attitude. Cosmopolitans are products of diverse gardening techniques. Some have been weeded from their homes, others have been sowed abroad by modern day economic empires; with contemporary industrial dislocations, some end up transplanted while many professionals layer their lives and offspring. Our modern cities are loci for multiple cross-pollinations. Vertovec and Cohen state that cosmopolitanism has more to do with an attitude or worldview than with a geographic or economic reality. They note that more and more analysts admit that expressions of cosmopolitanism “exist among a wide variety of non-elites, especially migrants and refugees” (8), so we find that it is increasingly more difficult in this globalized world to remain “pure” to one national/territorial identity. There has been much writing on diasporas and the role of place imagination in their identity, but the purpose of this article is to analyze these more recent cosmopolitan attitudes and how a sense of place might be experienced.

Thomashow states that in order to achieve a sense of place one needs to explore “home and community, ecology and history, landscape and ecosystem.” It implies searching for one’s ecological and historical roots and linking them to one’s identity (loc. 1036-1042). Place, history, community and identity are all linked and according to Thomashow, “a place-based orientation is also the foundation from which to explore global environmental issues” (loc. 1046). He argues that the interpenetration of species, people and landscapes are the basis of any local language and thus the stories of inhabitation provide the necessary knowledge of habitat and history (loc. 2430) that grounds us and shapes our identity. Echoing the ideas of Vertovec and Cohen, he also claims that cosmopolitans learn “to stand in several places at once, developing multiple fidelities and allegiances” (loc. 2488).

For the purposes of this article, I would like to focus on this socio-political description of cosmopolitanism as a mediator between the local and global, the factor of multiple affiliations and the worldview, attitude and practice. My purpose is not necessarily to celebrate cosmopolitanism; these multiple allegiances and subjectivities carry with them both positive and negative factors, gains and losses, to a great degree conditioned by how they are perceived. However valuable an analysis of the losses may be, I feel that ecocriticism (and other types of criticism) cannot just remain in nostalgia, but must try to find answers and solutions to the issues that arise. It is impossible to return to a traditional, idealized sense of place, where people have deep roots anchored in a given place. Our world is moving too fast. The landscape is changing, whether we like it or not, and the question is to find a way to deal with it, to retrieve wisdom from past lifestyles and adapt them to a new cosmopolitan lifestyle that remains place sensitive and

contributes to curbing our current rate of environmental destruction. With these ideas in mind, it is my intention to explore some of those stories of inhabitation of cosmopolitan writers and characters, a kind of literary planting of a cosmopolitan garden, to analyze possible interpretations of this new cosmopolitan sense of place, and to see to what degree they might contribute to the creation of a kind of eco-cosmopolitan awareness.

Place is “lived-in space” and “a center of felt value” (Tuan 4) and simultaneously encompasses different aspects such as environmental materiality, social perception or construction, and individual affect or bond (Buell 62-63). Based on this idea and other theories that I shall mention, I would like to posit, with the support of literary examples, that some of the characteristics of a cosmopolitan sense of place might be the following:

1. Cosmopolitans tend to perceive a place (as well as cultures, customs, etc.) through multiple sensitivities, allegiances and identities. Their multiple experiences induce them to feel a place with their senses, emotions, and intellect. The place has both a material physicality but also an emotional referent and a cultural intertextuality, an automatic element of comparison and juxtaposition to other experiences in very different but equally familiar contexts. Despite a sense of familiarity, this perception of a place is always open to appreciate its strangeness and diversity, allowing perception to change, to adapt, and to enrich a pre-existing experience.
2. Cosmopolitans travel often. But those with place sensitivity might consider journeys and travel not only as the means to a new home or job but also as sites of encounters with place. These encounters provide learning about the sites but also about the self. The cosmopolitan perceives and relishes this new layer of meaning both about the world and about oneself.
3. A cosmopolitan perceives place as the confluence of history and habitat, to use Thomashow's expression. S/he sees the markings of history on the place, views place as combining the natural and the constructed, the human and the non-human. A place-sensitive cosmopolitan would be attentive to both the stories of inhabitation and to the history inscribed on the land, as well as concerned with ecology and evolution. Factors of circumstance, contingency, and the complex mixing and layering of the local and the global would come to mind and be taken into account.
4. Fourthly, cosmopolitans often deliberately choose a home place. Traditionally people's socio-cultural identity was determined by the fact of birth and family heritage. Today, cosmopolitans choose. Although they initially might find a place as strange and alien, they adapt it to one's multiple subjectivities and thus

make it their own. This place reflects that complex subjectivity, whether it be a lifestyle, a room, a garden, its decoration or its location, something that contains and expresses those multiple identities. However, despite their feeling of belonging (although never 100%) in the place they have chosen, they are always aware of the interplay of transience and permanence, that any home is permanent in that one has made it home, but temporary in that there are always factors of contingency that bring about change. So home is home, while it lasts.

In order to illustrate these characteristics I will be primarily drawing on Mitchell Thomashow (*Bringing the Biosphere Home*, 2002) and Val Plumwood (*Environmental Culture*, 2002), and a seemingly odd assortment of writers, both fiction and nonfiction, many of which have an “Asian connection”: Aurora Levins Morales (*Getting Home Alive*, 1986), Rudolfo Anaya (*A Chicano in China*, 1986), John Francis (*Planetwalker*, 2005), Amitav Ghosh (*The Hungry Tide*, 2005), Brian Castro (*Birds of Passage*, 1983) and Pico Iyer (*The Global Soul*, 2000). These writers, who constitute an initial approach to the subject, offer a variety of examples of this concept of a cosmopolitan sense of place. They do not, however, necessarily exhibit the same aspects, and their interpretation of each characteristic is as varied as their multiple subjectivities.

In *Environmental Culture* Australian philosopher Val Plumwood speaks of a culture that would be place-sensitive. She acknowledges that “mobility rules modernity” and that to understand the “language of the land,” a deep acquaintance with some specific place is necessary (231). However, she proposes a re-thinking of our attitudes, freeing ourselves from an excessive dependence on rationalism and logic (a difficult task for us academics who rely precisely on our intellectual capacities). Plumwood argues that within our cultural paradigm our relationship to nature is monological: “land conceived as an adjunct to, or resource for, human projects” (229). She suggests that we try to view the “world as another agent or player” where, if we adopt a “trickster mind, a shape-shifting mind,” we can find meaning in contingency, be open to chaos, and feel wonder at the world (227). It is interesting to note that in Thomashow’s intent to develop and practice a perceptual place-based ecology, he also speaks of the importance of feeling wonder at the natural world. Experiencing wonder implies an appreciation of creation but also alarm at its fragility and its extinction. Wonder also spawns indebtedness and humility, and Thomashow considers these feeling essential for environmental learning and responsibility (loc. 789-905). The continuous “alienness” of the cosmopolitan traveler invites feeling wonder and surprise, delight at the newness of things, and taking the time to notice them.



Thus, if place is a center of felt value and dependent on both social and individual perception, then personal experience, worldview, and attitudes are key factors. Thus, for cosmopolitans, the first characteristic would be a place perception tinted by their multiple sensitivities. One can find examples of this phenomenon in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* and its two cosmopolitan characters, American of Bengali descent, Piya Roy, and Bengali-born, Delhi-settled Kanai Dutt. Both are clearly cosmopolitan, either due to heritage and birthplace, such as Piya (as she is usually called), or due to personal drive, circumstances and attitudes, such as Kanai. Amitav Ghosh also is clearly cosmopolitan, born in India, of Burmese parents, and having lived in Egypt, England and the United States. His character Piya finds a security and safety in her foreignness, which is breached by her physical appearance in the Kolkata-Canning region: "It was ironic that here-in a place where she felt even more a stranger than elsewhere-her appearance had robbed her of that protection" (30). While she looks Indian she cannot speak Bengali or Hindi, and she does not know how to find her way to Canning and the tide country. Moreover, because of her apparent "indianness," she is not awarded the aid traditionally given a foreigner. She has chosen her profession, a cetologist among other reasons because "it allowed her to be on her own, to have no fixed address, to be far from the familiar while still being a part of a loyal but loose knit community" (106). Kanai, who since childhood maintained a certain elitist cosmopolitan attitude, particularly towards rural peoples and customs, is representative of the new up-and-coming modern New Delhi society, catering to the multinational organizations through his translating services. He prides himself on "the breadth and comprehensiveness of [his] experience of the world; [he] had loved, [he used to say] in six languages" (291).

Their perceptions of the town and island of Lusibari, as well of the local people, notably the local fisherman Fokir, are radically opposite, given their diverse interests. Kanai, given his own effort to rise above the local, is condescending towards what he sees as an ignorant illiterate man and looks for any excuse to leave the primitive town as soon as possible. On the contrary, Piya, whose sole interest is in the dolphins, admires Fokir because he knows the river and where the dolphins are. The rest of the town and peoples are irrelevant to her. However, in the end, they both change, much as a result of what Kanai's Uncle Nirmal teaches him, "A place is what you make of it" (234). Both Piya and Kanai discover that they are, despite their studies and complex experience, totally ignorant of how to survive in the tide country, whereas the local people have the necessary knowledge and skills to adapt to an ever-changing land/waterscape. The local people always retain the respect and wonder at the continuous change and chaos of the tide country and the water. Finally, both Piya

and Kanai learn the necessity of observing the land and watching for its changes and shifts. The novel continuously references the need to “read” the river as a living text, to seek out its depth and layered meanings. The stories of inhabitation have to be interpreted: “That words are like the winds that blow ripples on the water’s surface. The river itself flows beneath, unseen and unheard” (277). Kanai observes Piya watching the river as “a textual scholar poring over an undeciphered manuscript: it was as though she were puzzling over a codex, that had been authored by the earth itself” (222).

African American John Francis, son of a West Indian immigrant who was raised in Philadelphia and California, has lived in different parts of the United States, and became a decided environmentalist as the result of witnessing an oil spill in the San Francisco Bay. His devastation makes him decide not to travel in any motorized vehicles for 22 years. His frustration at not being able to satisfactorily make his friends understand his decision led him to a vow of silence that lasted 17 years. During those years, he crossed the United States on foot, started his foundation Planetwalk, and earned a Bachelors, Masters and Ph.D. in environmental studies at three different universities, worked for the U.S. Coast Guard as a specialist in writing oil spill regulations, and became a U.N. Ambassador for the environment. Throughout the work he continuously assesses and re-evaluates his perceptions and decisions, ever open to new ideas and subjectivities. After he resumed talking and using motorized vehicles, he traveled the world, particularly South America and Australia, studying the environment and striving to bring about awareness. In his book-length essay, *Planetwalker*, which covers the period prior to his return to motorized vehicles, he speaks of the importance of personal perception in viewing the land, how a person will view it differently according to his/her prior experiences: “Forget size, terrain, the presence of wild animals, the absence of human technology-wilderness, ultimately, is a state of mind. If you think a certain piece of country is wilderness, then it is wilderness—for you” (loc. 1374). Francis is very conscious of how experience conditions perceptions. Thus, what might be a comfortably known environment for one, can be a frightening wilderness for another; a city can be as much a wilderness as a forest or a desert.

Pico Iyer was born in England of Indian parents, raised in America, and now lives in Japan. He travels the world, noting all the apparent contradictions of the cosmopolitan lifestyle and embodying a “global soul” who has “grown up in many cultures all at once” with a “porous sense of self that changed with [his] location” (*Global* 18). He openly acknowledges his multiple sensitivities, as he states in an interview in *Harper’s* in 1993: “I am simply a fairly typical product of a movable sensibility, living and working in a world that is itself increasingly small and

increasingly mongrel.” He suggests that the hope of any global soul is that of making the “collections of his selves something greater than the whole; that diversity can leave him not a dissonance but a higher symphony” (*Global* 121). However he specifies that he feels a “keen sense of blessings of being unaffiliated” and that has allowed him to keep alive “a sense of wonder” (*Global* 24). Moving allows him to see the foreignness, the newness of every land: “in Japan, bringing strange eyes to the things the Japanese take for granted, I can see the places that I might otherwise take for granted” (*Global* 292). He comments that “being in so alien an environment is the first step towards living more slowly, and trying to clear some space, away from a world ever more revved up. In our global urban context, it’s an equivalent to living in the wilderness” (288). The cultural distance of the cosmopolitan allows one to perceive from different perspectives, the variety induces a closer look, noting the nuances. Similarly to Francis, Iyer notes that any new, alien place, regardless of its physical materiality, can be perceived as a wilderness. Living in a wilderness implies the need for observation, for new survival strategies; perception of wilderness depends on the sensitivities and identities brought to it, and survival depends on the openness and willingness to adapt.

The second characteristic I have posited is that of the incessant travel of either the writers or their literary creations. Val Plumwood suggests that in traveling, place be viewed as an end, not just as the means to another holiday or for professional purposes. She advocates orienting journeying as a project of multiple place encounters in a dialogical manner, as “a communicative project to explore the more-than-human as a source of wonder and wisdom in a revelatory framework of mutual discovery and disclosure” (233). Philosopher Freya Mathews also addresses the issue of journeying which she defines as a “voyage into vulnerability, a doffing of one’s habitual identity to become the stranger, open to serendipitous direction by the world, and to the self-appointment of one’s destinations by themselves” (78). Mathews insists that the attitude of humility is key, whether we are speaking of an encounter of the “strangeness of the real in the midst of the everyday” or of a distant frontier. The journeying implies being “open to revelation,” being willing to “discover those things about oneself . . . that are hidden in daily life” (78). As an illustration I have chosen Rudolfo Anaya, perhaps the least cosmopolitan of all the writers, whose novels are decidedly located in a small part of New Mexico with characters who never travel. However, as a person, Anaya has traveled and he wrote a book on his month long journey to mainland China in 1984. His views on travel echo the characteristics I have posited. He views his travel as a pilgrimage, that trip of mutual discovery: “My response to China was highly personal. I felt that during my travel important answers would be

revealed to me. What answers? What revelations did I seek? To be truthful, I did not know exactly what I sought. I would be a traveler in search of symbols that could speak the language of my soul” (v-vi). He feels that travel is “one of those crucial ways in which we gain knowledge about the integrated Earth on which we live” (ix). In Anaya’s “journeying” he is open to revelation, and is surprised to find an unexpected relatedness between Chinese and Chicano cultures. He discovers that Chinese culture speaks to his heart, making him aware of the commonalities of all cultures and beliefs. Pico Iyer tends to actually see himself as travel; in his interview in *Harper’s* he states: “I am a multinational soul on a multinational globe on which more and more countries are as polyglot and restless as airports. Taking planes seems as natural to me as picking up the phone or going to school; I fold up myself and carry it around as if it were an overnight bag.” Yet that “overnight bag” keeps filling up with experiences, ideas, perceptions and impressions that inevitably alter his identity. Like the migrating birds, Iyer changes his place and alights at a new place, which also becomes part of his identity. He doesn’t feel displaced, but rather he perceives this new environment, absorbs it into his every-changing self, adding new layers of perception and feeling wonder at both its strangeness and similarity. John Francis, like Anaya, considers traveling as a pilgrimage: “At its core, Planetwalk is a journey of discovery” (loc. 1773). “While the destination is desirable, the journey and being in the present each moment is the meditation my walking has become. If my goal is to return to the place I have begun, I surmise, I have already left where I want to be and I am already here where I am going. In walking there is a constant sense of place” (loc. 1828). For Francis seeing new places also adds knowledge, new perceptions which, in a way, permeate his skin as he walks, modifying his identity. Like Morales, in the epigraph of this article, perceiving place implies not only knowing but also changing the self, adding a new layer, a dialogical process such as Plumwood suggested.

The third characteristic I have suggested is the perception of place as the confluence of history and habitat, which is clearly illustrated by Brian Castro, whose family comes from Shanghai and who was born in Hong Kong. He is of Portuguese, Chinese, and English descent and has lived in Paris, Hong Kong, and Australia, where he currently makes his home. The title of his novel, *Birds of Passage*, clearly alludes to the migratory experience, both animal and human. This novel is particularly interesting in the way in conflates time and place, history and habitat together with travels and transience. The novel traces two parallel journeys, that of Lo Yun Shan who travels from mainland China to Australia in the migratory gold rush of the 1850s and that of contemporary Seamus O’Young, an Australian-born Chinese who travels to England and France and

back to Australia, trying to make sense of his difference and his own identity and place in this world. As Shan travels and hears different languages, he begins to question his own identity and asks himself “Where did his loyalties lie?” (131). The narrative blends the voices, travels, and experiences of both characters only to merge them at the end: the written words of Shan become the voice of Seamus. Throughout the novel the brief, but poignant comments on nature are noteworthy, clearly denoting a special sensitivity for the natural world, despite the continuous journeys of both characters. Let this poem suffice as an example: “In this rough hollow//protected by slivers//of moonlit rock//not far from pounding surf//I wrap myself in earth//fearful still of ghosts.// In the hiatus between//each roar//I listen for my sadness//sighing before//each curling wave’s//unharnessed” (74). Seamus finds his rootedness and his sanity precisely in the interplay of transience and permanence, in learning to root himself in the crossroads of habitat and history, usually using images of nature for his restored sanity. Both Shan and Seamus display from the start a decidedly cosmopolitan worldview, refusing to be limited by the script established by one’s community, despite the fact that neither of them has any economic privilege, quite the contrary. Stuart Hall views the “cosmopolitan self” as one who, while coming from a determined cultural identity and vocabulary, cannot preserve a full and unique cultural identity since s/he has several to draw from, and as one who needs to step back, assess these cultural frameworks, dispensing with them when they are no longer useful (27). A cosmopolitan self is able to stand outside having one’s life written and scripted by any one community, whether a faith, tradition, religion, or culture, and draw selectively on a variety of discursive meanings (26). Seamus refuses to be “pigeon-holed” by his physical appearance or passport (Birds 8) and both he and Shan have their loyalties continuously divided. Seamus at one point addresses Shan as he is reading fragments of paper that he has recovered: “So you are discovering a new land, and yourself as well, modifying your views, readjusting your stance. How much of your foreignness will you retain, how much will you lose?” (62). Seamus wonders if his “genetic make-up [could] be a legacy of history” (51); he starts hearing voices which seem to be “the accumulation of the imaginations of all [his] predecessors,” “molecules of their ideals” constructing “several inter-linked worlds” that he inhabits (51-52). This complex passage brings together the constructed worlds of texts and words, with genetic and racial factors, the sheer materiality of his body and the places he has traveled: they all add new layers to his identity.

Plumwood notes that place sensitivity requires an understanding of place that is rooted in memory (individual and community), but also one that understands the “hegemonic social relationships expressed in places and between places”

as well as the need to “acknowledge the caring relationships to multiple places” (233). She also seems to echo Vertovec and Cohen’s ideas about the cosmopolitan’s ability to engage with the other, her openness to diversity and her way of being in the world. Plumwood advocates an ecological spirituality that is materialist in that it is based on the material and ecological bases of life, and dialogical in that it would be “communicative, open to the play of more-than-human forces and attentive to the ancestral voices of place and of earth” (229). Thomashow’s expression of place as the “confluence of habitat and history” is particularly relevant and echoes through Plumwood as well. The acknowledgement that nature is not static and that our place on Earth is relative to a given moment in time is an important issue in order to bring us out of the illusion of permanence in the home place. Thomashow explains that “rootedness lies in the interplay of transience and permanence forever unfolding” (loc. 2607). Undoubtedly this state is the reality for most human beings, but it is particularly so for the cosmopolitan who is continuously on the move. Reading the habitat, listening to the ancestral voices of place, understanding the social relationships expressed in place, perceiving the history of place, both in geological and anthropological terms, are essential factors to develop a sense of place, although different writers and/or characters may perceive and interpret this confluence in diverse ways.

Throughout Pico Iyer’s book, he continuously points out the extraordinary pastiche of multinational places in Japan, erected side-by-side with traditional Japanese temples. He describes where he lives:

“Western Convenience Neighborhood” (as the Japanese might call it) . . . I can get fresh bread at the Deer’s Kitchen bakery and éclairs (and Mozart) at Père de Noel. The Wellness building stands just across from a twenty-second-century health club, which offers *qigong* classes twice a week, its gray walls thick with autumn leaves, and the man at the Elle hair salon tells me (every time I visit) about his one trip abroad to Hawaii. Right next to the Memphis Apartments, competing with Elle, the Louvre Maison de Coiffure, and the Musée Hair and Make . . . the Bienvenuto Californian trattoria down the street; the Hot Boy Club (with surfing shop next door); and a coffee shop, above an artificial lake, that used to be called Casablanca and contained the very piano that Dooley Wilson played for Humphrey Bogart. (271)

Yet, venturing down a mere flight of steps, he finds “another country: green, green rice paddies shining in the blue-sky morning, and narrow, sloping streets leading up into the hills. Two-story wooden houses. . . . Grandmothers were working in traditional white scarves. . .” (273): the postmodern a few steps away from the traditional agricultural lifestyle. John Francis, as he walks across the country, sees the history written on the land and recognizes its importance: “The area is steeped in the history of Indian wars and skirmishes. Not too far to the

north, in Montana, is where Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse defeated Custer at the Battle of Little Big Horn. I stop to read each historical marker as I make my way into town. It adds to the sense of place that I carry with me” (loc. 3438). In Brian Castro’s work, precisely the commingling of past and present and Seamus’ re-tracing the steps of his ancestor are key to the novel.

Ghosh’s *The Hungry Tide* particularly illustrates the confluence of history and habitat, as the land exposes its ancient cosmopolitan character, from the geological or mythical origins of the tide country to the confluence of rivers, from the accumulation of silt to the unraveling strands of Shiva’s braid, from the English names of the islands to the diasporic origins of the settlers on these islands. Kanai tells Piya the story of the ill-fated port of Canning:

Like so many other places in the tide country, Canning was named by an Ingrej. . . . They got it into their heads that they needed a new port, a new capital for Bengal . . . on the banks of the Matla. . . . Now it’s no secret that the word matla means “mad” in Bangla, and everyone who knows the river knows also that this name has not been lightly earned. But those Ingrej town planners were busy men who had little time for words and names. (234-35)

Planners throughout history refused to listen to these voices only to discover that the voices, the fruit of local wisdom, would have warned them of the futility of their plans. The story also emphasizes the need to be open to chaos and contingency, to adapt to change and perceive the place and nature as alive with minds of their own. Nirmal’s stories about the English serve to illustrate the consequences of not reading the layers of meaning in the river. Having place sensitivity implies listening to the voices, to history, and learning from it, something which all too many cosmopolitans (or multinational endeavours) neglect doing, with the consequent environmental and human devastation.

Anaya continuously remarks on the relationships between Chinese culture and Chicano culture (partially derived from the Aztecs). He reflects on the migrations from Asia to America which “brought with them and preserved certain signs, certain symbols of value, certain archetypal memories of a biological nature, links, a history—an understanding of that other half of my nature, which whispers to me. Asia, land of the golden carp, Asia, land of beginning. Sipapu of the Americas, timeless land, I return to you to find myself” (5-6). He compares communal lives and the Chicano community (39-40). He relates the two cultures, in particular the symbols of the carp, the dragon and the serpent:

The Buddha cannot die from the memory of the people. Is he an aspect of Quetzalcoatl, the positive force that renounces the material world, the positive force we need to balance the aspect of the dragon? Has Buddha entered me yet? Will he enter me and sleep side by side with the dragon in my soul? We will take the teachings of the

Buddha and teach them in Aztlán even as we must teach the values of Quetzalcoatl, the wisdom and the poems of Nezalhaucóatl. We will send our Chicano dharma bums to the mountains of Tibet to study with the Buddhist priests even as we send them to unravel the secrets of the Aztecs and the Mayans. (48-49)

This cultural syncretism is written both on the land and on the body. All these writers and/or characters mix the human and non-human, the local and the global. For Anaya, the Yangtze becomes the Rio Grande, Buddha, Quetzalcoatl, and the Chinese dragon, the Aztec serpent. He dreams of dragons and when he visits the Palace in Beijing, “the vast courtyard between the buildings reminds me of Teotihuacán in Mexico. The walls, the smell, the sprigs of grass and weeds on the grounds. The dragon is everywhere, the flaming Quetzalcoatl of Mexico. The face of the fierce dragon looks out at me from walls, from gargoyles, from decorative pieces, almost exactly as the serpent head in the pyramids of Mexico” (21).

A poem by Aurora Levins Morales, born in Puerto Rico, daughter of a Brooklyn-born Ukrainian Jew and a Harlem-born Puerto Rican, richly illustrates not only history and habitat, identity, community and landscape, but also the layers of journeys and perceptions. *Getting Home Alive* is a revolutionary hybrid autobiography, co-authored by mother and daughter. From the cover of the book, to its structure with the blurring of the two voices, the multiple subjectivities and sensitivities, the alterations of the autobiographic genre, containing essays, poems, stories and reportage, and the *mestizaje* of language, the text embraces a clear feminist and *mestiza* consciousness, one that yearns for a home and for a place in the world. The title itself reflects the need for a rootedness, a place, a home. The constant migrations and travels reflect modernity and multiple allegiances but also the impossibility of setting deep roots in any one home place. Her poem acknowledges the confluence of history and habitat in her own body and identity. It mixes all these elements into that symphony that Pico Iyer yearns for.

I am a child of the Americas,  
a light-skinned mestiza of the Caribbean,  
a child of many diaspora, born into this continent at a crossroads.

I am a U.S. Puerto Rican Jew,  
a product of the ghettos of New York I have never known.  
An immigrant and the daughter and granddaughter of immigrants.  
I speak English with passion: it's the tongue of my consciousness,  
a flashing knife blade of crystal, my tool, my craft.

I am Caribeña, island grown. Spanish is in my flesh,  
ripples from my tongue, lodges in my hips:  
the language of garlic and mangoes,  
the singing in my poetry, the flying gestures of my hands.



I am of Latinoamerica, rooted in the history of my continent:  
I speak from that body.

I am not african. Africa is in me, but I cannot return.  
I am not taína. Taíno is in me, but there is no way back.  
I am not european. Europe lives in me, but I have no home there.  
I am new. History made me. My first language was spanglish.  
I was born at the crossroads  
and I am whole. (50)

This poem reflects her cultural heritage (Jewish, Ukrainian, Brooklyn, Puerto Rico, Spanish, Latin America, Africa, Taino,<sup>6</sup> and European). However, the places, their vegetation, historical conquest and linguistic *mestizaje* all inhabit her body and her character. She stresses that she is all of that, but at the same time something new: history and habitat have produced a new, cosmopolitan subject.

The fourth characteristic I have posited for a cosmopolitan sense of place is that of choosing a home place, aware that it may be temporal but that it is permanent for the time being. That home place speaks to the multiple identities and experiences; it gathers the diverse locals into a much broader global. But it also carries all the layers of meaning of those multiple journeys. Most of the aforementioned authors (and characters) end up deliberately choosing a home or see multiple places as home. Throughout their lives, Aurora and her mother Rosario, move, together and separately: Puerto Rico, New York, Chicago, Minnesota, New England and California. This counter-hegemonic narrative narrates the tracks, retraces them in the opposite direction and acknowledges the “layers” of influence on their individual identities. The text reflects our globalizing trend clearly where the multidirectionality illustrates the relative perception of different places. Moreover, both women choose their place at the end; it is no longer a question of forced migration (initially it had been for previous generations and circumstances). Rosario Morales perceives both Cambridge, Mass., and Puerto Rico as home. Rosario writes in her “Puerto Rican Journal” that she is going home: first on the plane to Puerto Rico on 2/14/83: “Home. I’m going home, I thought, and the happiness bubbled in me and spilled over. . . . I am a tropical child. I carry my island tucked inside and I’m going home” (82). The journal passage continues and two weeks later on her return flight to Cambridge, Mass. She writes: “The atmosphere on this plane is completely changed since the passengers got off at Philadelphia. . . . I’m stretched out with my journal on my lap. I have to smile. I’ve written, “I’m going home” (83). Both are home.

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<sup>6</sup> Taino refers to the indigenous population of Puerto Rico and the Greater Antilles.

Aurora, who has chosen to live in California, “the place no one took me or sent me to. The place I chose for myself” (192) makes her kitchen the site of the multiple crossings, a metaphor for her home place.

So I peel my bananas under running water from the faucet, but the stain won't come out, and the subtle earthy green smell of that sap follows me, down from the mountains, into the cities, to places where banana groves are like a green dream, unimaginable by daylight: Chicago, New Hampshire, Oakland. So I travel miles on the bus to the immigrant markets of other people, coming home laden with bundles, and even, now and then, on the plastic frilled tables of the supermarket, I find a small curved green bunch to rush home, quick, before it ripens, to peel and boil, bathing in the scent of its cooking, bringing the river to flow through my own kitchen now, the river of my place on earth, the green and musty river of my grandmothers, dripping, trickling, tumbling down from the mountain kitchens of my people. (38-39)

The kitchen, as cooking in other extracts, becomes a significant site because it has been viewed as a traditional female space—the matrix of feminine culture based on story-telling, female control, and domesticity. However, as Bost points out, it is also the place where one brews new concoctions, producing new blends and new selves (201). Rosario, too, uses food to represent her multiple selves. When she goes back to the Bronx, she reflects:

The knish place is still there selling knishes in every flavor: potato (that goes without saying), and cabbage and kasha and cheese and apple and strawberry. Though not the ones I made in Chicago one year, with (forgive me!) pork, and raisins and garbanzos and green Spanish olives, the insides of pasteles, in fact. I want a pure Jewish neighborhood to return to but I make Puerto Rican knishes in Chicago, make Morales blintzes in the mountains of Maricao, make my Jewish chicken soup with cilantro and oregano, raise Jewish-Puerto Rican-American children on aceite de oliva and kosher pickles, pasta de guayaba and pirozhni, empanadas and borscht mit sour cream. (116)

Both mother and daughter, in different places, cook the foods of all their identities, following all the traditions and breaking all of them, refashioning their new selves, selves deeply rooted in multiple places.

Pico Iyer reflects that for cosmopolitans their “sense of home is . . . scattered across the planet” (18). He states that the “challenge of the modern world is to find a city that speaks to as many of our homes as possible” (125). He reflects that the home for a global soul is perhaps “in the midst of the alien and the indecipherable” (269). Iyer equates the process of interacting with a place to finding something in common with as many of the subjectivities as possible (125). But he also chooses: “I choose to live a long way from the place where I was born, the country in which I work, and the land to which my face and blood assign me—on a distant island where I can't read any of the signs and will never be accepted as even a partial native” (269). Yet, he makes Japan his home and notes, it is home

“in incidental ways; I can tell when the trees in the park are going to change color, and when the vending machines will change their offerings from hot to iced. . . . I read Thoreau on sunny Sunday mornings, as Baptist hymns float over from across the way, and think that in our mongrel, mixed-up planet, this may be as close to the calm and clarity of Walden as one can find” (295-96). Although it is clearly a constructed environment, Iyer’s reflections address elements of the natural world, albeit through a cultural scrim. He has chosen Japan and a neighborhood full of multicultural references and multinational “props” where he has the “sense of a world that’s singing the same song in a hundred accents all at once” (270). Yet at the same time, traditional Japan is around the corner and he visits that too. He perceives “Japan’s response to globalism, it sometimes seems, is a promiscuous consumption of all the cultures of the world. . . . Japan is more alien than anywhere I know; but underneath the surface, it speaks the language I was trained to hear” (275).

How are we trained? Can someone with a cosmopolitan upbringing be satisfied while anchored to one sole place and culture? Stuart Hall states that “we cannot establish identity without a cultural vocabulary. We are in that sense always culturally situated and embedded-embodied beings-but, equally the world increasingly does not divide up neatly into particular, distinct cultures any longer. I am certain that everyone, or most people, do not any longer need *just one* of them” (27; emphasis added). With the accelerated pace of globalization, do we now need that multiplicity, the need to compare and contrast, to feel wonder at the diversity and wealth of the layers of places and cultures, the need to create our own individual syncretic blend, our personal symphony? And, if so, where does community lie? Does it disappear or become imagined, virtual? Sense of community is another major challenge of the cosmopolitan soul, but one that lies outside of the scope of this article.

Brian Castro’s Seamus finds his home in the uniting of the two voices, in the uniting of time and history, landscape and identity, becoming Shan and realizing that Shan was his ancestor. Before his realization he is going mad, unable to cope with the whirling world around him, trying in vain to find one identity without accepting the multiplicities of himself. As he makes this discovery, as he accepts the layers of his identity and complex allegiances, he becomes more attuned to place and time and feels peace:

He felt the sun on his eyelids. Twice he thought he heard the stiff, carpet-beating sound of ducks whirring up the river. He did not expect to notice the passing of time; but here they were, distinct and hard, rounded moments. The earth shook them. A branch cracked. Leaves seemed to be spinning down. They sounded like drops of rain when they hit the ground. Between the sounds there was a silence that was

total, real. Perhaps this was the prelude to the end. There was no longer even a voice in his head. He felt a release, a purity, a peace.

The compression in his dead disappeared. There was a lightness where the cool air entered, flowing down from the mountain of his will, looming up behind him, snow-covered, the current ushering him along, light as a leaf, spinning, floating, scraping against the rocks, the wind making a sound like burst of laughter-or was it sobbing, or both-as footsteps scuffed the sand and arms, soft arms enveloped him, lifted him who was now light as a leaf, cradling him in perfume and warm breath. (144)

Significantly, within his madness, acceptance brings not only peace, but the capacity to physically feel the surrounding environment, enabling him to stop and listen to nature, almost communing with and becoming one with it. Throughout Ghosh's novel, *Piya*, as a scientist and environmentalist, clearly shows a place sensitivity, caring for the different places she comes to inhabit, although she has chosen to move frequently. However, the complexity, the layers of history and habitat of the tide country reach her and at the end of the novel she chooses the humble city of Lusibari in which to live, realizing her responsibility to the people and that global projects imply the local and that she doesn't "want to do the kind of work that places the burden of conservation on those who can least afford it" (327). For her "home is where the Orcaella are" (329); a home caught between the permanence and transience of her interest and the transience and permanence of the species and its habitat. She perceives her home with the dolphins, a place where her training and interest merge, a place where she can make a mark in the village life, but a place in which she will always be a foreigner, without the language and culture. That choice seems to be permanent. But again, the transience cuts through. If the habitat of the dolphins is increasingly threatened, they will become extinct and then what will be her home? In a similar manner, although not as clearly, Kanai, has learned to appreciate the tide country and local knowledge, leaving aside his feelings of superiority and valuing family and community. So, he also returns to Lusibari, in an opposite movement: he chooses to come home, to return to the roots that he had previously rejected. A home, that given his previous rejection, was as alien to him as it might be for *Piya*, but equally a deliberate choice. Pico Iyer speaks of carrying his home and making it where his values are, no matter how transient the place:

Japan is therefore an ideal place because I never will be a true citizen here, and will always be an outsider, however long I live here and however well I speak the language. And the society around me is as comfortable with that as I am. . . . I am not rooted in a place, I think, so much as in certain values and affiliations and friendships that I carry everywhere I go; my home is both invisible and portable. But I would gladly stay in this physical location for the rest of my life, and there is nothing in life that I want that it doesn't have. (in Brenner)

In conclusion, these four aspects, the complex layered perception of place, travel as multiple sites of encounters with place, place as the ever shifting confluence of history and habitat and deliberate choices of a permanent/transient home place, might be a starting point for analyzing the sense of place of cosmopolitans. Their chosen home place might be a city, an attitude, a garden. Aurora Levins Morales imagines the pain of immigrants and refugees, always “leaving places, and people and landscapes behind” but her great-grandmother tells her to always plant a garden, to establish a rootedness wherever she is:

You think it matters so much, where you plant, who you have children with. It doesn't matter so much. What matters is how you grow them, how you love them. You can make a garden anywhere, with anything, anyone. The secret is not to leave it behind you, always to plant . . . then always you have a garden. You take it everywhere, then wherever you are, you are in your own garden! (132)

Each writer/character or cosmopolitan subject throws his/her particular complexity into play when reacting to a place. But the point is precisely in the reacting, in deliberately noticing, being open to that dialogical relationship. All subjects carry baggage to wherever they go and use that baggage to establish themselves in a new place, to “plant” themselves in a new environment. Can this garden be the appropriate metaphor for a cosmopolitan sense of place? Robin Cohen uses the garden metaphor to make a classification of diasporas (*Global* 178). Thomashow picks up on it and suggests “wild diasporic gardens” as a metaphor for place-based perception in diasporas. The metaphor contains both the intentional, cultivated controlled aspect that characterizes human culture, but also the wildness of nature, a degree of mystery and awe, the lack of control. The diaspora brings to mind the sowing of seeds, of planting new life in new places and of diversity (loc. 2494-2515). Perhaps we could take one more step and speak of “wild cosmopolitan gardens” as something we build, something that contains the constructedness of a garden but the wildness of perception and the rootedness in the interplay of transience and permanence, habitat and history. The “wild cosmopolitan garden” is perhaps more diverse, full of seedlings, grafts, layers and cross-pollinations, and less permanent, or more aware of its transient nature. This might be an adequate metaphor, but it can also be a physical reality, a way to plant roots, but roots that can be transplanted elsewhere. We can find the garden in a room (full of potted plants), in the food of our pantry, in a community garden or in our own small garden, populated with both plants and cultural artifacts which speak to our identities. A new sense of place is needed, particularly if, as Thomashow suggests, place is important in order to explore global environmental issues. Heise speaks of an eco-cosmopolitanism and Plumwood of a place sensitive culture; in either case we need new definitions of

sense of place to reach that goal. A traditional sense of place may no longer be viable for our culture and ecocritics need to find alternatives, those which respond to our current lifestyles, but that also reflect a place sensitivity that allows for a caring relationship with diverse habitats. This article has hinted at one possible starting point, at identifying what a cosmopolitan sense of place might be, or perhaps it would be better to say a cosmopolitan sense of places, in the plural; a sense that, rather than being rooted in one home place, be based on many locals, accepting and embracing multiplicities, a garden that can be uprooted and re-planted.

Travelling has left many layers on my own skin and home is where I live now, a place I choose. As I travel, I find that I am increasingly attentive to the earth voice and the habitat, and less attentive to history. By now I have the typically academic invasive species of *genus librorum* and of totally uncontrollable *genus digitalium tabulariorum* forming my particular garden. Each trip adds something and is expressed in some corner of my chosen home, in my imagination and in my garden. My physical garden has “cosmopolitan” passionflowers and morning glories, wisteria, magnolias and jazmin, with Mediterranean oleanders and a tiled Arabic-Andalusian fountain, populated with Mexican ceramic iguanas and Turkish lamps. My mental garden perhaps begins with my name, which in Arabic means garden; many gardens and villas in southern Spain are called “cármenes.” So this particular “carmen” holds the sequoias of Mariposa Grove, flashing on my screen saver together with the bougainvilleas of Yucatan, the stark aridity of Fatehpur Sikri in contrast with the Mesoamerican pyramids hiding under the tangled brush. The immensity of the Yangtze overwhelms the dry Spanish rivers. The lush rectangular quilts of the cornfields of my Midwestern childhood clash with the ochre curving plots of Spanish wheat. From China I carry in my heart the awe of the 2009 solar eclipse, and from Taiwan the banyan trees of Tamsui. The Old Santo Domingo Fort makes full circle from Taiwan to the American Southwest and back to Spain. The world is indeed round, cyclical and wondrous in its diversity. Anaya illustrates the garden we can all plant:

Tomorrow, I am leaving China, but I feel I take the dragons with me. I feel I take a great deal I can never put into words within me, dreams to plant in New Mexico soil, the dreams and insights of a pilgrim to China, a Chicano from the Southwest who fell through that hole he dug as a child and landed on the other side of the world. The world is round. I had not expected that. Roundness makes me happy. A cycle begins to complete itself. (179)

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## 野性的大都會花園： 朝向一個大都會地方意識的一些註解

### 摘要

對不少批評家而言，地方意識對於達成全球環境認知是非常重要的。但是傳統上地方意識根基於出生地，浸潤了在地價值，在全球化的世界裡，要如何去發展這種地方意識？許多現代及後現代的主體已無法確認出生地，而文化批評家正是把沒有地方 (placelessness) 或者非地方 (non-places) 的問題視為當代社會的特色。但是如果我們不關懷地方，我們又怎能關懷我們的家，地球？薇爾布蘭伍 (Val Plumwood) 思索著地方敏感社會 (place-sensitive society) 的特色，烏蘇拉海瑟 (Ursula Heise) 倡議星球意識，發展出她所謂的生態大都會主義。本文討論當代大都會主體涉及地方意識時的困境。對於一個大都會人可能怎麼看待地方及顯現地方敏感，我設定四個可能的特色，用一系列大都會作家的文本加以解釋。本文雖為未竟之作，卻提供一個可能的起點，允許一個大都會地方意識的未來表述。

**關鍵字：**地方意識，大都會主義，生態批評，地方敏感，旅遊，多重感受，多重忠誠