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"I didn't know you could do this!"
An interview with Mark Anthony Jarman

« Je ne savais pas qu'on pouvait faire ça! »
Un entretien avec Mark Anthony Jarman

Interviewed by / Interrogé par Jason Blake

JB You seem attracted to Central Europe, as well as Italy. Is there a specific reason for the attraction – that is, how did it all begin?

MAJ It wasn't all at once; one thing led to another and there was a series of coincidences and chances. I'd been to Italy and looked at the map and thought, Well, there's Croatia, right across the Adriatic, it's close, must be old Roman sites, and cheaper than Italy. I had an invite to a short story conference in Vienna, got a really cheap flight to Venice, and then I thought of Trieste, because it's close to Venice and James Joyce had lived and written there and met Italo Svevo and some Freudians. Then an e-mail out of the blue arrived from you in Ljubljana and I invited myself to Ljubljana, which is not far from Trieste. You also gave me names in Zagreb (and Brno) and poet Katia Grubisic's father has an apartment on the coast near Trogir, which helped the budget. It's kind of amazing I even found the place; I had trouble finding it the second time I went, even though I'd already been there once. As I said, one thing led to another to randomly steer me that way, but there was always some interest, a feeling of a gap when you hear this name "The Balkans" and wonder what it means. I had Kaplan's book, *Balkan Ghosts*, but it was also an interest in Joyce, the WW1 front where Hemingway was wounded badly, and a conference up in Vienna as catalyst.

Later I discovered Opatija. I'd rented a room in Canada to a filmmaker whose father was also a filmmaker living in Opatija, so we made our way north to meet him and had some lovely tea in a seaside hotel that felt like the French Riviera. I wouldn't mind getting back to stay longer. Nabokov stayed there. It's very close to Ljubljana, has more of the Austrian Empire influence compared to places a little to the south. Trogir and Zadar are solid walled Roman cities and the stonework seems like it's been there forever. Opatija seems more recent, polite 1800s Habsburg, less Slavic.

I wrote a bit about this in my Trogir piece in *Brick* magazine 99, called "The Drunken Widower Necks with the Virgin Mary in the Trogir Cathedral Razed by Saracens in 1123". Long title and strange scene in that church.

interview — entretien

JB You've had some interesting jobs outside the writing and academic world. Could you pick one or two of them and say whether they've helped you in any way as a writer. … and weren't you a roofer?

MAJ I was the worst roofer in Edmonton! That was just one summer. I was no good at that, some friends were doing it, so I just went along as an extra pair of hands. I'm sure that roof leaked the first time it rained.

I also drove a truck for the railroad in Edmonton. That was a really good summer job. One year I stayed on all winter, which was unusual, but it was a good union job, so I could save up for travel, for school. I started out in the warehouse, loading and unloading semi-trailers, and I was pretty happy there, but for some reason they wanted me out driving a delivery truck, covering different routes when other drivers booked off, and I realized it was great, you were basically your own boss – just load up the truck and go, all on your own, and I volunteered for a lot of overtime; that was a good job and work is always interesting material for a writer.

JB Didn't Alistair MacLeod also deliver some sort of product in Edmonton?

MAJ He was a milkman in Edmonton, I think Palm Dairies back when they still used horses, the end of an era. He still knew the names of his horses decades later. I used to joke that he might be my father because he was delivering milk right around the time I was born.

I also worked as a janitor. Those jobs are a good contrast to the academic world, it's useful to get out into other worlds. Hockey does the same thing for me. It's kind of an anchor and it's humbling and supplies amazing stories and a different crowd. The ivory tower is not an evil place, but it can be isolated from the rest of the world. It's good to get out.

There's a Richard Rodriguez essay where he was the one on campus who noticed the janitors. A lot of people just don't see you or prefer not to. I was invisible. I'd be coming into work, just as the day staff was getting off and they didn't want to see you. It was the same with the truck. I'd be delivering to someone's house and I'd see a *New Yorker* and say, "That's a great magazine!" They'd look at you as if to say, "We don't want to talk about the *New Yorker* with you; we just want you to hand over the box."

And I worked as a busboy in a restaurant. I've talked to people who have worked in restaurants, and they say you can tell which people you're serving have worked those kinds of job. It's good as a contrast to other worlds.

JB Do you ever pick details from those jobs for your stories?

MAJ Yes. I wrote a janitor short story, but I don't think it's published. And in my first book there's "Cowboys Inc." That was a guy I worked with; he was speedy, half-violent.

Jason Blake
"I didn't know you could do this!" An interview with Mark Anthony Jarman

interview — entretien

It was alright if he was on your side, but you wondered if he'd turn on you. That character came directly out of the janitor job. Hockey does that for me too.

JB Here's a question you may not like: how do you define the short story for your students?

MAJ I never do define it; seems a waste of time when you could be writing. They're all so different; you read Donald Barthelme or Flannery O'Connor or Julio Cortázar, and they're different from, say, Raymond Carver, or John Cheever or Lorrie Moore. To me, it's whatever works. I also say there are no rules. I often hear students spouting rules they learned in some previous workshop or class, and I say, where did you get that rule? I never agreed to that rule. A story can be anything, it can be a numbered list, it's whatever works for that person or story. I don't waste time thinking even of genre – my piece on Trogir blends fiction and non-fiction. Just write and see what works.

JB Does it get on your nerves when people provide or insist on firm definitions?

MAJ Yes. I'm sometimes suspicious. I see people who can talk the talk, but it doesn't mean they can write a story. I think influences are more important than rules. It's good to have guidelines. You take Joyce, he probably learned how to write a traditional short story and started fooling around more and more, and I think that's what you should be doing. But he had the background. You have to read!
I see some students whose influence is completely TV or film and that can work, but it's still useful to have a little more of a literary background. As Cormac McCarthy said, "Books come out of books."
When I young I was reading tough urban writers like Bukowski or Selby, but then I hit Flannery O'Connor on the farm and John Cheever in the suburbs, and I really liked both. A mix is useful.

JB I recently read a short essay by Nadine Gordimer on the short story. There she writes, "like a child suffering from healthy neglect, the short story survives." Only later did I see that the essay was published in 1968. My question: are the constant worries about the health of the short story form legitimate? What's your take?

MAJ I think it's all relative. Fitzgerald and Hemingway could make a really good living, they could make 20,000 bucks writing stories for the glossy mags (that's probably about 100,000 or more today), so that's a tangible decline. Alice Munro published her early story "Boy and Girls" in *The Montrealer*. That mag and other things like it in newspapers are gone.
But because of writing workshops, there's been an explosion in stories – a story is much easier to workshop than a novel or than a non-fiction travel book or a longer project.

I don't think there's any shortage in numbers, perhaps the opposite, but the market has clearly changed. In Canada, editors and agents want a novel or a longer book of non-fiction rather than a short story collection (even if they're really good) – or they'll do a two-book deal and say, "OK, we'll do your collection of short stories if you also do a novel."

In '68, when Gordimer was talking about "healthy neglect," mags like *The Atlantic* and *Esquire* and many others were taking stories – good money, good writers. My teacher at Iowa, Bharati Mukherjee, had a story in *Playboy*, and it was very good money. The question was whether you should take that money or not.

Today there are many lit mags and online mags, but they don't offer much money. With books I always try to get as much of an advance as I can. One press said we can give you a smaller advance with higher royalties later, but I prefer to get it up front, money in hand.

In terms of time I put in as a writer, I could make more money as a paperboy! But I'm addicted and I really can't complain. I have my teaching job and the two feed each other. I'm rewarded for publishing and I want to do it, so it's ideal. And if you get books and stories out there, people might see that and come to the University of New Brunswick, which is good for the school. Craig Davidson, for example, who also writes Stephen King style books under the name Nick Cutter, attended UNB, and later some of his fans applied, so there can be a ripple effect.

JB Back to genre: do you see a difference between linked short stories and novels?

MAJ It can be confusing. One review of my last book, *Knife Party at the Hotel Europa*, said that you can count this book of stories as my second novel (after the hockey novel). Originally I did a UNB summer course in Rome, loved it and decided I wanted to write a quick, sunny little Italian novel, but it took a life of its own and became a different creature, as happens in writing. But I couldn't sell it! It was discouraging. I took the same material and worked on it as separate stories, won some prizes, and built the book *Knife Party* out of those stories, one by one. The same material, but it got stronger. Maybe I'm just better at short stories! I tried to write a novel, appeared to fail, revamped it as a collection of stories, which seemed to work, but then it was compared to a novel in the reviews! I don't know what the lesson is there.

Alice Munro has done connected stories – it's almost like a compromise. Publishers try to market it as a novel, even if it isn't. Think of Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*. I read some of those stories individually in mags, but then it's marketed as a novel. It seems obvious to me, though, that they are short stories, and no shame in that. Stories are the best form. I admire Munro for her devotion to the story.

JB You're the fiction editor of *The Fiddlehead*. How does your work as a writer and an editor go together? Also, how tempted are you, as an editor, to make major changes to the stories you publish in *The Fiddlehead*?

MAJ Not so much major changes, but always endings. Endings are tough. I was working with an author for the summer fiction issue and she got mad and said, "You write the damned ending!" So I did. It's very tempting. I can see the potential there, the possibilities; I can see what works, what doesn't work. What to repeat, what to cut. But I lack time.

JB Is the process different with more established writers that *The Fiddlehead* publishes?

MAJ I can't think of a good example; I'll edit with anyone who is willing. There's a mix of new and old, writers we may not know and some we do. I'll ask for work. I took a story from Eden Robinson that the *Walrus* turned down because they'd asked her to tone down the swearing. I read about that in the *Globe and Mail* and right away I e-mailed her and said, "Send it to me!"
The tempting thing is to edit, to try and make it better. A lot of people get to know me as an editor rather than a writer. I'm not sure how it happened, wasn't planned.
Our individual interaction at *The Fiddlehead* may be rare, but I hope not. Years back I had a story in the *Georgia Review* where we did a lot of back and forth, and I said to the editor, "I didn't know magazines still did that!"
At *The Fiddlehead* we do personal notes. For example, I might say, "This setting or dialogue is working really well, but I'm not sure about the ending." Always endings. Sometimes I'll be at a reading, say, on the West Coast, and someone will say, "You wrote me the nicest rejection letter!" That's nice to hear, versus anger.

JB Your work contains plenty of references to music. You've mentioned Joy Division in the past. Can you say how music influences your stories?

MAJ I feel like Joy Division and Hank Williams were as much an influence on me as William Faulkner was, but I can't really articulate why – it's just something you pick up, something like mood, atmosphere, imagery, intent, what a band wants to do. It's hard to explain. There's a singer I like called Gillian Welch, who does Appalachian stuff, but she says punk was an influence on her. You don't really hear it, but she says it's there. Sometimes influence is like an attitude, or an approach to the material, or what material you choose, what you value, what you shun.
Ever since I was a kid song lyrics have been important. I also think that writers envy musicians because there's something immediate and direct. I can work on a book and it might appear years later or not appear, but if you hit an electric guitar and amp (or harp and mic), you've got an immediate effect. That's very appealing.

interview — entretien

JB When I teach your stories, students are amazed at the range of references (e. g. in "The Cougar" there's a nod to Eric Lindros, "I'm going to Disneyland," but also to William Blake's "London"). Do you worry about whether readers will "get" the reference or allusion?

MAJ Updike said you hope you have the ideal reader out there. A reviewer once complained about too much professor in me, he disliked references to Othello, to William Blake, but that's what I want in there, I don't want to dumb it down.

JB But the references are not all high literature. There's definitely a mix of high and low…

MAJ I want both. My brain is a little bit of a jukebox; so if I'm working on a theme, it'll bring up Neil Young, and I'll drop in a little snippet there, or if I'm writing a travel piece, I will add Blake's the river in London being walled off by the authorities. My brain supplies these and I'd rather use them than to fret, Oh, nobody's going to get these. Why fret? I hope they're going to get them and enjoy, or they'll just keep reading.

JB When you were talking to students in Ljubljana, one student praised your taste in video games, yet you said you'd never played it.

MAJ I got that from my son Martin, who will talk your ear off. He was talking about Dwarf Fortress, and I thought, I'll write some of that down, I can use it in my story set on the moon.[1]

JB Do you ever tell your students "Write what you know?" or is that a writer's cliché?

MAJ It is a cliché. Write what you know if that is good, but also write what you don't know. My story "My White Planet" has a radar station up north and I've never been up there! I made it up. So it's not one or the other. You can do both.
Students say, "My teacher told me only to write what I know…" I can see how that comes up. You have to take on something you can sell as a story, that convinces a reader, is plausible. If you're 17 and writing about a lawyer, you don't have to make him the number one attorney in New York. It can be a law firm in Saint John. If you do make it in New York, you don't have to make the character the number one attorney! You need the right details.
When growing up, I thought you had to write about cocktail parties in New York, and when I read Robert Kroetsch's *The Studhorse Man*, set in Edmonton, it was a revelation. I thought, "I didn't know you could do this!"
So I can see where those guidelines come from. But they are just guidelines, not a jail. Read for inspiration and be flexible and have fun; writing should be fun.

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1)   "The December Astronauts (or Moonbase Horse Code)" is available at: http://numerocinqmagazine.com/2010/06/15/the-december-astronauts-or-moonbase-horse-code-a-story-by-mark-anthony-jarman/

Playing for the "*Bleu et Blanc*" or for the Habs: Ice Hockey and Québécois Nationalism

Jouer pour le « Bleu et Blanc » ou pour les Habs: Hockey et le nationalisme québécois

articles — articles

Glen M. E. Duerr

Abstract

In 2005, former Bloc Québécois (BQ) leader Gilles Duceppe called for the creation of independent ice hockey and soccer teams for Quebec. As the federal representative for the sovereigntist movement, Duceppe was mainly trying to make a political statement. However, Duceppe was also trying to cast a vision of a future Quebec wherein its young athletes could aspire to representing Quebec in high-level international tournaments. As a result of situations like this one, the issue of Quebec nationalism, at times, has interlinked with the sport of ice hockey. Prior to the 1995 independence referendum in Quebec, for example, the *Toronto Star* newspaper compiled a hypothetical list of Quebec national ice hockey team players, including some of the biggest stars in the game at that time, such as Patrick Roy, Mario Lemieux, and Luc Robitaille. This article examines several different facets of the complex nationalist question, including the political uses of the Montreal Canadiens as a vehicle of nationalism, as well as international tournaments designed to give Quebec a place on the world stage.

Keywords: Bloc Québécois, hockey, nationalism, sovereignty

Résumé

En 2005, l'ancien Bloc Québécois (BQ) chef, Gilles Duceppe, a appelé à la création d'équipes de hockey sur glace et de football indépendants pour le Québec. En tant que représentant du gouvernement fédéral pour le mouvement souverainiste, Duceppe a surtout essayé de faire une déclaration politique. Cependant, il a également tenté de rejeter la vision d'un avenir où les jeunes athlètes pourraient aspirer à représenter le Québec dans les tournois internationaux de haut niveau. À la suite de situations comme celle-ci, la question du nationalisme québécois, à certains moments, est entré en collision avec le hockey sur glace. Avant le référendum sur l'indépendance au Québec de 1995, par exemple, le journal *Toronto Star* a compilé une liste hypothétique de joueurs de l'équipe nationale de hockey sur glace du Québec, y compris certaines des plus grandes stars dans le jeu à l'époque tels que Patrick Roy, Mario Lemieux, et Luc Robitaille. Cet article examine plusieurs facettes

complexes de la question nationaliste telles que les usages politiques des Canadiens de Montréal comme véhicule du nationalisme, ainsi que les tournois internationaux visant à donner au Québec une place sur la scène mondiale.

Mots-clés: Bloc Québécois, hockey, nationalisme, souveraineté

Introduction

1976 was a major year for both sports and politics in Quebec and the rest of Canada. Montreal hosted the Summer Olympic Games for the first time on Canadian soil. And although Canada did poorly in the athletic competitions by not winning a single gold medal, the games did provide a major boost to Montreal because the city was able to attract, and hold, a major sporting event on the world stage. The 1976 provincial election in Quebec was also held soon after the Montreal Olympics and, for the first time, the nationalist and secessionist Parti Québécois (PQ) won a majority in the National Assembly. On four occasions, including 1976, the PQ has won a majority, and, on two occasions, the party has held referendums on whether or not Quebec should become an independent country. Both referendum proposals – in 1980 and 1995 – were defeated. Given the desire to win more support from the electorate, the PQ has mobilized the issues of sports as a means to gaining greater backing. The idea of a "national" hockey team in Quebec is one that has gained some traction amongst nationalist leaders because, they believe, this step would be highly symbolic in the envisioning of Quebec as an independent state (CBC 2005). This idea has become an underlying strategy for leaders of the PQ, but also mainly the Bloc Québécois (BQ). On several occasions, the former leaders of the BQ and PQ respectively, Gilles Duceppe and Pauline Marois, in particular, promoted the possibility of Quebec playing international hockey – often citing the separation of the nations of the United Kingdom as a precedent because England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland participate in soccer/football and rugby as separate "countries" (CBC 2005).

The idea of a separate Quebec national team in hockey is the focus of this article. In essence, as illustrated later in the paper, many members of the PQ and BQ believe that the creation of Quebec sporting teams could shift the balance of Quebec voters, and lead to greater support for independence. Field research was conducted in Quebec in January and June 2010 through interviews with PQ and BQ leaders, including former BQ floor leader, Pierre Paquette, former MP and MNA, Daniel Turp, and former PQ President, Jonathan Valois, among others. Brief, informational interviews were also conducted with Gilles Duceppe and Pauline Marois. Their views help to show how strongly the issue of Quebec hockey is tied to independence.

The introduction of a Quebec national hockey team does not necessarily mean that "swing" voters will shift support to the PQ and independence, but it is a variable that could lead to political changes. Perhaps, like Bill/Loi 101, a Quebec national hockey team could placate some Quebec voters on the desire for cultural affirmation, whilst happily remaining within the Canadian model of federalism (Duerr 2012).

In the ensuing years since 1995, support for the PQ and the BQ has fluctuated. Overall, the issue of Quebec independence remains pertinent to politics in Quebec, even if it is less prominent than in the 1990s. The most recent provincial election, held on April 7, 2014, saw the PQ lose its minority government. The PQ governed from 2012 to 2014 under Marois, but was never able to mobilize support from other political parties like the centre-right, Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) to support independence. The CAQ supports more autonomy, and could change its position on the issue of independence in the future (meaning that it could align at a later date with the PQ in order to put forth a referendum vote), but did chose not to support the PQ on the issue of another referendum.

At the federal level, the BQ maintained a significant level of support; in every election from 1997 to 2008, the BQ obtained at least 37 percent of the vote in Quebec, including almost 50 percent in 2004. However, in 2011 and 2015, the party lost most of its seats winning just 4 and 10 respectively (Elections Canada). It is possible that support for the BQ could increase again in the future, though, if more voters are attracted to the idea of independence, via the creation of an international hockey team.

Given the political importance of hockey in Quebec, this article first provides an overview of important terms and debates within the sport of hockey that serve to frame the discussion and argument. The article then proceeds to examine the linkages between nationalism and sports providing context for the discussion of hockey and Quebec nationalism. Following this, the article specifically develops along three areas that have been contested by nationalists in Quebec: the creation of a separate Quebec "national" hockey team, which is supported by statements from independence minded political elites; the historic and contemporary role of the Montreal Canadiens in Quebec society; and the development of a separate Under-17 Quebec team. The article then concludes with a short discussion of these different issues in Quebec and the political nature of these issues.

Hockey

Although its status and role have been contested, ice hockey has often been described as "Canada's game" (Holman 2009). Canada has done very well in international hockey competitions and is regularly expected to win any international event. Many of the

best professional players in the world have, historically, come from Canada. Canada won the famous "Summit Series" with the Soviet Union in 1972 (although the USSR did surprise the Canadians by winning several games). Canada regularly won gold at the Winter Olympic Games (at least before 1952 and after 2002) and won all but one of the five "Canada Cup" competitions held between 1976 and 1991. Quebec-born players such as Marcel Dionne, Mario Lemieux, and Guy LaFleur were pivotal to Canada's success.

Canadian expectations of success have, however, changed a little since the 1950s with a surge of very strong national teams and players coming from the Soviet Union, then Russia, Czech Republic, Sweden, Finland, Slovakia, and the United States. Several of these countries have won Olympic Gold even with the inclusion of professional players from 1998 onwards, and the United States beat Canada at the 1996 World Cup of Hockey. Nonetheless, Canadians have historically produced the most high level players in the top professional league – the National Hockey League (NHL). Moreover, Canada has also exported numerous professional players to leagues across the world (Maguire 2011; Elliott and Maguire 2011). Other very strong professional leagues, most notably the Kontinental Hockey League (KHL) in Russia and in some surrounding countries, exist without many Canadian players. But, overall, many of the best players in the world are Canadian.

Like other sports, ice hockey has a world governing body. The International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) is the governing body of the sport of ice hockey and oversees its member associations (Maguire 2011, 143). This means that in order for teams to play internationally, they must be recognized by the IIHF. The IIHF has 72 member associations and, like other major international sporting bodies, ranks the teams (see IIHF.com). For the North American fan, the IIHF is most notable for two reasons: 1) it is the formal host of many international competitions, and 2) the "international ice" is larger than NHL rinks. The IIHF takes on the same role as FIFA for fans of soccer in that it organizes the sport internationally, and sometimes makes decisions that either please or anger hockey fans.

The NHL is currently comprised of 30 teams across the United States and Canada, including the province of Quebec. The NHL currently features seven Canadian teams including Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal. Winnipeg recently returned to the NHL in 2011 after a fifteen year absence and there is a movement to bring more teams to Canada (Huffington Post 2012). Other possible teams include: Quebec City, Hamilton, Halifax (Nova Scotia), as well as a second team in Toronto (perhaps in the suburb of Markham).

Given a confluence of the two main points made so far: Quebec nationalism and the love of ice hockey, it should be expected that nationalists would try to use hockey as a means of envisioning their political goal of creating an independent Quebec.

Politically, this is a possibility that Quebec nationalists discuss (Interview with former BQ President, Jonathan Valois).

This article continues by examining the interaction of nationalism and sports in the academic literature. There are very few sources that investigate the various ways that sports impact secessionist movements, so, in order to understand the possible effects of international hockey on Quebec politics, it is important to investigate what has happened elsewhere in the world with other sports that have similar levels of relevance to the culture of the society in which they are based. Nationalism can be mobilized in a range of different ways, which can affect politics in dramatic ways.

Nationalism and sports

The literature engaging two diverse subjects such as nationalism and sports has increased in recent decades in both volume and complexity (Renan 1882; Kohn 1944; Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983; Smith 1986; Hobsbawm 1990). However, it is important to start with a definition of nationalism. Nationalism can be defined in numerous different ways and much ink has been spilled in fierce academic debates over the definition of the term. Nonetheless, it is important to proceed with a definition in order to move forward with the relevant discussion of the connection between nationalism and sports in Quebec.

Nationalism is most succinctly described as a political principle in which the congruence of the national unit aligns with the political unit (Gellner 1983, 1). Nationalists in Quebec, for example, argue that their national unit (Quebec) is different from their existing political unit (Canada). A nationalist sentiment therefore exists because Québécois nationalists perceive that the political principle of congruence between national and political units has been violated. The nationalist movement in Quebec is therefore trying to replace the political unit of Canada with its own independent state. Of course, there are many people in Quebec who reject the idea of Québécois nationalism and they identify themselves as Canadians only, not québécois. Or, alternatively, some people in Quebec desire a degree of cultural affirmation within Canada, and identify themselves as both Québécois and Canadian.

Nationalism comes in a range of different varieties. It can refer to the ambitions of a country as a whole (such as the implementation of the Monroe Doctrine by the United States, or the rise of China in East Asia) or refer to national identity in both ethnic (this is most popular in East Asia at present, when national identity is most often conceived in ethnic terms) or civic terms (such as in the United States or Canada where citizenship, not ethnicity, is the most important factor in national identity). The ethnic/civic dichotomy is a debate that has long simmered in Quebec. Scholar

and former politician Michael Ignatieff, in his book *Blood and Belonging*, distinguishes between ethnic and civic forms of nationalism in a discussion of who can belong to a given country. The major point of contention is whether belonging is inherited (ethnic), or whether it is based on a person's subscribing to the political creed of the country (Ignatieff 1993, xii–xvii). Liah Greenfeld, meanwhile, essentially equates civic nationalism with citizenship (Greenfeld 1992, 13). After a major debate in academia in the late 1990s, the dichotomy between ethnic and civic nationalism was either replaced in favour of "cultural nationalism" or jettisoned as unworkable because nationalism requires a level of ethnicity and cannot be fully civic (see Nielsen 1996; Yack 1996; Xenos 1996). In recent years, however, the distinction between ethnic and civic forms of nationalism is being re-examined. Journalist James MacPherson argues that a distinction exists in Quebec between ethnic and civic forms of nationalism, stating that the differences between the north and the south in the U.S. civil war have a significant resemblance to the divisions in modern day Canada (McPherson 2011). The present author investigated ethnic and civic forms of nationalism in a study of Québécois and Flemish nationalism by measuring ethnic and civic statements on five areas of public policy: economics, immigration, political autonomy, culture, and language, and found that nationalist parties, including the PQ, have a mixed record on an attempted transition to civic nationalism (Duerr 2012b).

Nationalism can also refer to sub-state groups, which effectively use nationalism as a vehicle to secede from their current national states. The case of Québécois nationalism fits into the latter category whereby some Québécois nationalists are trying to create an independent state and leave the Canadian federation. Thus, in the larger context, Quebec is by no means unique in the world – there are many subnational movements in both the developed and developing worlds. In the developed world, the debates in Quebec are very similar to those taking place in Scotland (Lynch 2005), Catalonia, and Flanders.

Nationalism has a strong connection to sports. Another well-known nationalism scholar, Eric Hobsbawm, wrote in reference to soccer that, "the imagined community of millions seems more real as a team of eleven named players" (Hobsbawm 1990, 143). This quote can be easily applied to the case of Quebec and the sport of hockey. Playing for the "*bleu et blanc*" – that is, for a team bearing the Quebec provincial colours – is a vision for the imagination which links the people of Quebec together through a "national" hockey team.

Statehood, though, is a theoretical concept. The goal of any sub-state nationalist movement is to create a new independent state. This means that the leaders of the nationalist movement have to envision a larger imaginary community that combines people who will likely never meet each other in person, but who feel a sense of the same connectedness to a political unit; indeed, the term "imagined community" belongs

to another nationalism scholar, Benedict Anderson, who argued that a nation is an imagined community because it links disparate people in a national unit (Anderson 1983). Virtually every country in the world – perhaps with the exception of some very small microstates such as Liechtenstein, Andorra, or states in the South Pacific such as Vanuatu – has this element of imagination in the community.

In general, international sporting associations tend to avoid politicizing sporting events. However, it is not always possible to avoid political controversies when they arise. For example, Major League Baseball, which runs the World Baseball Classic – a new tournament, which serves as baseball's "World Cup" after its removal from the Summer Olympics, faced, and then succumbed to political pressure by the Chinese government over the participation of Chinese Taipei as Taiwan during the 2006 Baseball Classic (Duerr 2010, 191). Originally, Taiwan was included in the tournament, but this name was very quickly changed to Chinese Taipei after complaints from the Chinese. China considers Taiwan to be a renegade province and not an independent state. Taiwan, for many years, has tried to gain greater international recognition and a full position in the United Nations General Assembly. In a similar way, politicians in Quebec are trying to agitate for independence via international sports events such as the FIFA World Cup or international hockey tournaments. Institutional recognition by the UN is an important component of statehood because it provides diplomatic recognition; membership in FIFA is useful, but is not on par with UN membership.

There are also cases in which regions with nationalist movements use sports to mobilize for a political cause. In Croatia, for example, before the start of the Yugoslav Wars, a Croatian team played against the United States as if it were an organized international match – replete with national uniforms, anthems, and flags (Sack and Suster 2000, 308). The biggest issue, however, was that Croatia was not independent at that time and still part of Yugoslavia. The game with the United States played a role in promoting independence in Croatia. In the case of the Palestinians, this group has a football association and legally plays within the framework of soccer's ruling body – FIFA. In some respects, the banal reinforcements of nationalism such as seeing a "national" team with a uniform representing millions alongside the national flag and anthem, has bolstered the political case of Palestinian statehood (Billig 1995; Duerr 2012a).

Nationalism through sports has an important purpose. The symbols surrounding sports, including the national flag, national anthem, and national team, all play a part in envisioning a country. Social Scientist Michael Billig argues that it is the banal representations of the nation such as a flag and a song that reinforce ideological habits (Billig 1995, 6). Banal nationalism revolves around every day reinforcements of one's identity through an anthem, a flag, a military cemetery or a history lesson that buttresses political rallies in support of an idea like independence. The usage of

a "national" hockey team in Quebec would be highly symbolic in the envisioning of Quebec as an independent state and this is one reason, among others, why Hockey Canada has vehemently opposed any such move. There are significant reasons Hockey Canada cares about this issue. First, a Quebec "national" team would significantly weaken Team Canada. And, second, many of Canada's top political leaders have ties – and interests – in the success of the national team. The motivation is also to avoid diluting the possible talent available to the Canadian national team selectors.

Québécois nationalism and ice hockey

In 1995, just prior to the second independence referendum in Quebec, the *Toronto Star* published a list of potential Quebec "national" team players. At that time, this included some of the top stars in the game, such as Mario Lemieux and Patrick Roy. The article, published in the *Toronto Star* on October 24, 1995 (less than a week before the referendum) by journalist Jim Proudfoot, outlined the potential of a Quebec national team at the 1996 World Cup of Hockey and the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano. The title of the article, "Team Quebec? A Definite Contender" was meant to note that a separate Quebec national hockey team would be very strong and possibly contend for top honours in global hockey tournaments. Amongst the players listed were some of the best players in the world – especially at the goalie position at that time with Patrick Roy, Martin Brodeur, and Felix Potvin. Relatedly, an independent Quebec national team, Proudfoot notes, would have substantially weakened the Canadian national team. This, for supporters of Canada, would have been quite detrimental, to lose several of the top national team players.

This article in the *Toronto Star*, in some ways, fueled the debate on Quebec's independence in the lead-up to the referendum. The reality of an independent Quebec would affect the lives of Canadians in dramatic ways such as in government, in foreign affairs, and in taxation among others, but also in cultural and sporting terms by changing the face of hockey. It is mere speculation as to whether these iconic players would have been given the choice to play for Canada or Quebec, or would have been forced to play for Quebec or retire from international hockey. There were several precedents from the dissolutions of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, but given the relative rarity of state breakups, each case has some unique features, and it is unknown what would have happened if the second referendum vote produced a different outcome.

After the referendum vote was narrowly defeated in 1995, the issue of Quebec independence was relegated temporarily from mainstream national dialogue. Of course, for Québécois nationalists, the issue would be raised again, but it would have

been very difficult for the PQ to hold another referendum so soon after the 1995 referendum.

As time passed, however, the idea of a Quebec national hockey team continued to germinate. In 2005, former BQ leader Gilles Duceppe made headlines by more formally arguing that Quebec should have its own international hockey and soccer teams. As journalist Graham Fraser reports in a December 1, 2005, *Toronto Star* article, Duceppe argued that since England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland participate separately in soccer and rugby, but all belong to the United Kingdom, Quebec could do the same (Fraser 2005). In essence, Duceppe argued that England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland are not independent states, yet play separately from the United Kingdom. Based on the same principle of historical separateness, Duceppe reasoned, Quebec should be able to compete internationally as well. However, the counterargument to Duceppe is that the "constituent nations" of the UK formed separate football associations in the nineteenth century, and were then invited to participate – no parallel historic separateness can be claimed by Quebec.

Duceppe also tried to make the case for a separate Quebec Olympic team as a means of promoting physical fitness in Quebec. His comments were part of a plan to envision an independent Quebec in the minds of Quebecers in various ways – using a banal reinforcement of national identity and linking the imagined community of Quebec through hockey. Duceppe envisioned a separate government protecting the French language and Québécois culture, but also added the notion of Quebec's best hockey players wearing blue and white jerseys and participating against the best national teams in the world at the Olympics and other major hockey tournaments. This would provide more people in Quebec a vision of what an independent country would be like, thus using hockey as a political tool in the envisioning of an imagined community (Anderson 1983).

Pragmatically, Duceppe's vision is unlikely because the NHL and the IIHF are very unlikely to play a political role in hockey because a) there is, at most, very little history of political decisions, and b) international sporting organizations are often heavily criticized when they do venture into politics. For example, former FIFA President Sepp Blatter has been criticized for numerous stances that have been perceived as political – when he recognized Palestine as an independent state in FIFA, it drew significant protest (Duerr 2012).

This means that it is very unlikely that Quebec will be granted a perennial "national" team unless it becomes an independent state, or unless the Canadian hockey association with the tacit acceptance of the Canadian government also allows Quebec to play independently. This is also highly unlikely, though, because it has major political ramifications. Nonetheless, Québécois nationalists continue to consider the possibilities of leveraging hockey for their political agenda, mainly under the auspices

of gaining greater autonomy in the area of culture. Several interviews with BQ and PQ leaders highlighted the importance of Quebec gaining more autonomy on culture. For example, PQ MNAs, Carole Poirier and Daniel Turp, note: "The people of Quebec were so upset with the government of Canada, at the attitude of non-recognition, so we are going to petition for more control and gain some power on the issues of culture and communication" (Interview with PQ MNA, Carole Poirier on June 21, 2010 in Montreal); and: "We are going to create a campaign to the government to gain more powers in the areas of education, culture, the economy, and the environment" (Interview with former BQ MP and PQ MNA, Daniel Turp on June 24, 2010 in Montreal). Privately – or when discussing the issue after the formal interview – a number of interviewees noted how a Quebec national hockey teams could be very useful for the independentist project.

It is difficult to know whether the existence of a separate "*équipe nationale du Québec*" would serve as a catalyst for independence, or as a surrogate for separation. Perhaps the PQ and BQ would gain more votes, or, perhaps voters would look to other parties because their cultural identity was better preserved within Canada (Interview with former BQ President, Jonathan Valois).

Duceppe's arguments also ignore the historical reasons for the separate participation of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The "home nations" played separately against one another in the mid-to-late nineteenth century when the rules of these sports were formalized and so their separate participation was grandfathered in when soccer became more popular. Essentially, England, Scotland, and Wales are separate because they were the first national teams to play the sport. Since England and Scotland played the first international soccer match in 1872, historic inertia was on the side of separateness (Beck 2013, 25). Moreover, the "home nations" were usually among the best in the early years of international soccer and playing as a unified United Kingdom team would have been very strange at that time. England, Scotland, and Wales dominated international soccer in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and even chose not to participate in the early World Cup tournaments because of a dispute with FIFA. But, perhaps most importantly, there was an assumption that the Home nations teams would dominate the competition – better to simply continue playing against one another.

Despite this clear distinction between the home nations of the United Kingdom and the case of Quebec, politicians who support the unity of Canada should not underestimate the importance of sport to nationalist aspirations. For example, as noted earlier, Croatia played a soccer game against the United States in 1990 in which the respective national anthems and flags were raised (see Sack and Suster 2000). For the Croatians, this proved to be a diplomatic victory in obtaining their independence, in part, through a soccer match.

Using logic in lines with that – namely, agitating for independence by mobilizing sports – Hockey Quebec has attempted to create a "Quebec Cup" in which Quebec would host France, Italy, and Switzerland in an "international" hockey tournament. Although the original plan was to create a tournament for 2011, which did not happen, other plans continue to simmer. The Quebec team would be composed of players born in the province of Quebec (*La Presse* 2008).

This "Quebec Cup" idea builds on Duceppe's conceptualization of a national Quebec hockey team. The political imagery would be in place. Quebec's blue and white jersey complete with the *fleur-de-lys* would provide a powerful visual image against other national teams, and, the arena would be awash in the flags of Quebec. It would, in some senses, be a political rally on the part of the PQ, just without the speeches.

The NHL in Quebec

"I was born and raised in Ontario, and what you notice is that I'm from Hawkesbury, which is just by the border with Quebec. But the reference for my family was Montreal, not Ottawa. We support the Expos, the Canadiens, and the Alouettes, not the Roughriders or Senators."

Interview with former BQ MP, Richard Nadeau on June 21, 2010 in Gatineau

While Quebec does not have a national hockey team, hockey plays a major role in the identity of the average Quebecer. For many years the Montreal Canadiens were viewed as a mode of identifying with the French language, French-Canadian culture, and a broader French-Canadian identity. Although other teams have existed in the province of Quebec, the Canadiens were – and still are – the team that most French-Canadians identify with. In more recent years, the French-Canadian identity has been supplanted by Québécois identity, meaning that identity is not based on ethnicity and history, but on the territory of Quebec. Nonetheless, the Canadiens continue to carry the representative sense of Québécois identity in the sport of hockey.

The Montreal Canadiens – also known as *Les Habitants*, or the Habs – are the most successful team in the history of the NHL. The Habs have won 24 Stanley Cups, which is by far the most out of any team. Even after the post-1967 expansion of the NHL when the league grew dramatically, the Habs still won another 10 Stanley Cups (though only one since 1987).

Many young boys growing up in the province of Quebec dream of playing for the Montreal Canadiens. This sense of connection provides a tie to generations of hockey fans in Quebec that have rooted for the Habs. The desire to play for the Habs is also tied to Francophone identity in that the Habs have long been the one Francophone

representative in the NHL. In some ways envisioning and representing Quebec and a broader French-Canadian or Québécois identity has been met through playing for or supporting the Habs.

The Canadiens have a long history in the city of Montreal, having been founded in 1909. The Canadiens were originally formed "exclusively for players who speak French" and created to contribute to an ethnic base of fans for the team (Lasorsa 2011, 10). This ethnic identity for a team is very rare in the world, with a few notable exceptions including Athletic Bilbao, which plays in Spain's highest soccer league, La Liga. Athletic Bilbao represents Basque identity within Spain and still refuses to allow non-Basque players to play for the team. The Habs, in significant measure, embodied the linguistic, social, and cultural struggle against English Canada and Anglophone North America more broadly.

In many respects, the rivalry between the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Montreal Canadiens best represented the larger societal issues in Canada. The two teams represent the cities of Toronto and Montreal respectively, the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, the duality of English and French languages and cultures in Canada, and, historically, Protestant and Roman Catholic religions (see Duplacey and Wilkins 1996). This is not uniform. For example, the St. Michael's "feeder" Ontario Hockey League team of the Leafs has strong Catholic linkages (see Ryan and Wamsley 2007) and the Maple Leafs had several prominent Catholic players throughout its history, such as Frank Mahovlich (this divide along religious lines is no longer a major factor in the rivalry).

Games between the Maple Leafs and the Canadiens have long been about more than just hockey. The Toronto Maple Leafs continue to serve the role as antagonist and as the biggest rival of the Canadiens and, for decades, the rivalry provided a microcosm of Canadian society, even giving birth so to speak to Canada's most famous short story (Roch Carrier's 1979 tale "The Hockey Sweater"). The Toronto-Montreal rivalry presented notions of class, linguistic, and to some extent, religious divisions in the Canadian society. The cleavages in Canadian society have lessened through the Maple Leafs-Habs rivalry as the city of Montreal has become more equitable as French Canadians and then Québécois – including Francophones – have improved economically. [Tangentially, the Habs have other historical rivals such as the Montreal Wanderers (1903–1918), and the Montreal Maroons (1924–1938), which represented the Anglophone community in Montreal (Lasorsa 2011, 2), cultivating a hockey based Francophone-Anglophone split in the city].

Many of the most famous Quebec born hockey players, such as Maurice Richard, Henri Richard, Jacques Plante, Guy Lafleur, and Jean Béliveau, have represented the Montreal Canadiens and helped to build the franchise as a major part of French-Canadian identity. It is no surprise that Maurice Richard, for example, served as

a "figurehead" for French-Canadians in the relationship between Anglophone and Francophone Canadians. This was especially true when he was banned by NHL Commissioner, Clarence Campbell, when he suspended Richard for the final three games of the 1955 regular season and the playoffs over a very controversial fight with Hal Laycoe of the Boston Bruins. On March 17, Richard was suspended for the remainder of the regular and the playoffs for the earlier altercation involving Laycoe and a linesman on March 13. A riot ensued on the part of French-Canadians, who saw the punishment as too severe and an example of prejudice because of Richard's French-Canadian heritage. There were demonstrations in the Montreal Forum, which ended in significant property damage. Most fans were angry at Campbell – an Anglophone – who handed down the suspension. In some ways, the Richard suspension mirrored the feelings of many French-Canadians in that they perceived a sense of economic and political discrimination on the part of the English-Canadian majority. This sense of historic animosity is not confined to the past, either. The Richard riot is so ubiquitous in Quebec culture that, in 2005, a major French language movie was released on the life of Maurice Richard, starring actor Roy Dupuis.

The Canadiens also had a provincial rivalry for several years. The Quebec Nordiques played in the World Hockey Association (WHA) from 1972 to 1979 and then were amalgamated into the NHL when the WHA was discontinued. The Nordiques continued to play in the NHL until the team moved to Colorado in 1995. The issue of an NHL team in Quebec City remains a major topic in the sporting and political scenes of Canada. Moreover, with the recreation of the Winnipeg Jets in 2011, there is increased expectation that a team will return to Quebec City.

And yet, for the nationalist cause, the Canadiens and Nordiques comprised one of the most antagonistic rivalries in the NHL from 1979 to 1995. The rivalry started, in part, because the Canadiens owner voted against the WHA team merging into the NHL. The Nordiques served as a natural rival for the Canadiens because of geography, but also because fan support and television money was drawn away from the Canadiens – no longer could the Habs rely on support throughout Quebec. The rivalry between the Canadiens and Nordiques eventually became known as the "Battle of Quebec" or "*La Guerre de la 20*" – referencing the highway running between the two cities (Harvey 2006, 41). Perhaps the most significant historical aspect of the rivalry was the 1984 playoff series between Montreal and Quebec City, known as the Good Friday Massacre because of the sheer number of fights during the six game series. Moreover, playoff series tend to be highly competitive anyway and are highlighted when rivals play against one another.

The Quebec Nordiques also played to nationalist sentiments in a way that the Canadiens never did. The Nordiques displayed the *fleur-de-lys* on the shoulders of the jersey (Harvey 2006, 41). This overt approach to symbols of Quebec

accentuated Québécois identity and provided symbolism for the province; in other ways, it provided symbolism for envisioning a separate Quebec as noted in the previous sections on the desire of nationalist leaders in the PQ and BQ to create an independent Quebec national hockey team. The subject of hockey teams in Canada – and specifically Quebec – has been another target of the BQ. As mentioned, former BQ leader, Gilles Duceppe, has argued that the Canadian government should support building a new arena in Quebec City in order to attract an NHL team back to the city. Duceppe argued that the city of Toronto received a lot of money to bid for the 2008 Summer Olympics and to host recent G-8 and G-20 Summits, so money should also be spent for sporting purposes in Quebec City (Wingrove and Seguin 2010). In the 2011 federal election, Duceppe's BQ lost dramatically, winning only four of the province's 75 seats. Duceppe lost his position as BQ leader and Member of Parliament, so the debate over Quebec hockey has dissipated a little. The debate has been further dampened since Pauline Marois, the leader of the PQ, is no longer the premier of the province of Quebec. But, construction started on a new arena for Quebec City (the New Quebec City Amphitheatre), in part, as a means of attracting an NHL team back to the city (TSN 2014).

Nonetheless, since the Nordiques moved to Colorado (in 1995), the Habs have once again maintained the role of representative of Québécois cultural identity through sports. The Montreal Canadiens continue to play an important role in advancing Francophone identity and this has been noteworthy with recent protests against the team's interim English speaking coach for the 2011–12 season, Randy Cunneyworth, has reinforced this notion of support for the Canadiens and its linkages to the Francophone community. Former PQ language critic, Pierre Curzi, criticized Cunneyworth for his inability to speak French fluently. Curzi has also argued that the Habs do not have enough Francophone players and insinuated that this was a federalist plot to undercut nationalist identity through the Canadiens.

Despite the recent claims of Pierre Curzi, the Montreal Canadiens have, in many respects, served as the team that is most representative of French-Canadian, then Québécois identity, throughout Quebec (and amongst many within the rest of Canada). While other teams have rivaled the Habs either in the Francophone community or the Anglophone community, the Canadiens remain one of the most important NHL teams of all time. Québécois nationalists have at times tried to tie themselves to the Habs, and political leaders have tried to agitate for greater recognition for Quebec.

A brief glimpse of Quebec nationalism realized: Quebec Junior teams in international hockey competition

Even though it might not be full desire of nationalists in Quebec, the province does participate as an independent territory in one major ice hockey competition: the under-17 World Hockey Challenge. Canada, for this tournament, is split into five different regions: Ontario, Quebec, West, Atlantic, and Pacific. All teams are carefully named. Canada is used in conjunction with each team to avoid supporting an institutional separateness for any province or region. For example, the Ontario team is called "Canada: Ontario." Quebec is called "Canada: Quebec," which means that the team plays as a province of Canada, and not as a separate entity. Also, all teams wear the red and white jersey of Canada (provincial/regional names are on the back of the jersey), so it is clear that the young players are representing Canada, rather than wearing the blue and white of Quebec. Nonetheless, the Canada: Quebec team does play as a separate entity on the world stage. And, the Canada Quebec team has had some real success, winning the 1986, 1994, and 2006 tournaments (Hockey Canada). The team has not always been successful, but their occasional success does provide something of a victory for Quebec in that the Ontario team was defeated, and Quebec was able to compete against all other teams from around the world (Hockey Canada).

Historically, the under-17 tournament was fairly small in size and scope. In 2005, however, the tournament became much larger, incorporating five Canadian teams and five international teams. Since 2008, this tournament has become an annual event in the Christmas/New Year holiday season. It does not rival the World Junior Championships (World U-20 tournament), but there is some prestige in hockey circles for winning and many young players are scouted by NHL and other professional teams. The first edition of the tournament was played in 1986 and has been featured on and off on an almost annual basis. Hockey Canada organizes the tournament as a way to expose young players to better competition. However, it can also serve to institutionalize the separateness of Quebec on the international stage through ice hockey, at least in a rudimentary way (Duerr 2010; Duerr 2012).

When players move up to the under-18 age group, however, Canada once again plays as a united country. Symbolically, there is a unity here that Canada is one country made up of people from different provinces and regions. Quebec, therefore, has some sense of separateness when it comes to junior hockey, but this stops at a point when international competition strengthens and Canada has to use a united national team to play against the other top teams in the world.

Although this tournament is not a serious endeavor to create a Quebec national team, this is an example of Quebec competing on the world stage. As noted earlier

in this article, there are cases where some institutionalization of international competition has increased political demands and opportunities for statehood. While this team merely serves as a representative of a Canadian province, it does give Quebec a role on the world hockey stage. The tournament is widely covered by the media every year, but there has not been any coverage of this story from a political angle.

Conclusion

For Quebec nationalists, there are few occasions when the symbols of banal nationalism are on open display. A political event staged by the PQ and BQ, and parades during *Fête Nationale* , are rare opportunities to envision an independent Quebec. However, there is something emotionally powerful when seeing one's national team play against others when the national team jersey is matched with the national anthem and the national flag. Often these banal reinforcements are honoured, but not considered too deeply by scholars and fans alike.

Hockey, for Quebec nationalists, presents a way of articulating a vision of an independent Quebec in which the territory can compete on the international stage against all other recognized participants in the Olympics or in world tournaments. For example, in a personal interview, former PQ MNA Martin LeMay notes this connection between sports and nationalism: "At the Olympics, what do you see? Flags and national anthems. In South Africa (2010 FIFA World Cup), what do you see? Flags and anthems. Nobody is ashamed of this reaction and we want to have the same."

It is unlikely that Quebec will be granted any form of national recognition by the IIHF because of that organization's general reticence to become involved in politics, nor the Canadian Hockey Association. However, a "national" hockey team in Quebec is often referenced by journalists and by political elites with the PQ and BQ. If the Quebec Cup ever comes to fruition this tournament could provide nationalists with a sense of vision, a vision of an independent Quebec, which they could show to others. The case of Croatia provides a powerful lesson here – but, it should be noted, Quebec and Croatia are two different cases because Yugoslavia was just starting its descent into ethnic conflict when Croatia played a soccer game against the United States, in part, to gain diplomatic recognition. A Quebec team may merely be seen as an example of autonomy in the same way that a representative team of Saskatchewan or Nova Scotia is; that said, there are no major movements for independence in either of these provinces.

Québécois nationalists also remain highly involved with the Canadiens. The recent criticism over then-coach Randy Cunneyworth and his lack of French shows that the issues of language and culture in Quebec remain strong political issues. The

Habs do not play a political role, but the team is often used as a representation of a wider Québécois identity. However, if a new NHL team returns to Quebec City, it could once again complicate the issue of Québécois nationalism and its relationship to the sport of hockey.

Politically, the issue of hockey in Quebec is challenging. On the one hand, the nature of Canadian federalism is such that each province should have some autonomy. On the other hand, allowing Quebec to play separately from Canada could well lead to a vision of separateness and then be used by Québécois nationalists to bolster secessionist claims. For many people in Quebec, playing for the Habs provides a strong sense of identity; the only question is whether this identity increased demands for a separate state for Quebec and the opportunity for its players to play for the *bleu et blanc*. Of course, the Habs are a business, not a political organization, but the lines between the two are often blurred.

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Mavis Gallant's Paris

Le Paris de Mavis Gallant

Éva Zsizsmann

Abstract

"All immigration is based on misapprehension," says Gallant in *Paris Stories* (2002). Despite the title, the stories in the collection take place all over Europe, catching the behaviour of the out-of-place citizen. Most of the characters are permanent wanderers whose peripatetic fate is equally peripatetic. They are shown to inhabit transient states, dwelling in the zone between thought and possible action. The article focuses on memory, place and belonging, exploring "A State of Affairs" and "Forain," each written in 1991 and each figuring Polish immigrants in Paris after the Second World War. I propose to discuss the way in which Gallant's texts feature the workings of memory and the working of language on the events of the past, in the context of the immigrant experience. I also focus on Gallant's preoccupation with narratives of aging and the construction of the self.

Keywords: Mavis Gallant, memory, *Paris Stories*, transitions

Résumé

« Toute l'immigration est basée sur un malentendu », dit Mavis Gallant dans *Paris Stories* (2002). Malgré le titre, les nouvelles de ce recueil se concentrent sur le comportement du citoyen déplacé dans toute l'Europe. La plupart des personnages sont des vagabonds permanents, dont le destin péripatétique n'est pas intentionnel. Ils sont dans des états transitoires ; ils habitent la zone entre la pensée et l'action possible. L'article met l'accent sur la mémoire, le lieu et l'appartenance, l'exploration de deux nouvelles, toutes deux écrites en 1991, et les immigrants polonais à Paris après la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Je propose de discuter de la manière dont les textes présentent le fonctionnement de la mémoire et le fonctionnement du langage dans le contexte de l'expérience de l'immigrant. Je m'intéresse aussi aux récits sur le vieillissement et la construction du soi qui occupent une place importante chez Gallant.

Mots-clés : Mavis Gallant, mémoire, *Paris Stories*, transitions

Introduction

In the Preface to her *Collected Stories* (1996) Gallant recalls the joy of supplying a voice to a large colony of paper dolls, playing the ventriloquist. Another episode remembered is her 'apprenticeship' as a journalist in Montreal, during which she "amassed an enormous mental catalogue of places and people, information that still seeps" into her stories (Gallant, vi). Looking back to her beginnings, the French convent school in Quebec, the English storybooks from home and her ability to translate English to French at sight, she concludes: "It left me with two systems of behaviour, divided by syntax and tradition [...]; two codes of social behaviour; much practical experience of the difference between a rule and a moral point. Somewhere in this duality may be the exact point of the beginning of writing" (vii).

Born in Montreal and settled in Paris, Mavis Gallant published almost all of her short fiction in *The New Yorker*, which implies a certain generic feature. As Carolyn See points out in a 1993 review entitled "Paris as Prison," "Almost by definition, these stories lack adventure and plot. If things started happening in them, they wouldn't *be New Yorker* stories; the characters wouldn't be boxed in by the circumstances of their lives. The appeal of these narratives must lie in the exquisitely perceived details [...]." Gallant's Paris is slow-moving, over-furnished, stagnant, a place of desperate loneliness.

Though Gallant's published collections received distinguished literary prizes, she had a small readership. John McGahern suggested that the reason of this disparity might be Gallant's merciless, ironic voice: she was a "scalpel-sharp anatomizer of various forms of stupidity, and while this skilfulness can often seem just and very funny, sometimes it leaves behind an unpleasant aftertaste, as if the witty, controlled prose is functioning at the expense of her characters" (McGahern).

In a 2008 review Andrew Saikali nuances this view somewhat, underlining that the narrator treats her characters with sympathy and understanding:

> Ex-pats, émigrés, displaced persons, and transients – the moved, the removed, and those on-the-move – have all sprung from Gallant's fertile imagination, arriving fully formed on the page, in stories that betray both a keen, unsentimental, journalist's eye and a humane artistic vision. (Saikali)

"A State of Affairs" (1991)

I propose a reading of the short story as a narrative about aging, the expatriate condition, memory and the construction of the self. "A State of Affairs" is a portrait of a member of a vanishing generation of Polish émigrés, composed of fragments of the

thoughts, memories, reflections and silent conversations in M. Maciek Wroblewski's stream of consciousness. We find out bits and pieces about his identity as the flow of memory throws light onto distant episodes in his life: a casual reference to Nansen passports (the internationally recognized refugee travel documents first issued by the League of Nations to stateless refugees) reveals that he is a Polish political refugee living in Paris, whereas a passage of free indirect discourse rendering his ruminations on old age makes it clear that he was in Dachau for ten months, the last winter and spring of the Second World War.

The use of the formal salutation ("M. Wroblewski" – i.e. "Monsieur") throughout the text is a sign of respectability; however, it also suggests his alienation on account of old age and the expatriate condition: "Unfortunately, most of M. Wroblewski's Paris acquaintances have vanished or moved away to remote towns and suburbs [...] or retired to a region of the mind that must be like a twisted, hollow shell" (644).

Wroblewski's surviving friends in Poland are "dispirited, mistrustful" (642), complaining about the decline in the quality of life back home, the rudeness of the young, the debased spoken language and rising anti-Semitism. Wroblewski refuses dark visions, using euphemisms and fantasies as survival tools against difficulties. 'State of affairs' replaces 'problem' in his vocabulary and he never utters the term 'dementia' when talking about his wife's condition. The mirrored walls of a building across from his favourite café, the Atelier in Montparnasse, function as metaphors of refraction, his coping strategy – that is, the method of distancing himself from dangers, the ultimate threat: "A sheet of black glass means nothing. It is not a cloud or the sky [...]. From that distance, the dark has no power. It has no life of its own. It is a reflection" (673). Multiplication or double life is another coping strategy, symbolised by the medallion of the young French bank clerk in a later scene:

> "Your accounts are in fine shape," she said. "That must be something off your mind. We could allow . . . At any rate, come back and see me if you have a problem."
> "My problem is my own death," he said, smiling.
> "You mustn't think such things." She touched her talisman, Gemini, as if it really could allow her a double life: one with vexations and one without. (654)

Wroblewski's wife, Magda, is taken care of by a young Martinique woman and seems to be hopeless; however, her occasional, unexpected remarks spell out truth. Her pronouncements, like those of blind Tiresias, are cryptic but never wrong. The awkward question, "Are they coming home for Christmas?" (644) becomes the synonym of belonging, a key concept in the short story.

Wroblewski imagines meeting his old Jewish friend from Warsaw, composing several letters to him in his mind. Home for him is conversation, shared memories as in this cosy scene he conjures up:

> He would like to be able to send his friend a plane ticket to Paris, find him a comfortable room and discreetly settle the bill, invite him to dinner: M. Wroblewski, his friend, and Magda around the little table in the living room, with the green lampshade glowing and the green curtains drawn; or at Chez Marcel, where he used to go with Magda. The owner would remember them, offer free glasses of cognac with their coffee: jovial, generous, welcoming – One Europe, One World. (643)

The three characters represent different stages in alertness, in the process of aging conceived as a journey. The old friend from Warsaw, who received a death threat after speaking about his wartime ghetto experience in a radio talk, has "an amazing memory of events, sorted out, in sequence […] he would find a historical context for everything" (643). Magda, the wife is the other extreme: "poised on the moment between dark and light […]. She lives that split second all day long" (644). Wroblevski negotiates his own variant of the wakeful-sleepy state, watching himself for signs of aging.

Wroblewski's euphemistic phrase, 'chinks of light', epitomising the refusal of a negative vision, is coupled with rewriting past events or simply forgetting them, disposing of burdensome memories. Contingency is shown to be an organizing principle of memory and the construction of the self:

> Shreds of episodes shrugged off, left behind, strewed the roads. Only someone pledged to gray dawns would turn back to examine them. You might as well collect every letter you see lying stained in a gutter and call the assortment an autobiography. (646)

The scene where Wroblewski looks back to his life, pondering "his exact due", asking himself whether he has ever "crawled" or "begged for favour," points to the volatile nature of self-conception, our constantly changing self-image: "Of course he had begged. He had entreated for enough to eat, relief from pain, a passport, employment" (646). It also raises the question of virtue, pride, gain by fraud and deceit.

As Esther Harriott points out, "A State of Affairs" was written with Gallant's characteristic double vision: it is a portrait of Wroblewski in old age and the enduring effects of the war on the life of the émigrés (116). Wroblewski recalls a series of absurd scenarios resulting from the whims of bureaucracy, from encounters with bureaucracy. When he filed a claim for damages, on the grounds of ten months spent

in a concentration camp, the German lawyer explained that he was not entitled to it: "He cannot plead that the ten months were an irreparable break, with a before and after, or even a waste of life" (648). The calling in of the Nansen passports is another absurd situation: "The bureau that handles those rare and special passports is closing down. Polish political refugees do not exist any longer" (648). An engraver in his eighties gives voice to his indignation: "What are they going to do with us? Ship us back to Poland? Are we part of a quota now? At our age, we are better off stateless" (649).

References to social class and status nuance the larger picture of the multiethnic scene presented in the short story. We find out that "The Wroblewskis, neither prosperous nor in want, get their annual gift in a correct and legal way" (646). Honesty is therefore a key principle in Wroblewski's system of values. His recollection of their annual Easter holidays in the South of France underlines their dignity: though they had modest means due to displacement during the war (they were travelling third class), they considered it important to be elegant. Still, the ritual of having dinner at the *pension* on their own points to their separation from wealthier Western Europeans: "After dinner, a visit to the casino – not to gamble but to watch the most civilized people in Western Europe throw their money around" (646).

Wroblewski belongs to the educated middle class; he had a job and an apartment in Paris. When the Nansen passports are called in, he decides to act in a defensive way, not to cause a riot but politely ask for French citizenship in a letter:

> He […] drew attention to the number of years he had lived in France, his fluent French, and his admiration for the culture. He spoke of the ancient historical links between Poland and France, touched briefly on the story of Napoleon and Mme. Waleska, and reminded the ministry that he had never been behind with the rent or overdrawn at the bank. (649)

The letter is met with "official silence" (649). The meeting with the young French bank clerk at the end of the short story, meanwhile, offers an external view of Wroblewski, dramatizing his loquacity and unfashionably formal speech; however, it is an affectionate portrait, as Gallant is sympathetic towards her character.

"Forain" (1991)

"Forain" is an ironic, subtle, extremely precise description of the mechanisms of publishing Central and Eastern European literature in the West and the changes that the turn in 1989 brought about in literary institutions. Blaise Forain, owner of a small press in Paris devoted to the translation and publication of works by Eastern

and Central European writers, had discovered a niche market that provided him with a modest income:

> He was often described in the trade as poor but selfless. He had performed an immeasurable service to world culture, bringing to the West voices that had been muffled for decades in the East. Well, of course, his thimble-size firm had not been able to attract the leviathan prophets, the booming novelists, the great mentors and tireless definers. (634)

Later he realises that Cold War stories are increasingly difficult to be sold to a post-1989 audience. Gallant offers a brilliant description of the literary marketplace in France after the fall of the Berlin Wall:

> The truth was that the destruction of the Wall – radiant paradigm – had all but demolished Forain. The difference was that Forain could not be hammered to still smaller pieces and sold all over the world. (636)

Most of the story takes place at the funeral of Adam Tremski, an emigré Polish Jew, one of the writers published by Forain. We see the group of elderly immigrants through Forain's reflections and observations: they live on the fringe of Montparnasse, "the wrong side of the Seine" (626); some of them "migrated to apartments in the outer suburbs, to deeper loneliness but cheaper rents" (630). The exiles' grief is shown to encompass past grievances: "tears came easily, not only for the lost friend but for all the broken ties and old, unwilling journeys" (627).

Architecture and interior design function as a metonymy of the immigrant condition, namely, they have a temporary, contingent aspect. Tremski's apartment is repeatedly described:

> he stuck to his rented flat, a standard emigré dwelling of the 1950s, almost a period piece now: two rooms on a court, windowless kitchen, splintered floors, unbeatable bathroom, no elevator, intimidating landlord – a figure central to his comic anecdotes and private worries. (628)

Forain's inventory offered up instead of a last prayer at the funeral reveals the portrait of a man who failed to assimilate to the country to which he fled. He has lived a makeshift life ever since the end of the war:

> In a corner, the chair piled with newspapers and journals that Tremski still intended to read. [...] Above it, the spread of photographs of his old friends. A window, and the sort of view that prisoners see. In front of the window, a drop-leaf table that had to be cleared for

meals. [...] On the wall, a charcoal drawing of Tremski – by an amateur artist, probably – dated June 1945. It was a face that had come through; only just. (638)

Forain's comment – "Even after Tremski could afford to move, he remained an-chored to his seedy rooms" (628) – suggests stagnation, the inability to act, the zone between thought and possible action. As Michael Ondaatje writes about Gallant,

> Her Europe is a place of "shipwrecks" – a word that occurs more than once in the stories. All characters are seemingly far from home. They belong, to be honest, nowhere. Most of them are permanent wanderers, though a nomadic fate was not part of their original intent. With no land to light on, they look back without nostalgia, and look forward with a frayed hope. (Ondaatje, vi)

The short story shows different generations of immigrants (the older generation, their predecessors and the new wave), underlining the contrast between an idealistic older generation followed by a more opportunistic one. Tremski and his fellow artists seem to be naive, idealistic, impractical:

> Forain's own little flock, by contrast, seemed to have entered the world with no expectations. Apart from the odd, rare, humble complaint, they were content to be put up on the top story of a hotel with a steep, neglected staircase, a wealth of literary associations, and one bath to a floor. For recreation, they went to the cafe across the street, made a pot of hot water and a tea bag last two and a half hours, and, as Forain encouraged them to keep in mind, could watch the Market Economy saunter by. Docile, holding only a modest estimation of their own gifts, they still provided a handicap: Their names, like those of their characters, all sounded alike to barbaric Western ears. (634–5)

The second generation of immigrants, those born in Paris, appear to be more con-scious of integration and assimilation, of becoming part of the new context. For exam-ple, Halina, Tremski's stepdaughter, was resentful of him, claiming that he spoke loud Polish in restaurants and had tried to keep her from achieving a French social identity. The recent arrivals from Poland, those who are not refugees but on the lookout for more exciting lives, do not seem to be interested in historical accuracy or the past:

> Scholars who, looked dismayingly youthful, speaking the same language, but with a new, jarring vocabulary, were trekking to Western capitals – taping reminiscences, copying old letters. History turned out to be a plodding science. What most emigrés settled for now was the haphazard accuracy of a memory like Tremski's. In the end it was always a poem that ran through the mind – not a string of dates. (628–9)

History, the memory of the Second World War, is important for Gallant, and therefore she writes ironically about the literate and among them journalists (French political journalists included), who substitute "a few names, a date looked up, a notion of geography" for a thorough knowledge of the past:

> It was remarkable, Tremski had said, the way literate people, reasonably well travelled and educated, comfortably off, could live adequate lives without wanting to know what had gone before or happened elsewhere. (630)

As the narrative unfolds, Forain's image gradually changes "from flawed protagonist to sanctimonious crook" (Harriott, 112) as we encounter different layers of discourse, plurivocality. The text is masterful in playing with degrees of uncertainty: rumours, intimations and the narrator's thoughts about himself are deliberately mixed: "Forain knew that some of Tremski's friends thought he was unreliable. He had a reputation for not paying authors their due" (633). As Ondaatje remarks in his Introduction to *Paris Stories*, "Gallant is brilliant at tilting a situation or a personality a few subliminal degrees in the mind of the reader so that he discovers himself located in a strange new place, seeing something from a more generous or more satirical position" (Ondaatje, vii).

Forain makes little money from his business, and so he is regularly accused of cheating his writers, while posing as a saviour of European culture. His image alters between petty swindler and cynical literary agent. The mind of the central character merges with the voice of the narrator outside the story and therefore the irony of the outside narrator overlaps with the self-irony of the central character:

> Season after season, his stomach eaten up with anxiety, his heart pounding out hope, hope, hope, he produced a satirical novella set in Odessa; a dense, sober private journal, translated from the Rumanian, best understood by the author and his friends; or another wry glance at the harebrained makers of history. (635)

After the destruction of the Berlin Wall, Forain considers attempting to save his business by creating a new market in Third World countries: "Briefly, Forain pondered the possibility of unloading on readers in Senegal and Cameroon the entire edition of a subtle and allusive study of corruption in Minsk, set in 1973" (636).

"Forain" is remarkable through the use of devices linked to deception: it can be read as a story of human betrayal and deceit. Not only does Forain try to profit from naive, idealistic writers, we have the intimation that he wants to publish Tremski's last

unfinished work under his own name, in an attempt to save Blaise Editions. Iconic items of clothing reiterate the topic of betrayal:

> Forain knew there was a mean joke abroad about his wearing dead men's clothes. It also applied to his professional life: He was supposed to have said he preferred the backlist of any dead writer to the stress and tension of trying to deal with a live one. (630)

At Tremski's funeral Forain wears a black cashmere coat, allegedly presented to him by a dying friend. Secondly, there is a reference to Tremski's only suit (he wore it for his wedding, at her wife's funeral and was supposed to be buried in it). By the end of the story, Forain's new secretary spreads the rumour that he took away Tremski's coat.

Paris, as we see it in Gallant's "Forain" and "A State of Affairs," is the Montparnasse inhabited by various ethnicities, mostly Central- and Eastern-European immigrants arriving in the city after the Second World War. As Michael Ondaatje points out, "The world Gallant depicts is cosmopolitan, and she is a writer of seemingly endless voices and personae, but in these stories she is also regional in the best sense. She has a brilliant sense of place" (Ondaatje, vii).

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Le symbolisme aquatique et les personnages féminins dans *Les fous des Bassan* d'Anne Hébert

Water Symbolism and Female Characters in Anne Hébert's *Les fous des Bassan*

Manea Florentina Ionela

Résumé

La terre de Griffin Creek cache le sort de Nora et d'Olivia Atkins, les deux cousines qui, la nuit de 31 août 1936, disparaissent, englouties par la mer. Leur destin est celui de rejoindre l'abîme aquatique, qui accueille leurs corps, ravagés par le désir de l'homme. Matrice universelle et liquide aux propriétés lustrales, l'eau devient dans l'univers hébertien un témoignage du destin des personnages féminins. Fraîche et printanière, ou ténébreuse et vorace, l'eau est un espace mystérieux, situé entre la vie et la mort, où des générations de femmes ont trouvé refuge. Ces femmes deviennent des nymphes, des naïades ou même des démons des eaux qui séduisent les hommes et les mènent au bord de la folie.

Mots-clés : Anne Hébert, eau, sacré, corps, femme, nymphe

Abstract

The realm of Griffin Creek conceals the fates of Nora and Olivia Atkins, the two cousins, who, on the night of 31 August 1936 disappear, swallowed by the sea. The two young girls are destined for the womb of this abyss, which welcomes their bodies, violently ravaged by a man. A universal matrix and primordial liquid with cleansing properties, the water becomes, within the Hébertian universe, a testament to the destiny of female characters. Fresh and vernal or wicked and all-consuming, the water is a mysterious place, which lies somewhere between life and death, where generations of women have found sanctuary. In an attempt to reestablish a link with their own body, these women become nymphs, naiads or even water demons who seduce or lure men to the brink of insanity.

Keywords: Anne Hébert, water, sacred, body, woman, nymph

Texte riche qui se prête à des lectures plurielles, le roman *Les fous de Bassan* est un témoignage de l'originalité d'Anne Hébert, écrivaine qui a su se réinventer, livre après livre, en explorant les dimensions majeures de l'existence humaine. Soumis aux jeux parodique et intertextuel, les récits bibliques constituent une source inépuisable d'inspiration, son œuvre ne saurait être considérée ni comme une simple parodie des écrits sacrés, ni comme une réitération des histoires saintes. En fait, l'écrivaine réactualise sans cesse les dimensions d'une histoire éternelle, celle qui raconte la genèse du monde et des premiers êtres humains, de l'opposition entre le féminin et le masculin, le bien et le mal. Dans cette démarche, l'auteure retourne aux sources originelles d'un sacré collectif, qui lui permet de mieux explorer les abîmes de l'âme, les désirs refoulés et les passions voraces qui dévorent ses personnages.

Le roman *Les fous de Bassan* s'inscrit dans cette démarche de redécouvrir et de valoriser les sources d'un sacré originel. Construit sur le thème du double, le récit met en scène des êtres rongés par le désir, atteints par la folie meurtrière ou en proie à des souvenirs insoutenables. Les couples des personnages rejoignent les couples thématiques traditionnels (soleil – lune, eau – feu, mer – terre, homme – femme) ce qui attire l'attention sur le symbolisme des quatre éléments primordiaux qui traversent l'espace romanesque. En effet, les personnages empruntent les caractéristiques que l'on confère symboliquement à l'eau, à la terre, au feu ou à l'air. Plus encore, leur destin est soumis à la volonté de l'eau, qui engloutit avidement les corps des jeunes filles, de l'air, qui rend fou, du feu, qui tisonne le désir, et de la terre, qui rend la femme fertile et prête à accomplir sa destinée.

Parmi les éléments primordiaux, l'eau évoque la féminité dans toute sa complexité. Liquide aux propriétés lustrales et curatives, l'eau est l'élément qui domine l'univers romanesque hébertien. Présence vive partout dans le roman et symbole de la fertilité, elle témoigne du destin aquatique des personnages féminins, de ces créatures ineffables et transparentes, presque irréelles. Si les eaux matricielles contiennent en elles la promesse de la vie, à Griffin Creek, les vagues portent les présages de la tragédie, car les voix des femmes livrées à cette existence aquatique mêlent au vent les avertissements sur le désir féroce et la folie de l'homme. Devenue unique refuge pour ces femmes, la mer s'identifie au giron maternel, nourricier et protecteur, revenant ainsi au symbolisme originel de l'eau, celui de matrice féconde et source de toute vie. Néanmoins, liée justement au mystère de la fécondation et de la genèse, l'eau devient espace inaccessible et ténébreux où fermentent les germes de la vie. Le cycle naissance – mort – renaissance témoigne de la véritable nature des eaux, gouffre effrayant qui soumet l'être à une dissolution extrême avant de le rendre, transfiguré, à une nouvelle existence. Les ténèbres matricielles, lourdes du fruit de la vie, sont ainsi liées à la mort, aux processus de décomposition de la matière, et par extension, à l'inconscient et à la femme, celle-ci - l'*anima* – perçue comme dangereuse et dévoratrice.

Jouant sur l'ambivalence de l'élément aquatique, Anne Hébert essaye de surprendre la complexité de l'éternel féminin, que les philosophes et les poètes rangent du côté de la métaphysique et du religieux. La femme serait une médiatrice qui accomplit l'œuvre mystérieux du salut par son pouvoir d'intercession, renvoyant aux figures de la charité et de la sagesse (*Sophia*) du gnosticisme chrétien, ou de la fidélité d'amour. Pure contemplation (par opposition à l'homme qui est connaissance et action), et réduite aux vertus essentiellement féminines (chasteté, pureté, modestie), la femme est envisagée comme créature angélique dont l'unique raison d'être est de guider l'homme sur la voie de la moralité et de la spiritualité.

À cet imaginaire cher aux romantiques s'oppose la croyance chrétienne dans la malice et l'immoralité inhérentes à la femme, esclave du démon, par le corps de laquelle le péché est entré dans le monde pour tourmenter les hommes pieux. Dans cette perspective, la femme doit être soumise à l'homme, porteuse d'enfants et nourricière, ventre fidèle et corps accueillant. Suivant cette tradition ancestrale, le révérend Nicolas Jones, le Verbe de Griffin Creek, s'approprie la parole divine et l'utilise pour imposer son autorité incontestable sur les jumelles Pat et Pam, qu'il considère comme des vieilles filles insignifiantes, soumises à sa volonté. : *Je les appelle « mon ange » et « ma colombe », mais la plupart du temps je les mène avec une trique de fer. Sans jamais les toucher, rien qu'avec ma voix de basse caverneuse, je les retourne comme des feuilles légères dans le vent (FB, 7).* Soucieux de contrôler leur moindre geste, le révérend s'insinue dans les rêves et l'intimité de ces femmes, d'où elles ne peuvent pas échapper : *Pour elles seules je débite mes plus beaux sermons. Tous les anges du ciel et les démons de l'enfer surgissent de la Bible, à mon appel, se pressent la nuit au chevet des jumelles endormies. Nourries de l'Écriture, par les prophètes et les rois, les jumelles ont des rêves féroces et glorieux. Maître de leurs songes j'exerce un ministère dérisoire, de peu d'envergure, mais d'autorité absolue (FB, 7).* Réduites à l'existence des spectres qui hantent le presbytère, les jumelles deviennent les prisonnières du révérend, corps et âme.

Soumises à ce réseau d'identification et rangées du côté de l'Altérité absolue, ces femmes, sans voix ni corps propre, se perdent dans la multitude des mythes patriarcaux, qui les transforment dans un simple corps érotique ou nourricier. Anne Hébert essaye de donner une voix à ces figures féminines réduites au silence, une voix qui, dans le roman *Les Fous des Bassan*, est troublante et assourdissante comme le bruit des vagues qui déferlent sur les rives de Griffin Creek.

Intimement lié aux personnages féminins, l'élément aquatique a dans la trame narrative une fonction beaucoup plus importante : plus qu'un symbole de la fécondité, l'eau est le symbole d'un type de destin, un destin essentiel qui, selon Bachelard, *métamorphose sans cesse la substance de l'être*.[1] En effet, le devenir des personnages romanesques (qu'ils soient les femmes ou les hommes de Griffin Creek) est voué au

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1)   Gaston Bachelard, *L'eau et les rêves*, Librairie José Corti, 1942, p. 13

gouffre des eaux matricielles, qui rendent les hommes fous et accueillent les corps des femmes. Le livre d'Olivia de la Haute Mer, le cinquième récit composant le roman, est en fait le livre de l'eau comme destin de la femme, son refuge et son tombeau. Olivia possède ce destin aquatique : fruit de la mer, pour elle la mort ne signifie que retour au ventre maternel. À jamais perdue dans l'immensité des eaux, goutte de pluie et écume de la mer, Olivia prend sa place au fond de l'océan, près de sa mère et de tant d'autres générations de femmes. Mais dans cette existence essentialisée, ce qui perdure, ce qui la hante avec violence c'est son désir pour Stevens, un désir qui habite maintenant cet être transparent, et qui la pousse, nuit après nuit, avec les vagues et le vent, vers les rives de Griffin Creek : *Ma senteur forte de fruit de mer pénètre partout. Je hante à loisir le village, quasi désert, aux fenêtres fermées. Transparente et fluide comme un souffle d'eau, sans chair ni âme, réduite au seul désir (FB, 97).*

Victime des passions et des péchés des autres, Olivia rappelle la figure tragique d'Ophélia et par cela rejoint le complexe culturel décrit par Bachelard. Pour le philosophe français, l'eau est la patrie de la mort féminine, jeune et belle, de la mort sans orgueil ni vengeance[2]. Personnage shakespearien tragique, Ophélia est la femme objet-érotique, définie par sa sexualité et ses puissances fécondes valorisées au sein du mariage. Sans volonté propre, elle finit par intérioriser ce statut imposé par l'homme et l'ordre patriarcal, en contradiction avec ses besoins profonds d'être lumineux et aimant. De cette contradiction naissent sa tragédie et sa mort, geste expiatoire pour les péchés d'autrui, notamment ceux des hommes qui l'ont condamnée à ce sort. Olivia de la Haute Mer, fraîche anémone des eaux, devient, elle aussi, un personnage tragique, soumise à un destin implacable qu'elle partage avec des générations de femmes. Ce destin la met face à face avec le désir brûlant de l'homme, rendu fou par son odeur musquée de jeune fille. Inutile de résister ; comme l'observe Nora : *mon oncle Nicolas, ma tante Irène Stevens, Perceval, Olivia et moi serons tous emportés par le mouvement de notre propre sang, lâché dans la campagne, au grand galop de la vie et de la mort (FB, 56).* Aucun salut possible. Sa triste histoire sera racontée à l'infini par les femmes de la mer, tout comme la reine Gertrude déplore le destin tragique de la douce Ophélia. Bien qu'elle ne soit pas symbole d'un suicide masochiste[3], Olivia aux cheveux blonds flottants, aux yeux de violette et d'outremer, est une autre Ophélia qui donne sa vie aux eaux, doucement. Ses pensées vont toujours vers cet homme, unique entre tous qui, une nuit de 31 août, sur la grève de Griffin Creek, lui fait découvrir le secret de la vie et de la mort : *Un jour, mon amour, nous nous battrons tous les deux sur la grève, dans la lumière de la lune qui enchante et rend fou. Sans grâce ni merci…. Mon Dieu j'ai dit mon amour, sans y penser comme si je chantais. Non, non, ce n'est pas vrai. Je rêve. Cet homme est mauvais.*

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2)   Ibid., p. 98

3)   Gaston Bachelard, op. cit., p. 98

Il ne désir rien que de réveiller la plus profonde épouvante en moi pour s'en repaître comme d'une merveille. La plus profonde, ancienne épouvante qui n'est plus tout à fait la mienne, mais celle de ma mère enceinte de moi et de ma grand-mère (FB, 98).

Tout autour d'Olivia, dans les eaux de la mer, des visages de femmes apparaissent, transparentes et transfigurées par cette existence aquatique ; les eaux s'ophélisent[4], se peuplent de ces créatures ineffables et légères qui susurrent des prières et des avertissements : *Une cohorte de femmes dans l'ombre et le vent (…) Je les entends qui disent : ne lève pas la tête de ton repassage, tant que ce mauvais garçon sera là dans la porte. Lui entre milles autres. Elle l'a regardé en plein visage. Elle a été regardée par lui en plein visage. Mon Dieu il ne fallait pas disent – elles toutes dans l'ombre et le vent, les mères et les grand-mères alertes (FB, 104).* Mais Olivia sent, confusément, que l'expérience de l'amour sensuel est la seule qui puisse l'épanouir en tant que femme et l'intégrer à un réseau de communication avec l'inconscient féminin collectif : *l'amour seul pourrait faire que je devienne femme à part entière et communique d'égale à égale avec mes mères et grand-mères, dans l'ombre et le vent, à mots couverts, d'un air entendu, du mystère qui me ravage, corps et âme (FB, 104).* Ses eaux sont les eaux amoureuses, pleines d'appels et de murmures d'amour, qui profitent des vagues pour rejoindre encore une fois la grève et l'homme tant désiré : *Mes mères et grand-mères gémissent dans le vent… me recommandent d'y habiter désormais avec elles, d'être obéissante et de ne plus profiter de la marée pour retourner à Griffin Creek. Non, non ce n'est pas moi qui décide, c'est la marée qui m'emporte, chaque jour sur la grève de Griffin Creek (FB, 106).*

Le cygne est un symbole lié à cette dimension amoureuse de la substance aquatique. Il renvoie traditionnellement à la fidélité amoureuse, à la pureté. La valorisation du symbole du cygne en tant que désir érotique est due au mythe grec de Léda. Amoureux de la jeune femme, Zeus se métamorphose en cygne pour la séduire. L'image de cet oiseau est ainsi fortement sexualisée et sa présence dans les rêveries de Nora matérialise le désir sensuel de la jeune fille : *je me demande lequel de ces oiseaux sauvages, à la faveur de quelle obscurité profonde, se posera, un soir, sur mon toit, au cours d'un de ses voyages. Un cygne. Je suis sûre que ce sera un cygne. Il entrouvrira son plumage, je verrai son cœur à découvert qui ne bat que pour moi. Alors il se dépouillera d'un coup de toutes ses plumes blanches glissant en tas de neige, à ses pieds. Sa forme d'homme délivrée de l'enchantement qui pesait sur lui. Sa figure pure de roi couronné. Nulle fille au monde ne sera aimée, n'aimera plus que moi, Nora Atkins (FB, 58).*

Par son essence aquatique, Olivia est aussi une nymphe, fraîche créature des eaux, dont l'existence dépend entièrement de ce liquide nourrissant, qui la protège des souvenirs violents de la nuit de 31 août : *Je n'ai que juste le temps de me couvrir d'ombre comme une poulpe dans son encre, m'échapper sur la mer avant que ne revienne, dans toute sa furie, la soirée de 31 août 1936….Ayant acquis le droit d'habiter le plus creux de l'océan,*

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4)   Ibid., p. 99

son obscurité absolue, ayant payé mon poids de chair et d'os aux féroces poissons lumineux, goutte de nuit dans la nuit, ni lune ni soleil ne peuvent plus m'atteindre (FB, 108).

Dans les mythologies grecque et latine, les nymphes et les naïades vivent dans des endroits inaccessibles, dans les grottes ou les creux des rochers, près des sources et des torrents. Felicity Jones entraîne ses petites filles dans le sein des eaux vierges, à la lumière incertaine de l'aurore, et les filles, comme des nymphes, joyeuses créatures, se baignant dans les eaux fraîches, chantent et dansent, loin du regard des hommes : *Felicity fait la planche. Nora et Olivia tentent de nager, imitant les mouvements précipités des chiens se débattant dans l'eau. Bientôt on peut les voir danser sur le sable pour se réchauffer. Les cheveux mouillés sculptent les petits crânes lisses, les maillots de laine collent sur les corps adolescents (FB, 17)*. Les eaux habitées par ces créatures sont des eaux lumineuses et légères, des eaux printanières[5] : elles renvoient à la jeunesse et à la fraîcheur de Nora et d'Olivia, à la saveur des pommes vertes de la mère d'Olivia, à l'arôme de l'océan qui imprègne le corps de Felicity. Femme aux gestes mesurés et à l'allure d'une reine, Felicity devient, après le rituel purificateur de la baignade dans les eaux de la mer, plus douce et plus tendre. Même les femmes qui habitent les profondeurs aquatiques s'imbibent de la fraîcheur de ces eaux : *les grandes femmes crayeuses, couchées dans le petit cimetière de Griffin Creek, depuis longtemps ont l'âme légère, partie sur la mer, changées en souffle et buée. Ma mère, parmi elles, la plus fraîche et la plus salée à la fois, me parle en secret ma douce langue natale (FB, 105)*. Dans ce cas, le sel devient symbole de la purification et, par son usage comme agent conservateur, de l'immortalité.

Felicity Jones est souvent surprise par son fils Nicolas lorsqu'elle sort de la maison avant l'aube pour aller sur la grève où la mer l'attend. Elle s'y livre à un rituel sacré destiné à lui purifier le corps et l'esprit de la souillure infligée par son mari et à lui renouveler la vie : *Dans sa vieille robe de chambre à ramages marron et rouge Felicity se précipite sur la grève, comme quelqu'un qui a un rendez-vous. Elle a choisi cette heure vague, entre le jour et la nuit, pour s'échapper alors que tous ceux de son sang basculent derrière elle, avec la maison fermée dans les profondeurs du sommeil. Une heure à peine de solitude (loin des tâches conjugales et domestiques), avec ses mains inoccupées, ses pieds nus, posés sur le sable, son regard perdu sur la mer grise, son cœur défait de tous ses nœuds d'orgueil et de vertu ; aimant et haïssant en paix, dans le calme du matin (FB, 15)*. C'est un moment d'intense communion avec les eaux fécondes et Felicity dévoile sa véritable nature de créature aquatique : *Elle règne sur la mer. Sa robe de chambre, à ramages marron et rouge, flotte autour d'elle. On dirait une méduse géante (FB, 15)*. L'eau acquiert ainsi ses propriétés curatives et purificatrices. L'eau aux propriétés lustrales était présente dès l'antiquité dans les cultes des déesses de la fertilité, qui présidaient aussi aux rites mortuaires. Les ablutions et les bains rituels faisaient partie des offices dédiés à la

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5)   Gaston Bachelard, op. cit., p. 42–43

déesse égyptienne Isis, et aux mystères d'Éleusis, culte ésotérique consacré à Déméter (déesse de la fertilité) et à sa fille Perséphone, figures féminines outragées par la déité mâle et qui trouvent leur confort dans le partage des expériences communes. Une sorte de solidarité mystique émerge aussi des souffrances des femmes de Griffin Creek, vouées à un destin identique : des *repasseuses, laveuses, cuisinières, épouses, grossissantes, enfantantes (FB, 104)*, s'épanouissent dans l'écume de la mer, dans les tourbillons des eaux matricielles, où elles deviennent gouttes lumineuses dans l'infinie profondeur des océans. Le giron des eaux fécondes devient pour elles l'unique refuge contre toute sorte de violence, y compris la violence masculine. Olivia se rappelle les souffrances de sa mère, rongée par un mal inconnu, et son désir est de l'emmener le plus loin possible, *là où il y a des palais de coquillages, des fleurs étranges, des poissons multicolores, des rues où l'on respire l'eau calmement comme l'air (FB, 101)*, où elles pourront vivre ensemble, *sans bruit et sans effort (FB, 101)*. Ce rêve de rejoindre l'état prénatal (invoquant l'image fœtale dans le liquide amniotique) a des fonctions prémonitoires : la mère d'Olivia s'éteint doucement, sans révolte, son âme revenant aux matrices aquatiques d'où elle est issue. Le corps blessé et outragé d'Olivia sera, lui aussi, donné aux eaux, geste symbolique qui marque le retour de l'être humain au chaos primordial à la fin d'un cycle existentiel.

Nymphes, naïades, océanides, les femmes vivent dans un univers à part, séparé du monde masculin, inaccessible et mystérieux, situé entre la vie et la mort. Ce secret qui entoure leur existence amène les hommes au bord du délire, qui se manifeste par une fascination et une imagination exaltées. Pour Stevens, Olivia est une créature de la mer, par son *défaut au pied droit. Un orteil qui est collé à l'autre par une petite peau, comme un canard (FB, 37)*. Perceval pense que sa grand-mère Felicity est un dauphin qui veut entraîner les deux cousines dans l'abîme des eaux. Olivia et Nora, par le symbolisme gémellaire qu'elles évoquent, ressemblent à un monstre marin, *une seule et même créature à deux têtes, quatre bras, quatre jambes et deux petits sexes cachés (FB, 13)*. Cette image monstrueuse rappelle au lecteur qu'autour des créatures aquatiques jeunes et belles comme les nymphes circulent les légendes effrayantes des hommes qui, ayant entendu leur chant ou découvert leur refuge, sont devenus fous, aveugles ou muets. Un grand danger est lié à ces femmes qui couvrent l'eau de leurs corps et de leurs voix. Les hommes savent qu'il faut éviter certaines heures de la nuit pour échapper aux maléfices de ces créatures marines : *certains marins dans la solitude de leur quart, alors que la nuit règne sur la mer, ont entendu ces voix mêlées aux clameurs du vent, ne seront jamais les mêmes, feignant d'avoir rêvé et craignent désormais le cœur noir de la nuit (FB, 105)*.

Parfois, leurs cris sont si déchirants qu'ils rappellent les cris des âmes tourmentés dans l'enfer : d*es voix de femmes sifflent entre les frondaisons marines, remontent parfois sur l'étendue des eaux, grande plainte à la surface des vents, seul le cri de la baleine mourante*

est aussi déchirant (FB, 105). Ces eaux perdent leurs qualités lumineuses, deviennent un liquide trouble, noir, qui avale les ombres et les âmes. Plus proches du symbolisme de la mort, ces eaux obscures renvoient au symbolisme funéraire et à une imagerie infernale aquatique. Les Enfers grecs valorisent l'eau en tant que moyen de transport vers le royaume des morts (toujours en compagnie d'un guide comme le nocher Caron), comme source d'oubli ou source de punition pour les âmes pécheresses. On retient, parmi les fleuves infernaux, le Styx, fleuve de l'immortalité et de la haine, l'Achéron, noir fleuve de la douleur aux eaux vénéneuses, la Léthé, le fleuve de l'oubli, le Cocyte, qui accueille les âmes sans sépulture, condamnées à errer avant leur dernier jugement. Devenue substance de la mort, la mer de Griffin Creek est, elle aussi, lourde et sans reflet, elle absorbe les souffrances et ralentit les mouvements, elle est peuplée par des âmes rendues à une existence aquatique. Mais, si dans les enfers grecs, les esprits des morts sont retenus comme des ombres sans force ni sentiments, au passé jamais aboli, les eaux de Griffin Creek sont dépourvues des qualités amnésiques de Léthé. La mémoire est une cicatrice vive et douloureuse, et Olivia, elle aussi âme sans sépulture ni repos, erre chaque nuit sur la grève, hantée par les souvenirs et le désir. Seule dans son voyage vers le monde de vivants, elle est accompagnée dans sa descente vers les profondeurs aquatiques par des voix des femmes, qui, dans leur rôle de guide, renvoient à la figure du nocher Caron, (celui qui faisait passer les ombres perdues à travers le Styx), ou à Mélinoé, divinité orphique et nymphe chtonienne. En tant que déesse des enfers, Mélinoé préside au passage des morts, mais elle possède une autre fonction qui la rapproche des femmes marines de Griffin Creek : dans les hymnes orphiques on découvre que, *par des apparitions aériennes, monstrueuses images d'elle-même*, Mélinoé *épouvante les mortels, tantôt transparente, et tantôt brille dans la nuit en circulant à travers les ténèbres*[6]. Nicolas Jones est hanté la nuit par des voix et des images, des sons et des couleurs qu'il croyait à jamais disparus : *NoraOliviaNoraOlivia ont écrit les jumelles sur les murs dans la galerie des portraits. Des yeux de violette et d'outremer. Des masques blêmes sur des faces absentes. Trop de fantaisie. (…) La nuit est sans pitié, propice aux apparitions* (FB, 16–17).

Par assimilation, la femme peut aussi devenir vorace et stérile, comme les eaux infernales. Liée à ces eaux mortes et dormantes, l'épouse du pasteur, Irène, est incapable de concevoir. Condition fondamentale de la femme dans le monde biblique, la fertilité est signe de la bénédiction divine, tandis que la stérilité est vue comme la conséquence d'un grave péché châtié par Dieu. Une femme stérile, dans la tradition judéo-chrétienne, pourrait accoucher des enfants avec l'intercession divine, mais pour Irène ce signe de Dieu tarde à arriver, tandis que le pasteur sait qu'*en d'autres lieux, sous d'autres lois, je l'aurais déjà répudiée, au vu et au su de tous, comme une créature inutile(…)*

6) http://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Hymnes_orphiques_(traduction_Leconte_de_Lisle), LXVIII, parfum de mèlinoè *Les Aromates*

Elle dort contre moi, dans le grand lit, pareille à un poisson mort, sa vie froide de poisson, son œil de poisson, sous la paupière sans cils, son odeur poissonneuse lorsque je m'obstine à chercher, entre ses cuisses, l'enfant et le plaisir (FB, 9). Le ventre d'Irène devient le symbole de l'infécondité extrême, du néant. Les eaux maléfiques, dangereuses contiennent les germes latents de la vie. Mais Irène baigne dans des eaux empoisonnées, qui ont perdu toute puissance vivifiante et nourricière. Son destin est celui de la mort sans possibilité de retour, d'une mort stérile : elle ne retournera pas à la mer, comme les autres femmes de Griffin Creek. Symboliquement, ni la terre, élément féminin et fécond, ne la recevra à son sein. Irène se pend dans la grange, le soir du barn dance. Perdue dans ces eaux vénéneuses, *cette femme n'a jamais eu l'air vivante, sa vraie nature étant d'être incolore, inodore et sans saveur, déjà morte depuis sa naissance (FB, 47).*

Autres femmes infécondes sont les jumelles Pat et Pam, mais cette fois-ci, la stérilité est infligée par le contact avec l'homme. Vierges éternelles et créatures de la mer, les jumelles, aux cheveux blonds, le corps léger et l'âme floue, sont maintenues par la révérend dans un *état malléable, sans tenir compte du temps qui passe. Le temps leur glisse dessus comme l'eau sur le dos d'un canard. Sans jamais avoir été femmes, les voici qui subissent leur retour d'âge, avec le même air étonné que leurs premières règles. Pas une once de graisse, ni seins, ni hanches, fins squelettes d'oiseaux (FB, 6–7).* Leur descendance est monstrueuse car, pareil à leurs frères Perceval et Stevens, elles sont *hantées (FB, 7),* prenant plaisir à tourmenter le révérend par leur ressemblance, sorte de vengeance pour une claustration éternelle. Mais c'est leur mère, Béa Brown, qui est la véritable incarnation des eaux maléfiques et dangereuses. Menaçantes, ces eaux noires sont non-dissociées de la figure de la mère. Dans la mythologie babylonienne, Tiamat est mère de toute vie (le nom, de provenance sumérienne, est composé de *ti* – vie et de *ama* –mère), personnifiant les eaux salées où règne le chaos. Déesse primordiale, elle accouche des créatures monstrueuses : des dragons, des serpents, des bêtes difformes et dangereuses. Béa Brown engendre, elle aussi, seulement des abominations, des enfants maudits : les jumelles Pat et Pam, vivant dans une symbiose fœtale, Perceval, l'enfant fou, Stevens, atteint par un désir féroce et meurtrier. Symbole des eaux froides, Béa est aussi la mère dévoratrice qui cherche à perdre ses enfants, une autre Lilith (*le gouffre, la gueule*, connue dans la traduction de la Vulgate comme Lamia) créature de la nuit et voleuse d'enfants : *Cette femme a une très mauvaise circulation, dit le Dr Hopkins. Elle dégage du froid comme d'autres de la chaleur. C'est encore étonnant qu'elle puisse mettre au monde des enfants vivants, sortis d'un ventre aussi polaire, on aurait pu croire que seuls des cadavres d'enfants…Ces deux-là sont bien vivantes(…) Elle pleure et affirme qu'elle ne veut pas de ces deux enfants (FB, 40).* Si la fontaine est symbole de la maternité, le sein de cette mère est une fontaine glacée, épuisée de toute puissance nourricière, évoquant la stérilisation du principe vital féminin. Stevens dira que : *c'est pas le lait tout cru qu'elle m'a donné, Beatrice ma mère, c'est la faim et la soif. Le désir (FB, 40).*

Ni maléfique comme Beatrice, ni vouée au néant comme Irène, Maureen est quand même un symbole des eaux dormantes, des eaux troubles et solitaires. L'élément aquatique salé est sa véritable nature, et Stevens la surprend dans un moment d'intimité et de liaison profonde avec la mer, voyant *sa poitrine de femme monter et descendre dans sa veste d'homme. La senteur de la mer devait lui plaire car elle ne cessait de respirer profondément, calmement, sans se lasser, s'imprégnant d'iode et de varech, comme si c'était sa seule raison d'être ; de respirer à fond et de se trouver présente au matin, sur le pas de sa porte, au bord de la mer (FB, 39).* La présence de Stevens la dérobe à son existence latente, réveillant dans son corps le désir et la sensualité. Créature sans âge, elle découvre une vie nouvelle de jeune fille amoureuse dès que Stevens la touche pour la première fois. Mais son véritable destin est celui de la solitude. Veuve et stérile, Maureen ne pourrait jamais étancher la soif de Stevens : *Vieille, tu es vieille, ma pauvre Maureen. Trop vieille pour moi (FB, 47).* C'est pour cela que la fraîcheur et la jeunesse de Nora et d'Olivia la violentent et la consomment: *Maureen nous regarde fixement toutes les deux, avec ses gros yeux d'eau verte, scandalisés dans leurs orbites. Parfois Maureen rit avec nous. Mais ses yeux ne bougent pas (continuent de nous regarder), ne se plissent pas de rire, conservent leur air sauvage scandalisés. (FB, 98).*

Maléfiques et dévoratrices ou fraîches et printanières, toute une cohorte de femmes semble envahir les rives de Griffin Creek, pour le malheur et le tourment des hommes. Ces femmes sont nées pour ensorceler et rendre fou, menant les hommes au bord du gouffre et de la psychose. Perceval bave et se tord les mains, Stevens crie et pleure dans la tempête, Nicolas Jones erre comme un fou sur la grève, jour et nuit, épiant tout mouvement des jeunes filles. Poussés par le désir, les hommes sont à l'affût, cachés parmi les rochers, attendant les femmes qui viennent se baigner dans la mer. On assiste ici à une *sexualisation visuelle de l'eau*[7], l'eau acquérant une fonction érotique, car elle renvoie à la nudité féminine. *Le bain devient une foule*[8], Nora et Olivia étant toujours l'objet du regard insidieux de l'homme : *Le révérend n'a jamais été seul ici, même lorsqu'il croyait pouvoir regarder en paix les petites-filles préférées de Felicity Jones s'ébattant avec leur grand-mère, dans l'eau glacée, au petit matin. Perceval est déjà là, caché dans les joncs, tout près du pasteur, respirant fort, les yeux écarquillés, fixés sur la mer, au bord des larmes (FB, 45).* Stevens, incapable de se satisfaire de ce voyeurisme, surprend Olivia sur la grève et lutte avec son impulsion de posséder son être entier : *Sa robe blanche s'envole sur ses longues jambes nues. L'odeur musquée de sa peur... Je tente de la prendre dans mes bras, ruisselante et glacée, tout essoufflée, elle se débat comme un poisson fraîchement péché, ses cheveux mouillés me passent sur la face en longues lanières froides. ... L'envie me tient d'atteindre Olivia par ruse ou par violence, d'exister avec elle, au cœur même du cercle magique de sa danse, là où sa petite vie de danseuse est libre et sans défense (FB, 17).*

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7)   Gaston Bachelard, op. cit. p. 44

8)   Ibid., p. 45

Si l'homme est incapable d'infliger à la femme toute la force de sa passion et de sa fureur, il se tournera vers l'eau, le double de ces êtres qui le rend fou de désir. Contre les eaux mugissantes, l'homme s'érige en détenteur de la Parole divine, qu'il assume comme la sienne, et mesure ses forces avec les puissances des eaux, dans une tentative désespérée de les dompter. Enfant, Nicolas Jones apprend par cœur les Psaumes de David, pour ensuite les réciter devant les eaux, sur un rocher qui domine la mer : *Je m'adresse à l'eau, désirant parler plus fort qu'elle, la convaincre de ma force et de ma puissance. L'amadouer tout à fait. La charmer au plus profond d'elle-même. Éprouver ma voix sur la mer…. Je jette les paroles de David par-dessus les flots (FB, 45–46).* Pour Nicolas Jones, le Verbe divin est unique refuge contre la tentation démoniaque de la femme et emblème du pouvoir qu'il a sur les gens de Griffin Creek. Dès l'aube du christianisme, la Parole n'appartient qu'à l'homme, par la voix duquel la volonté de Dieu est transmise, et qui inscrit en lettres de feu, dans le lignage des apôtres, les noms des hommes saints et pieux. Mais à Griffin Creek, les femmes, insidieusement, s'approprient ce Verbe divin : *Maître des saintes Écritures, je leur parle au nom de Dieu. Depuis quelque temps je choisis avec encore plus de soin les psaumes et les hymnes du dimanche en pensant aux petites Atkins. Leurs yeux de violette et d'outremer se lèvent vers moi pour ma damnation. Elles chantent et elles prient, s'approprient la parole des apôtres et des prophètes, leurs âmes enfantines mûrissent et se forment dans la splendeur de l'Écriture (FB, 11).*

L'eau envahit la maison du révérend, épie ses mouvements, glisse dans ses rêves et le hante, lui rappelant le terrible péché de la chair. Sa maison devient un aquarium plein de tourbillons et d'eaux troubles, en proie à une lente fermentation, tandis que, dehors, la mer et la forêt, symboles de la vie et de la fécondité toutes les deux, s'avancent vers cet espace de la mort : *Les planches de la maison gémissent comme des arbres en forêt. Quelque part dans la profondeur de la forêt des arbres vivants répondent aux arbres morts de la maison. La nuit obscure est pleine d'appels d'arbres et de végétation triomphante en marche vers le cœur pourri de cette demeure. Du côté de la mer même avancement victorieux, en larges lampées de sel et d'écume sur le sable (FB, 14).* C'est comme si les femmes outragées, résidentes des gouffres ténébreux, amassaient toutes leurs puissances fécondes pour coincer l'homme dans son espace familier qui déjà ne lui appartient plus. La nuit est porteuse de l'odeur saline de la mer, et, étant de la même substance que l'eau, elle se mélange par osmose aux flots féconds pour augmenter la sensation de claustrophobie et de lente putréfaction. Dans cette nuit humide, voyageant avec la marée, des figures féminines se matérialisent pour hanter le révérend : *Il fallait s'y attendre, les petites Atkins sont là, délestées des cordes et des pierres qui les retenaient au fond. Mues par une incroyable énergie elles m'accusent, traînant avec elles une nuée de petits personnages remuants, à l'allure décidée, qui grandissent (FB, 115).*

Cette propriété de l'eau de matérialiser des images renvoie au symbolisme du miroir et du double. Il n'y a pas de personnage dans le roman qui n'ait *soit un double, soit*

un reflet, soit un homologue[9]. Les couples sont construits non seulement sur ce riche symbolisme, mais aussi sur le complexe de Narcisse, qui tisse entre eux un réseau obsessionnel compliqué, les personnages se poursuivant tout au long du roman, comme des bêtes à l'affût. Nora et Nicolas, les deux plus roux de Griffin Creek, se ressemblent comme père et fille, et leur union charnelle concrétise l'image inquiétante de l'hermaphrodite et du désir incestueux.[10]

Le couple Stevens – Olivia est construit sur le pouvoir maléfique et ensorcelant du regard et incarne le besoin profond d'être vu et connu par l'autre pour exister pleinement. De retour sur la grève de Griffin Creek, l'esprit léger d'Olivia n'a qu'un seul désir : *Qu'il me regarde surtout, que je sois regardée par lui, la lumière pâle de ses yeux m'éclairant toute, de la tête aux pieds. Le voir. Être vue par lui. Vivre ça encore une fois. Exister encore une fois, éclairée par lui, nimbée de lumière par lui, devenir à nouveau matière lumineuse et vivante, sous son regard. Vivre !(FB, 8)*. Par la force de ce regard, les vies de Stevens et d'Olivia sont intimement liées au point d'être une seule et unique personne : *Je suis elle et elle est moi. Je m'ajuste à ses os et son âme n'a pas de secret pour moi (FB,106).* Mais voire son double est un présage de mort, c'est pour cela que les femmes gémissent dans le vent et essayent d'avertir Olivia sur les conséquences néfastes du regard dévorateur de l'homme.

Les jumelles Pat et Pam se ressemblent comme dans un miroir, femmes sans âge et vierges éternelles, identiques et interchangeables. Vivant en symbiose, elles prennent un malin plaisir à tromper le révérend sur leur identité, évoquant ainsi le côté maléfique du symbolisme gémellaire. Soupçonnés de posséder des pouvoirs occultes, les jumeaux se trouvent entre deux mondes, le monde terrestre et l'Au-delà, un corps à deux âmes, l'une mortelle et l'autre immortelle. Pat et Pam, elles-aussi, possèdent des pouvoirs sur la vie, la mort et la chronologie, car sur les murs de la galerie des ancêtres, ignorant tout repère temporel, elles donnent vie ou invoquent du gouffre aquatique des figures féminines tragiques, des revenants qui viennent hanter le monde des vivants, pour le malheur et le tourment de Nicolas Jones : *Prennent un malin plaisir, malgré ma défense, à faire surgir sur le mur, à plusieurs reprises, les petites Atkins et Irène, ma femme. Trois têtes de femmes flottent sur un fond glauque, tapissé d'herbes marines, de filets de pêche, de cordes et de pierres. Trois prénoms de femmes, en lettres noires, sont jetés de-ci de-là, au bas des tableaux, en haut, à droite, à gauche, ou en travers, se mêlent aux herbes folles, s'inscrivent sur un front blême ou se gravent, comme une balafre, sur une joue ronde (FB, 6).*

Olivia et Nora sont un autre couple qui évoque l'image du double et des jumeaux. Inséparables, les filles deviennent cette bête fabuleuse à deux têtes et deux sexes

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9)   Janet M. Paterson, *L'envolée de l'écriture : « Les Fous de Bassan » d'Anne Hébert,* Voix et Images, vol. 9, n° 3, 1984, p. 143–151, p. 8

10)   Janet M. Paterson, op. cit., p. 8

qui obsède l'imagination masculine et incite au désir meurtrier. Invoquant le côté inquiétant, parfois ténébreux de l'imaginaire aquatique, les deux filles (dont les noms mêmes seront griffonnés par les jumelles Pat et Pam dans un flot continu : *NoraOliviaNoraOlivia (FB, 16),* sont *un seul animal fabuleux, à deux têtes, deux corps, quatre jambes et quatre bras, fait pour l'adoration ou le massacre (FB, 13).*

Au symbolisme du miroir et du double s'ajoutent quelques autres symboles aquatiques. Le sel est un symbole bénéfique, qui dans la Bible est associé à la pureté et à l'incorruptibilité de la chair. Il est associé à la vie, comme élément fortifiant : les bains rituels dans la mer rendent Felicity Jones plus vive que le sel. De même, dans la tradition rabbinique, les offrandes à Yahvé étaient toujours abondamment salées : la mère d'Olivia, la plus salée parmi les femmes de la mer (signe qu'elle a rejoint l'éternité) est une offrande au monde marin. Le sel a aussi un côté négatif, comme symbole de la stérilité et de la corrosion de la matière. *Le Livre du révérend Nicolas Jones* met en exergue une expression du Nouvel Testament, *vous êtes le sel de la terre (FB, 4),* qualifiant ceux qui suivent Jésus. Le sel exprime ainsi le dévouement du chrétien et son croyance inébranlable qu'ayant suivi la voie de la vertu, ses péchés seront exaucés. Mais une fois que la folie et le désir corrompent les âmes pieuses des gens, le sel de Griffin Creek s'affadit lentement.

S'opposant au soleil-mâle, la lune est principe de la féminité et gouverne le monde onirique, les eaux matricielles et la fertilité. Elle symbolise en même temps les puissances féminines dévoratrices, liées souvent à la mort et aux ténèbres chaotiques. Nout, déesse des astres dans la mythologie égyptienne, avale chaque nuit le soleil, pour l'enfanter ensuite, le matin. Nout est aussi déesse de la mort, qui rend la vie aux défunts, coiffée des cornes de vache (symbole de la fertilité), comme Isis, une autre déesse lunaire et funéraire. L'élément aquatique et l'astre lunaire sont intimement liés, vu que c'est de ce dernier que dépendent les marées. Celles-ci sont associées, par leur rythme, aux cycles naturels de la femme, à la périodicité des menstrues et au caractère évolutif de l'astre nocturne. Néanmoins, la lune possède aussi des propriétés maléfiques. L'astre nocturne qui éclaire la grève de Griffin Creek fascine et rend fou. Séduit par les rayons lunaires, Perceval désire les sentir sur son corps : *J'enjambe la fenêtre. Reste là sur l'appui de la fenêtre. Au premier étage de la maison. Les jambes ballantes dans le vide. Je me baigne dans la lumière liquide. La lune me gèle à travers mon pyjama. Je vais me déshabiller complètement. Risquer de tomber. Prendre un bain de lune. Sentir le froid de la lune sur mon ventre de garçon (FB, 66).*

Olivia et Stevens sont, tous les deux, fascinés par cette lumière irréelle qui leur donne l'impression de quitter le monde : *Olivia se fait un peu prier, émue par la beauté de la nuit, semble-t-il, et par l'étrangeté de la lune. Je lui donne la main et j'ai l'impression de l'entraîner avec moi dans un domaine interdit, baigné de lumière blanche et de calme infini (FB, 116).* Olivia sait qu'il ne faut jamais regarder le visage d'une personne sous la

lune, pour éviter les conséquences néfastes. Mais, comme ensorcelée, Olivia regarde Stevens puiser des pouvoirs maléfiques dans les rayons lunaires : *La mer miroite, chaque petite vague comme autant de petits miroirs agités doucement sous la lune. Ce n'est que l'attirance de la mer, mon cœur, ce n'est que la fascination de la lune. Il faudrait courir, Nora et moi, rentrer bien vite à la maison, avant que n'apparaisse sur notre chemin un certain visage entre tous, mis au monde pour nous perdre, toutes les deux dans la nuit brillante, lui-même baigné de lumière sauvage, la lune rayonnant de sa face sa blanche froide lumière, ses yeux mêmes paraissant faits de cette matière lumineuse et glacée* (FB, 99).

La terre fantastique de Griffin Creek cache le mystère du destin de Nora et d'Olivia Atkins, les deux cousines, qui, la nuit de 31 août 1936, disparaissent englouties par la mer. Les deux jeunes filles sont vouées aux gouffres des ténèbres matricielles, qui reçoivent leurs corps outragés par la violence de l'homme. Matrice universelle et liquide primordial aux propriétés lustrales, l'eau devient dans l'univers romanesque hébertian un témoignage du destin des personnages féminins. Fraîche et printanière ou maléfique et dévoratrice, l'eau est cet espace mystérieux, situé entre la vie et la mort où des générations des femmes ont trouvé refuge. Dans leur essaie de renouer le dialogue avec leur propre corps, les personnages féminins deviennent des nymphes, des naïades ou même des démons marins qui séduisent ou mènent les hommes au bord de la folie.

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Canadian Artistic Group Formations:
Art as a Form of Cultural and National Identity

La formation des groupes d'artistes canadiens :
l'art comme forme d'identité culturelle et nationale

Krisztina Kodó

articles — articles

Abstract

The terms cultural and national identity are fluid terms that allow for a wide scale of interpretation. What do we define as being a cultural identity specific to a nation? Canada, like all other nations of the world, has its own unique set of distinct features, that is, its symbols. Making occasional references to Tom Thomson and Emily Carr, this paper focuses on the specific groups of Canadian painters who officially formed the Group of Seven in Toronto and the Beaver Hall Group in Montreal. What made them "better" than other Canadian painters before and after? They strove for national content, hence an identity, and this aim was evident from the very beginning. The paper proposes to illustrate how as a group they succeeded where individual artists failed, and simultaneously created a steadfast and durable identity for Canada, thereby capturing the essence of the Canadian being through their paintings.

Keywords: Beaver Hall Group, Group of Seven, national identity, painting

Résumé

Les conditions culturelles et nationales de l'identité sont des termes mouvants qui laissent une grande part à l'interprétation. Qu'est-ce que nous définissons comme l'identité spécifique d'une nation? Le Canada comme toutes les autres nations du monde a son lot de caractéristiques distinctes que nous considérons comme des symboles. La présente contribution se concentre sur des groupes de peintres canadiens spécifiques, sans inclure Tom Thomson et Emily Carr qui formaient officiellement le « Group of Seven » de Toronto et le groupe « Beaver Hall » de Montréal. Qu'est-ce qui les a rendus meilleurs que les peintres canadiens antérieurs et postérieurs ? L'essai propose d'illustrer la façon dont ils ont lutté en tant que groupe, mais aussi comment ils ont ou n'ont pas réussi en tant qu'artistes individuels, créant avec ténacité une identité durable pour le Canada en saisissant l'essence du Canada dans leurs peintures.

Mots-clés : Groupe de Beaver Hall, Groupe de sept, identité nationale, peinture

In an earlier form, this article was first presented as a paper at a conference entitled "Multiculturalism in Canada: Changing Perspectives", which was organized by Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary and Eötvös Loránd University on 24-25 November 2016.

Cultural and national identities are fluid terms that allow for a wide range of interpretations. Due to their transparency, identities are not constant, but liable to shift and change in their meanings. Identities define the major outstanding features of a nation and as such formulate symbolic images. What do we define as a specific cultural identity of a nation? Generally, characteristics and general attributes that describe a nation's culture. These may refer to human features, but also such inanimate objects as a specific landscape or a mountain, and such animate ones as plants or animals and also human beings.

Identities abound in every nation of the world, and Canada is no exception. How does a country go about acquiring identities? This is not an entity that can be purchased or borrowed, but presupposes a long process interlinked with traditional, historical and religious perspectives. The present paper endeavours to highlight the relevance of cultural identities with regard to artists' groups and their cultural (hence artistic) goals at the end of the nineteenth and the turn of the twentieth century internationally and in Canada. Whether these international groups were linked with each other in any form or influenced one another in their artistic experimentation will be commented on, but the major focus will be given to two outstanding artists' groups within Canada – the Group of Seven and the Beaver Hall Group – and their achievements in formulating their own set of unique Canadian identities. The work will focus on Canada as a relatively young country, one that was first officially created in 1867, a country that is still considered to be in its teens as a "high-school land," according to Earle Birney in his poem "Canada: Case History: 1945" (Kuester 1995, 18).

In the first written accounts of explorers the "vast landscape and northern geography" of Canada was given considerable emphasis. Cartier's well known phrase "the land God gave to Cain," referring to Canada's hostile and harsh nature, which dictates the terms of human existence, has by now become, as Ross King notes in *Defiant Spirits*, "a mythology involving arduous voyages of discovery and struggles for survival in the wilderness, from Jacques Cartier and Martin Frobisher to Samuel Hearne and David Thompson" (2010, 17).

The landscape, therefore, has been, from the beginning, a distinctive feature of the young and rapidly developing nation called Canada. The *Montreal Daily Star* heralded Canada in 1911 as "the richest, most promising, most prosperous country in the world" (King 2010, 15). In 1912 Algonquin Provincial Park was

advertising itself as one of "the beauty spots of the Dominion," attracting nature lovers, sportsmen and artists as well (King 2010, 3). The view of nature, therefore, gradually shifts from a hostile and vast land to that of an attraction and a place of beauty.

At the turn of the century the Dominion of Canada was not yet fifty years old. This young nation had not previously experienced any great revolutions or battles, and due to this the nation had no great tragic heroes that it could name as its own. The movement from colony to nation went forth peacefully, but there was a lack of any traumatic effects "that bind a people together by means of a shared body of rituals, myths, heroes and sacred objects" (King 2010, 16). The nation also lacked a distinctive flag of its own and an official anthem, since these were first officially acknowledged in the second half of the twentieth century. Colonized by France and Britain, its lands were purchased (or stolen) from Natives, and divided between French and English speakers who were British subjects. Like the United States, Canada was not only populated by Protestant Scots, Irish and English immigrants in the late nineteenth and turn of the century, but also by immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe who had arrived as a result of the "Last Best West" campaign promoted by the Canadian Government. "In 1912 more than 80,000 immigrants who spoke no English arrived in the country" (King 2010, 16). This extremely varied and colourful cultural representation presented countless difficulties in terms of historical interpretation and the search for cultural identities.

Canada was ardently seeking its identities and heroes, and simultaneously trying to find answers to the question of what it meant to be a Canadian. Inherent in the ambition of many Canadian artists was the desire to rouse artistic consciousness in Canadians through their artistic endeavours. But what was Canada? The one common notion that most Canadians agreed on was that Canada was geography. This is a land of mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes, huge forests and endless prairies. And Canadians' engagement with this "hostile and unforgiving land dictated the terms of human existence" (King 2010, 17). Man's connection with his natural surroundings triggered an emotional response which included "fear, mystery, wonder, often frustration and disappointment. One confronted not other people, or even oneself," but rather the "forces of nature and the vastness of the universe" (17).

By the second half of the nineteenth century, much of Canada had been painted by many skilled artists. The notion of experiencing Canada through art was in progress. Nevertheless, the art critic Harold Mortimer-Lamb wrote in *Canadian Magazine* in 1908 that "no painter has yet experienced the spirit of the great northland; none has possessed the power of insight which such a task would demand" (18). The solution ultimately lay in finding the precise technique and learning to see the unique particulars of the Canadian landscape.

Impressionist-inspired painting after 1895 produced numerous works that explored the winter landscape in Canada and this duly furthered its acceptance on Canadian soil through the canvases of Maurice Cullen (1866–1934), James Wilson Morrice (1865–1924), Marc-Aurèle Suzor-Coté (1869–1937), Clarence Gagnon (1881–1942), J.E.H. MacDonald (1873–1932) and others. Artists tried to adapt particularized light effects, which made many turn homeward where they sought to foster a national identity. The entire notion of seeking national identity and promoting the hardiness of the northern races was heavily emphasized not only in painting but in literature as well, not least through Robert Grant Haliburton's expression with reference to Canada and the Canadians as "Northmen of the New World" (King 2010, 68).

The many landscapes, however, were often compared with European landscapes and were in effect not even recognized as being a Canadian landscape. J.E.H. MacDonald's early explorations were distinctly Canadian, but still executed with a "foreign-begotten technique" (Figure 1: *By the River (Early Spring)*), which was a result of his studies of John Constable at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

The first exhibition held on the North American continent presenting the works of Scandinavian painters, meanwhile, was at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 (Stacey 1995, 60). The following remarks on that exhibition stem from Charles W. Jefferys (1869–1951), an English immigrant painter:

> Here we saw the work of artists dealing with themes and problems of the landscape of countries similar in topography, climate and atmosphere to our own: snow, pine, trees, rocks, inland lakes, autumn colour, clear air, sharply defined forms. … Our eyes were opened. We realized that on all our painting, admirable as much of it was, lay the blight of misty Holland, mellow England, the veiled sunlight of France, countries where most of our painters were born or had trained. (qtd. In Stacey 1995, 60)

The Impressionist methods and techniques acquired in France, Germany and England greatly influenced the artists, and as Ernest Lawson (1873–1939), an expatriate Canadian painter, said: "As with medicine, French influence kills if taken in too large a dose" (Stacey 1995, 58). This referred to the fact that the artists who trained in France, England and Germany would be taught to use techniques and especially colours that suit the 'colouring' of that particular country. Emily Carr (1871–1945) also makes a note of her own perceptions and observations in her work *Growing Pains: An Autobiography* (1946), comparing England with Canada:

> All England's things were tame, self-satisfied, smug and meek…The forest was almost like a garden – no brambles, no thorns, nothing to stumble over, no rotten stumps, no fallen branches, all mellow to look at, melodious to hear… (1946, 143)

Similarly, Group of Seven member A.Y. Jackson (1882–1974) was also known to have said that after "the soft atmosphere of France, the clear, crisp air and sharp shadows of my native country in the spring were exciting" (Newlands 1995, 20). These comparisons highlight the vital differences these painters faced in trying to adapt the skills learnt to their home environment.

The winter landscapes were acknowledged and had value, because "they paid tribute to a typical Canadian reality" (Lacroix 1995, 51). The Canadian winter, the North and the snowy landscapes were appealing subjects for the public and the critics, who – like the artists themselves – were intent on achieving a specifically Canadian art. The early winter landscapes in Impressionist style helped pave the way for the following generation of artists to combine and adapt "the techniques of painting in high keys to their perception of the Canadian landscape" (51). The Impressionism that eventually found its roots in Canada in the depictions of the rugged wilderness of landscape scenery promoted the awakening of cultural identities that were to be firmly established two and three decades later by the Group of Seven, Tom Thomson, Emily Carr and even by the Beaver Hall Group.

Experimenting and exploring technical formulas that would help capture the particularly Canadian atmosphere and colouring set many artists to work, but none were effective enough to confront and overcome the hostility of art critics and the public. The seven Canadian painters (excluding Tom Thomson and Emily Carr[1]) who officially formed the Group of Seven in May 1920 were all gifted and talented artists. All had studied abroad, except for J. E. H. MacDonald. The fact that most of these artists worked at Grip Limited, Engravers, was no coincidence, since the late nineteenth century was "the heroic age of commercial illustration" (King 2010, 14). Many ambitious artists who were on their way to becoming famous were designing commercial posters, logos and pamphlets. Besides making commercial illustrations, they also went on joint sketching trips to Algonquin Provincial Park, where they sketched and painted *en plein air* in the manner of the Impressionists. Furthermore, they met regularly at the Arts and Letters Club in Toronto, where they were able to discuss the artistic and cultural trends arriving from Europe and the technical merits of painting. The discussions and the joint sketching trips all influenced the friendship, comradeship and the quality of their work, and also the realization that what they ultimately wanted was to create an altogether distinctive Canadian art: "something Canadians would recognize and support" (Hill 1995).

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1) Tom Thomson, a close friend of the members of the later Group of Seven, would have been the eighth member of the group had he not drowned in July 1917 in Canoe Lake in Algonquin Park. Emily Carr, however, met the Group of Seven only in 1927, when her works appeared in an exhibition organized by the National Gallery of Canada that was held at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. Her work, therefore, was never associated with that of the Group of Seven.

It was evident from the very beginning that these artists strove for nationalistic content. The appeal of these artists was, therefore, that they "believed the fine arts could play an active role in creating a better and healthier society" (King 2010, 321). This form of civic reform had active followers in England, the United States and Canada who had been "hoping to tame violent passions, improve morals, inspire patriotism and uplift the spirits of their population [...] through a provident use of everything from architecture and monuments to music and public murals" (321). These artistic inspirations were intended to promote a consistent national identity and a fundamentally healthy society.

This notion is further enhanced by F.B. Housser's book *A Canadian Art Movement* (1926), in which he quotes J.E.H. MacDonald:

> The Canadian spirit in art is just entering on the possession of its heritage. It is opening a new world and the Canadian artists respond with a spirit that is very good. This world... has character attractive to the artist; not often so softly beautiful as ruggedly strong, large, homely, free, and frankly simple in colour. ...It aims to fill its landscape with the clear Canadian sunshine and the open air, following faithfully all seasons and aspects... (143)

The would-be members of the Group of Seven realized that the "most effective way to confront and perhaps overcome ossified academics and dyspeptic critics was by collective action" (King 2010, 303). This notion is given emphasis in a letter written by A.Y. Jackson to Arthur Lismer (1885–1969) in 1918 in which he writes "the only way we will ever get anywhere will be by a group of us working together" (303).

The idea of creating something fundamentally distinctive and lasting called for the formation of artists' groups within Europe and on the North American continent. In most cases these were painters, sculptors, writers and musicians who revolted against the enclaves of the set establishments. Notable early international examples are the Belgian groupe des XX ("Les Vingt"), founded in Brussels in 1883, and the Group of Eleven, established in Berlin in 1892. The early twentieth century also produced its set of artistic groups, with, for example, the "Eight" becoming "one of the main currents in twentieth-century American painting" ("The Eight"), the Hungarian Nyolcak (translated as 'the Eight') between 1909 and 1912 formulating an image of modern Hungarian painting, and The Young ('De Unga') in Sweden in 1909, who later split up and created another group, also named The Eight ("De Åtta") in 1912. These are just some of the most noteworthy artistic circles that were created on the heels of the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist trends and styles emerging from France, specifically Paris and the Académie Julian, from the first decade of the twentieth century. The new ideas, colours, forms and technical skills introduced by these international groups were to launch a new era in modernist painting.

The idea, therefore, of officially forming an artists' group was not new, but nevertheless an effective way in which these Canadian artists could promote their cause and works. By the time the Group of Seven officially formed in May 1920, they, as individuals, had dominated the art scene in Toronto for much of the previous decade. They were not unknown to the public and the artistic scene; in fact, the National Gallery had already bought and held more than a dozen of their paintings. These artists had friends in high places, notably Eric Brown (Director of the National Gallery) and Sir Edmund Walker (Canada's leading patron of the arts), and several held positions of power themselves.[2] As they had already exhibited their works together in previous years they were often referred to as the "Algonquin Park School" (King 2010, 330) in the press, but instead of forming a school or an association they decided on becoming an official group, perhaps with the intention of following the European and American trends of forming such groups. In 1920 they were a nucleus of seven young Canadian artists who wanted to "produce something really significant" (King 2010, 330). In calling themselves a group they merely wished to emphasize that "they were a cooperative group of like-minded artists joined together to articulate their ideas for the advancement of Canadian art" (Hill 1995, 88). The Group's first official exhibition was scheduled to open on 7 May 1920 and it was to be a group show that consisted of the works of Lawren Harris (1885–1970), Arthur Lismer (1885–1969), A.Y. Jackson (1882–1974), J.E.H. MacDonald (1873–1932), F.H. Varley (1881–1969), Frank Johnston (1888–1949) and Franklin Carmichael (1890–1945). From 1920 onwards the Group held annual exhibitions. Their last group show, in 1931, also allowed another twenty-eight Canadian artists to exhibit their works.

The Group of Seven was not the only artists' group active at the time in Canada, since the Beaver Hall Group in Montreal was doing what the Group of Seven was doing in Toronto. This Group was originally started by four artists (Mabel May, Lilias Newton, Randolph Hewton and Edwin Holgate), who were all former students of William Brymner (1855–1925) at the Art Association of Montreal, where he had been Director for thirty-five years. Like many painters of the period, he too trained in Paris, at the Académie Julian, and organized curricula according to the Parisian model. Brymner's person and teachings are considered important in the sense that he encouraged his students' enthusiasm for new artistic trends and developments and "emphasized the importance of self-expression" (Walters 2005, 14). The social conventions of the time dictated that for women art and painting were merely a pastime. Nevertheless Brymner "arranged scholarships for the talented" female students as well (15).

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2)   Arthur Lismer was Vice-Principal of the Ontario College of Art; Lismer, MacDonald and Johnston were members of the Ontario Society of Artists' Executive Committee.

The Montreal of the early 1910s was rapidly developing, like the city of Toronto, and many artists were aware of the changes taking place in Canadian art. The spring exhibition of Montreal's Art Association in 1913 displayed many canvases that adopted the techniques of the Post-Impressionists, which resulted in horrified outbursts from art critics. Samuel Morgan Powell of the *Montreal Daily Star* is perhaps the most often quoted critic:

> Post-Impressionism is a fad, an inartistic fetish for the amusement of bad draughtsmen, incompetent colourists, and others who find themselves unqualified to paint pictures. (Walters 2005, 15)

His harsh dismissal of the style, however, was by no means short-lived, as he again damned the technique and strong colours five years later as being

> rough splashy meaningless blatant plastering and massing of unpleasant colours in weird landscapes... the same blustering spirit of Post-Impressionism, all conveying the same impression that the artist didn't know how to do it, and wasted considerable good pigment in a disastrous attempt. (Walters 2005, 15)

The ultra-conservative, prevailing academic and public attitude to new trends had been challenged. These groups, whether in Toronto or Montreal, consciously went against public approval to raise public awareness. Their methods often went beyond the conventional norms, with the aim of shocking their audience. The paintings exhibited by the Group of Seven were at first considered too vibrant in their colours, mere splashes of paint without a distinctly identifiable landscape. The Beaver Hall Group worked with a broader subject matter, not only landscapes, but also urban cityscapes, portraiture, figure studies and nudes (Figure 2: Prudence Heward: *Countryside*; Figure 3: Prudence Heward: *Girl Under a Tree*; Figure 4: Sarah Robertson: *The Blue Sleigh*). The nudes placed on exhibition by the female artists created an immediate uproar, with critics condemning them as lacking good taste and morals. Nevertheless, by shocking their audience they succeeded in making themselves noticed, which is what they ultimately strove for in the first place.

The two groups worked parallel, each in their home environment. And like the Group of Seven in Toronto, the Beaver Hall Group were looking for studio and exhibition space, which they found at "305 Beaver Hall Hill, an old house just down from Dorchester St. [now Boulevard René Lévesque] which backed onto the gardens of St. Patrick's Church" (Larsen, *Montreal Gazette*). At the time Montreal was already a bustling modern city, but the artists seemed to want a place reminiscent of the "old world charm of European cities" they had visited and studied at on the continent

("About Beaver Hall Hill"). This seemed to be the ideal place where they could get together and discuss their own and other painting techniques, paint and exhibit their works, as well as, "to break away from the constraints of the vetted, institutional exhibitions with their tendency to favour 'traditional' art over 'modern' art" ("History Beaver Hall Group").

The Beaver Hall Group officially formed in the fall of 1920, only a few months after the official forming and first exhibition of the Group of Seven. They were the first modern artistic group in Montreal – indeed, the first in Canada – to form "male-female parity" ("Exhibition"). The Group of Seven consisted of only men and basically did not invite any female members. Wayne Larsen of the *Montreal Gazette* quotes a specific source with regard to this issue: "'I once asked old A.Y. [A.Y. Jackson] why my Aunt Pru (Prudence Heward) was excluded from the Group of Seven,' recalled the late Heward Grafftey, Heward's nephew. 'Well, I guess we liked our brandy and cigars too much,' he replied regretfully. He knew there was a prejudice against women artists" (Larsen 2015). Interestingly, some critical sources often mention Emily Carr as a possible "would-be" eighth member. This was due to her close friendship and correspondence with Lawren Harris from the end of the 1920s. However, nothing of this kind ever materialized.

The Beaver Hall Group was joined by both Anglophone and Francophone artists, creating a diverse and loosely knit group of about fourteen men and fourteen women. Beyond the official members, there were artists who associated with them through friendship and solidarity. While various critical sources available offer a diverse list of the names of artists involved, the main core consisted of the following: Nora Collyer (1898–1979), Emily Coonan (1885–1971), Adrien Hébert (1890–1967), Henri Hébert (1884–1950), Prudence Heward (1896–1947), Randolph S. Hewton (1888–1960), Edwin Holgate (1892–1977), A. Y. Jackson (1882–1974), John Y. Johnstone (1887–1930), Mabel Lockerby (1882–1976), Mabel May (1877–1971), Hal Ross Perrigard (1891–1960), Robert W. Pilot (1898–1967), Sarah Robertson (1891–1948), Anne Savage (1896–1971), Adam Sherriff Scott (1887–1980), Regina Seiden (1897–1991) and Lilias Torrance Newton (1896–1980), as well as André Biéler (1896–1989), Ethel Seath (1879–1963), Kathleen Morris (1893–1986) and Albert Robinson (1881–1956). The major core of the group consisted of women, who, like the artists in Toronto, fostered long-standing professional friendships. They encouraged each other in their work, providing inspiration, which ultimately had a beneficial effect on their work. Their first exhibition was held in January 1921. This was succeeded by only three more exhibitions before they eventually disbanded roughly two years later, though some sources mention this period as being a year and a half.

A "cunning PR strategy" (Larsen 2015) was to make Group of Seven member A.Y. Jackson their President and spokesman. Jackson is an important figure since he

seems to be a connecting link as cofounder of the Group of Seven, an Anglophone Montrealer and fellow Brymner alumnus. Also, he was emotionally involved with Anne Savage (a Beaver Hall member) to whom he also proposed in 1933. Jackson's name and popularity also attracted attention and ensured that the Beaver Hall Group's first exhibition acquired sufficient publicity. His inaugural speech sums up the major ideas that defined not only the Beaver Hall Group but also the manifesto of the Group of Seven as well:

> Montreal has long had an association (the Art Association of Montreal) but no association of artists, so it cannot be alleged that this body of young painters is in any sense a secession. …Its aim is to give the younger painters a regular opportunity of showing creative work, to give a place to efforts, which, possibly experiments in the earlier stages, may develop along some new and vital line … 'Schools' and 'isms' do not trouble us; individual expression is our chief concern. (Larsen 2015)

The key phrase that in this instance requires further explanation is "individual expression," which is an artistic concept that goes beyond that of the Beaver Hall Group and also the Group of Seven. One of the major ideas that Impressionism introduced at the end of the nineteenth century was that the artist was free to choose his own form of expression, which would in turn offer a release from the bondage of the established enclaves of artistic academia. To generalize, one may ascertain that the many European and North American artists' groups aimed at this specific idea of formulating their own "individual expression." This individuality was in fact the unique attribute that helped artists voice their own 'impressions' of what constituted the various notions of cultural identity. For the Group of Seven this meant the Northern Canadian landscape, which was barren of human habitation, especially the North Shore of Lake Superior, the Algoma region, the La Cloche region and Algonquin Park. The Beaver Hall Group, however, explored in their paintings the subjects of the port of Montreal and its downtown streets, modern city life, portraiture and nude compositions. They focused exclusively on the region of Quebec, the small villages near the big city of Montreal and Quebec City. Each group provided an 'individual expression' of their interpretation of what Canadian cultural identity meant to them.

What were the ultimate causes for why one group could reach great fame, success and popularity, while the other virtually disappeared and was all but forgotten? Based on contemporary sources, the financial means of the Beaver Hall Group were restricted and they could probably not afford to rent Beaver Hall any longer (Gibbs "History"). The Group of Seven in Toronto had no such problems, since Lawren Harris used his inherited fortune to build a studio building for his artist friends in 1914.

Nevertheless, of the original Beaver Hall Group, six of the women continued to paint together, each working from their own studios. Three more female artists joined this group, making a final group of nine women. These were: Nora Collyer (1898–1979), Prudence Heward (1896–1947), Mabel Lockerby (1882–1976), H. Mabel May (1884–1971), Kathleen M. Morris (1893–1986), Lilias Torrance Newton (1896–1980), Sarah Robertson (1891–1948), Anne Savage (1896–1971), and Ethel Seath (1879–1963) (Gibbs "Artists").

The Beaver Hall Group was by all means a great endeavour that brought together the most talented artists within the Quebec region. Nonetheless, they were unsuccessful, whereas the Group of Seven gained in recognition and popularity. Why? Perhaps their coalition was too big and too loose, since the first Beaver Hall Group exhibition included the works of eighteen artists, including both men and women (Gibbs "Artists"). This meant altogether too many names to remember, not to mention that it was also harder for the public to generalize about what they did. In addition, they did not have a published manifesto like F.B. Housser's book *A Canadian Art Movement* on the aims and creation of the Group of Seven. Many of the artists that were first present in the Beaver Hall Group left after the first exhibition and perhaps sought other opportunities and outlets to present their works. Though these artists were all friends, still the group was missing the strong bond of friendship and comradeship that existed within the Group of Seven. But perhaps the fact that this was considered a "women's circle," instead of the "male den" of the Group of Seven, had a greater impact than one is willing to admit. Not only were they women, but also mostly Anglophones within French Canada. In addition they were also young artists, lacking the experience of the Group of Seven, just embarking upon a career considered mostly the terrain of men. The very conservative milieu existing not only in Francophone Quebec, but the whole of Canada in the 1910s and 1920s, simply did not allow women the same recognition as men. Women were viewed as "little more than hobbyists and were left out of the mainstream world of professional art" (Gibbs "History"). This, even though important personalities of the contemporary art world, such as A.H. Robson,[3] praised and acknowledged their work and wrote the following in comparing their work to the Group of Seven: "[the Beaver Hall Group] display more subtlety in their use of colour, a stressing of rhythm of line, and greater simplicity in their planes" (Gibbs, "Beaver Hall Group").

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3) A. H. Robson (1882–1939) was a graphic artist specializing in illustration and advertising design. At Grip Ltd., an engraving-house in Toronto, as artistic director he had under him J. E. H. MacDonald, Tom Thomson, Frank Johnston, Arthur Lismer, Frank Carmichael, F.H. Varley, Tom McLean, William Broadhead, Neil McKechnie and others. Five of these artists became members of the Group of Seven. He was also a well-known art historian, and author of *Canadian Landscape Painters* (1932). As Vice-President of Art Gallery of Toronto he was responsible for the acquisition of paintings by Canadian artists, especially the Group of Seven. (MacDonald, "A.H. Robson")

Who were these nine women who dared to challenge the unwritten rules that bound women in the first decades of the twentieth century? Anne Savage simply said in 1966: "A very simple group of a few people with no means and big ideas" (Everett-Green 2015). Unfortunately, they were gradually forgotten with merely a handful of critical works written on their achievements, a few exhibitions and one documentary film. The whole story of the Beaver Hall Group has "never been told where it counts, in a kind of comprehensive survey put on by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts" (Everett-Green 2015). The new exhibition "1920s Modernism in Montreal: The Beaver Hall Group," held recently in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts,[4] set out to tell their story and "to dispel the mythology around these artists and to place them in their proper context" (Everett-Green 2015).

During the decade that the Group of Seven worked together as an official group they succeeded in becoming the symbols of the Canadian art establishment and gave Canada a definite cultural identity through the representations of its unique northern landscape. The artists of the Beaver Hall Group also sought to portray similar objectives with their urban scenes and portraits; they were not, however, able to achieve the level of fame and domination of the Canadian art scene that the Group of Seven had in their time. Nevertheless, all of these artists succeeded in portraying a segment of Canada through their interpretations of the Canadian landscape, whether it was of pure nature or the urbanized dwelling, hence awakening the cultural identities of a nation that needed to establish itself on the international scene.

And in considering Northrop Frye's famous question of "Where is here?" perhaps it is most appropriate to conclude that both groups provide an answer through their paintings, which capture the essence of the Canadian being. The "here," therefore, lies in the Canadian northern landscape, encompasses the geography, the urban scenery of Montreal or Toronto, and the people portrayed. All these distinctive features offer "individual expressions" of the Canadian cultural identity.

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4)   See mbam.qc.ca/en.

Figure 1: J. E. H. MacDonald: By the River (Early Spring) 1911

(http://discoveryportal.ontla.on.ca/en/about-parliament/the-legislative-building/art-legislature/river-early-spring)

Figure 2: Prudence Heward: *Countryside* (probably Rockville Village), 1934. Oil on canvas 22" × 25"

(https://fineartmusicandbooks.wordpress.com/2013/07/22/prudence-howard-countryside-probably-rockville)

Figure 3: Prudence Heward: *Girl Under a Tree,* 1931. Oil on canvas.

http://www.thespec.com/whatson-story/2255657-from-a-woman-s-perspective/)

Figure 4: Sarah Robertson: *The Blue Sleigh,* c. 1924. Oil on panel 8 1/2" × 11 1/2"

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Latinité as Image in Charles Maurras and Lionel Groulx

La latinité comme image chez Charles Maurras et Lionel Groulx

Aleš Vrbata

articles — articles

Abstract

This paper deals with the politico-ideological imagery of two prominent protagonists of French and Québecois conservative nationalism – Charles Maurras and Lionel Groulx – from the perspective of archetypal psychology. As historians and ideologues, both men drew on concepts that were based on their own personal imaginative leaps into the past, a subjective but fundamental aspect of their work. Even though there are significant differences in their views of the history of French civilization, they share certain common backward-looking characteristics, i.e., a valorisation of tradition as a sort of maternal security mechanism, in contrast to their feared and redoubtable vision of future modernity. Stuck in a psychology of black-and-white polarity and good-and-evil dynamics, both ideologues engaged in what Jungian psychology calls "coniunctio opositorum" – a universal, trans-historical and trans-cultural complex, along with corresponding archetypal images.

Keywords: archetypal psychology, France, Lionel Groulx, historical imagery, Charles Maurras, Nouvelle France

Résumé

L'article évoque l'image politique et idéologique de deux importantes figures françaises et québécoise du nationalisme, Charles Maurras et Lionel Groulx, dans une perspective de psychologie archétypale. En tant qu'historiens et idéologues, les deux hommes ont défini des concepts, dont les bases sont inspirées par leurs sauts imaginaires et individuels dans le temps. Ces concepts sont des aspects subjectifs mais fondamentaux de leurs travaux. Même si on trouve des différences significatives dans leurs visions de la civilisation française, ils ont en commun un regard passéiste qui se raccroche aux traditions comme à un mécanisme de sécurité maternelle, contrastant avec la peur de la redoutable vision d'une modernité future. Adhérant à une psychologie binaire de type manichéen et à une dynamique du bien et du mal, les deux idéologues promulguent, ce que la psychologie de Jung nomme la «coniunctio oppositorum», c'est-à-dire un complexe universel, transhistorique et transculturel, ainsi que des images archétypales.

Mots-clés : imagerie historique, France, Lionel Groulx, Charles Maurras, Nouvelle France, psychologie archétypale

I. History as imaginative archetype

> *Je ne crois pas beaucoup au sens physique d'une race latine. Mais de toute mon âme, je confesse*
> *l'esprit latin ou plutôt helléno-latin. [...] Ne vous semblent-elles* [nos parentés] *pas un peu trop*
> *oubliées par nos temps d'internationalisme unificateur plus ou moins fédéral ou confédéral?*
> Letter to Salazar (Maurras 1958, 261–263)

> *Pour expliquer notre mutuelle sympathie entre royalistes français et Canadiens, j'ai déjà dit à*
> *quelques-uns de vos catholiques républicains: 'Entre un royaliste et nous, il n'y a que l'océan et*
> *cela se passe; entre nous et un républicain il y a la mer de 89 et cela ne passe pas'.*
> Lionel Groulx, Letter to Houpert (Trépanier, 186–187)

Working with the past has much to do with the unconscious. The Ancients were doubtless aware of this in their appeals to Mnemosyne and her daughters, the Muses. Early historians/mythologists such Hesiod, Homer and Herodotus recognized the implications of Mother Memory and like forces that enabled the opening up of their vision of the past as it had existed in soil, trees, rivers and in the countryside. Theirs was not a *head* history but a *body* history, and their successors – singers, bards, poets, dancers, entertainers, musicians, historians, prophets and countless others – worked with their own inner visions. Some of these visionaries, even if physically blind or otherwise incapacitated, could see the past with their inner, third eye.

In a personification of psychic forces, British historian Ruth Meyer traces Psyche (depth psychology) and Clio (history) as sisters and companions working hand in hand in the consciousness of historians. Not all of the writers Meyer follows were familiar with depth psychology – as was, for example, Arnold Toynbee – but all of them allowed themselves to be led by their own inner perceptions.[1] In their thinking they wandered off the beaten paths, taking long meditative walks across the countryside; linear Cronos time was suspended and indeterminate Kairos time could be experienced.

This article will not deal with contemporary historiographers' views of depth psychology, nor with the importance of imagination in the creative work of historians or philosophers of history. Rather, I am going to turn to two important actors within the French-speaking world who unquestionably took their fertile imaginations into the distant past. As political thinkers, ideologues and writers, both men looked back to the ancient myth of *latinité* in what had become a rational, secularized, scientific 20th century. The roots of their ideological struggle stretched to the distant mythological landscape of the collective unconscious, with the real enemy of their ideas being

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1)   Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung, Arnold Joseph Toynbee, William Wordsworth, Henry David Thoreau, George Macaulay Trevelyan, Alfred Leslie Rowse, Richard Cobb, Simon Schama and others.

neither Anglo-Germanic Protestantism (Maurras) nor the Anglo-Protestant culture of British North America (Groulx), but rather modern and rational scientific objectivity. Maurras died in 1952 and Groulx in 1967, but even though they are considered "men of the past", they still arouse attention in France itself as well as in Québec or other Franco-Canadian and American regions.

Today rational and objective psychology concepts like what once was called secularization have lost much of their appeal and in many respects are considered obsolete (Hanegraff 2012). According to Ruth Meyer many workers in history consider depth psychology quite a problematic set of discourses; although both disciplines seem to share a common base, they remain incompatible. This may sound counterintuitive in light of the seemingly successful and fruitful intersections of depth psychology with theology, literary studies, cultural studies and other arts. Success, however, is always relative. Connections between history and depth psychology were stimulated by Sigmund Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* and *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood*, as they had been in the previous century by Johann Jacob Bachofen's *Mutterrecht*. Shortly after Jung's death, his admirers and followers would come to include such luminaries as British historian Arnold Toynbee (Toynbee 1954, 1956). In 1957 the intermingling of both disciplines was given official sanction when the president of the American Historical Association, William Langer, urged that the "next assignment" for historians was to take advantage of insights of depth psychology in their work.

One answer to Langer's call was the birth of a new discipline, psychohistory, the landmark study of which became Erik Erikson's oeuvre *Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History*. During the following decades, history, philosophy and psychology went through a sometimes interdisciplinary shift toward to what I would call the "primacy of mental/archetypal imagery," a direction pointed to already in the 1950s by Erich Neumann. It was James Hillman, however, who in the early 1970s revolutionized, first, Jung's concepts of the archetypal and, later, imaginal psychology. It seems that one contingent of Jung's disciples sided with the part of his work in which psyche was equated with the imagery of fantasy:

> As in Jung's *Collected Works*, I employ the word "fantasy" as a synonym for "imagination", whether conscious or unconscious. "All the functions that are active in the psyche," Jung says, "converge in fantasy." He remarks that fantasy has "a poor reputation among psychologists," including psychoanalysts, but, he asserts, "it nevertheless remains the creative matrix of everything that has made progress possible for humanity." Jung very much esteems fantasy, which he claims "has its own irreducible value." According to Jung, "Developing fantasy means perfecting our humanity." (Adams, 2–3)

If Adams considers Jung someone who overthrew the Reality Principle to replace it with the Fantasy Principle, Paul Kugler expresses the same view:

> The experience of reality is a product of the psyche's capacity to image. It is not an external being (god, ideal, or matter), but, rather, the "essence" of being human. Subjectively, reality is experienced as "out there", because its originary principle is located "in the beyond", transcendent to the ego's subjectivity. With this ontological shift, mental image ceases to be viewed as a copy, or a copy of a copy, and now assumes [...], the role of ultimate origin and creator of meaning and of our sense of existence and reality. (Kugler 2008, 87)

In a radical break from Jung, Hillman declared the primacy of image, which is "always more inclusive, more complex [...] than concept" (Hillman 1983, 30–31). Moreover, he rejected almost all of Jung's structural concepts:

> I don't emphasize [...] some of Jung's terms, like: self, compensation, opposites, types, psychic energy. You won't find anything about mandalas and wholeness, and I don't refer much to Eastern thought, synchronicity, and the Judeo-Christian God-image. My favourite books are not *Aion* and *Answer to Job*. When I use the term "ego" I put ironic masks around it: the so-called ego, because for me the task of psychology is to see through it and get around it. I certainly don't place his construct ego in the center of consciousness [...] (Hillman, 30–31)

Hillman dismissed even the privileged ego-image, disparaging the role "I-ness" often plays in a Western (heroic) culture which identifies ego with the "hero archetype". Adams points out how, "[i]n a sense, for Hillman, the ego is the unconscious. The ego is that sense of 'I-ness' that imagines it knows when it does not know. What the 'I' does not know is that it, too, is an image – what I call the 'ego-image' – a figment of the imagination, a fiction, a fantasy – and not 'reality'" (Adams, 173). Thus, it is not an exaggeration to state that according to the Hillmanian perspective rationality is preceded by the epistemologically primary phenomenon of fantasy.

Ruth Meyer does not deal with the Hillmanian interpretation of Jungian psychology. Instead, she is inspired by Hillman's biography of R.G. Collingwood[2] in which he uses Collingwood's story to illustrate his theory that "the Daimon, or guardian angel [i.e. imagination], knows our destiny and guides us toward it" (Meyer, 134). Because imagination and inner life in general are not and cannot be centred, it can be seen as poorly structured and polymorphous. Meyer takes

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2)   Collingwood developed the concept of historical empathy, where history is not about a chronology of events but rather "getting inside other people's heads" and looking at the situation through their eyes (Collingwood, R. G. *Autobiography*, p. 58).

a close look at déjà-vu moments, out-of-time experiences, inner visions and the use of imagery in the work of a number of historians, particularly those who have defended literary history against its scientific critics. Some, like Trevelyan or Toynbee, were aware of their close relation to Clio, some were not. In addition, Meyer is convinced that their creative powers and imagination were prompted not just by walks, or visits to libraries, but first of all by historical sites. In this article I defend a thesis according to which both Maurras and Groulx were such historian-thinkers. Not only were they both historians, they were also writers and poets who used powerful archetypal images to mythologize the past of their respective national histories.

II. *Latinité* mythologized: Backward-looking prophets and their French-speaking muses

> *N'est-ce pas plus doux de croire aux dieux sans nombre de la mythologie, depuis Apollon, père des Arts, ou Vénus, mère de l'Amour, jusqu'aux petits lares qui protègent nos foyers? Un Dieu unique – cette centralisation!*
>
> Charles Maurras to Gustave Thibon (Thibon, 16)

> *Like the novelist, the historian constructs a complete world around him, which must form a coherent whole.*
>
> (R. G. Collingwood, 245)

If there is a view according to which Jung is simultaneously a pre-modern, a modern and a post-modern thinker, then this is also surely true about the Hillmanian version of Jung's thought. If Hillman states that Jung's fantasy is directed by *anima*, then this study must turn to those who were inspired essentially by Mnemosyne and her daughter Clio, Muse of history.

The imagery sustaining in Charles Maurras's and Lionel Groulx's thought is immersed deep in the past. Regardless of the specific cultural background in which they made their "imaginative leap" back into history, the result of their inquiries signifies a free movement between modern times and a mythological image of a pure, uncorrupted, pre-modern Latin society, perhaps a regressive "pastoral paradise [...] inhabited by shepherds and shepherdesses, and nymphs and Satyrs, who dwell in the atmosphere of romantic love [...]. The idealized rural retreat, the place of escape from the reality and complexity of life in town and court, is fundamental to the idea of Arcadia" (Hall, 30). Contemporaneous historical reality exteriorized their inner enemy, with their works becoming notable renderings of that inner drama. At the

same time, they each took on the role of prophet endowed with the certain knowledge of national destiny and its secure guide to the future.

Charles Maurras is an excellent example of a thinker profoundly inspired by abundant imagery. But it seems that his imagination did not follow just one direction toward an idealized *Méditerranée* of ancient classicism. As observed by Philippe Mège, Maurras's later intensified anti-Germanism was preceded by eager reading of Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Fichte and Stirner regarding the inner battle between nihilism and religious faith. His religious crises (Nuit de Tholonet and Nuit de Pau)[3] were accompanied by his own loss of hearing (1883), finally leading to the decision to side with science and not with religious faith: "Saint Thomas ne satisfait pas toujours. Il ne répond pas à la grandissime question, la seule qui me passionne: savoir la réalité objective de nos idées" (Mège, 19). Even though he preached traditional Catholicism, in his private life – as is clear in the introductory quotation above – Maurras followed certain steps of Greco-Roman paganism and declared himself a disciple of Comte. This challenge confronted his Catholic followers and sympathizers when his first work, *Le Chemin de Paradis* (1895), was published. Catholic reviewers were outraged by Maurras's paganism and asked "Monsieur Maurras n'est pas, ou n'est plus avec nous?" (Massis, 111). Rejection of metaphysical monism did not mean lesser receptivity toward inner inspiration, but contributed to ambiguity and misunderstandings of his thought. Even today Maurras hardly "fits in" to a specific "camp". In French historiografy he is "présent [...] de facon détournée" and is labelled as "le condamné perpétuel" (Goyet, 124):

> Une des constantes de l'action de Maurras fut d'être condamné par les autorités qu'il disait défendre. Il fut condamné avec une telle régularité qu'on peut y déceler une des logiques profondes de ses actes: le Félibre en 1893, le Vatican en 1926, le Prétendant en 1937, la Nation en 1945. Et cette succession chronologique ne rend pas entièrement compte de l'envahissement de sa vie par ses condamnations, car celles-ci connurent plusieurs épisodes épisodes, de prémices en rebondissements. Il n'est donc pas question de n'y voir de simples accidents de parcours. (Goyet, 211)

Maurras became a "catholique secularisé". Committed to a rationalized, intellectualized image of a stable and powerful tradition, he nevertheless can be seen as a gnostic Catholic dreaming his counter-revolutionary dream. Maurras was a traditionalist but preferred his rational concept of monarchy to loyalty to a pretender. Described as "l'homme de rempart" or as a man with the "mentalité d'un assiégé" (Weyembergh, 16), Maurras considered his doctrine of integral nationalism

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3) That is how Maurras himself labelled the two spiritual crises that finally took him away from Catholicism and led him to adopt a scientific worldview.

and *latinité* as "un mur protecteur et son oeuvre comme un ouvrage d'art" (Goyet, 211). In his works one repeatedly comes across the image of a fortress, massive city walls, or a sturdy ship. From the Jungian perspective it becomes clear that throughout his discourses there is a fundamental *coniunctio oppositorum* (archetype of unified opposites) behind his purported "archetypal polarity". Maurras's self-image was the reflection of a vanishing *latinité*, a harmonious Greco-Latin tradition and a threatened Catholicism, whereas he viewed as most dangerous the Anglo-Germanic, individualist, Protestant and "barbarian" world. Maurras's *latinité* cannot be understood without considering this fundamental polarity, since he used it to construct a powerful theoretical apparatus consisting of a theory of arts, French and European history, war strategy ("la seule France") and aesthetics. Certainly he was not the only one who had experienced the French fin-de-siècle as a triumph of decadence. Victor Nguyen introduced his opus *Aux origines de l'Action Française* with a prologue entitled "Un mythe majeur du XIXe siécle français: la décadence." There Nguyen characterizes late 19th-century decadence as a collectively shared imagery that was not exclusively French, but could be found in many conservative and reactionary authors. In Maurras this anxiety was compensated for by the grandiloquent projection of *latinité* and his own self-image as its defender and reformer. It is in his concept of *latinité* that Maurrassian politics meets aesthetics, ideology, history and philosophy, becoming universalist and assuming trans-historical dimensions. Such a trans-historical, imaginal and spatial-temporal leap was already perceptible in his project École romane. Here we can see how his colleague Jean Moréas viewed such a project:

> L'École Romane Française revendique le principe gréco-latin, principe fondamental des Lettres françaises qui fleurit aux XIe, XIIe, XIIIe siècles avec nos trouvères; au XVIe avec Ronsard et son école; au XVIIe avec Racine et La Fontaine. [...] L'école romane française renoue la chaîne gallique, rompue par le Romantisme et sa descendance parnassienne, naturaliste et symboliste [...].[4]

L'École romane was founded by Maurras and Moréas in 1891 shortly after Maurras's arrival in Paris (1885), with the aim of promoting the pagan and classicist spirit. In Paris – probably under the influence of the Félibrige de Paris – Maurras achieved a synthesis of positivism with the harmony of classical (i.e. pagan) arts. It was probably here where "paganisme lié à l'ordre et la beauté du monde" was born and never deserted. After Félibrige de Paris (1888), École romane became a continuation of his involvement with *latinité,* although his conscious identification of beauty and harmony gave shape to the opposite:

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4)   Jean Moréas, *Lettre au Figaro* quoted by Ernest Raynaud in the preface of "Choix de poèmes" published *in Mercure de France,* 1939.

The young ego is obliged to establish itself as something definite and therefore it must say, "I am this and I am not that." No-saying is a crucial feature of initial ego development. But the result of this early operation is that a shadow is created. All that I announce I am not then goes into the shadow.[...] if psychic development is to occur, then split-off shadow must be encountered again as an inner reality. (Edinger, 13)

Maurras never overcame this psychological crisis. His philosophic-politico-aesthetic attitudes required "the barbarian other". Maurras was caught in the clutch of good/Latin and evil/barbarian binaries and remained trapped in this mindset until the end of his days. Could Maurras be then viewed as a "gnostic crusader" who mythologized himself as a solar hero in defence of Latin reason, order and harmony (Apollo) against chthonic underworld forces (Dionysus)?

[...] the most crucial and terrifying pair of opposites is good and evil. The very survival of the ego depends on how it relates to this matter. In order to survive, it is absolutely essential that the ego experience itself as more good than bad. There has to be a heavier weight in the side of good [...]. .. for the young ego can tolerate very little experience of its own badness without succumbing to total demoralization. It also accounts for another universal phenomenon – the process of locating evil. Evil has to be located [....]. .. blame or responsibility must be established [...]. It is exceedingly dangerous to have free-floating evil. Someone must personally carry the burden of evil. (Edinger, 13–14)

Thus Maurras's ego became a scene of universal drama of the opposites. The proportions of such an intra-psychic conflict are visible from his global vision of *latinité*:

Ma Méditerrannée ne finit pas à Gibraltar, elle reçoit le Guadalquivir et le Tage, elle baigne Cadix, Lisbonne et s'étend, bleue et chaude, jusqu'à Rio de Janeiro. Elle atteint le Cap Horn, salue Montevideo, Buenos-Aires et, sans oublier Valparaiso ni Callao, elle s'en va, grossie de l'Amazonie et de l'Orénoque, rouler dans la mer des Caraïbes, caresser amoureusement nos Antilles, puis Cuba et Haïti, ayant reçu le Meschacébé du grad enchanteur de Bretagne; elle court au Saint-Laurent et, sauf de menues variations de couleur ou de température, va se jeter dans la baie d'Hudson où elle entend parler français. Le caprice de cette Méditerranée idéale la ramène alors dans notre hémisphère, mais non pas nécessairement pour revoir Baléares, Cyclades, Oran ou Alger, car ni Anvers, ni Gydnis ne lui apparaissent barbares: ma Méditerranée ne demande pas mieux que de devenir nordique ou baltique pourvu qu'elle rencontre, ici ou là, les deux lucides flammes d'une civilisation catholique et d'un esprit latin. (Maurras 1963, 21–22)

Nonetheless, this *latinité* – and with it, its main reservoir, i.e. France – became seriously threatened. If Maurras saw before him a clear image of *latinité*, he could see its adversary with the same clarity. He waged his war on the field of the arts, a war against what he viewed as anarchic Cubism or Surrealism. Together with Barrès, he fought against German philosophy hegemony at French universities because, as he asserted, "le kantisme est la religion de la Troisième République" (Mège, 18). His was the so-called "oeuvre de dégermanisation" exposed in *Quand les Français ne s'aiment pas* and in *Devant l'Allemagne éternelle.*[5] In the latter work, he depicts the France of intellectuals and universities at the end of 19th century, and later (1914) he observed with sadness that the Sorbonne "a été blessé par l'Allemagne, non dans la guerre mais dans la paix" (Mège, 17).

The threat to *latinité* was anything but short-term. In fact, it was a consequence of neither the Franco-Prussian War nor the French Revolution. Maurras imagined himself as a warrior waging a war against the modern Germanism initiated by Luther, "le grand separateur de la Germanie et la latinité". But such a war was "pas dissociable du germanisme de l'Antiquité ou du Moyen-Âge catholique contre lequel il lançait déjà ses 'barbares assauts'" (Maurras 1939, 24). In the following extract from his letter to Barrès (who was staying in Germany at the time), we can see that Maurras considered the struggle against Germanism to be secular or even archetypal: "Soyez heureux chez les barbares. J'aime infinitivement ceux d'entre eux qui ont eu le bonheur de se laisser romaniser. Quel est donc cet ingénieux philosophe qui disait justement que c'est Arminius qui a fait tout le mal? Sans cet Arminius, Luther et quelques autres, nous aurions une Europe catholique et romaine, c'est-à-dire classique et païenne […]" (Monday, June 1896, Barrès, Maurras, 123–124).

Maurras, his Action française, the counter-establishment university-like Institut d'Action française, his *Revue d'Af* and later *Journal d'Af*, his books and his practical politics all raised attention. Such attention rose particularly high in Latin realms, including in Québec, among intellectual elites (frequently Catholic and Franco-American) in the USA and UK and even in Germany. Such a network of sympathizers and followers was charted for the first time by Eugen Weber and later – in 1968 – on the occasion of the centennial anniversary of Maurras's birth it was Victor Nguyen who founded Institut d'études politiques d'Aix-en-Provence, where he organized four conferences on Maurrassian studies. This was the first serious attempt to legitimize Maurrassian discourse, albeit without any success. The resistance by official authorities was manifested even later, in 1976, on the occasion of the appointment of the Maurrassian thinker Pierre Boutang as a professor at the University of Paris IV (Goyet, 114–115).

And yet, Maurras can count on considerable support abroad. Such support is visible in the interest in what Weber described in his chapter "Amis étrangers" and

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5)   Articles collected between 1898 and 1903; articles collected between 1915 and 1916.

what he termed "maurrassisme diffuse", which suggests many possible avenues for comparative studies about "l'idéologie maurrassienne chez les clercs nationalistes des pays de culture française ou latine au XXᵉ siècle [...] (Pomeyrols, Hauser, 5).

> Hors de France, le maurrassisme fournit à des groupes d'intellectuels [...] un prestigieux modèle, qui permet d'obtenir une reconnaissance sur la scène locale [...] propose une conception unitaire et essentialiste de la nation fondée sur des permanences présentées comme naturelles et anciennes telles la famille, les traditions, une culture propre etc. Cette conception peut servir à légitimer la revendication d'autonomie [contre] un État 'pluriethnique', libéral ou démocratique. Le Maurrassisme est, enfin, une référence qui a pu servir de levier, permettant [...] le passage d'une revendication régionaliste à une revendication nationaliste, car il fournit des arguments utiles pour légitimer la nouvelle définition du groupe en 'nation.' (Pomeyrols, Hauser, 7)

Maurrasian influence reached Québec and French Canada as well. Here, the main protagonist of Maurrasian influence was Lionel Groulx (1878–1967). Given the above-mentioned contradictoriness and especially Maurras's agnosticism, this influence should not be overestimated. As Trépanier points out, "Groulx dit ce qu'il sait du rayonnement de l'école de Maurras au Canada français, mais en évitant de se placer explicitement sur le terrain des rapports entre le traditionalisme canadien-français et le traditionalisme français, plan sur lequel se révèlent les affinités les plus profondes" (Trépanier, 182). Even though Groulx declared that "Maurras a contribué à me dégoûter de la démocratie", at the same time he added that Maurras was "grand esprit avec un grand trou par en haut" (Trépanier, 182–183).

In other words, Groulx's *latinité* is not *latinité païenne* or *latinité greco-latine*, but *latinité catholique*. Groulx imagined French Canada as first of all a restored and renewed New France,[6] i.e. a *civilisation française catholique* whose existence was brutally disrupted by the Anglo-Protestant Conquest: "Le petit peuple de 1760 possédait tous les éléments d'une nationalité: il avait une patrie à lui, il avait l'unité religieuse, l'unité de la vraie foi, et, avec elle, l'équilibre social et la promesse de l'avenir" (Groulx 1919, 293).[7]

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6)   "Groulx believed that French Canadians, right up to his own day, were endowed with an apostolic mission in the New World, a mission they could fulfil only by remaining faithful to their deeper 'nature', which consisted of their Frenchness (Canadianized Frenchness, of course) and Catholicity. His historical work consisted to a very large extent of trying to rekindle in the mind of his compatriots the former grandeur of the 'French Empire of America'. This historical project, in turn, fuelled his work as a nationalist militant, particularly his efforts to win a guarantee that the ancestral rights of French Canadians, in Québec and the other parts of America to which they had spread, would be respected" (Bock, 77).

7)   Despite these words of Groulx, there is the fact that Groulx himself strongly viewed differences, for example between *Québécois* and *Acadiens*, as fundamental. In his work *Visions Canadiennes* Groulx writes: "Why not to admit it? We French Canadians have not always understood that a political situation different

If Maurrasian *latinité* was based on pagan and agnostic counter revolution and anti-modernity, Groulxian imagery followed much more traditionalist prescriptions, a fact that became perceptible after the Papal condemnation of the Parisian Action Française (1926), when Groulx distanced himself from Maurrasism. That is why today's historians rightfully point to other figures of French conservatism, especially to Joseph de Maistre, Henri Massis or Jacques Maritain (Monier, 11–12) as alternative inspirers of conservative and anti-modern thought. On the other hand, if Maurras felt himself "l'homme de rempart" and suffered from the "mentalité d'un assiégé", Groulx – surrounded by Protestant Anglo-American culture – certainly felt the same. There is another analogy between Maurras and Groulx that seems to have produced the deeply felt polarity, namely, the threat from the Anglo-Protestant "other" and consequently an incapacity to integrate both. Behind both the Maurrassian and Groulxian visions was a projection of a "dark/threatening other". As Edinger puts it, such profound and collectively experienced opposites are an expression of *coniunctio*, the essential unity of both, even though consciously dis-united: "Once you start thinking about it [opposites], and once you become familiar with the phenomenon of the opposites, you'll see it everywhere. It's *the* basic drama that goes on in the collective psyche. Every war, every contest between groups, every dispute between political factions, every game, is an expression of *coniunctio* energies. Whenever we fall into an identification with one of a pair of warring opposites, we then lose the possibility [...] of being a carrier of opposites. And instead we become one of God's millstones that grinds our fate" (Edinger, 15).

Although references to Maistre were not entirely common,[8] it seems that for Groulx he was very much a reliable inspiration. Maurras considered Maistre "le premier de nos philosophes politiques", but for him he was "fondateur" especially because of his critique of Revolution. Philosophically, Maistre was – paradoxically – closer to Burke. Moreover, he interpreted history theologically. Maurras "ne pourra jamais se reconnaitre dans le mouvement de pensée, propre à Maistre, qui fait le fonds de Soirées: la vision de l'histoire comme le drame d'une chute et d'une régénération cosmiques [...]" (Glaudes, 1224).

from our own, [...], has made the French person in Acadia a quite distinct nationality type. [...]. [Other French Canadians] refused to accept that the *Acadiens* did not want to become obedient little *Canadiens*; we mocked their flag, their national feast day, their language [....]" (Bock, 78–79). Groulx was convinced that the difference between *Québécois* and *Acadiens* is of old date, especially since the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) that ceded Acadia to the English.

8)   Maistre was an Anglophile and a Mason. His political thought was essentially influenced by English history, especially by the Glorious Revolution (1688). Similarly to Burke, Maistre interprets the Glorious Revolution as a conservative revolution that restored English liberties; in contrast to Burke, he views it as misguided because it was based on Protestant reform, which means that it emphasized and attributed the highest value to individual judgment, leading to the destruction and damage of the authority principle. In his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* Burke explained that the Glorious Revolution did not aim to put people's rights above those of the sovereign, but rather salvation of the monarchy and constitution threatened by the illegal actions of James II.

Groulx was a priest and a historian. Unlike Maurras, providentialism constitutes an axis of his thought about French Canada. In this he is Maistre's heir. This feature of his thought makes him really a prophet whose idea of nation was both "a subjective and objective reality" (Bock, 64), which becomes perceptible especially when he uses the terms "âme collective" or "race". There is a conviction that the destiny of the Franco-Canadian nation is directed and predestined by divine Providence to work toward the "conquest of souls" and that Franco-Canadians possessed a hereditary birth right in all North America. In a 1925 lecture, Groulx spoke about his nation as a "chosen race" inspired and directed by a "providential plan" with its own spiritual vocation:

> Whatever we believe about the motive of the kings of France […], there is one major fact that cannot be contested: that the idea of mission caused the idea of colonization to triumph. French penetration into the heart of the continent was as much an advance of the Catholic apostolate as it was commercial penetration. And if we could read the providential plan above, […], perhaps we would learn that the winds of heaven pushed […] caravels towards the vast hunting grounds […], where the most populous indigenous nations lived and where there was the greatest potential for apostolic work. (Bock, 75)

The Maistrian backward-looking theological vision of European history and Revolution and the Groulxian backward-looking vision of rural and Catholic New France went hand in hand. These visions were far from being matter-of-fact theories. Both contained a considerable dose of romanticism. Maistre, even though generally considered a man of the 18th century, was actually influenced by German "romantisme politique" of reactionnary inspiration initiated by Novalis.[9] In Groulx one can find a romantic vision of the nation as defined by Sternhell, who identifies its founder in Herder and his subjective concept-image of the *Volksgeist*. Neither should we forget that Groulx's visions were formulated at a time when different ideological currents within Western civilization converged, aiming at the delegitimization of concepts of society and politics as conceived by the Enlightenment and institutionalized by the French Revolution. Those currents promoted a Herderian, essentialist concept of nation and cultural relativism. In this context it is appropriate to mention Bélanger's interpretation of Groulx's nationalism in his book *L'Apolitisme des idéologies Québécoises*, where Bélanger stresses an apolitical aspect of Groulx's nationalism leading to "Québecois mystique" more than to a genuine political programme.

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9)   But if Maistre did not know German Romantics, they knew him very well: Adam Müller and Friedrich Schlegel expressed their admiration for Maistre explicitly. The differences in their initial motivation does not prevent us from following their convergence with Maistre, who inspired German Romantics to reject liberal theories of state and contractual theories of state in favour of an organic and hierarchic concept of society which, moreover, enjoyed the support of obvious nostalgia for medieval theocracy. Schlegel's *Geschichte der alten und neueren Literatur* (1815) was an open panegyric on Joseph de Maistre.

Similarly to Maurras, Groulx viewed party politics as a condemnable division of organic unity: "his concept of the nation as an organic entity rested, instead, on the notions of consensus, harmony and corporatism" (Bock, 31), and national interest "defined as separate from the concepts of statehood and political conflict, was at all times to take precedence over party interests" (Bock, 32). Groulx's nationalism fits in with a Herderian vision of nation and nationality because for him nations are "organic entities, analogous to living beings, each with their own national 'genius'. The diversity of nations was the work of Providence, and Providence did not tolerate the possibility of legitimating the absorption of the weakest by the strongest. [...] This conviction was shared likewise by colonial powers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (Bock, 55). According to some, the Groulxian concept of nation was influenced by Count Gobineau's racial theories (Bock,19) and combined racial mythologizing with "apostolic vocation". In 1921 Groulx published the following lines:

> We wish to find once more, seize again, in its integrity, the ethnic type that France brought to our shores and that one hundred and fifty years of history then formed ... And it is this French type, clearly distinguished, dependent on a history and a geography, having its ethnic and psychological heredities, it is this type we wish to continue, on which we rest the hope of our future, because a people, like any person growing up, can only develop what they have in them, can only develop those strengths whose living seed they already contain. (Bock, 65)

Such a rejection of enlightened revolutionary politico-ideological universalist imagery should be understood as a part of Western national imagery. If we keep in mind Sternhell's "l'idéologie, ne l'oublions pas, est l'interaction de la culture et de la politique" (Sternhell, Sznajder, Ashéri, 12), we can see that Groulx's politics of *latinité canadienne-française* derived directly from the imagery of Anglo-Protestant danger.

Whereas Maurras's Latin imagery was a reaction against Revolution but also against 19th-century modernization processes, Groulx was still challenging modernity in the 1950s. In France, the Maurrasian reference to the Ancien Régime and classicism remained at the theoretical level; French Canada, however, was no heir of modern France. Rather, it constituted an extension of Catholic pre-modern France. These two theses are even more convincing if we keep in mind that Groulx used terms like "living seed" and "soul": "Groulx considered the France of the Grand Siècle the only one that could be deemed the authentic repository of the French 'soul'. The 'other', the one born of the French Revolution and the Third Republic [...] strayed from its deeper nature under the impulse of the individualistic, universalist and, of course, anticlerical ideal" (Bock, 64). The fact that Maurras was aware that the reality of French Canada

was closer to his ideal is perceptible in this short text, a text in which the Muse of his imagination did not forget to add heroes of ancient Greece. If Groulx imagined French America in terms of "Latin Catholicism", Maurras viewed it as an extension of his *Méditerranée greco-latine*:

> Heureux pays! Vous avez une foi, une langue, un esprit de famille, une paysannerie, des mœurs … Où n'irait une race humaine avec de tels atouts? Comparez la stabilité, la fécondité de vos foyers à l'instabilité, à la stérilité du foyer américain. Votre moralité à la criminalité des autres. Votre fidélité, votre unité religieuse, à leur morcellement, au pullulement de leurs sectes et de leurs temples! Votre puissance et courageuse continuité ethnique et linguistique à cette mosaïque d'immigrants de tous lieux et de tous pays! Comparez vos champs, même vos forêts, à l'industrialisme dont vos voisins sont prisonniers, même la charrue à main. Un seul élément paraît militer contre vous, c'est leur nombre. Mais l'armée du roi des rois comptait des centaines de milliers d'hommes, et les bataillons de Miltiade, de Thémistocle et de Léonidas ne faisaient qu'une poignée: ils l'ont emporté pour les siècles. Les mécanismes de l'histoire sont héroïques. (Maurras 1934, 217)[10]

Whereas Maurrassism gradually became discredited and, in post-war France, totally marginalized, in Canada Groulx's influence become gradually reduced by the modernization effect of the Quiet Revolution. In postwar France there were several groups that could line up with Action française ideology: Maurrassian "modernistes" (Pierre Boutang and his group), those with a nostalgia for Vichy (revues like *Écrits de Paris* and *Rivarol*), traditional Catholics (the revues *Verbe* and *Itinéraires*) and finally the "jeune droite" (Jacques Laurent, Michel Déon etc.). In postwar Canada a new generation of historians initiated a new kind of historiographical approach and modernization, putting Groulx's traditionalist vision aside. By 1950, Abbé Groulx "had entered the ranks of the principal ideologues or 'definers' of French-Canadian nationalism, […] he made himself the spokesman for a profoundly conservative nationalism situated at the intersection of several influences, including the counter-revolutionary tradition, ultramontanism, the Church's social doctrine and parliamentarism, ideologies that wove together into a delicate and original synthesis" (Bock, 5). But after the late 1950s imagery connecting all these doctrines started eroding. At that time Groulx's cultural particularism started retreating to cultural universalism because Canada became increasingly open to globalization processeses. Already in his Montréal lecture "Où allons nous?" (1953) Groulx noted that French Canada had lost its moral compass

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10) In this extract Maurras acclaims French Canadian rural and traditional culture and society, which, for him, corresponds to the ancestral (French) heritage, to human nature and virtues, and brings French Canadians close to Mediterranean cultures, including that of ancient Greece. In this respect French Canada is much closer to the Maurrassian ideal of pre-modern rural France before the Revolution.

and fought against "objective history."[11] Defeat of his ideology did not come from the Anglo-Protestant "other", but from the modernization process to which Canada became exposed.

So the inner eye of the Maurrassian and Groulxian visions and their French-speaking muses so dear to mystical Mediterranean nationalism and Franco-North-American Catholic New France became progressively invisible, condemned, outdated, old-fashioned and forced to withdraw its visionary mythological and providentialist theses. Mythologized national history had to cede to universalist globalized modernity. But bards such as Groulx and Maurras are still, in spite of their controversial ways, at least in some quarters a source of inspiration and a witness to the merging of mythological imagery, historiography, ideology and politics.

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11)   After World War II, the traditional theological interpretation of history was replaced by the myth of modernity and secularism. In French Canada such a change became visible in the rejection of a major part of the intellectual heritage of Lionel Groulx. On the intellectual scene a neo-nationalist movement and the École de Montréal appeared. Its prominent leader Michel Brunet "frequently denounced what he called the 'consoling myths' of traditional French-Canadian nationalism, including the myth of messianism and of the spiritual conquest of America. Brunet claimed to be using, instead, scientific objectivity and a certain historical determinism [...]. The neo-nationalist historians believed that the movement they were participating in represented a form of progress when compared to the thought of Lionel Groulx" (Bock, 217).

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articles — **articles**

Yann Martel's *Life of Pi* as a Reflection of the True Self

La vie de Pi de Yann Martel comme le reflet du Vrai soi

Stella Aslani

Abstract

Works of Canadian animal literature educate us about animals, nature and, most importantly, ourselves. *Life of Pi* is such a work. To read Yann Martel's novel means to be confronted with a reflection of one's true self. The article investigates this phenomenon of literary self-confrontation by closely analysing three persistent themes in *Life of Pi*: anthropomorphism, religion and science, and self-perception. The analysis is broadened by introducing philosophical concepts of Giorgio Agamben, Helmuth Plessner and Jacques Derrida. The final step of the article is a revisiting of the themes in the light of philosophical background examined. What *Life of Pi* teaches us is that throughout our lives we adopt multiple interpretations of our self. It also teaches us that in order to have a chance to define our true self, we must first reconcile all the different interpretations we have of our self. The novel's proposed way to do that is through the rehabilitation of spirituality.

Keywords: *anthropomorphism*, religion, science, Yann Martel

Résumé

Dans la littérature canadienne, il y a des œuvres qui nous informent sur les animaux, la nature et, surtout, sur nous-mêmes. *Life of Pi* de Yann Martel est une telle œuvre, car elle nous confronte à notre être véritable. Cet article examine ce phénomène en analysant trois thèmes dans *Life of Pi* (l'anthropomorphisme, la religion et la science) mis en parallèle avec le thème de la perception de soi. L'analyse repose sur les concepts philosophiques de Giorgio Agamben, Helmuth Plessner et Jacques Derrida. La dernière section de l'article envisage ces thèmes à la lumière des fondements philosophiques plus récents. Ce que *Life of Pi* nous enseigne, c'est que, tout au long de notre vie, nous adoptons de multiples interprétations de nous-mêmes. La spiritualité joue un rôle majeur dans ces interprétations.

Mots-clés : *anthropomorphisme*, religion, science, Yann Martel

Canadian literature has a long and venerable tradition of animal literature. Some of the most prominent works of Canadian animal literature are works by Ernest Thompson Seton, Sir Charles G.D. Roberts and Margaret Atwood. That animals always have been and will be a crucial part of Canadian literature comes as no surprise, considering that animals have been a part of human life from its very beginning. They provide us with food, clothing and company. Human lives and animal lives have always intertwined in a manner akin to how literature and society intertwine. Therefore, it is only natural for artists to combine the three. Be it fable, allegory, satire, naturalism, realism, fantasy, folk tradition or sci-fi, the story with animals in a central position serves a higher purpose – it educates us about animals, nature and, in the end, about ourselves, much in the way that *Life of Pi* does.

Life of Pi is a Canadian novel written by Yann Martel, a Canadian author with a degree in philosophy. After being rejected by several publishing houses, his novel was finally published in 2001. The rough start did not diminish its worth, and the novel won several prizes, one of them being the Booker Prize for Fiction. In 2012, it was adapted into a movie that also won several awards, among them the Golden Globe Award for Best Original Score and Best Achievement in Directing at the 85th Academy Awards.

And yet, *Life of Pi* has far more to offer than mere prizes and awards. The story it tells is, as a character claims in the foreword, "a story that will make you believe in God" (Martel 2012, XIII). Since the statement is a statement of a novel character, and not a real person, it is up to the reader to decide whether there is any truth in it or not. No matter your decision, the novel *Life of Pi* approaches the unique. Its structure, language, narrative, setting and objective are close to brilliant. It starts as a story about a boy whose name is Piscine Molitor, otherwise known as Pi, but ends up being a story about his survival of a harrowing shipwreck.

As many have commented, Pi and Parker's voyage and adventures in the open sea make the novel an adventure story somewhat similar to *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe and *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway. However, the structure of the novel is not simple; and its plot can be approached in various ways, each of which opens up diverse classifications and interpretations of the novel itself. Most people see it as an adventure story (e.g., Jordan 2002) due to the shipwreck and survival on the open sea, and such a classification is the most straightforward one. Some see it as a post-colonial novel, since it focuses on the culture and stories of India, a former British colony. This kind of classification relegates many important parts of the novel, such as Pi's growing up and becoming a man by surviving the shipwreck, which is why the novel has also been classified as a Bildungsroman (Kidd 2013). Others, who tend to focus more on how the novel was written rather than on what was written, see it as a sort of magical realism or fable-like story resembling Aesop's fables. And, lastly, many see it as allegory, or at least an allegorical narrative (Krist 2002).

In some way all these classifications are true, and yet all of them leave something out. Some focus more on the shipwreck, some more on Pi growing up and some on the fact that part of the novel takes place in India. Nonetheless, what is certain is that *Life of Pi*, although seemingly just yet another Canadian novel featuring animals, is in fact a great novel. Through it one explores society's state of mind, but that is not all; indeed, one is also confronted with a reflection of one's true self – that is to say, the self that most of us are not consciously aware of and therefore cannot describe or define. As a work of literature, Martel's novel moves towards articulating themes that have long concerned philosophers.

Life of Pi abounds with themes, both concrete and abstract ones. Luckily, in the vast scope of themes three persistently stand out: anthropomorphism, religion and science, and self-perception. These three themes will be addressed in the next section; later one, they will be revisited after a brief explanation of relevant philosophical concepts of, especially, Giorgio Agamben, Helmuth Plessner and Jacques Derrida that lead to a final interpretation of the novel. Only by firstly introducing the themes, then backing them up with short philosophical overview and, lastly, going back to themes can we truly grasp the whole picture of our being in line with views expressed in *Life of Pi*.

Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism is akin to personification, that is, attribution of human characteristics to non-human beings or things. Its history as a part of human history dates far back. It is not strange that something that has been a part of human life for so long would find its way into literature. Indeed, in *Life of Pi* anthropomorphism is one of the crucial themes, although Yann Martel himself never anthropomorphises in the novel. The first indicator of this refusal to make animals human-like is that the main character lives in a zoo and has a father who lectures him about true animal and human nature. He exhibits to his son Pi endless examples of animals fighting for their survival at any cost and thus showing their true nature, which is far from harmless, especially for man. At the end of a tour of the family zoo, Pi's father notes:

> There are animals we haven't stopped by. Don't think they're harmless. Life will defend itself no matter how small it is. Every animal is ferocious and dangerous. It may not kill you, but it will certainly injure you. It will scratch you and bite you, and you can look forward to a swollen, pus-filled infection, as high fever and ten-day stay in the hospital. (Martel 2012, 50)

As we can see, Pi's father cannot stress enough that, no matter the size, every animal is dangerous. Animals cannot help themselves; it is in their nature to defend their life.

Indeed, the concerned father would do anything to teach Pi the distinctive difference between human and animal nature. Animals are not our equals, and we should never treat them as such. To make this point as powerful as it can be, he makes Pi watch a tiger kill a goat, in a scene of brutish glory:

> With sudden ease the trapdoor slid open. Silence fell again, except for bleating and the *click-click* of the goat's hooves against the floor.
> A streak of black and orange flowed from one cage to the next.
> Normally the big cats were not given food one day a week, to simulate conditions in the wild. We found out later that Father had ordered that Mahisha not be fed for three days.
> I don't know if I saw blood before turning into Mother's arms or if I daubed it on later, in my memory, with a big brush. But I heard. It was enough to scare the living vegetarian daylights out of me. (Martel 2012, 47)

Pi, who himself is a vegetarian (as Martel emphasises here), would not harm another living being no matter what. To him the very sound of the killing remains forever imprinted in his memory. This is a most frightening scene to be witnessed by a young boy, but a crucial one, according to Pi's father. By exposing him to such a violent act, Pi's father succeeds in his intention to teach Pi about distinctive difference between human and animal nature.

It is not that the father believes humans are superior; it is just that he believes that becoming too comfortable with animals and projecting your own thoughts and actions onto them can lead to catastrophe for both sides. In the end, he believes humans to be the worst kind of animal. To prove his point, Pi's father decides to perform an ongoing experiment of sorts near the entrance to his zoo:

> Just beyond the ticket booth Father had had painted on a wall in bright red letters the question: DO YOU KNOW WHICH IS THE MOST DANGEROUS ANIMAL IN THE ZOO? An arrow pointed to a small curtain. There were so many eager, curious hands that pulled at the curtain that we had to replace it regularly. Behind it was a mirror. (Martel 2012, 40–41)

Through this representative act, the father not only conveys his opinion about humans, but he makes people re-think, even if only for a second, their true nature. However, the father's good intentions do not work out. Pi is still amazed with the tiger, and the tiger's having a human name – Richard Parker – does not help the father

to bring home his point that animals are not at all like humans. It is easy to attribute human characteristics to a captured animal, and an animal having a human name makes it so much harder to resist this temptation. Calling any being "Richard Parker" calls for completeness of a person and it is hard to imagine otherwise. Therefore, it is not strange that Pi, when left almost completely alone (except for the tiger!) on the lifeboat after the shipwreck, cannot but anthropomorphise the Richard Parker. The only way to survive is to make him equal and important.

The theme of anthropomorphism, thus, is a strong and repeating theme in the novel. Anthropomorphising Richard Parker did not cost Pi his life, as it could have; but it did cost him his belief: the belief that animals are our equals and our friends.

Ever since Richard Parker came to the zoo, Pi had had a special relationship with him, or at least he thought he did. Later, on the boat, the relationship deepened and deepened until it was completely shattered on the Mexican coast. It fell to non-existence the moment they got saved and "Richard Parker, companion of [Pi's] torment, awful, fierce thing that kept [Pi] alive, moved forward and disappeared forever from [Pi's] life" (Martel 2012, 285). Pi expected the tiger to act like a human, to make the final human gesture – the kind that one can see in the movies – but the tiger of course remains an animal, and he just continued on his own path without the slightest glance back.

The detailed process resulting in an abrupt end not only shows how anthropomorphism takes place, but also that there are two natures which can never be unified – human and animal nature. It is important to see things clearly and call them what they truly are, without adding ornaments.

Religion and science

Another important theme that stretches through the novel is religion and science. Pi grows up in a family that deals with animals and is fairly well educated about animal nature. He himself explores and investigates around the zoo and has a special bond with his science teacher, Mr. Kumar, deepening his knowledge of such matters:

> To [Mr. Kumar's] ears, when animal felt the urge to mate, it said "Gregor Mendel," recalling the father of genetics, and when it was time to show it mettle, "Charles Darwin," the father of natural selection, and what we took to be bleating, gruting, hissing, snorting, roaring, growling, howling, chirping and screeching were but the thick accents of foreigners. When Mr. Kumar visited the zoo, it was to take the pulse of the universe, and his stethoscopic mind always confirmed to him that everything was in order, that everything was order. (Martel 2012, 34)

Mr. Kumar's scientific way of looking at the world teaches Pi not only great names of science, such as Gregor Mendel and Charles Darwin, but most of all about a scientific approach to life in general. What is more, Pi's nickname has a scientific origin meaning nothing more than an irrational number known to most of us as 3.14. Suffice to say that science is an important part of young Pi's life and how he makes sense of his life; it is thus an theme of the novel.

However, Pi is also interested in spirituality. He explores and adopts three great religions – Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. He finds the study of religion as important as the study of science and becomes a devoted follower of all three religions throughout his life. However, his devotion to the three religions was questioned by both his parents and his religious teachers. After being pushed to choose one of the religions, Pi reacts thus: "Bapu Gandhi said, 'All religions are true.' I just want to love God,' I blurted out, and looked down, red in the face" (Martel 2012, 92).

For Pi there is no real difference between different religions or even science. His only wish is to be free to explore all sides of religion and science alike and decide on his own what is true for him, be it scientific explanation or religious belief for how things came to be. The argument that rings throughout the novel is that science and religion are equal because each rests on a certain type of faith. Pi's knowledge of scientific matters helps him greatly on the open sea, especially the knowledge of animals and animal nature. Religion, however, is his place of comfort when he is low morale.

The differences between spirituality and science are often obvious, but there are similarities, even if they are harder to see. This parallel is made most obvious in a scene in which two Mr. Kumars meet – like religion and science, they are two sides of the same coin. The recurring theme of both religion and science not only points out their importance, strength and weaknesses, but it shows the necessity for the two to work together or at least side by side without diminishing each other's worth. As the novel implies, if the two Mr. Kumars can come together in observing a feeding a zebra, religion and science can also coexist.

> Mr. and Mr. Kumar looked delighted.
> "A *zebra*, you say?" said Mr. Kumar.
> "That's right," I replied. "It belongs to the same family as the ass and the horse."
> "The Rolls-Royce of equids," said Mr. Kumar.
> "What a wondrous creature," said Mr. Kumar.
> "This one's Grant's zebra," I said.
> Mr. Kumar said, "*Equus burchelli boehmi.*"
> Mr. Kumar said, "*Allahu akbar.*"
> I said, "It's very pretty."
> We looked on. (Martel 2012, 112)

Confronted with a simple thing like a zebra's beauty, each Mr. Kumar cannot but acknowledge it. One Mr. Kumar sees in the zebra beauty specific to equids, while the other Mr. Kumar sees the beauty of all living things – but they both see beauty, even if they translate it into technical terms ("The Rolls-Royce of equids") and more mystical terms ("What a wondrous creature").

Self-perception

A third theme of the novel is self-perception. It is probably the most important theme since it combines the previous two. Pi's perception of himself is related to all the most important influences in his life – the zoo, animals (including Richard Parker), science and religion.

The first thing he came to know zoo life. He played around animals all the time and came to know their nature by heart. An important part of his personality was formed under their influence since, due to the omnipresence of animals in Pi's everyday life, Pi is quick to acquire knowledge about the physical world around him, specifically, the animal world. As Pi recalls:

> My alarm clock during my childhood was a pride of lions. They were no Swiss clocks, but the lions could be counted upon to roar their heads off between five-thirty and six every morning. Breakfast was punctuated by the shrieks and cries of howler monkeys, hill mynahs and Moluccan cockatoos. (Martel 2012, 18)

Later he established a close relationship with different religions – Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam. Each contributed to shaping Pi's personality and added another layer of understanding the world around him – how things function and how they came to be – onto his previously-established personality under the influence of zoo animals.

At the same time as Pi was exploring religions, he was also deepening his knowledge of science. This knowledge polished the part of personality created under the influence of zoo animals, even as it overlapped with the aspects of Pi's personality shaped and informed by spirituality. Science and religion merge to create a unified layer in Pi's personality, giving him a unique way of perceiving and coping with the world around him and, in the end, himself.

These layers and their mixture are important later in Pi's life, especially when he finds himself lost not only on the open sea, but also lost to the world and himself. The horror of the shipwreck and survival took its toll on the young Pi and he was left to re-evaluate his perception of who he is. Some parts of him seemed forever lost, but

he, his persona, so to speak, managed to survive thanks to the presence of Richard Parker. Richard Parker stood for all the zoo animals Pi grew up with – the very first layer of Pi's personality. The need to tame the tiger stood for the scientific knowledge Pi had – the second layer of Pi's personality, which was, yet again, interlaced by Pi's need for a deeper explanation of things that stood for Pi's interest in religions and spirituality – the third layer of Pi's personality. Thus, the greatest immediate danger was simultaneously a source of inspiration and survival.

The theme of self-perception occurs throughout the novel, dressed in different guises, depending on the need of the story. Regardless of its appearance, the self-perception theme is a very strong one in the novel, especially since the novel could be viewed as a Bildungsroman. By telling his story, Pi not only related a tale of a great shipwreck and even greater survival. He told a story of a young man's growth, his ups and downs and his perception of himself. He pointed out that the way we perceive ourselves – be it through religion or science or animals – is in the end the most important element. As shall be evident in the next two sections on the novel's philosophical background, it is according to our self-perception that we create our life. For that reason, a fairly lengthy overview of things philosophical is in order.

The philosophical background to *Life of Pi*?

Considering what we have seen regarding the themes of the novel, the most important theme in *Life of Pi* is self-perception. To further explore its meaning in the novel, it is crucial to recall some of the leading thinkers of our civilization and their concepts of being. In order to be able to perceive oneself, one first has to exist. This is why the next section of this article covers different theories of being, from Aristotle's and Descartes's to Agamben's, Plessner's and Derrida's. What is more, the short overview not only recalls the crucial aspects of different theories of being, but is also later closely linked to *Life of Pi* and what it teaches us about our being.

The famous quote "I think, therefore I am" written by the French philosopher René Descartes in his work *Meditations on First Philosophy* not only proves that if one thinks one must certainly exist, but is based on a theory of categories of being that reaches far back even before Descartes's time and has had a strong impact on the way society today perceives the world: dualism. Yann Martel himself might have based his novel on this theory either intentionally or unintentionally. The theory is irretrievably interlaced with our society and history, or as Pi puts it while describing father's ticket booth performance:

> we look at an animal and see a mirror. The obsession with putting ourselves at the centre of everything is the bane not only of theologians but also of zoologists. (Martel 2012, 41)

Dualism is the position that advocates the dual existence of man. Mind and body are two separate parts of man and they are by no means identical. Body and mind are two fundamentally different components.

Dualism has existed at least since the time of Plato and Aristotle. In their oeuvres, both Aristotle and Plato state that the human mind and soul cannot be identified with the physical body. Descartes later reinforced this concept of dualism known today under the name of Cartesian dualism. Admittedly, his line of thinking was not entirely unprecedented, but his mechanical view of the world in which animals are nothing more than a mere body without a soul that follows its instincts and laws of nature, while humans consist of both body and mind and are therefore higher on the hierarchy tree, is still very influential and present in today's society.

For Descartes, animals are without a soul and, therefore, unimportant. But how does Aristotle categorise different entities (in the sense of living beings)? In his work *On the Soul* Aristotle focuses on the nature of living things and their different operations. According to Aristotle, plants have only a nutritive soul of growth and metabolism – the minimum for any living being. Animals, on the other hand, have this minimum plus a perceptive soul of pain, pleasure and desire but they lack the third and the most important – the faculty of reason. It is intellect and reason that distinguish humans from other animals, that distinguish Pi from Parker.

Dualism and the modern world

Aristotle's view on dualism is fairly simple and straightforward, and dualism seems to be the leading philosophical concept even today. We perceive both body and thoughts; it is only the way we explain their relation to each other that differs. Nonetheless, the division into the two remains and the concept delves into the roots of both science and religion.

Aristotle's hierarchy of souls takes a new direction because of the theory of evolution. According to the theory, plants appear slightly earlier on the evolutionary tree than animals and finally humans – the highest developed form of animals known so far. However, not many are inclined to think of humans in such animal (or vegetable) terms since, in their eyes, acknowledging that humans are animals diminishes human value. The old belief in dualism that places humans high above animals is deeply rooted in society. Many still see humans as superior to animals and think of animals as less important, if not as unimportant, thus causing emergence of diverse problems related to animal rights and reestablishment of animal position in the world.

What strikes me as interesting is that the activists and artists that fight for animal rights often regard animals not only as our equals but as our other selves. This

tendency to depict animals as humans, as the human's alter ego has been present in human history for a long, long time, even before the questions of animal rights became popular. As mentioned, it is more commonly known as anthropomorphism. By attributing animals with human attributes we not only reject Descartes belief that animals do not have souls, but we also reject our superiority and acknowledge the animal in us. This is very much in line with Jean-Paul Sartre's stance that the self exists only in relation to others; thus, our human self exists only in relation to the animal self. We define our self, our being, according to animals, but we also define the self of animals, their being according to us. Such reasoning is circular and calls for a new way of reasoning, a new way of defining our human self.

The limit between the animal and the human

The distinction between the animal and the human self has been a growing subject of many contemporary philosophers as well, such as the German philosopher Helmuth Plessner, the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben and the French philosopher Jacques Derrida.

In his work *The Open. Man and Animal*, Agamben rethinks a classic topos of Western metaphysics: the relationship between man and animal. He rejects any kind of censorship regarding the question of the relationship between man and animal, because he thinks that censorship does no good. Censorship will actually do more harm and produce irreducible indistinctness between man and animal. The solution for Agamben lies in overcoming the anthropological machine, the anthropological machine being "a description of the dichotomy between man and animals in the form of a working entity, the machine" (Thrown into the World 2013). Agamben even states that there are two types of anthropological machine, one modern and the other pre-modern. The modern one creates the non-human by zoomorphising the human, while the pre-modern one creates the non-human by anthropomorphising that which is animal (Agamben 2001, 113). In the end, both are unacceptable to Agamben and he finds that only overcoming the anthropological machine will stop circular reasoning and free man and animal alike from mutual captivity (Agamben 2001, 114). By disabling the differentiation between animal and man, man is saved from the dichotomy between the animal and the human as well as from the dichotomy between heavenly and earthly nature.

In contrast, Derrida, in his The Animal That Therefore I Am, does not go into specific details about the distinction between man and human, though he does address the problem. He asks himself who he is after he is seen naked by his cat. To him the

cat is not inferior but is animal-other with its own point of view. In his own way he breaks with the Aristotelian tradition of the animal by rethinking the limit between animal and man and suggesting that new words should be used when addressing this problem. Like Agamben, Derrida sees no solution in deleting lines between man and animal, as many other activists do. He sees the solution in multiplying them, making "limitrophy" – i.e. limits – his subject. Derrida protects animal-others from anthropocentric homogeneity, but also from the reduction to Descartes's "animal machine" (Bruns 2008, 416).

Plessner's work, meanwhile, does not deal so much with how to solve the problem of the limit between man and animal, as he actually defines levels of the organic and speaks of the human dichotomy between heavenly and earthly nature. Though his stance is somewhat in conflict with Agamben's and Derrida's, it came first and rests on Plessner's innovative principles of philosophical anthropology – "the study of the nature of individuals through their experiences" (Britannica 2015).

In his theory of existence he differentiated humans from animals. For him, plants have utterly open self-expression and they have no ability to express their preferences regarding their environment. Animals, however, know their own borders and are pressed back within them, thus constantly limiting their expression. Finally, humans alternate between open and closed intentionality. We have these borders and we are these borders.

The question of man

Plessner's theory of existence and his whole philosophical anthropology lies on the specific socio-politic ground of the 1920s. Both Plessner's and Max Scheler's philosophical anthropology was created as an expression of the crisis of the bourgeois world, its culture and its philosophy (Plessner 1981, 441). However, intriguingly, Plessner breaks with the Platonic-Christian tradition as well as with the Cartesian tradition of understanding of the world and man.

It seems that Plessner's philosophical anthropology was created at the very beginning of breaking with classic philosophical theories, but also the very beginning of efforts to bridge the institutionalised gap between science and philosophy. This is why Plessner started rethinking the philosophical, scientific as well as human pasts (Plessner, who was born in 1892 and died in 1985, lived in a highly science-oriented society, so it is not entirely strange that he took this difficult task upon himself.

The problem itself is still relevant even today, as we have seen Agamben's rethinking of limits between man and animal. However, at the root of the controversy between the humanities and science lies a more relevant question: the question of man. Who

is he? How can his being be defined? This is an old question that has existed from the beginning of our time. Philosophy tried to answer the question as well as religion did and later science, but it seems that every philosopher, every religion and every scientific theory has its own answer to the question.

Themes (revisited)

This section, as mentioned before, closer look at the themes will take place, linking them, and the short above overview to, *Life of Pi*. The themes – anthropomorphism, religion and science and self-perception – brought up interesting issues *Life of Pi* deals with. The short overview provided a specific philosophical background for the issues and the following section investigates the connection between themes, philosophical background and *Life of Pi*.

Both dualism and the theory of evolution have a special place in Life of Pi. The distinction between mind and body is present throughout the novel mainly as a basis for the evolutionary approach to the division between man and animal, but also as a basis for each of the three religions present in the novel. The criticism of dualism is therefore never direct, but conveyed through the criticism of the traditional man-animal division, the criticism of anthropomorphism and, finally, the criticism of the distinction between scientific and religious self-perception.

Life of Pi shows a great understanding of the theory of evolution and the hierarchy presented through it. It is this knowledge that allows for the criticism of the traditional superiority of man and inferiority of animals. As we have seen in the overview of the novel, Pi's father knows very well the nature of each and every animal in his zoo. In his tour of the zoo, Pi recalls a scene in which his father used the guinea pigs, the only other animal besides the tiger to have been starved at his orders, to show him that:

> "You see these guinea pigs?"
> "Yes, Father."
> The creatures were trembling with weakness as they frantically nibbled their kernels of corn.
> "Well…" He leaned down and scooped one up.
> "They're not dangerous." (Martel 2012, 50)

The guinea pigs make for a humorous example, but they are also a way of softening the lesson the father is giving Pi (or, perhaps, contrastively showing the dangers represented by the other animals). That said, every joke has an underlying hidden truth. What the guinea pigs joke teaches us is that every being, be it human or animal, has its own nature. Animals and humans alike differ among themselves.

Unlike most visitors and people around him, the father treats animals with respect, acknowledging their nature as their deserved right and nothing out of the ordinary. This is partly because of his knowledge of the theory of evolution and partly because of the fact that animal-others, if we borrow the term from Derrida, are our fellow animals, neither superior nor inferior to us. The other reason Pi's father acknowledges the animal-others as he does is because of the fact that he does not look the other way when it comes to human nature. He knows that we are also animals and that we are capable of great brutishness. What is more, Pi's father not only acknowledges animal-others nature and sees human nature as it is, he is also aware of the fact that most people do not see this as such and that because of this denial of our nature, we are the most dangerous animal of all:

> We [zookeepers] commonly say in the trade that the most dangerous animal in a zoo is Man. In a general way we mean how our species' excessive predatoriness has made the entire planet our prey. (Martel 2012, 38)

By acknowledging animal-others' nature and respecting it, and by stating the obvious yet neglected fact about deepness of human brutishness, Pi's father went against the traditional superior position of man.

Another strong criticism in *Life of Pi* mentioned before and revisited here in light of the articulated philosophical background is the criticism of anthropomorphism. As we have seen, anthropomorphism serves as a special way of defining our human self. However, this kind of reasoning leads to circular reasoning, diminishing the importance and value of animals and their nature.

Pi's father conveys the same criticism of anthropomorphism and warns Pi about the possible danger of approaching animals in such a manner. Although he speaks openly about human brutishness, he also speaks and respects animal "brutishness". His stance is that what is animal remains animal and that it will always act according to its nature, and we would be misguided to think otherwise. Forgetting animal's real nature and attributing it with a human one is dangerous both for us and the animal, especially because we are attributing it with a human nature we ourselves are incapable of accepting for what it truly is.

Pi's investigations of three different religions and his ever-growing love for any kind of spirituality gives us a fair insight into another machine of self-perception. The theory of evolution is one machine and spirituality is another. Through spirituality Pi discovers the human possibility for greatness and love. Spirituality teaches us to strive for the best – to strive to live according to, as Aristotle would put it, superhuman virtue rather than brutishness. It shows us the side that we, as humans, have always been too afraid to explore on account of its utter greatness.

In today's society this way of thinking about the human self is generally discarded as overly traditional and outdated, but *Life of Pi* speaks of both the religious, traditional concept of man, and modern, scientific concept of man. By doing so, it not only teaches about two different approaches to such concepts, but builds a basis for the criticism of the distinction between science and religion.

In dual self-perception lies the answer to the ever-growing gap between science and religion. *Life of Pi* teaches us that there are two ways of defining our human self, and each has its pros and cons. That is why some middle ground between the two is necessary, according to *Life of Pi*. If we truly want to perceive our human self in all its greatness, then we must accept both approaches.

Science teaches us about our body, how it came to be, what it is capable of and how it affects our behaviour. In contrast, religion teaches us about greatness and how we should always strive for it. The two seem irreconcilable, but Pi takes both and combines them into his unique perception of his human self. Being strongly grounded and acknowledging the wide span of human nature – but at the same time seeing that there is more to human nature than pure genes and animal instincts – is what frees us and gives us long lost freedom of open life. As Pi notes after having landed on the coast of Mexico:

> I was truly alone, orphaned not only of my family, but now of Richard Parker, and nearly, I thought, of God. Of course, I wasn't. This beach, so soft, firm and vast, was like the cheek of God, and somewhere two eyes were glittering with pleasure and a mouth was smiling at having me there. (Martel 2012, 383)

The criticism of dualism through the criticism of the traditional division between man and animal, the criticism of anthropomorphism and, finally, the criticism of the distinction between scientific and religious self-perception all lead to the conclusion about the true position of man and his human self. It is the position that lies halfway between a scientific and a religious approach to self-perception.

However, this position is the position that Plessner finds problematic. According to him, this middle position is the position that leaves a man without a home, or, put differently: man is forever lost between two worlds. His self is elusive to him. The position is problematic to Plessner since, according to him, man is trapped between two worlds, paralyzed – though if we look at this trapped-ness as Pi does, it is not problematic at all. To Pi we are not trapped between two worlds. The worlds are part of us, both of them. The position is not so much between the two worlds as it is the point at which the two worlds collide – the contact point.

Philosophers see the answer to this in combining philosophy and science. In applying a philosophical approach where the scientific one reaches the dead end. This way of

thinking can be extended to the humanities in general – to reconcile the growing gap between the sciences and the humanities in order to gain a fuller understanding of the world around us and our self. Therefore, it is not strange that Pi advocates the reconciliation of science and religion.

Yann Martel said, when asked about his intentions of writing *Life of Pi*, that reality is not only one, and that according to this there are also different interpretations of reality, or, as Pi puts it, "The world isn't just the way it is. It is how we understand it, no? And in understanding something, we bring something to it, no?" (Martel 2012, 405).

Science is one interpretation of reality, philosophy another, and religion a third. And these are not only interpretations of reality; they are also interpretations of our self. If we want to break the anthropological machine as Agamben stated, we first have to reconcile different interpretations of our self. Only by doing that will we get a chance to define our self and this is exactly what *Life of Pi* teaches us through its rehabilitation of spirituality.

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Deconstructing Indigenous Feminism: A View from the Other Side

Déconstruire le féminisme indigène : une vue depuis l'autre côté

Marija Glišić Dunović

Abstract

The paper addresses key concepts of Indigenous feminism and the phenomenon of the female marginal *Other* seen in the fiction and non-fiction works presented by distinguished Canadian female authors in postmodern, racial and women's studies. They have shared their intimate memories and personal impressions on the experience of being women surrounded by the social constraints of racism, sexism, and ethnic oppression.

A contemporary Indigenous woman and her female public voice are examined through conventional postmodern and post-colonial notions of archetypal femininity, motherhood, and *red womanhood* stereotypes. Native understanding of the postmodern phenomenon of *cultural hybridity* as fragmented and fluid female identity is presented in connection with the perception of Indigenous gender roles. Indigenous feminism promotes reconceptualization and prefiguration of an ingrained vision of Aboriginal female identity. Pursuing sexual and ethnic liberation, the Indigenous woman is articulating her feminist native speech.

Keywords: woman, the *Other*, identity, ethnicity, feminism

Résumé

L'étude aborde les concepts clés du féminisme indigène et du phénomène de la femme marginale "autre" vus dans les œuvres fictionnelles et non fictionnelles proposées par d'éminentes femmes canadiennes, auteures des études postmodernes et raciales ainsi que par les femmes qui partagent leurs mémoires intimes et leurs impressions personnelles sur l'expérience d'être une femme entourée par les contraintes sociales du racisme, du sexisme et des oppressions ethniques.

La femme indigène contemporaine et sa voix publique féminine sont examinées à travers des notions postmodernes et postcoloniales conventionnelles empreintes de l'archétype de la féminité et de la maternité, ainsi que des stéréotypes de la *féminité rouge*. La compréhension indigène du phénomène postmoderne d'*hybridité culturelle* appliquée à l'identité féminine fragmentée et fluide est présentée en regard d'une perception des rôles du genre autochtone. Le féminisme autochtone promeut des préfigurations mythiques du rôle de la

femme indigène et de la reconceptualisation de l'identité de celle-ci dans la poursuite de sa libération sexuelle et ethnique par l'articulation de son discours autochtone.

Mots-clés : la femme, l'autre, l'identité, l'ethnicité, le féminisme

Introduction

Throughout history, Aboriginal women in Canada have been fighting multiple opponents: male colonizers, white females, Indigenous men and, above all, the passive stance of other Indigenous women. Therefore, forming the Alliance of Indigenous[1] women and integrating it with the non-Indigenous female collectives is a feminist imperative.

A new preternatural synergic world of bipolar oppositions, hierarchy, patriarchy, ethnic nationalism, sexism, globalism, and consumerism, predisposed the destiny of Indigenous women. Still, Aboriginal women persisted in validating their Indigenous female cultural experience by articulating authentic community and personal voices in the literary outlet. Harmony of native[2] being is vocalized in the orature and literature, which implies an ongoing construction and reconstruction of the Indigenous natural feminine essence of identity. A fundamental constituent of female indigeneity in the literary world is aimed at ascertaining the existence of resistance literature.

Postmodernist and post-colonial feminist frame

Cultural hybridity attains an entirely new meaning in the context of Canadian historical experience. When white people conquered the New World, they wrongly named it, thinking they had landed on the Indian subcontinent. Colonizers also carelessly disregarded differences within nations, using one common denominator for all the peoples they had encountered. To the newcomers, the scene and autochthons they had seen seemed primitive since Native Peoples did not use the wheel or because most of them were illiterate.[3] However, in matrilineal societies (Hopi, Iroquois, etc.)

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1)   The expression "Indigenous" is globally accepted to denote distinctiveness of Aboriginal cultural groups with reference to specific nations.

2)   The nonexclusive term "Native" will be used to encompass the overall Aboriginal population targeted by white cultural male domination.

3)   Indigenous illiteracy is here mentioned as exemplary colonizers' preconception. The colonists, superficially, failed to notice the existence of Indigenous literacy. Some of the Native Peoples, like members of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek (Muscogee), and Seminole), wrote a letter that was created by the Cherokee Chief Sequoyah, which was first printed in *Phoenix* magazine on 21st February 1828.

women were respected and empowered in tribal decision-making. Indigenous women were traditionally influential and authoritative what had not been detected in the European patriarchal world of male dominance. Beverly Jacobs, a former NWAC president, and Mohawk activist indicates that:

> Women were respected for their spiritual and mental strength, and men were respected for their spiritual and physical strength. Women were given the responsibility of bearing children and were given the strength and power to carry that responsibility through. Men had always respected that spiritual and mental strength and women respected the men's physical strength. There was always a balance between men and women as each had their responsibilities as a man and as a woman. (2008: 35)

Instead, the colonists made an agenda to "civilize" the "brute" up to their European model. The settlement entailed a European system of values that ruined the native social structure. As Huhndorf and Suzak note:

> Although Indigenous women do not share a single culture, they do have a common colonial history. The imposition of patriarchy has transformed Indigenous societies by diminishing Indigenous women's power, status, and material circumstances. (2011: 4)

Purportedly, before colonization all Indian women were treated equally. Thus, all feminist inclinations tend to be regarded as exclusively "whitish." Moreover, the oxymoronic caption Indigenous feminism still implies the umbrella term of mainstream white feminism, which is again contradictory since it is not the prevalence of dominion of any kind, especially not white feminists', that is involved in the struggle of Indigenous females. Stated differently, if mainstream (predominantly white) feminisms exist despite sexist, racist and political obstacles, the point is, why is, then, Indigenous feminist articulation being questioned? To put it again differently: are mainstream and Indigenous feminisms complementary or contradictory trends?

Linda Hutcheon, in her essay "Circling the Downspout of Empire: Post-Colonialism and Postmodernism," questions the broad sense of multiple Canadian marginalities: "It is almost a truism to say that Canada as a nation has never felt central, culturally or politically" (1989: 154). Thus, for the Indigenous woman, quadruple marginalization occurs: Canadian marginality toward dominance of the British Empire or recently America; native marginality within a white Canadian society; native women's submissive role regarding white women, and submissive position of Indigenous women within the Aboriginal community in their relations with Indigenous men. While writing about Canadian colonial experience, Hutcheon adopts W. J. Keith's concept of the psychological effect of the colonial past (154). The drawn

conclusion depends on the stance in the dialogue with Canada' history ever since its establishment as a colony. If Canadian post-colonial culture is frivolously defined as a consequence of cultural imperialism in a Third World, the cultural attainment was differently positioned for the whites and the Indigenous inhabitants who were almost entirely conquered by the English language. Ironically, what is for the First World postmodern might, from a Third World perspective, seem post-colonial.

Prominent literary theorist Edward Said claims that nowadays the traditional concept of identity has been drastically changed, if not destroyed. Moreover, the notion of identity intermingles with sexuality, gender and ethnicity issues. Indigenous and Western perspectives of Indigenous gender concepts differ in their initial ideas. By following the examples from nature, North American Native Peoples embraced gender diversity as a universal creation of a divine totality. Native ethnic organization pristinely took this diverseness for granted and welcomed differences as a blessing. In contrast, Western superficial and simplified gender restrictions reduced gender variety to heteronomous binary oppositions judging the Indigenous gender roles as deviant and abnormal Otherness. The position of the dominant culture, unlike dominated Others, is a matter of legitimacy and power. The society is challenged by its historical heritage and will inevitably enter the period of uncertainty and forceful universal domination of the center (1993: 326–328).

In that early 19th-century milieu, a plurality of feminisms occurs and among many nuances of feminist tendencies, postmodern feminism inclined to ethnic and political discrimination criticism. Lee Maracle, a renowned Canadian Aboriginal author and First Nation activist, debates the situation of Indigenous women in the frame of reference of North American feminism, and proposes the approach of "decolonization in the feminine" (Morton, 1999:18).

Ethnic feminism thrust

Indigenous feminism as a theoretical concept is prone to contradictory interpretations especially because before the contact with white people, undeniable Indigenous female identity was axiomatically implied in practice, and thus there was no need for theorizing it. In her interview titled Theorizing Feminism and Postmodernity, Linda Hutcheon does not consider feminism just as a postmodernist appearance.[4] However, she uses a postmodernist critical tool of predetermined and static identity to develop her gender and racial theoretic contemplation on the "variety of political positions possible within the term of gender." She observes feminist discussions as "complex-

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4)   Linda Hutcheon recognizes and examines *feminism* not as a single ideology but a variety of *feminisms*, of movements with naturalistic and historiographical differences.

ified questions of identity and difference" (O'Grady, 1998: 20). Hutcheon reviews the complex strongly overlapped relations between post-colonialism and postmodernism, regarding all their significant formal, thematic and strategic differences. While post-colonialism professes a particular political agenda, and even though postmodernism is politically ambivalent, it is feminism that helps to foreground those differences. The very same term – i.e. post-colonial – implies the historical position within time. Moreover, it distinguishes a period before and after independence, casting the light on the difference between colonialism and post-colonialism and pointing out that the majority of the world is infected by its influence, either directly or indirectly. "Framed geographically and historically between two major Anglophone empires (past and present), Canada has experienced an odd amalgam of British and American influences and both have played their role in shaping our intellectual heritage" (O'Grady, 21).

For a better understanding of Indigenous feminism, this paper takes on the various perspectives on the issue of social and cultural marginality. The viewpoint is different from the Indigenous prospect on the one hand, and, on the other, from the "white" point of view (often defined as being non-Indian) (Hoy, 1997). Normative feminist definitions do not make the distinction between white women and women of color. However, since the 1990s Indigenous feminism implies that gender struggle is a critical practice for cultural identity, political autonomy, and decolonization.[5] In feminist theory, Indigenous feminism occupies a space for debating the Aboriginal women's role in Canada.

> We are part of a global movement of women in the world, struggling for emancipation. The world will define the movement. We are part of the women who will define it… I represent the future of the women in North America, just as any other woman does. That white women only want to hear from me as a Native and not as a voice in the women's movement is their loss…Who can understand the pain of this land better than a Native woman? The road to freedom is paved with the intimate knowledge of the oppressed. (Maracle, 1996: 137–139)

Maracle's book *I Am Woman: A Native Perspective on Sociology and Feminism* is regarded by some as being "too beautiful to be political" (Kelly, 1994: 82) – such as in the horrific story of tragic heroine Rusty, who is captured by her fear of life beyond oppressions. Maracle's mission is "empowerment work through writing and counseling" (73), to cure the fear of the whites and liberate the social and historical tension which locked Native Peoples in the apathy of their self-imposed era of segregation. Maracle suggests that the First Peoples establish a starting point and

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5)   As Lee Maracle sees it, colonialism has never been finished. It might have been coated in post-colonialism but in its classical detection it is still very lively and present. (Kelly, 1994: 83)

vivify an existing human connection with the white outer world and to follow the path of a trickster. Necessary in this regard is the constant spiritual growth and transformation within the native community (74). The role of the reformer should be brought to the daughters of the nation.[6]

Indigenous feminism understood as organization and process, gathers both men and women who are willing to speak out publicly about the issues of Indigenous women. The first specter they are fighting is the skepticism of Indigenous women toward feminism. The feminist postulate is to erase all the differences even though it proclaims a universal support for the oppressed. However, for women of color, a bone of contention adds sensitivity aura.

The other limitation of the Indigenous feminist theory is traditional justification of clan sexism. Whether inherited or adopted, sexism promotes gendered ways of colonial oppression style. Sexism is covered by colonial and post-colonial racism and must be observed in the symbiosis of the influences. Unfortunately, "Native women are very likely to be abused sexually and physically in their lives" (87). Thus, "to deal with the violence outside the home as well as inside the home" (87) is a must. As Maracle further writes,

> I have not found a Native man whose sexism extends to a white woman in quite the same way that it operates in our community. If we're sitting at the table and there's one white woman and four Native women and one Native man, very often the exchange will take place between the Native man and the white woman and there will be silence from the four Native women. Very often racism operates in our community and often sexism operates as internalized racism…Racism operates at the table of sexism. Now, when you have life inside the home then sexism is operative, it becomes operative on a personal level. Outside the home, the racism is operative. It just depends on where he's standing. I don't think those two things are separate phenomena in our communities. (80)

A possible reason for not having a plenitude of Indigenous feminist texts is that native feminist authoresses[7] mostly write in English, which is imposed on them by colonialism, and not in the languages of their national ancestry. Thus, the probability that the external white non-native reader will read feminist texts is considerably greater than expectations of encountering a native one. The literary audience is anatomy not mobilized by author's skin color, though.

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6)   Allusion to Maracle's novel *Daughters are Forever*.

7)   The term *authoress*, even though archaic, is a gender styled one. The perception that there are no notions on the Native feminist (male) authors, whose enunciation is warmly welcomed, does not match reality. However, because a key concept here is the native feminist role in Canadian society, the term will not be repeated. Moreover, Maracle is harsh toward men's prospect for change: "Men aren't very good in the realm of anti-sexism. Their intentions might be there, but they haven't done much anti-sexist work." (Kelly, 1994: 83)

Among significant additions to theorizing gender from the feminist Native women perspective, the studies *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions,* (1986) and *Off the Reservation: Reflections on Boundary-Busting, Border-crossing Loose Canons*, (1998) written by Native American critic Paula Gunn Allen are salient. North American native experience is determined by traditional ethnic, cultural and historical circumstances. The dissonance between national and established feminism is reflected in implied methods and expected goals. Allen tracks the hurdles in the monolithic designation of identity. Cultures and identities are in a constant flow, and hence female identity as a syncretic concept is prone to the interflow of socio-historical, political, economic, and ethnic currents, which define the native women's subject. Thus, Allen proposes the value of an ethnic, feminist methodology. Another famous theorist, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak notices the endurance of the existence of binary oppositions in feminism expressed as epistemological violence toward Third World authors. The reach of the minority writers positioned on the boundary is not accessible to the females who are overtly endangered. For Allen, feminism, in all its modifications, is the product of a dominant society, which is why it is not interested in and does not dare to reassess the patriarchal institutions (Allen 1986: 213). Moreover, the feminist focus is on gender issues, while the racial struggle is considered completed or notably accomplished. So, Gloria Anzaldúa promotes hybrid mestizaje identity:

> At the confluence of, two or more generic streams, with chromosomes, constantly "crossing over," this mixture of races, rather than resulting in an inferior being, provides hybrid progeny, a mutable, more malleable species with a rich gene pool. From this racial, ideological, cultural and biological cross-pollination, an "alien" consciousness is presently in the making – a new mestizaje consciousness, una conscience de mujer. It is a consciousness of the Borderlands. (Anzaldúa, 1987:77)

Both Allen and Anzaldúa are aware of their mixed origin: "Yet however, mixed in ancestry heritage and culture, we are all, all of us Indians, and have been 'off the reservation' at all times" (Allen, 1998: 6). Allen proposes a border theory, a new direction in North American ethnic studies. After crossing the border to *the Other* side of the incompatible world, the realm of freedom liberated from domination will be reached. In other words, one will reach a new world of inclusivity of contrasts and omnipresence of plurality:

> This body of work, literature that rides the borders of a variety of literary, cultural, and ideological realms, has not been adequately addressed by either mainstream feminist scholarship or the preponderance of 'ethnic' or 'minority' scholarship. However, in the past

decade a new field of study has emerged that resists definition by other critics that seems determined to define itself. This new field raises questions that mainstream feminist and 'ethnic' or 'minority' approaches fail to address and simultaneously begins to open before us new possibilities for inquiry. (166)

The predominant themes of native feminist writing are colonialism, sexism, and racism in North America. Maracle, who openly declares herself an Indigenous feminist (Maracle, 2015: 149), proclaims: "Some women accuse me of being angry and bitterly resentful about the life that this society handed me. You miss the point. I write about racism to free my mind" (Maracle, 1996: 138). For Maracle stories are therapeutic (2015: 158). She does not invent them. Somehow, stories find a way to her to be retold and heard. For Maracle, the ethnic revolution never happened in Canada and, as Jennifer Kelly confirms, "Tolerance isn't the movement…" (1994: 85) It is not the understanding of the white people that Natives are hoping for, but acceptance. To start the healing process, she suggests that whites and Indigenous Peoples start a necessary mountaineering journey in the menacing mountains of racism, sexism and nationalist oppression to rule out discrimination.

Acclaimed Indigenous author Maria Campbell, meanwhile, says, "I am not bitter. I have passed that stage. I only want to say: This is what is what like, this is what is still like" (Campbell, 1983: 9). Unlike Maracle, who addresses Aboriginal women, Campbell, dedicates her autobiography and a personal narrative *Half-Breed* to all non-Native Peoples: "I write this for all of you, to tell you what it is like to be a Half-breed woman in our country. I want to tell you about joys and sorrows, the oppressing poverty, the frustrations and the dreams" (1983: 2). If the world is a cruel place for Indians, for the Métis or Half-breeds it is hellish. On the scale of social marginality Half-breeds are the lowest of the low: "If the Indians are the Undesirable Other, the Métis are the Despised Other in Canada" (Lal, 1997:130). Métis are neither white nor Indians, and, according to Campbell, are certainly undesired in either community. They are seen as a consequence of the interaction between whites and status-Indians, and they occupy the minimal space in the history and territory. Campbell remembers that no whites ever visited them and in the church, even if they were allowed to attend the service, everybody was sitting on the other side of the room. Half-breeds fit nowhere and are accepted by no one. The quest for Métis female identity toward self-definition is a dangerous path of self-denial and rejections of the society through staggering into prostitution, alcohol, and drugs. Campbell is not telling a tale to amuse the readers. Her life-story is "unmelodramatic but poignant presentation" (131). Half-breed women have no friends, and in Campbell's reminiscence, the only light is her great granny Cheechum, the incarnation of hope and purity and a landmark in her self-discovery wanderings. For Campbell, the worst among her adolescence memories

were those scenes of brutality demonstrated by the "Half-breed" men. Halfbreeds were, unlike Indians, quick-tempered but easy to forget (1983: 25), whereas whites were expectedly and regularly brutal in their sexual, economic, and ideological exploitation. Campbell rejected the church and was skeptical about Christianity. Instead, in a search for salvation, she looks deeper within herself where it resides and where peace only survives.[8]

A feminist reading of Indigenous women's writing

Most contemporary native female writers share the reliance on oral sources, primarily the inspirational stories of women's ancestors in the family and community to whom the voice is given. Their fiction often contains autobiographical elements. Thus, they combine native oratory with the European story. In her monograph *Oratory: Coming to Theory*, Maracle clarifies that oratory is a theory presented through story (2015: 162–164). An Indigenous story humanizes theoretical framework by infusing an essential Canadian self into it (110). Moving toward a definition of the literary tradition of new realities from marginal to emergent implies that Indigenous literature is a component of postcolonial literary canon on account of the discursive, syntactic and semantic features of the bicultural "composite composition" (Krupat, 1985: 31). Procreation of a nation is inscribed into the awakening of Aboriginal articulation through orature and literature and, as Maracle claims, "I come from a speaking culture. I come from a culture that says words are sacred, and I have an obligation to my community as a woman" (Kelly, 1994: 87). The phenomenon of the restrictions within reservations creates the space for echoing imagination of silent voices as holy sound. Postcolonialism institutionalizes margins by exerting to convert "savages" to "civilization," hence replacing the "inferior" by a "superior" race, which often entails destroying ancient traditions of the Other. Differentiation has been one of the exclusions and the borderlines of Self and Other. However, Christianisation and an intrusive educational crusade did not coerce the Native Peoples to abandon their cultural values. For Maracle, a story is a foundation of culture (2015: 156). It is "the curious tension of cultural 'revelation' and cultural 'silence' " (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1989: 59) of the language that make a story.

To the Indigenous female authors, writing becomes a way they can generate not only the memory, but also the identity because, through remembrance, female writers establish a connection with the homeland of their ancestors – ancestors who are

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8)   The researcher, who is white and non-Indigenous and from the part of the world not directly being targeted by colonialism, even though the distant ranged imperialistic impact is unavoidable, tends to objectivize her position as an outsider. She resembles the stance of the narrator in the article written by Hoy Helen "Because You Aren't Indian": The Politics of Location in Lee Maracle's novel *Ravensong*" (1997).

a part of their cultural heritage, but also the connections to the contemporary society. Identity is a mystical category, and for its preservation Hutcheon suggest an implying of parody:

> "It seems that, as Canadians, women are often in the position of defining themselves *against* a dominant culture or discourse. One way to do that, a way with great subversive potential, is to speak the language of the dominant (which allows you to be heard), but then to subvert it through ironic strategies of exaggeration, understatement, or literalization. Parody is the mode that allows you to mimic that speech, but to do so through re-contextualizing it and therefore without subscribing to its implied ideals and values. "(O'Grady, 1998: 21)

Turning *the Other* into the Same, as Simon During views it, is improbable since subdued *the Other* can never speak for itself loudly enough to be heard (1987: 33). In the post-colonial discourse of resistance, *the Other* is able and must be allowed to speak. For Spivak, academic thinking always serves Western economic goals. Imperial rhetoric about *the Other* is formulated as a white, male colonial discourse talking to a white interlocutor and is less critical than hegemonic. It resembles feminist writing when it complies with the patriarchal academic conventions. The colonial project, which has been presented as a philosophical design, disregarded the Indigenous cultural roots and Aboriginal ethnic capacity. That thought was planted in Aboriginal Peoples' land and nourished by colonists' rhetoric, to be harvested to sustain the Western ideology. Beneficial for the Western writers, non-Western writers' urges are disregarded. The Western subject ostensibly scrutinizes a non-Western object. The plot is reduced only to the Western agent's performance, while the non-Western object is opposed and uncalled for. No, the subaltern cannot speak in the role-play where the West is directing the show (1994). However, as Bhabha claims, the content of articulation is not the only thing that matters but the place it is verbalized as well (Bhabha, 1990: 312).

In such a climate of female power on the fertile ground of feminism, the Indigenous stories blossom. Indeed, feminism itself brings all sorts of distortive conservative interpretations. Indigenous feminism is even more indefinable. What is unknown might seem chimerical, and thus ethnic feminism looks as if it is under-theorized or at least not explicitly defined. Indigenous feminism is a unique phenomenon shaped by post-colonial knowledge and rendered mostly throughout postmodernist male constructs. It is inseparably linked to colonization and violation of Indigenous women's human rights; it does challenge dominant discourses, often deconstructing them, but it rarely reconstructs. The occurrence of the driving current of Indigenous feminism within mainstream feminism engaged in the issues of national identity and decolonization requires the border crossing of disciplinary discussions. In the domain

of ethnic minority and feminist theory writing, Indigenous theorists are continuing to construe a political and social native feminist context to stop institutionalization of gender and racially discriminatory policies.

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Translating Methodological Considerations of Teaching Culture into Classroom Materials on East Asian Canadians

Transformer les considérations méthodologiques intervenant dans l'enseignement de la culture en matériaux pour la classe traitant des Canadiens d'Asie de l'Est

Judit Nagy / Mátyás Bánhegyi

Abstract

This study discusses some theoretical considerations with respect to teaching materials addressing cultural issues, and – in this context – outlines teachers' roles as cultural mediators and the implications of culture teaching for teaching English as a foreign language. Then it examines how these principles can be applied to the development of classroom materials on East Asian Canadians. The paper details the theoretical pillars used for the preparation of the worksheets presented in this study and describes the use of these teaching materials. Finally, the paper reviews the most relevant professional roles and attitudes associated with the work of educators teaching cultural content.

Keywords: cultural mediation, East Asian Canadians, teaching culture, teaching materials

Résumé

Cette étude aborde quelques considérations théoriques concernant les matériels pédagogiques traitants des questions culturelles et – dans ce contexte – décrit le rôle des enseignants en tant que médiateurs culturels et les implications de l'enseignement de la culture pour l'enseignement des langues étrangères. Ensuite, elle examine comment ces principes peuvent être appliqués à l'élaboration des matériaux pédagogiques sur les Canadiens d'Asie de l'Est. On va détailler également les piliers théoriques utilisés pour la préparation des feuilles de travail présentées dans cette étude aussi que l'utilisation de ces ressources pédagogiques. Enfin, on va considérer les rôles et attitudes professionnels les plus pertinents associés au travail des éducateurs enseignant le contenu culturel.

Mots-clés : Canadiens d'Asie de l'Est, l'enseignement de la culture, matériels pédagogiques, médiation culturelle

This teaching-oriented practical paper first describes theoretical considerations in connection with the methodology of developing teaching materials focusing on cultural issues different from the culture where these teaching materials are used, and then demonstrates how these principles can be applied to the development of worksheets about East Asian Canadians. Finally, the study outlines the most important professional roles and attitudes successful teachers of cultural information – in our case teachers using materials with Canadian cultural content – should assume and cultivate. Before embarking on the theoretical introduction, we wish to provide a definition of culture as used in the scope of this study.

From the perspective of the methodology of culture teaching, culture itself is problematic to define as it encompasses an extremely vast section of reality that can be presented to students. Neuner (2012, 21), however, offers a practical and methodologically suitable definition of culture which can serve as a reliable basis for designing teaching materials about cultural issues: "Culture in its widest sense can be understood as a specific way of thinking, acting and feeling about one's own actions and the actions of others. This includes conscious or underlying explanations of the world and one's own and other people's place within it. It also encompasses beliefs, faiths, ideologies and world views, which we call upon to assert reality, truths, values and ideas of good and bad."

As a next step, we wish to introduce some terms that are most frequently used in connection with classroom materials with a cultural content: interculturality, multiculturality and cross-culturality. According to UNESCO's *UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education* (UNESCO 2006, 17), interculturality is a "dynamic concept" referring not only "to evolving relations between cultural groups" but also to an "unstable mixture of [cultural] sameness and otherness" (Leclerq 2002, 6). In the context of culture teaching, this means that intercultural teaching materials focus on emerging or changing connections between different cultures and present diverse aspects of this issue. On the other hand, according to the same document (ibid., 17), multiculturality is largely concerned with the "culturally diverse nature of human society" and it follows from this that multicultural teaching materials aim to present the multicolouredness and diversity of human society in general, mostly bringing into focus similar cultural issues in different societies. Finally, the third term, cross-culturality, describes the study of certain cultural features in different cultures, usually for the purpose of making cultural comparisons. Teaching materials of this kind focus on a limited range of cultural aspects and primarily provide a comparative orientation towards addressing these issues.

As an obvious and almost cliché-like third point concerning culture teaching, it must be borne in mind that culture is inseparable from the group of people who

are members of that culture (Banks 1971): a people and their culture are born and undergo constant change. What is more, as a rule, humans tend to exhibit self-centred attitudes to culture and mostly begin their exploration of other cultures by regarding their culture as being superior to or more acceptable than other cultures. They therefore neglect cultural relativism (Banks 1971), which denotes the fact that what is considered normal in one culture can be deemed abnormal in another.

As far as culture teaching is concerned, it is significant to realise that teachers of cultural knowledge themselves are also members of a culture; furthermore, their role in, and their attitude to, culture teaching are crucial in terms of the formation of students' attitudes to culture. As well, it must also be noted that culture teaching is never purely about conveying cultural information but it is also about conveying cultural perspectives. In other words, teachers shed light not only on factual information but also on worldviews and value systems accepted in a given culture. In addition, it must also be remembered that culture teaching can never be culturally neutral as all aspects of human life are permeated by culture and thus innately contain culture-specific worldviews and value systems. For that very reason, it is highly important to adapt culture teaching to the local culture in which culture teaching actually takes place. This is the case because certain cultures may express hostility to certain aspects of other cultures or to the culturally inappropriate presentation of other cultures, which this way can induce enmity and hatred. In an attempt to combat such situations, some scholars, including Eldering and Rothenberg (1996), also focus on political power-related aspects of intercultural education ranging from "reality" (the actual ethnic, cultural and religious groups present in a society), ideology (public discourse about identity and culture), official policy (the officially accepted political approach) and this policy's practical implementation (the realisation of the political approach). In must also be added at this point that very often teachers promote social change through providing intercultural education as supported by the findings of Tiedt and Tiedt (2010).

When we discuss culture teaching, we must inevitably discuss its relation to foreign language teaching; after all, such discussions usually occur in the scope of foreign language learning, or in the context of learning something through a foreign language, when students are exposed to information about cultures different from theirs. With relation to this, it can be claimed that foreign language learning, on the one hand, and interculturality and cross-culturality, on the other hand, are in fact inseparable. The reasons for this are manifold. Basing themselves on Kramsch's claims (1991, 217), scholars are aware of the fact that "culture and language are inseparable and constitute one single universe", i.e. language shapes the perception of culture and culture shapes the perception of language. This suggests that, through learning a foreign language, students will also come to understand foreign cultures.

Furthermore, Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002) claim that learners' social identities are related to culture, which means that learners will interpret their world and the world of other cultures through the roles they assume in their respective culture, and this will also define their attitude and initial point of orientation towards other cultures. In addition, learners of foreign languages, whenever they use these foreign languages in question, are also cultural mediators in the sense that they not only communicate through cultures but they will inevitably tackle cultural differences when communicating successfully. For this, they necessarily need intercultural competence, which Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002, 10) define as the "ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities". In order to develop intercultural competence, students should "build encounters with other societies [using a commonly understood language as a means of communication] as opportunities for discovery and for inputs of knowledge and information" and, in addition, they should also provide "responses to those discoveries", while teachers should manage "learners' responses to those discoveries," as Beacco (2011) claims. In other words, with the help of teachers, students must be exposed to very different aspects and facets of a wide range of cultures through a foreign language, which practically means that learners acquire intercultural competence in addition to, and in the context of, language learning. Thus, it can be stated that, in the scope of language learning, language is in fact a means of developing intercultural competence.

Last but not least, it must not be overlooked that cultural learning is a never-ending process, be it in connection with one's own culture or with other cultures. This is so because cultures change around us and we keep track of such changes acting as members of our own culture and/or as observers of other cultures. In an ideal case, when exposed to appropriate culture teaching as part of language learning, students develop new and improved attitudes as well as critical thinking in terms of the presentation of cultural content in textbooks, in the media or elsewhere, and they thereby gain the necessary skills to become truly interculturally competent persons, which seems inevitable in our globalized world.

In the rest of the theoretical part of this paper, it will be clarified which three theories constitute the foundation for the worksheets on East Asian Canadians, to be presented below. Gay's (1988) theory of multicultural education, Wlodkowski and Ginsberg's (1995) theory of culturally inclusive classrooms and Gay's (2013) concept of culturally responsive teaching have been used for the preparation of the teaching materials as far as culture teaching is concerned. These theories will be described in more detail below.

Gay's (1988) theory of multicultural education emphasises that teaching materials should exhibit, depict and explore cultural pluralism. This suggests that those aspects

of culture that have been selected for focalisation in students' worksheets should be presented in a way that culturally diverse viewpoints are offered in an attempt to avoid the presentation of monocultural or culturally incorrect perspectives. Furthermore, it is in the scope of such a presentation that cultural viewpoints other than those of mainstream culture and less typical cultural topics – such as multifunctional urban living spaces of minorities and less typical urban cultural lifestyles, owning a convenience store, cf. below – are dealt with so that a culturally neutral approach to these subjects and topics can be accommodated.

The second theory observed during the design of the worksheets was Wlodkowski and Ginsberg's (1995) theory of culturally inclusive classrooms, which is built on the concept of celebrating similarities and discovering differences. In other words, this theory is based on the comparative analysis of cultures, whereby cultural similarities are revered and honoured, while cultural differences are esteemed and treated as an asset. This theory advocates in-depth development of students' commitment to understanding and exploring cultural differences.

The third theory the worksheets rely on is Gay's (2013) concept of culturally responsive teaching, which is primarily concerned with making learning as culturally applicable and appropriate with reference to the students' cultural experience and everyday lives as possible. As Gay (2013, 49–50) explains, "using cultural knowledge, prior experiences […] of ethnically diverse students to make learning […] more relevant". This in practice means and aims to realise the following:

1. What is learnt at school is connected to life and living outside the school, which teaches students to apply and put into practice the cultural knowledge they learn in class.
2. Cultural differences are considered assets. In other words, cultural differences are deemed an invaluable classroom resource to exploit for the purpose of cultural learning and advancement.
3. Culturally different individuals and heritages are valued. This attitude celebrates and cherishes cultural differences with respect to peoples and their culture.
4. Developing social consciousness of one's own and other cultures. This approach advocates raising cultural awareness of students' own cultures and facilitates their cultural sensitisation towards other cultures.
5. Filtering cultural content to promote learning. Rather than functioning as a kind of censorship, this means selecting those pieces of cultural information for presentation to students that successfully introduce the target culture to the given student group and, at the same time, make this culture appealing to students without compromising cultural content and without manipulating students' perception of the culture presented.

6. Promoting cooperation and collaboration among students, which is essential not only for encouraging cultural understanding in general but also for exploring yet unknown cultures and for enhancing cultural openness.

In the next part of the paper, the module Convenience Store Project, which has been developed on the basis of the above principles and centers around individuals from the Korean-Canadian community, will be described in detail.

In the introductory part of the module, students are invited to answer a set of personalized questions regarding life at a convenience store (Figure 1). The aim of this activity is to provide students with ideas on the lifestyle store-owner families lead, and to elicit a comparison of this lifestyle to that of their own.

1) What would your daily routine be like?
2) What kind of jobs would you have to do regularly?
3) What kind of products do convenience stores sell? Make a list.
4) Do you think it would be an easy job to work at your own convenience store? Why? Why not?
5) Who would be your typical customers?
6) What kind of dangers would you be exposed to?

Figure 1: Introductory questions

The discussion of the questions on the question sheet is carried out in small groups, which is followed by the assigned spokespersons' reports on the findings of their group. (Question 3 can also form the subject of a vocabulary contest and thus can be discussed separately from the rest of the questions.)

At the next stage, students are presented with a quotation sheet (Figure 2), which contains excerpts from a Korean-Canadian writer, Ann Y. K. Choi's reminiscences of her childhood.

To ensure familiarity with the vocabulary of the text, which is fundamental to students' considering the implications of the writer's thoughts and feelings, the comprehension questions are preceded by a vocabulary activity focusing on those items which are indispensable for the understanding of the excerpts (Figure 3). Once students have guessed the meaning from the context in pairs and matched the highlighted items with the listed definitions, they will answer the comprehension questions regarding the excerpts (Figure 4) in groups.

"No matter where I go, people know a Korean family that owns a variety store."

"Koreans lived all over because we lived above our variety store. You can't have **a cluster of** variety stores, they are **scattered** everywhere. It allowed us a unique position to **tap into** different Canadian communities, but it also scattered us [...] because we are all over the place and it's hard to get together."

"There is so much that happens behind the counter. People come into the store, buy the milk and buy the bread, and they leave, whereas we're **stuck**, we're chained there. It's almost like the store is - not a monster [...] - but it demands to **be fed**."

"[I remember] the number of times we were robbed or watching my mother be **harassed** by customers, having customers coming in to complain and having to **navigate** those discussions. It can be emotionally **devastating** at times."

"[But] no matter what happens, you have to **hold your chin up** and see possibilities. There are always opportunities if you [...] accept that they are there."

Source: http://www.cbc.ca/books/2016/05/ann-yk-choi.html

Figure 2: Ann Y. K. Choi's reminiscences of her childhood

— to be given food:
— not being able to move from a place:
— a small group of
— causing a severe shock, destructive
— to be disturbed, bothered
  or hurt by someone

— to remain cheerful in spite
  of difficulties
— lead in a clever, diplomatic way
— be widely spaced
— become friendly with, gain access to

Figure 3: Definitions to match the highlighted vocabulary items

The excerpts in question, presented in Figure 2, are chosen in a way that they reflect upon various aspects of convenience store ownership within the Korean diaspora: the ubiquity of the experience, shop and abode – thus work and family – being inseparable, the diasporic isolation of the shop-owner families, how the store has been binding these families, crimes and customer complaints they have been exposed to, and their emotional response to their host-cultural environment. Not only do the comprehension questions help channel students' attention towards these aspects, but they also facilitate comparisons through informal, small-group discussions involving students' own social and family background.

1) According to the text, are there many Korean variety stores in Canada?
2) Where did Korean variety store owners usually live in the old days?
3) Were these stores close to each other? Why?
4) What is the advantage and the disadvantage of this arrangement?
5) Why does the writer say that you need to 'feed' the store?
6) What challenges are there in someone's life who works at a variety store?
7) What do the expressions **navigate those discussions** and **emotionally devastating** mean in the sentences above?
8) Is the text optimistic or pessimistic? Why?

Figure 4: Comprehension questions

As an extension to the group discussion, for eliciting further reflections on these issues, students can listen to the CBC interview with Ann Y.K. Choi about her family background and her reminiscences of her family's convenience store,[1] which is also a useful means of exposing students repeatedly to convenience store-related vocabulary.

The first part of the Convenience Store Project module concludes with a picture description activity, providing an opportunity for students to revise the words and expressions of the previous activities through guided, and then free, practice, at the same time also extending their convenience store-related vocabulary with items such as 6/49 or ATM. In turn, small groups of students present photos they have taken of a particular convenience store in their own country, introduce the range and selection of goods and services available there, and discuss their convenience store-related shopping habits.

The second part of the module builds on putting students' collective problem-solving skills to use. Working in small groups, students are instructed to piece together lines of a dialogue featuring problems at the convenience store (Figures 5a and 5b). The shorter dialogue (Text A) will go to student groups at a lower level of English proficiency, and the longer one (Text B) to those at a higher level. Once the groups have put the lines in place, they are invited to brainstorm on solutions for the given problem. Next, they will be paired up with a student from the other group and they will be asked to share their story and the proposed alternative solutions to the problem. This phase will be followed by small group discussion of customers' complaints and shop-related crime drawing on students' own experience as well as on news reports. If a group is open to internet research, they can collect further examples just as they can devise solutions to the problems mentioned by their peers.

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1) The recording is available at http://www.cbc.ca/books/2016/05/ann-yk-choi.html.

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Text A

Janet: **I, I can't sell you any more eggs, Mr. Petrenko. (1)**

Janet: It's not racist. I mean, look, I just sold you a dozen eggs, and then I watched you walk outside and throw them at a cyclist, a cab, and a streetcar. (2)

Janet: The streetcar thinks it's better than you? So, you already heard. I'm not selling you any more eggs. (STAMMERING) Is there anything else I can get for you? (3)

Mr. Petrenko: Nope. (4)

Mr. Petrenko: Well, that's because they think they're better than me. (5)

Mr. Petrenko: Well, that's racist. (6)

Figure 5a: Problems at the store: customers' complaints

Text B

(DOOR BELL JINGLES)

Young man: **Hands on the counter! Open the cash and give me the money. (1)**

Janet: Appa made the deposit before dinner. (2)

Janet: Can you open the till? The big button. (3)

Jung: Got it. (4)

Jung: Hey, it's okay, it's just my sister. I know you don't want to hurt anyone. (5)

Jung: I'll give you 50 bucks for the knife. (6)

Jung: There's only like 50 here. (7)

Jung: You came in here selling a knife. I bought it. I paid 60 for the knife. (8)

Young man: 50 bucks? Hey. (9)

Young man: Hurry up! (BUTTONS BEEPING) (10)

Young man: Only if I get what I want. (11)

Young man: What? (12)

Figure 5b: Problems at the store: robbery

With the help of one or two-minute clips from Episode 4 Season 1 of the CBC Series *Kim's Convenience*, which is based on Ins Choi's play of the same title, the third part of the module offers a glimpse into the ordinary life of a Korean-Canadian convenience store-owning family, the Kims. The clips feature the visit of Janet's Korean cousin, Nayoung, and aim at showing the cultural differences between Koreans and Korean-Canadians.

Student groups are given a few minutes to read the questions to go with each clip (Figure 6), and, upon watching the clips twice, they will answer short and specific questions connected to the viewed content. After every clip, students exchange information within their group regarding the questions and put together their

answers, which stage will be followed by the discussion of two more general and abstract issues, for which the questions can be found at the bottom of the sheet.

Clip 1	Nayoung's Clothes (1:46–2:51)	Why is Janet's mother looking for clothes for Nayoung? What is her opinion about the girl's dressing style? Why is Janet upset?
Clip 2	Nayoung arrives (4:10–6:05)	What are your first impressions of Nayoung? What does Nayoung look like? Do you like her clothing style? What present does she bring over from Korea? Would you like to get a present like that? What do you think Janet, Umma and Appa think of her? Do you like Nayoung? Why? Why not?
Clip 3	Trouble at the Restaurant (10:07–11:25)	Why does Janet's friend want Janet to smile? What do you think "fighting" means? Does Janet know how Korean people eat the dish? Has Janet been to Korea? Does Janet know how to speak Korean? How do you think Janet feels at the restaurant? What makes Nayoung cry?
Clip 4	Reconciliation (18:27–20:00)	How does Janet feel about what happened earlier? How does Nayoung feel? What kind of present does Janet give Nayoung? Why? Why do you think Janet offers her to take a picture of them and the picture?

1) What kind of person do you think Janet expected to see when Nayoung arrived? Was she right in her expectations? How would you have reacted in Janet's place?

2) What do you learn about Korean culture through the four clips?

Figure 6: Nayoung's visit from the CBC series *Kim's Convenience.*

The clips also possess a very rich language content, which will be harnessed in activity 3b, which focuses on Korean immigrants' English knowledge (Figure 7), the way young people communicate (Figure 8) – which actually helps establish a bond between Nayoung and Janet – and the explanation of some idiomatic expressions used by Canadians (Figure 9).

*Help Janet's mother with her English. Correct the following lines in the conversation
and write them below the original lines.*

Janet: Umma, what's going on?
Umma: Oh, your cousin Nayoung, she come all the way from Korea. She need Canada
clothes.

Janet: Did they lose her luggage?
Umma: No. Where your turtleneck?

Janet: Umma, I haven't had a turtleneck since …
Umma: Oh, you still wear this?

Janet: It's a blanket, Umma. What's going on?
Umma: You cousin, Nayoung. She very nice, but she not wear enough clothes. She, you
know, Korean style girl.

Janet: What does that mean? There's a lot of Korean girls and a lot of Korean girl styles.
Umma: She dress too much like a … What's the word… Slut.

Janet: Did you just call Nayoung a slut?
Umma: No! I say she dress like slut.

Janet: She's super sweet.
Umma: Yeah, very nice, - still dress like…

Janet: Umma, do you listen to yourself?
Umma: I see her on Facebook. She wear very short skirt. And high heel shoes. Make her
short skirt look even more short.

Janet: Umma, you're judging her based on her clothes.

Figure 7: Janet's mother's English

As Umma's mistakes are quite basic, this activity can be done from pre-intermediate
level upwards. Furthermore, it is useful to revise the difference between the simple
and the continuous aspects before the correction starts.

The correction of Umma's mistakes is followed by a class debate on whether we can
judge people based on their appearance or language. The debate can be managed as

a moderated for-and-against type of activity prompting arguments from both sides. As a follow-up, students may work these arguments into a one-page argumentative text.

As an introduction to the task on emoticons, students will be asked about their own text messaging habits and the abbreviations they use while texting. Every group should present a few examples with their explanations provided. After the student groups have filled in the emoticon chart (Figure 8), they present their suggested emoticon meanings and their own favourite emoticon collection. At a higher level of English proficiency, emoticon-related theoretical issues can also be raised.

Janet gets the following text message from Nayoung: "Sad face, broken heart, waterfall, waterfall, waterfall, rain cloud, and Clapping monkey" *What do you think these emoticons mean? Can you make them on your mobile phone?*

Emoticon	Sign	Meaning
sad face		
broken heart		
waterfall		
rain cloud		
clapping monkey		

Can you add a few more emoticons to this collection?

Figure 8: Emoticons

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As an introduction to the last activity in part 3b on language, it is necessary to explain briefly what an idiom is, what inherent qualities it possesses, and how it may be culturally dependent. Also, from intermediate level upward, student groups can collect from the Internet other Canadian idioms, with their meanings, and they may work their collection into a multiple-choice puzzle (1 correct and 2 false meanings) for the other groups to guess in the classroom.

When students have filled in the missing words to find out about an idiom and its meaning (Figure 9) in the fourth clip, they will have a text in front of them which tackles an important issue: that of sameness and difference. Janet's realization "We don't need to be the same to be friends" can be a good starting point of a class debate on the role of sameness and difference in human relationships and in society.

In clip 4, Janet explains the meaning of an English expression to Nayoung. Fill in the gaps to get the full explanation and Nayoung's understanding of the situation. Each gap represents one missing word.

Janet: What? No! I'm the one who should be sorry. I was _____ _____ _____.

Nayoung: Adeline?

Janet: Oh! _____ _____ _____. There's an imaginary _____ and on this _____ is nice people, and _____ _____ here, that's me.

Nayoung: I just want to have _____ time together.

Janet: I know. It's just we're _____.

Nayoung: That's what I _____.

Janet: (LAUGHS) But sometimes, I forget that we don't need to be the _____ to be friends.

Nayoung: (LAUGHS) Eonni, I don't want to be _____ you! Right.

Figure 9: Idiomatic expressions

This part of the paper has introduced the module *Convenience Store Project*, and it has demonstrated how the principles detailed in the theoretical part can be translated into actual teaching materials for the English classroom on East Asian-Canadians.

As the presented tasks suggest, teachers' culture-related methodological knowledge to successfully negotiate the cultural challenges the discussion of these topics may entail is of vital importance. Thus, based on Chisholm (1994, 47), the final part of our paper describes those culture-related features that teachers effectively using cross-cultural and intercultural teaching materials share. Firstly, the teacher's role is no

longer to provide new knowledge only, but to act as cultural brokers, who "bridge [...] the cultural chasm and smooth [...] the cultural mismatch, thereby empowering students to succeed both academically and socially". Put differently, teachers prepare students for, and expose them to, experiences that are culturally new to them, help them understand and overcome such previously unknown situations and this way enable them to cope with challenges posed by work, studies or everyday life.

Secondly, teachers themselves should possess adequate cultural competence, which constitutes, as Chisholm writes, "the ability to function comfortably in cross-cultural settings and to interact harmoniously with people from cultures that differ from their own" (1994, 47). In other words, teachers should be culturally skilled enough to seamlessly communicate and cooperate with people from different cultural backgrounds, from which experiences they can learn a lot, and which attitude they can present to their students as positive and successful behaviour.

Thirdly, culture teaching should be done in a culturally reflective way, in the scope of which approach teachers "monitor, evaluate and revise their own teaching practices" (Irving 1990 qtd. in Chisholm 1994, 47) with reference to cultural contents, information and values. This approach stresses that teachers need to obtain and generate feedback about what and how they teach when it comes to teaching culture, and based on such feedback they should ideally modify the contents of their classes as well as the presentation methods and approaches they use.

It is firmly believed that, as long as teachers observe the above methodological guidelines, their teaching of cultural information will be culturally appropriate, authentically credible and effectively supportive. As a summary, it is highlighted that this paper touched upon theoretical considerations regarding cultural issues related to teaching materials, outlined teachers' role as cultural mediators and discussed the implications of culture teaching for foreign language teaching. It also described the theoretical pillars used for the preparation of the worksheets presented in this study and explained the use of these teaching materials. The paper then reviewed the most relevant professional roles and attitudes teachers of cultural information should exhibit. As a conclusion, it can be claimed that the above-described theoretical considerations and the student worksheets presented can serve as a potential starting point for the purpose of generating further research, and can provide an example to follow, thereby encouraging the development of similar East Asian Canadians related worksheets.

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Gertrude and Grace: Margaret Atwood's "Gertrude Talks Back" and *Alias Grace*

Gertrude et Grace : « Gertrude Talks Back » et *Alias Grace* de Margaret Atwood

Milena Nikolic

Abstract

The aim of this article is to explore the importance of language for the perception and construction of reality from the perspective of two of Atwood's main female protagonists, Gertrude from the short story "Gertrude Talks Back" (*Good Bones*, 1992) and Grace Marks from the novel *Alias Grace* (1996). Atwood's protagonists are the postmodern variants of women described in literary works by William Shakespeare and Susanna Moodie. In constructing her heroines, Atwood uses the technique of gender-oriented revisioning. We will try to point at many similarities that Atwood's Gertrude as the modernized opposite of Shakespeare's Gertrude bears with the cunning and assertive protagonist of *Alias Grace*.

Keywords: Shakespeare, Susanna Moodie, possible worlds, trans-world identity, power of language

Résumé

Cet article a pour objectif d'explorer l'importance du langage dans la perception et la construction de la réalité, plus spécifiquement dans deux textes de Margaret Atwood: « Gertrude Talks Back » (*Good Bones*, 1992) et Grace Marks du roman *Alias Grace* (1996). Les deux protagonistes féminines d'Atwood sont les variantes postmodernes des femmes décrites dans d'œuvres littéraires de William Shakespeare et Susanna Moodie. En construisant ses héroïnes, Atwood opère une révision du genre. Nous essaierons de souligner les nombreuses similitudes entre la Gertrude d'Atwood, conçue comme l'opposé actualisé de la Gertrude de Shakespeare, et le protagoniste futée et assertive du roman *Alias Grace*.

Mots clés: Shakespeare, Susanna Moodie, mondes possibles, identité transnationale, pouvoir du langage

Introduction

There are many questions regarding the character of Shakespeare's Gertrude, the beautiful queen of Denmark and Hamlet's mother: Was she complicit with Claudius in the murder of her husband? Did she love her husband? Did she love Claudius, or did she marry him simply to keep her high station in Denmark? Does she intentionally betray Hamlet to Claudius, or does she believe that she is protecting her son? She is not only one of the most enigmatic female figures in world literature but also the Everywoman whose voice is barely heard and whose turn to tell the story is left out in the fictional universe of many prominent authors. These are probably the main reasons why Atwood decided to make her alive again and give her a chance to speak for herself. But what kind of Gertrude are we introduced to in Atwoodian fiction? How is Shakespeare's Gertrude from the sixteenth century different from Atwood's Gertrude (*Good Bones*, 1992)? How is the historical figure of Grace, an Irish immigrant, a servant girl and a convict whose life story was told in *Life in the Clearings Versus the Bush* (1853) by the Victorian chronicler Susanna Moodie different from Atwood's Grace Marks (*Alias Grace*, 1996)? And finally, how is the patient and faithful Penelope, the wife of the hero Odysseus in Greek mythology, different from Atwood's twenty-first-century Penelope, whose version of the story is heard in *The Penelopiad* (2005)? What do Atwood's Gertrude, Grace and Penelope have in common?[1]

According to Lubomir Doležel's theory of possible worlds presented in *Heterocosmica: Fiction and Possible Worlds*, a postmodernist adaptation of a literary work forces the reader to analyze classical literature from a perspective based on new aesthetical and ideological postulates (Doležel, 213). Atwood's "Gertrude Talks Back" is a postmodernist adaptation of the character of Shakespeare's Gertrude.[2] Shakespeare's canonical fictional world is in constant dialogue with Atwood's literary work, which leads to the construction of a new, alternative fictional world full of ambiguities and uncertainties.

It is particularly interesting that Atwood's writing strategy enables readers to imagine that her main protagonist can simultaneously be in parallel worlds where

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1)   The character of Penelope from Atwood's *The Penelopiad* will not be discussed in this paper.

2)   Similarly, Atwood's *Penelopiad* is a postmodern adaptation of the mythical story of Odysseus and his faithful wife Penelope. Like Atwood's short story "Gertrude Talks Back" and the novel *Alias Grace*, *The Penelopiad* is a story told from her main female character's perspective. Atwood's Gertrude is a murderess, her Grace is the most practised liar, and her Penelope is "the most unfaithful wife" – "I led the suitors on and made private promises to some of them [...]Among other things, I used my supposed encouragement to extract expensive gifts from them" (Atwood, 2008: 76) Towards the end of the book, Penelope reunites with Odysseus and says that both of them were "proficient and shameless liars of long standing" (Atwood, 2008: 89). Given that her son, Telemachus, disapproved of his mother's potential marriage (she was getting "remorseful glances" from him), Penelope's Telemachus is seen as a parallel to Hamlet (Atwood, 2008: 60).

fiction and reality are in constant dialogue and where the truth, facts and lies are relativized without turning to a science fiction scenario. The theory of possible worlds insists on the idea that the existence and characteristics of fictional persons are independent of their real prototypes (Doležel, 28). However, fictional persons that have their own "prototypes" in the real world form a special semantic subclass within the class of fictional persons.[3] Doležel points at the particular bond that exists between "a historical Napoleon and all fictional Napoleons", and claims that fictional persons are connected with their real prototypes via their trans-world identity (Doležel, 29).

Very much in line with Doležel's theory of possible worlds, Atwood establishes a trans-world identity between the character of Moodie's Grace Marks and her own Grace Marks, since the fictional Grace Marks has her own "prototype" in the real world. Although we do not know for certain whether Shakespeare's Gertrude is a historical figure, we cannot ignore the possibility of her having a prototype in the real world. What we do know for sure is that she is a sixteenth century fictional creation that has been recreated through Atwood's twentieth century fictional lenses. Since the trans-world identity is established between fictional creations and all their fictional variants, the same pattern can be applied to Shakespeare's Gertrude and Atwood's Gertrude – two characters who share the same name as a signifier. However, it is important to stress that individuals do not need to have the same name in other fictional worlds so that we could be able to determine their trans-world identity. Moreover, they can have several names, aliases, nicknames or pseudonims (see Doležel, 28–30).

1. Gertrude

> Frailty, thy name is woman!
> (*Hamlet*, 3.2.148)

Taking into account the fact that Hamlet speaks more than half the text and that the action is viewed from his perspective in Shakespeare's play, we can hardly find any evidence for Gertrude's instinct of self-preservation and ability to act independently of men in her life. Instead, she rarely speaks, and when she does, says little, even in the "closet scene" in 3.4. Hamlet's lengthy monologues confirm the statement that the power of language is enormous and that it is usually in the hands of men – a fact that calls into question the whole concept of patriarchy and triggers many feminist issues. It is interesting to stress how language, if given to women, can transform the concept of reality based on traditional values and create another reality in which the focus of the reader's sympathy is on a potential murderess. Atwood's heroines – Grace

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3) For more information see the "triple-domain theory of individuals" see Rescher 69–70.

Marks and Gertrude – use this language potential and turn the prescribed gender roles upside-down.

In the "closet scene" Hamlet condemns his mother's behavior and urges her to repent for having chosen Claudius over his father, saying, "Mother, you have my father much offended" (3.4.10). He even places a mirror in front of her so that she can see her blemished image in it: "You go not till I set you up a glass / Where you may see the inmost part of you" (3.4.21–22). We can see from this scene that Gertrude plays the role of a submissive wife who addresses her husband as "my lord" and that she is afraid of what her son might do to her: "What will thou do? Thou wilt not murder me? / Help, help, ho!" (3.4.23–24). She lacks self-assurance, since her self-image depends on how she sees herself mirrored by men: "O Hamlet, speak no more. / Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul, /And there I see such black and grained spots / As will not leave their tinct" (3.4.95–98). Hamlet makes Gertrude believe that her actions fall short of her moral standards, and violate her concept of fair, decent behavior.

Gertrude's speech in this scene is limited to brief reactions to Hamlet's condemnation of her behavior such as "O, speak to me no more." Eventually, we witness how her resistance to Hamlet's accusations weakens due to his powerful rhetoric and her passive silence. She depends on powerful men and is easily dominated and influenced by them: "O, speak to me no more. / These words like daggers enter in my ears. / No more, sweet Hamlet" (3.4.103–104). Gertrude lacks self-assurance and determination, since she is unable to think critically about her situation and instinctively accepts seemingly safe choices.

Gertrude's position within Shakespeare's play points at the sexual morality of the period in which the play was written: women were supposed to reject/suppress their sexuality. Hamlet wants to "wring [her] heart" because she betrayed the king by marrying his brother, who allegedly killed him. After stabbing Polonius through a curtain without even checking to see who he is, Hamlet sees this gesture of his as "a bloody deed" but also adds that it is "almost as bad,[...],/As kill a king and marry with his brother" (3.4.28–30). He keeps condemning her for what he calls "an act that blurs the grace and blush of modesty,/Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose/From the fair forehead of an innocent love,/And sets a blister there, makes marriage vows/ As false as dicers' oaths" (3.4.45–50). She grows more silent and passive until she eventually agrees to take his part and help him: "Be thou assured, if words be made of breath/And breath of life, I have no life to breathe/What thou hast said to me" (3.4.213–215).

In Atwood's revised version, Gertrude is given the title role. According to Reingard M. Nischik, she is "the modernized polar opposite of Shakespeare's Gertrude", whose voice is being restored (Nischik, 2006: 158). There is a reversal in the basic speech situations. It is Hamlet who is now reduced to silence and Gertrude who is armed

with freedom of speech, (sexual) energy, self-confidence, lust for living and self-determination. She speaks freely about the king, her first husband, and Claudius, her second husband. The tone of her voice is assertive, straightforward, informal, ironic, sarcastic and almost offensive. Gertrude's version of the story offers another definition of female gender roles and unravels male control under the surface of so-called "morality". The status of women is altered in "Gertrude Talks Back", since the main female character is depicted as a representative of the twenty-first century woman – strong and independent – whose harsh words are aimed to keep her son in line. Her criticism and confession shocks the audience because of the contrast in her character in the original play.

Atwood's Gertrude uses humor to discredit Hamlet and his father. This is how she tries to eliminate the guilt her son tries to make her feel and reject his male construction of her. In the beginning of her monologue Gertrude claims that her husband's selfishness was the main motive for naming her son after him: "I ALWAYS THOUGHT it was a mistake, calling you Hamlet. I mean, what kind of a name is that for a young boy? It was your father's idea. [...] I wanted to call you George" (Atwood, 1997: 11). She reveals that young Hamlet had been given many nicknames at school and that terrible jokes with the allusion to the literal meaning of his name ('hamlet' being a diminutive of ham /pork/) had been made throughout his childhood.

Atwood's Gertrude is a sexually-oriented woman who openly proclaims her guilt and accepts responsibility for her actions. In Shakespeare's play, Hamlet wants to trigger a sense of shame and guilt in his mother so he places a mirror in front of to make her feel bad. In Atwood's version of the "closet scene" Hamlet is fidgeting with Gertrude's mirror, "the third one [he] has broken" (Atwood, 1997: 11). Hamlet is depicted as a diligent, responsible and neat student from Wittenberg in Shakespeare's play. In Atwood's short story we learn that he is a student of weird habits who lives in a "slum pigpen" and does not bring his laundry home often enough. Atwood treats Hamlet's bad habits with humor and exposes the side of him that makes him appear bland and unobtrusive, which further negatively affects his public image. In Shakespeare's play, Hamlet praises his father, claiming that he makes better marriage material than Claudius. He even makes his mother look at the pictures of his father and his uncle and asks whether she "has eyes" (3.4.28–30). In Atwood's version, she is not left without response. She accepts her son's challenge to compare both husbands by saying: "Yes, I've seen those pictures, thank you very much" (Atwood, 1997: 11). Self-confident Gertrude is not only satisfied with her image in the mirror but also does not depend on how she sees herself mirrored by men. She is in control of her decisions and her opinion is not easily influenced by her son's patriarchal (sic) accusations.

Atwood's Gertrude is not afraid to dismiss her husband on account of his sexual deficiencies. She claims that even though Hamlet's father was "handsomer than Claudius" he "wasn't a whole lot of fun" (Atwood, 1997: 11). This might be an allusion to the fact that he was a failure in bed – a thing that she particularly could not stand. She praises female sexuality, which men want to restrict; she appreciates Claudius's energy and freely admits that it is for sexual reasons that she chose to remarry. She also implies that Hamlet's attitude towards Claudius is the mere consequence of jealousy and average friction between a grown-up stepson and a newly-acquired stepfather: "By the way, darling, I wish you wouldn't call your stepdad the bloat king. He does have a slight weight-problem, and it hurts his feelings" (Atwood, 1997: 12). She advises him to find "a real girlfriend" and have "a nice roll in the hay" instead of being with the "touch-me-not-corset" girl (Atwood, 1997: 17). Gertrude humorously calls into question Ophelia's mental state, claiming that "any little shock could push [her] right over the edge" (Atwood, 1997: 12).

In Shakespeare's play, Hamlet stresses that Gertrude is no longer in the prime of life. However, Atwood's Gertrude seems to be more alive, energetic and sexually at ease than her son: "But I must say you're an awful prig sometimes. Just like your Dad" (Atwood, 1997: 12). She reveals that it was very difficult to live with her late husband, who strongly disliked "*The Flesh*": "And every time I felt like a little, you know, just to warm up my ageing bones, it was like I'd suggested murder" (Atwood, 1997: 12). In the end of her dramatic monologue, she makes another shocking revelation: it was she who murdered her husband, not Claudius. To quote the lines directly and in context:

> You think Claudius murdered your Dad? [...]
> It wasn't Claudius, darling.
> It was me. (Atwood, 1997: 12)

Atwood's Gertrude is also direct in another sense: she constantly breaks the wall of silence that surrounds the concept of sexuality by explicitly stating that it is her sexual energy that makes her feel alive and healthy. Also, the concept of morality does not play any role in Gertrude's life since she considers it another unnecessary and fragile social convention that limits people's minds and makes their lives dull and uneventful. Instead of defending a submissive wife and mother by stressing her softness and lack of independence in the male-dominated world, Atwood gives Shakespeare's character a striking comeback by depicting her as a woman who is beyond sexual or any other morality, who can state her opinions freely, who has control over her decisions and who is ready to deny her son the power to judge her.

In Shakespeare's play, Gertrude remains unresponsive to Hamlet's various accusations. Her silence adds a lot of ambiguity and confusion to the plot and has

led to many different interpretations of her character. In her fiction Atwood tends to create enigmatic female characters with complex, double and multiple identities. Her heroines are free to tell their version of the story in the manner that suits them. Atwood's Gertrude has been given the opportunity to contradict, defend and justify herself. The power of language and the right to speak from another perspective proved to be an efficient strategy that Atwood turned to in creating her Gertrude.

2. Grace Marks

In *Alias Grace,* Atwood reveals how the life story of the historical figure of Grace Marks, first presented in the historical account of one of the most prominent nineteenth century chroniclers, can get another turn if told from another (postmodern and feminine) perspective. In creating the enigmatic character of Grace Marks, the author not only gave her main protagonist the right to speak for herself but also to decide which information she would like to reveal/keep for herself. Indeed, as Atwood related in a personal interview, "*Alias Grace* deals with storytelling as another survival technique. Once upon a time is a very old narrative strategy dating from the Brothers Grimm's modified folk tales. In the twenty-first century this strategy proved to be working as well."[4]

The withholding of information as a traditional narrative ploy is the most striking characteristic that Atwood planted into her heroine: "What should I tell Dr. Jordan about this day?", Grace wonders, making the audience (readers) her confidants (Atwood, 1997: 273). In chapter forty-three, Grace seems to have decided what to tell: "I could say this [...]" (Atwood, 1997: 324). Soon afterwards she explains that her decision was influenced by Dr. Jordan, who "likes to hear about such things, and always writes them down" (Atwood, 1997: 324, 327). Focusing on the relationship between power and storytelling, Ellen McWilliams argues that Grace is "a progenitor of texts, both in the stories that she tells and in the stories that are told about her" (McWilliams, 94). Grace has been given the power to manipulate the language: she can invent, reveal, hide, tell the truth, tell lies, and mix historical fact and fiction. This strategy enables her to create and inhabit alternative worlds in which all different versions of her could exist at the same time.

We first learn about Grace Marks from the first Canadian female literary figure – Susanna Moodie. In her book *Life in the Clearings* (1853), Moodie portrays Grace as a woman who committed a double murder because she was jealous of Nancy Montgomery, the housekeeper and mistress of Thomas Kinnear, the man Grace had

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4)   The private conversation with Atwood took place during the Struga Poetry Evenings, which ran from 24–29 August 2016.

a passion for. When she visited her in the Lunatic Asylum in Toronto, she changed her opinion and said that Grace must have been deranged all along.[5] In her essay "Margaret Atwood and history", Coomi S.Vevaina stresses that Atwood paid homage to Moodie as "a literary foremother" by reconstructing her account of Grace's life story in an imaginative way (Vevaina, 92).

The imaginative way that Atwood chose in writing the story of Grace Marks was closely linked to the study of mental illnesses, which became very popular in the nineteenth century. Who is sane, who is not, and who is the one to judge? Atwood problematizes the concept of Grace's (in)sanity in her novel by treating madness as a theatrical element – something that Elizabethan playwrights learned from the Greek classics. Since the behavior of a mad person is never predictable, the level of suspense is always greater. In Shakespeare's plays, some characters are addled, some pretend to be mad, and some really go mad.[6] Was Grace really mad or did she pretend to be insane, as Dr. Bannerling had suggested, because she did not like "the strict regimen of the Penitentiary, where she had been placed as a just punishment for her atrocious crimes"? (Atwood, 1997: 54).

In her speech given at the Stratford Festival in September 1997, Atwood defined the nineteenth-century literary and dramatic madwoman as a hybrid of Ophelia and Lady Macbeth, a combination of innocence, blood and sexual guilt as a typical Victorian element. The typical Victorian madwoman appears in novels by Charlotte Brontë (Bertha's madness is presented as a hereditary trait in *Jane Eyre*) and Emily Brontë (Catherine's madness in *Wuthering Heights* is due to her marriage with the wrong man). In *Alias Grace* Atwood shows that Susanna Moodie's description of Grace Marks hits all of the expected Victorian notions of madness and melodrama. *Alias Grace* exposes Moodie's fondness for the vengeance-of-God theory, her belief in phrenology and her view of madness as a "malady". This occurs in chapter 6 of *Alias Grace*, where Atwood includes a short excerpt from *Life in the Clearings* in which Susanna Moodie expresses her view of Grace's condition:

> Among these raving maniacs I recognised the singular face of Grace Marks – no longer sad and despairing, but lighted up with the fire of insanity, and glowing with a hideous and fiend-like merriment. On perceiving that strangers were observing her, she fled shrieking away like a phantom into one of the side rooms. It appears that even in the wildest bursts of her terrible malady, she is continually haunted by a memory of the past. Unhappy girl!

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5)　Atwood's "In Search of Alias Grace" provides more information about Moodie's meeting with Grace in the Kingston Penitentiary, before the move to the Toronto Lunatic Asylum.

6)　Shakespeare made use of many forms of madness in his plays (in *Macbeth*, guilt causes Lady Macbeth to go mad; the hero becomes mad in *King Lear*; in *Hamlet*, Hamlet assumes madness and Ophelia goes mad due to thwarted love and the sudden shock upon realization that her father is killed by the person she loves).

> When will the long horror of her punishment and remorse be over? When will she sit at the feet of Jesus, clothed with the unsullied garments of his righteousness, the stain of blood washed from her hand, and her soul redeemed, and pardoned, and in her right mind? What a striking illustration does it afford of that awful text, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord!" (Moodie, 126)

Atwood stresses that Moodie saw the kind of madwoman she had been conditioned to see: Grace fitted into the frames of both the popular images of madness and the scientific explanations available at the time.

According to the historical records, Grace spent fifteen months in the Toronto Lunatic Asylum. After Moodie visited Grace in Asylum in 1851, she retold the double murder in her book *Life in the Clearings*. She believed that Grace would remain in the Asylum until her death, and that Grace's "sins" appeared as a result of her mental illness and that her redemption depended on whether her "disturbed" mind could be healed. In Moodie's version, Grace committed the murder because she was obsessed with her employer, Mr. Thomas Kinnear, and was jealous of Nancy Montgomery.[7] According to Moodie, Grace offered James McDermott sexual favors in exchange for Nancy's death; this was based on James McDermott's claim that Grace was the instigator of the whole affair. Of the various explanations for Grace's actions, Moodie preferred McDermott's version of the story since it made Grace's character even more fascinating – that is, this version of Grace makes Grace a more enticing character and it satisfies Moodie's need for dramatic expression (blood guilt, haunting, madness). Howells claims that in her account of Grace in the Asylum, Moodie alludes to "the possible connection between female insanity and criminality in a typically mid-Victorian way" and that Atwood's Grace "ironically interrogates contemporary cultural constructions of female monstrosity" (Howells, 2005: 147).

In Atwood's novel, Grace comments on the concept of madness, saying that "a good portion of women in the Asylum were no madder than the Queen of England" (Atwood, 1997: 17). Ironically, this could also be a comment on the Queen Victoria, who reigned from 1837 until 1901 (the Victorian era).[8] Grace claims that many women in the Asylum pretended to be mad either because they had no other shelter in winter or they wanted to get away from their abusing husbands (Atwood, 1997: 17). Moodie writes in her book that Grace "fled shrieking away like a phantom into one of the side rooms" when she noticed that the strangers observe her. Atwood's Grace explains that she was screaming and behaving as a madwoman because one of the women in the Asylum who was genuinely mad wanted to baptize her with hot soup

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7)   Moodie gets some names and locations wrong. She is the only commentator who calls Nancy Montgomery "Hannah".

8)   The Victorian era was a long period of peace and prosperity for Britain. However, we cannot but notice the ironic commentary on dubious morality under the reign of the Queen.

and poured it over her head (Atwood, 1997: 18). Atwood's "mad" Grace is neither a beast nor a machine. She fits into a definition of madness according to which being mad means being close to an inspired prophet, a shaman, a trickster. She blurs the boundaries between sanity/insanity, innocence/guilt, truth/lies, and fiction/reality by being a wonderful seamstress both of her story and her quilts.

Howells sees *Alias Grace* as telling a story from the feminine perspective (Howells, 2005: 140). The story of Grace's origin and unhappy childhood, which is neglected in Moodie's account of Grace's story, is revealed through Grace's conversations with Dr. Simon Jordan, a fictional character created by Atwood. McWilliams claims that Atwood treats Grace's origin "with the kind of sympathy not afforded by her other biographer, Susanna Moodie" (McWilliams, 108). She also points out "how Grace's Irishness, her difference, affects accounts of her alleged crime" (McWilliams, 109). At the beginning of the novel, Grace starts her life story by pointing out that the papers wrote that "*both of the accused were from Ireland by their own admission*" (Atwood, 1997: 82). The fact that she was from Ireland had already marked her as a potential criminal and made her subject to unapologetic prejudice. Atwood depicts Grace's sentimental journey from her homeland to the New World and makes Moodie's prejudices more explicable, as reflecting attitudes to the Irish that were current at the time.

In *Alias Grace* Atwood exposes Moodie's contradictory responses to Grace's case by providing all the contradictory information she could find while doing research for her novel. According to Dr. Bannerling Grace was "a sham" as a lunatic, "an accomplished actress", "a most practiced liar", "a Siren" like the mythical sailor-luring creature (Atwood, 1997: 53). In the "Afterword" Atwood reveals two contrasting versions she found concerning the story of Grace Marks: "Was Grace a female fiend and temptress, the instigator of the crime and the real murderer of Nancy Montgomery, or was she an unwilling victim, forced to keep silent by McDermott's threats and by fear for her own life?" (Atwood, 1997: 419). Gazing at herself in the mirror in the opening chapter of Atwood's novel, Grace exposes the different versions of her created by the public and wonders "how she can be all of these different things at once?" (Atwood, 1997: 9)

Moodie's reliability is not only called into question by Grace Marks but also by the fictional characters of Grace's doctor, Samuel Bannerling, her lawyer, Kenneth MacKenzie, and Reverend Verringer. Dr. Bannerling calls Moodie's account of the whole affair "inaccurate" and "hysterical" because she is "inclined to believe any peace of theatrical twaddle served up to her, provided it is pathetic enough" (Atwood, 1997: 53) He reveals that Moodie is "prone to overwrought effusions, and to the concoction of convenient fairy takes; and for the purposes of truth, one might as well rely on the 'eye-witness reports' of a goose" (Atwood, 1997: 395). Atwood's ambivalent relationship with a literary foremother is deepened by Reverend Verringer, who discovers that Moodie "has stated publicly that she is very fond of Charles Dickens,

and in especial of *Oliver Twist*" (Atwood, 1997: 168). In the novel Reverend Verringer also adds that Moodie is "subject to influences", especially Sir Walter Scott, that she likes "to embroider" and that "the Spiritualists have got hold of her" (Atwood, 1997: 168–169). Moodie's description of Grace is further discredited by Kenneth MacKenzie, who says that she "has a somewhat conventional imagination and a tendency to exaggerate" (Atwood, 1997: 344). It is clear that Atwood's intention is to question the reliability of Moodie's historical accounts by presenting Grace's character from different perspectives. Moodie is depicted as an impressionable chronicler whose mind was limited by the same Victorian stereotypes that shaped the imagination of other people who misinterpreted Grace's story in a similar way.

3. Conclusion: Gertrude and Grace

Both of Atwood's protagonists reject being defined by male authorities. Men are discredited in Gertrude and Grace's version of the story. Gertrude's first husband is described as a failure in bed, while Hamlet is depicted as a student with a weird name and even more weird habits. Like his father, he lacks sexual energy, he is inferior to his mother, and his accusations are a mere act of jealousy presented as a result of a general animosity between a stepson and a stepfather. The male authorities that try to define Grace's identity are unreliable because their perspective is distorted either by their sexual fantasies, their incompetence or lack of evidence. For example, Dr. Simon Jordan's mission is to trigger Grace's suppressed memories. However, he ends up suffering from amnesia due to the head wound he received during his service in the civil war. His judgment is further distorted by sexual fantasies and romantic feelings he has about Grace. All these factors make him incompetent and unable to complete his mission. Grace's lawyer, McKenzie, is also unreliable when it comes to presenting her life story. He "put a misconstruction upon what [she] told him" because he "was always more fond of listening to his own voice than to someone else's" (Atwood, 1997: 331). McKenzie does not want her to tell the story as she remembers it but "to tell a story that would hang together" (Atwood, 1997: 329). He tries to present Grace as someone who is "next door to an idiot" and make "all of the witnesses appear immoral or malicious, or else mistaken" in order to win the case in court (Atwood, 1997: 10). As Dr. Jordan realizes upon meeting him, McKenzie has "flamboyant tastes as a raconteur", and in fact reconstructs Grace's story to suit his needs (Atwood, 1997: 344). He also tells Dr. Jordan that Grace is "besotted" with him and that she gave him flirtatious looks: "A Hand placed on hers, and she would have thrown herself into my arms" (Atwood, 1997: 346). Similarly, Reverend Verringer's account of Grace's story is inadequate since he is, as Dr. Jordan concludes, "in love with Grace Marks": "Hence

his indignation, his assiduousness, his laborious petitions and committees; and above all, his desire to believe her innocent. Does he wish to winkle her out of jail, vindicated as a spotless innocent, and then marry her himself?" (Atwood, 1997: 62) In both Atwood's stories, male authorities are unsuccessful in their attempt to reconstruct the female identity and create *his*tory instead *her* story.

Both Gertrude and Grace use language and the power to tell a story from their perspective as a strategy to stand up for their rights and discredit male authority's point of view. Gertrude is not afraid to speak about her first husband's sexual deficiencies; she acknowledges her female sexuality; she even makes a shocking revelation by confessing that she is also a murderess. Grace manipulates the language; she chooses to speak/withhold information in order to protect herself; her speech is more a testimony of confusion than that of a confession; she "thinks" she "sleeps" when describing the crucial moments of the story; the events describing the double murder are presented through her dreams, hallucinations and hypnotic trance; her possible confession of the murders is perhaps inscribed in the quilt "The Tree of Paradise" but it is never openly stated. If Gertrude's strategy is to tell the truth and defend herself by taking responsibility for her actions, Grace's is to tell lies and ensure her safety. In both cases the power of language, more precisely, the power of telling and not telling, proves to be the most efficient survival technique, discrediting all the attempts of male authorities to construct the female's identity on their own terms. The narrative technique Atwood uses puts aside the question of the guilt/innocence of her two "celebrated murderesses" and calls for a fresh perspective when interpreting their life story.

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Hag-seed: The Tempest Retold

Margaret Atwood

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Revels Unending

Among our major living authors, Margaret Atwood must be one of the most obliging. Asked to participate in a literary challenge, or an experimental on-line writing exercise, she steps up to the plate and, more often than not, hits one over the literary Green Monster. Such challenges have given the world *The Penelopiad* (2005), *The Heart Goes Last* (2015), and now, *Hag-seed: The Tempest Retold* (2016).

When the Hogarth Press unleashed Atwood on Shakespeare, they may even have known the Canadian tradition of revising the tale of Prospero's island: by Robertson Davies, for instance, Audrey Thomas, or even in Haida Gwaii productions of *The Tempest* in city parks.

Atwood takes Shakespeare's anonymous Mediterranean island and transforms it into southwestern Ontario, Festival country, home to theatrical festivals in communities such as Stratford, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Blyth. But just when you think you envision the cozy, community-theatre setting, it vanishes like the spirit banquet, and in its stead appears Fletcher County Correctional Institute, with its educational program for inmates. And why not? *The Tempest*, after all, is a play about skullduggery, kidnapping, drunkenness and revenge – all fine associations for a penal institution. And there are, as Felix's prison class discovers, no fewer than nine distinct acts of imprisonment within the play itself. But Atwood places the emphasis here on the 'correctional' in the prison's name. For much will be corrected in the life of Felix Phillips the protagonist as well as in the lives of inmates.

This adaptation mirrors the plot of *The Tempest*, while also narrating the staging of the play at Fletcher Correctional, under Felix's direction. It's a play within a play, as the reader gleefully recognizes, with Prospero/Felix as sub-dramatist, just as Shakespeare made him, pulling the strings of his puppet spirits and enemies. An earlier Canadian novel, *Tempest-Tost*, by Robertson Davies (1951), took a similar approach, where the staging of *The Tempest* by the Salterton Little Theatre merges with the comic drama

of the cast's lives. But Davies' setting is more conventional, a stuffy university town, rife with class prejudice and intellectual snobbery, much of which is punctured in the course of the action.

Shakespeare's Prospero, former Duke of Milan, has more serious revenge on his mind, having been supplanted by his scheming brother Antonio. Atwood supplies a useful summary of the play's events at the end of *Hag-seed*, so that we can brush up our memories of who was whom among the Italian courtiers: Alonso, King of Naples, fellow conspirator, Ferdinand, his son, and Gonzalo the wise old counsellor. How, Felix wonders, did a man like Gonzalo keep his place at the poxy court of the usurping Antonio? Good question, but the Shakespearean answer can and must be: because the plot demands it. Atwood's Prospero figure, Felix, also seeks revenge, having been ousted from his directorship of the theatre festival by his odious underling, Tony. Felix claws himself back from total artistic exile by taking a job at Fletcher Correctional but then finds that Tony and his political ilk are planning to cut the budget for the educational program at the prison.

The threatened budget cut is an Atwoodian masterstroke: many readers can identify with the feeling of impotent rage that follows budget cuts in our own particular domain. Those of us in Canadian Studies in Europe certainly identify; we are avid for vengeance on Felix's nemesis– the kind of politician who gets his start in the periphery of arts administration, rises to a position of political power, then turns and skewers the arts in turn. We are ready for any dark deed, positively drooling for Felix to work his cathartic black magic on Tony and company. But, wait– here comes Ariel (Atwood's version of Ariel skirts the issues of gender and materiality in a clever twist that I will not reveal here) to remind us of our humanity. The magic is there, too, if one accepts that technology is magic. After all, Arthur C. Clarke's third law asserts that any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic, and so it proves in the production of *The Tempest* by Felix and company.

Like any adaptation, *Hag-seed* is playful, in a manner both parodic and burlesque: the theatrical tempest is done with toy boats and a shower curtain; Felix has a magic cloak made from the pelts of toy stuffed animals; the goddesses are played by Disney Princess dolls; the Bard's immortal lines re-emerge as rap lyrics; Renaissance intrigue dwindles to 21st-century professional jealousy, and home truths are dealt out with a free hand: the inmates in the Literacy Through Literature program "video each scene and then edit digitally, allowing Felix to check off 'acquired marketable skill' on the numerous forms where checking-off was required" (57).

There's a lot of checking off and checking in – Fletcher correctional is a prison after all, and Atwood gives the inmate ensemble an appropriately Canadian ethnic profile. The very PC mosaic of races, classes and crimes recalls the platoon film or the 1950s drama *Twelve Angry Men*, with their deliberate coverage of all population niches. There's a boy genius

hacker, a renegade doctor and a Ponzi-scheme scammer to liven up the assortment of burglars, drug dealers and gang members. There's even a token Mennonite.

From this group, Felix must cast his *Tempest*. The potentially touchy topic of Caliban is dealt with in a low-key manner: "Caliban should be First Nations," says Red Coyote. "It's obvious. Got his land stole" (148). However obvious, this is not the choice made by Felix or Atwood. In contrast, Atwood makes much of the adaptation of Miranda, who does not long continue as an eyelid-batting virgin, but is allowed to emerge as what could be called the "female subject." Felix wangles permission to bring an actress into the prison to play Miranda, much to the inmates' surprise – and the reader's. If you prefer your heroine to be a kick-ass gymnast and devourer of hamburgers, then this new version of Miranda will be to your taste, even though Atwood does meld her character with that of the Shakespearean character in an almost satisfying way. *Almost* because we are required to suspend a good deal of disbelief along the way.

One of the most charming details of *Hag-seed* is the way Atwood works Shakespeare's language right into her text. Although the inmates are allowed to re-write blank verse into hip-hop lines, in many places the novel echoes the verse directly and in one unexpected way: swearing. Felix has an invariable rule for his prison classroom: no swearing unless the curses are from the play being studied. So, the air is blue with *scurvy monster*, *whoreson*, *moon calf* and *pied ninny*. After several weeks of rehearsal, the inmates get so good at this that they even try some modest expletive infixation: "Way to red plague go!" says PPod. And when the resident pickpocket purrs, "Be not afeard, the isle is full of fingers" (200), the reader is treated to that svelte sense of déjà-vu that is the pleasure of any good adaptation.

Atwood saves her satirical best for an interior monologue by Felix in which he imagines all too clearly the potential critique of his acting program's "pedagogical efficacy":

> Is it really that helpful . . . to expose these damaged men –and let us tell you how very damaged they are, one way or another, many of them in childhood through abuse and neglect, and some of them would be better off in a mental institution or an asylum for recovering drug addicts, much more suitable for them that teaching them four-hundred-year-old words –is it helpful to expose these men to traumatic situations that can trigger anxiety and panic. . . or, worse, dangerous aggressive behavior? (79).

Naturally, bureaucrats clothe their imperatives as helpful suggestions; they turn humanitarian action into risk-laden adventure; they rationalize the withholding of funding, and make it the receiver's fault. You're the one who cares about these inmates – would you risk further damaging them?

However, the agenda never overcomes the illusion. The novel, like the original play, is still a place of invisibility, ventriloquism and magical sound. It's also full of Ontario, or the details that make the locale unmistakable: the handsome Victorian yellow-brick houses with their bed-and-breakfast signs, the carpet outlet warehouses and the grey wooden barns.

And the food. In *Hag-seed*, the characters are sufficiently real to eat: a banquet ranging from Felix's solitary boiled eggs in his hermit-like shack, to the grapes (spiked) and the brownies (not spiked) that make it through security into Fletcher Correctional. Atwood's fiction always features food; it grounds the action in real life, what she has called the "ordinary dirt" of our lives.[1] In the magical, spirit-haunted atmosphere of *The Tempest*, there has to be some grounding, something we can touch and taste – although tasting can be dangerous, too, when magic is around.

Moreover, food provides the occasion for much satire. Robertson Davies knew this when he included in his *Tempest-Tost* a tour-de-force of contrasting banquets – one the functional, post-rehearsal snack of fruit and cheese. The other is Mrs. Leakey's pretentious spread which is as seriously over the top as only a respectable middle-class matron could make it:

> She imprisoned little sausages in pastry and baked them. She made an elaborate ice cream, and coloured it green. She made sandwiches of the utmost difficulty, possible only to a thirty-third degree sandwich maker . . . sandwiches in which fish, mayonnaise and onion were forced into uneasy union.[2]

Davies was taking his revenge on the small-town mentality, the kind of place that harboured decided opinions: "There's a kind of nice simplicity about a Canadian that education abroad seems to destroy."[3] For the exacting of vengeance, what better vehicle than Prospero's magic staff and book? Being of its decade, Davies' novel ties up the loose ends, clears away the bunting and returns Salterton to its original condition, and the unhappy Hector/Gonzago to his senses. Atwood, in contrast, leaves the reader wondering what will happen after the last page. It's not fashionable in literary criticism to entertain such questions (too much like speculating on the number of Lady Macbeth's children), but Felix does ask his students to predict the fates of the play's characters beyond Act V. Some of the predictions are sinister, some drenched in realpolitik. This act of reading beyond the script infects our own reading of the outer plot of *Hag-seed*; seeds sprout, after all, and Atwood leaves the future crop an open and very tricky question.

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1)   Margaret Atwood, "The Queen of Quinkdom,"In *In Other Worlds: Science Fiction and the Human Imagination*. Virago Press, 2011, p. 127.

2)   Robertson Davies, *Tempest-Tost*. 1951. Penguin Books 1980, 163–64.

3)   Ibid, 30–31.

Before I end this particular set of revels, I really must go back and revise that baseball metaphor from the opening paragraph – not because it is too American, but simply because there is a much better Canadian one available: Atwood does not "hit it over the Green Monster"; she stickhandles it behind the net. There is a satisfying sneakiness about her narrative transformations that recalls those deft Gretzky scoops that used to frustrate his hockey opponents. We don't see it coming – her ending, that is; we need to hit playback to track the movement when the plot, to the elements is free.

« *Le livre aimé du peuple* ».
Les almanachs québécois de 1777 à nos jours

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Various Forms of Appropriation

Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink's « *Le livre aimé du peuple* »**.** *Les almanachs québécois de 1777 à nos jours* is a well-structured and beautifully illustrated book that deals with an interesting phenomenon of cultural history, namely, annually-published volumes targeted at various layers of Quebec society. The almanacs he examines are shown in a wide context, pointing at similarities or differences with regard to this type of publication on the American continent or in Europe. Lüsebrink blends aspects of cultural studies, the history of books and reading, as well as references to cultural anthropology. As he himself puts it in the preface, he relies on his training at a comparative literature scholar when he aims at tracking down the various forms of appropriation, imitation and transformation of European and Anglo-American models in the almanacs of Québec. These almanacs had an immense political and cultural influence since in thousands of households the almanacs were the only books, apart from the Bible, prayer books and the lives of the saints. For decades, the almanacs targeted a wide readership, thus bridging social classes and generations.

Nova Scotia Calendar, the very first almanac in Canada, was published in 1769, while in French the first ones were the *Calendrier pour Montréal* and the *Almanach encyclopédique,* both published by Fleury Mesplet in 1777. The titles clearly show that they can serve a given geographical unit, and wish to offer information in various domains, including general knowledge and practical advice alike. The almanacs were structured around four sections: the calendar, historical landmarks of the previous year, practical advice, and finally, anecdotes and other kinds of stories – this arrangement of contents was generally followed throughout the Western world. Chronologically, the peak period in Québec was between 1880 and 1930, with a sharp decline in the second half of the twentieth century. As time passed, the formats, sizes and target

groups of almanacs kept changing, but they were generally printed on cheap paper, meaning that the social and cultural elites often despised them (15). Still, circulation rocketed. For example, the *Almanach du people*, published by Librairie Beauchemin, reached figures of between 80,000 and 100,000 copies in the early decades of the twentieth century. Indeed, its editors encouraged readers to keep the copies year by year and thus to form a small library in the house. Lüsebrink re-evaluates the role of these editions by pointing out that the popular almanacs, instead of being a rather marginal, folkloric genre focusing greatly on weather forecasts and astrology (22), reflected the social and economic realities of French-Canadian society of the given period. This focus implied that safeguarding the French language and respecting religion and the Catholic Church had a privileged place among the missions of these annually published books – the greatest writers and church functionaries of a given epoch (like Louis Fréchette, Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, sr., Lionel Groulx, and even Félix Leclerc) regularly published, or re-published, stories in the almanacs. This emphasis on culture and religion marks a point of difference in comparison with the composition of similar volumes in English Canada: the latter served more as a practical guide, including a calendar, an address book and directory.

« *Le livre aimé du peuple* » devotes chapters to readership (women, workers), regionalism and interculturalism, the representation of aboriginal people, the issue of identity (regional, linguistic), as well as reflections about modernity. The increased role of advertising in all types of printed media was a remarkable 'side effect' of the spread of modernity in the late 19th century – this phenomenon is also touched upon at various points of the monograph, with Lüsebrink pointing out, among other things, that both English-Canadian and American companies used the almanacs to reach out to a wide range of prospective customers. At the same time, the almanacs gave advice about the correct pronunciation of English terms – and fought against the use of Anglicisms (229–230). These features underline the dual role of these annual publications: on the one hand, to defend the values of traditional rural society in Québec, and on the other hand to help readers find their way in the changes triggered by modernity (378, 380). Indeed, "[l]es contradictions entre nostalgie du passé et modernité renvoient ainsi aux clivages profonds de la culture québécoise du XXe siècle, déchirée entre le monde rural et l'univers des villes, la nostalgie de la Nouvelle-France et l'attirance vers l'américanité, la société autosuffisante et agricole du passé et la société de consommation du futur" (381).

« *Le livre aimé du peuple* » offers a wide panorama of Québec society and culture, particularly of everyday culture. It is a joy to read – and not only for those who can still remember their childhood excitement at finding an old almanac on the grandparents' mantelpiece in rural Quebec or rural Hungary.

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We Talk More than Hockey

"Sport starts the conversation" (137). That's how André Richelieu begins his chapter "The Changing World of Sports in Québec" in *Sport*, the fifth volume in Athabasca University's How Canadians Communicate series. Richelieu's statement is at once hyperbole and truth – hyperbole because sport begins the conversation only for *some* segments of the Canadian population. Those who don't care about sports are supposedly free to ignore the banter in our hockey-crazy country. Similarly, nobody forces us to go out and play. But for all this voluntariness, as Richard Gruneau points out in his chapter, "women continue to be underrepresented in Canadian adult sport in comparison to men, as are Aboriginal adults and individuals who don't speak English as a first language" (227). In other words, the richer you are, the more likely you are to be active. Peter Zuurbier's chapter on "Hockey as Commodity," meanwhile, argues that less moneyed fans are excluded from one of Canada's two national sports (250). Hardly a perfect model for a country whose myths include hockey tales and stories of equality and inclusion.

And yet, Richelieu's terse claim that "sport starts the conversation" is true because sport talk is unavoidable in Canada and "How 'bout those Leafs?" and "See the game?" are common conversation starters. This phatic sports yapping is of course not unique to Canada, and neither is it always fatuous or a waste of time. As the chapters in *Sports* clearly show, conversations about sport quickly spill into bigger questions.

For example, should Canadian taxpayers fork out big bucks so we can watch hockey on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation? Given that international competitions like the Olympics are "often interpreted in ideological terms," with some states "represented as 'friends' and others as 'enemies,'" how should we think about televised sporting nationalism? (Hiller, 158) And how do we talk about or with athletes long excluded from the media landscape, especially from the televised games? David Legg,

in "Debating Disability: Paralympic Athletes and the Media," examines the rise of other athletes, but cautiously notes that they often "merely serve as symbols for the generic underdog – and, while they may restore our faith in the human potential, they arguably do little to alter underlying social attitudes" (178). In other words, just because the Paralympic Games are shown on television does not necessarily mean that these athletes are not portrayed as being "damaged," "less than whole" and, most disturbingly, "less than fully human" (Legg, 175). Media exposure promotes familiarity, but it doesn't always undo stereotyped and entrenched perceptions of what an athlete is supposed to look like.

In his introduction, alliteratively titled "Power Plays: Communicating and Control in Canadian Sports," David Taras summarizes an eerie development in sports: "athletes are becoming physically larger, sometimes to the point of freakishness" (9). Taras also reasons the need for this volume on understanding mediated sport and how we communicate it. At a time when "active participation in sports is plummeting [...], sports culture is more and more about our experiences as fans – an experience that is largely shaped and defined by the media" (3). In other words, we sit, kibitz and bicker, but we don't *just do it*. The way sport is packaged in the media means that sport is often *done to us*; after we tune in, we are force fed narratives about what's going on.

Few academic volumes cover as many sports from as many angles as *Sports* does. Yes, there is the usual whack of hockey among the book's 20 chapters, but there is also Duane Bratt's examination of Canadian vs. American college sports, former Olympian luger Regan Lauscher's and Jeremy Berry's examinations of Nodar Kumaritashvili's death at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, Aritha van Herk's virtuosic overview of chuckwagon racing, Glenn Ruhl's musings on "Early Professional Wrestling in Canada," Bart Beaty's look at ultimate fighting or mixed martial arts, and philosopher Angela J. Schneider's addressing of the moral quandaries of doping in the Tour de France. And that's only half of this book's stories.

The danger of such a blend is lack of focus. Taras neatly circumvents this danger in his lucid introduction, explaining "why sports matter" in terms of active participation, fandom and, "[m]ost fundamentally, the ways in which people communicate about sports and participate in the sports spectacle are being transformed" (4). He also deftly outlines the "bewildering kaleidoscope of all-sports channels, league and team channels and websites, blogs, apps, national radio shows, YouTube videos, fantasy leagues, video games, and countless magazines, to say nothing of Facebook sites and tweets by coaches, players, and reporters" (4). Again, sport culture in Canada is less about activity and more about swallowing – but also creating homemade – mediated versions of events.

A red thread of this volume is that new media present new opportunities. Sometimes, however, new media prove to be novelties serving up limitations. Veteran journalist

Roy MacGregor provides a tragicomic focus on sport culture's shift from story-telling to an "obsession with 'content,'" where "content" often means faux-insider gossip tweeted out in "140 characters or less" (35). The name of the professional writing game, increasingly, is to be fast and furious, to be first to break "small news" (33) about trade rumours and similar minutiae. One longs for the days of the soaker sports journalist and prose soaked up with one's morning coffee.

One also longs for a time when a single media conglomerate – to quote from Christopher Waddell's chapter on the concentration of sports ownership – was *not* "the employer of the interviewer, ... of the [...] commentator, and of the player currently under criticism, as well as the owner of the team [...], of the station on which the [interview takes place]" (49). This concentration of capital, coupled with the pressure for journalists to have fast rather than extended conversations, means journalists are "in danger of becoming PR agents rather than objective keepers of the public trust" (Taras, 12). Imagine Ford or General Motors "owning" the reporters who were investigating automobile recalls and you can see why we should care. However trivial we may find sports, we cannot deny their central role in society and we cannot deny that objectivity is something we need. As professional sport continually bleeds into public life, it is not hard to imagine a media conglomerate whitewashing sexual misdemeanours or downplaying steroid scandals in order to protect their interests – or perhaps even convincing us tax dollars should go to help fund privately-owned stadiums.

Of course, one can always turn off the television, refuse to stream, and actually go out and play hockey or baseball, or at least go for a jog. In this regard, Richard Gruneau's chapter "Goodbye, Gordie Howe: Sport Participation and Class Inequality in the 'Pay for Play' Society'" offers a grim prognosis. Gruneau makes sense of the hard data on declining participation in sports and provides alarming insights into why managerial classes and their offspring are healthier (shades of past centuries, where the less wealthy were shorter...). "Goodbye, Gordie Howe" is not an adieu to the hockey great who died not long ago but a sobering realization: born poor, Gordie Howe (1928–2016) would not have gained access to the arena these days; his family would not have been able to cough up fees that "can easily exceed $3,000 a year" and "can run as high at $10,000" (225).

Ira Wagman's chapter "Of Home Teams and Visiting Players: Imports and Substitutions in Canadian Professional Sports" probes a Canadian irony. Canadians generally like their popular entertainment to be American (lists of the most-watched shows in Canada are always dominated by American shows), yet "we tend to emphasize the fact that a product like a TV show comes 'from elsewhere' rather than trying to understand the various forces that bring that product to different places" (118). The most insightful part of this chapter, for me, was Wagman's articulation

of our "ability to Canadianize" (119) non-Canadian sporting events, such as occurs whenever "the importer selectively 'lifts out' or interrupts what may appear to be a flow of TV content to return to Canada to repatriate the program as being a mix of imported and domestic content" (Wagman, 127). Wagman chooses his words well. "Canadianize" and "repatriate" hint at nationalism even as they point to local and global convergences. This fancy footwork brings to mind bicycles that perform Canadianness by slapping an "assembled in Canada" sticker on the seat tube, which of course means "produced offshore."

A short review of 20 chapters means ignoring chapters. This ignoring is not a critical statement. Indeed, many of the chapters I was slow to turn to surprised me. Derrick Newman's chapter on "Fantasy Leagues" comes to mind; he explains a world of invented teams, where gamblers assemble teams of professional players and win or lose depending on how well the real players perform in real games. In other words, if "your" quarterback throws five touchdown passes, you win big. However, as Newman informs us, this playing is more than an advanced stage of couch-potatodom: "Being able to manage an organization, even if it is in fantasyland, can replace the powerlessness that many people feel in their ordinary lives with a sense of power and achievement" (80). Media monsters such as Rogers and Bell may control how we receive our mediatized sports, but the ground-level fan activities do not go unheard. Fantasy fans are hungry for statistics, and Bell is happy to give the people what they want. I may complain about the empire, but I can participate in the conversation by tweet back.

Two final notes are in order. *Sports* includes two former Olympians among its contributors. This inclusion is laudable because academic study on sports has long ignored those sporting bodies most enveloped in the industry – often in articles that lambaste the mind-body split. The two Olympians are not *only* muscles in motion (still, I wonder how much Angela J. Schneider philosophized while rowing to her silver medal!). Lastly, and very inclusively: Athabasca University Press has made the book available as a free PDF, meaning that it is accessible to anyone with an internet connection.

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she points out that this book is not meant to explore the philosophical or theoretical background to these categories, for her emphasis is on the literary application of these terms (17). This enables Molnár to demonstrate her mastery in close reading with a focus on textual subtleties rather than on a rigid application of theories, especially because, as she maintains, the way theory has been incorporated in the study of Canadian literature is characterised by a lack of uniformity (11).

The first three authors Molnár discusses are representatives of Caribbean-Canadian literature, whose portrayals of the homeland are, to a smaller or greater extent, influenced by the colonial history of their homelands. In her analysis of Austin Clarke's *The Origin of Waves*, she focuses on the complexity of the male protagonists' friendship, the significance of memory and the poignant interpretation of snow, an element that Clarke often incorporates in his works. In Molnár's reading, the chance encounter of the two elderly men in a snowstorm in Toronto is in itself of crucial importance, because "[w]ithin the new urban reality the characters often suffer from the consequences of being rootless" (25), and snow often "preserves [their] past, freezes [their] memor[ies]" (26). The conversation of the two men, who have not seen each other since their childhood in Barbados, is continuously informed by their memories of their homeland that gains significance in their new reality in Canada.

Molnár then proceeds with her analysis of Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family*, in which the author revisits his homeland, Sri Lanka, in order to gain a more profound understanding of his family history. Perhaps this is the book in which the futility of the search for clear answers is most conspicuous. As Molnár underlines, Ondaatje experiments with a plethora of narrative techniques and incorporates various textual elements, such as poems and photographs, in his work, which becomes "a textual space of reference that is created from the perspective of 'here' (Canada) and about 'there' (Sri Lanka)" (38). The author of this "semi-fictional autobiography" (37) himself is aware of the impossibility of his task, for he cannot avoid the pitfalls of subjectivity in the course of his quest, as the past and his homeland are always filtered through his memories.

The last Caribbean-Canadian writer Molnár scrutinises is Rohinton Mistry, whose *Such a Long Journey* follows the life of a Parsi family in Bombay. Perhaps this is the reason why this chapter places more emphasis on the actual geographical locations and on the relationship between the private and the public than the previous ones. As Molnár observes, in this novel "[t]he world of the home and the homeland are intertwined" (50), and she pays special attention to the way the protagonist's fate is influenced by the

Molnár does not subscribe to any spatial theory, but, quoting Wesley A. Kort, she believes that "the spatial theory implicit in [the works] needs to be released" (16).

Discussing Austin Clarke's novel *Growing Up Stupid Under the Union Jack*, she calls attention to Clarke's ambiguous feelings towards Barbados and the contrasts he presents between the old and the new world as well as between social classes. Clarke tries to debunk the myth of Barbados as a "Caribbean Paradise" and Canada as "El Dorado" (20) by acknowledging that approaching such places through mythical idealization presents a false image. The author, instead, draws a realistic picture by observing his homeland from neutral locations, from where the chasm between rich and poor can be objectively identified. Molnár shows the ambiguity with which Clarke relates to Barbados by calling attention to the contrast between the title of his memoir and his often affectionate tone (24).

Already in this chapter it becomes apparent that Molnár makes use of a vast pool of references; as a result, she sometimes appears as a moderator who provides a context for the works of scholars concentrating on the aspect of spatiality in Canadian immigrant writing. She is in control of the direction the analyses take but credits her colleagues whose contributions to her research are relevant.

Attending to Rohinton Mistry's *Tales from Firozsha Baag* and *Such a Long Journey* in the longest and most detailed chapter of the book, Molnár, together with Patricia Gabriel, underscores the special position Mistry occupies in Canadian literature resulting from his "double displacement" (25) – his Parsi identity makes him an endangered minority even in his home country, not to mention his minority status in Canada. She further accentuates Mistry's importance on the Canadian literary scene by introducing him as a pioneer since his novels and short stories "open up a place for the double identities of [the immigrant] writers immersed in trans-national memories and histories newly located in a global and diasporic moment of exile and displacement" (26–7).

Molnár demonstrates that Mistry's spaces indeed reflect on multiple aspects of the immigrant experience as he thematizes sacred, intercultural, imaginary, natural, cosmic, and social spaces. In her most insightful chapter, she demonstrates perfectly how simple stairs and drawers bear significance in the process of one's individuation, both being symbols of close human contact and education. One of the most intriguing examples of displacement Molnár presents is the changing of place names. In her words, "the dislocations produced by the historical shift from a colonized space marked by the names of the colonizer and the new names that mark independence induce profound ruptures in memory and identity" (51).

Having introduced topography into her analysis, Molnár then highlights maps as images that bear special significance in Michael Ondatjee's *Running in the Family*. She considers the language of geographical names central in familial and social identity

formation as signifiers of colonization and mythicizing. While Mistry's narratives are special in part because they are born from the experience of double displacement, Molnár points out that Ondatjee's stories problematize circular migration. Another similarity to Mistry's stories is that geographical places, despite being concrete physical reminders of one's past, are insufficient when it comes to attempts to anchor identities in their surface.

Neil Bissoondath's *A Casual Brutality* is the only novel in the book that does not generate a feeling of nostalgia – as indicated by the name he gives the teardrop-shaped imaginary island of his narrative, Casaquemada, a "burnt down house" (78). The need for personal space in this estranged land is crucial, as is suggested by the relevance attributed to Raj's grandfather's prayer room. This is the place of Raj's conception, birth and reading sessions, the place where he finds solitude. The religious aura of this confined room, where the most intimate, almost holy acts take place exclusively among close family members, reflects Raj's mother's longing for intimacy but stands opposed to her feeling of claustrophobia in the island. As Molnár puts it, a concrete "physical place [...] becomes almost synonymous with human spirit" (90).

In Nino Ricci's *Lives of the Saints*, Molnár demonstrates how a place can reflect a character's state of mind by highlighting how the mysterious and dark hospital building echoes the pain characters experience when inside. She underscores that places also serve to fulfill a role in explicating the moral of a story when she observes that the stable is both a locale of sexual pleasure derived from sexual freedom and retribution for the abuse of this freedom. She also suggests that the narrative's "homeland" is suffocating and the family's departure from there is inevitable.

Narrating the Homeland is an exceptional work that amalgamates views from a number of Canadianists who had focused on the subject of spatiality in Canada's immigrant literature. Molnár's book proves especially valuable scholarship as her arguments are easy to follow even without familiarity with the works she is analyzing; her superb presentation of the subject should inspire further studying of not only these but other works of Canadian immigrant fiction. Although her style is elaborate and sophisticated, the book is also a valuable source for those less knowledgeable in literary studies as well as scholars. *Narrating the Homeland*s therefore deserves attention and a wide readership.

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