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# Expatriation, commonality, and imagined transatlantic community in Kay Boyle's Early Poetry

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## Abstract

Expatriation to France for Kay Boyle, far from being a flight from her American identity, was instead a means for a displaced encounter with it. Making distance the condition and context of heightened proximity with the American experience emphasizes her desire to consider it from a parallax angle by first and foremost situating language in an out-of-border or debordered space. This she found possible by inscribing her search for commonality in the elegy, a genre which is particularly apt, as Jahan Ramazani has demonstrated in *A Transnational Poetics*, to both utter nationalism and contravene it by virtue of its cross-cultural bearings. Taking its cues from studies by Ramazani, Giles, Katz or White, who have persuasively argued for a transnational remapping of American literary modernism, this paper will attempt to demonstrate how Boyle's construct of communalism resists facile opposition between "nativist" and "internationalist" forms of modernism, and opens instead to a space where it exposes and communicates itself to the outside. Anne Reynes-Delobel is an Associate Professor at Aix-Marseille University in Aix-en-Provence, France. Her research interests include transatlantic modernism, and European avant-garde and modernist movements. With Mary Ann Caws, she has co-authored *Glorious Modernists. Modernist Women Painting and Writing* (Presses de l'Université de Liège, 2016) She currently serves as the President of the Kay Boyle Society (an MLA and SSAWW affiliate).

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