Bilinguefact Your Air: Literary Representations of French Canada, 1945-48

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Table of Contents

Abstract

At the end of the Second World War, relations between Quebec's English- and French-speaking communities were in severe disrepair. This was largely the product of their opposition over the issue of conscription in both World Wars, which had worsened the pre-existing tension between the groups due to their economic and political inequalities. In the context of this estrangement of Quebec's major linguistic communities, two important anglophone Montreal writers produced literary depictions of Quebec's French-Canadian communities: Hugh MacLennan published *Two Solitudes* in 1945, while A.M. Klein published *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* in 1948. Both volumes seek to render French Canada attractive to English-Canadians and thereby counter the negative stereotype that English-Canadians typically held of French-Canadians as pro-fascist, anti-semitic protestors against conscription. The method of this project is to undertake an in-depth synchronic literary-historical study of 1945 to 1948, the four years from the publication of *Two Solitudes*, which coincides with the end of the war, to the year of the publication of *The Rocking Chair*, in order to situate MacLennan's and Klein's portrayals of French Canada in their rich historical context. The study of *Two Solitudes* and *The Rocking Chair* alongside the works of their French-Canadian contemporaries such as Gabrielle Roy, Alphonse Piché, Alain Grandbois, and Paul-Emile Borduas will show that their depictions of French Canada are remarkably similar and that these anglophone authors were working carefully and conscientiously to improve French Canada's image with their English-Canadian audiences.

Résumé

À la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, les relations entre les populations anglophones et francophones du Québec étaient dans un triste état. Ceci était largement à cause de leur opposition sur le sujet de la conscription dans les deux Guerres mondiales, ce qui à empiré la tension pré-existente entre les deux groupes, qui étaient séparés par des inégalités économiques et politiques. Dans le contexte de cet éloignement des groupes linguistiques du Québec, deux écrivains anglophones de Montréal ont produit des dépictions littéraires de communautés canadiennes-françaises: Hugh Maclennan a publié *Two Solitudes* en 1945, tandis à ce que A.M. Klein a publié *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* en 1948. Ce projet va montrer que ces deux travaux cherchent à dépicter le Canada français d'une façon qui serait attrayante aux canadiens-anglais et donc à opposer les stéréotypes négatifs que les canadiens-anglais tenaient généralement des canadiens-français comme étant des protésteurs contre la conscription à la fois pro-fascistes et anti-sémites. La méthodologie de ce projet est d'entreprendre une étude littéraire-historique en profondeur synchronique des années 1945 à 1948, les quatre années qui séparent la publication de *Two Solitudes*, qui coincide avec la fin de la guerre, de la publication de *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems*, afin de contextualiser les dépictions du Canada français de MacLennan et Klein dans leur époque et dans leur culture québécoise. L'étude des travaux de ces deux auteurs anglophones dans le contexte des travaux de leurs contemporains canadiens-français tels que Gabrielle Roy, Alphonse Piché, Alain Grandbois, et Paul-Emile Borduas montrera que leurs représentations du Canada français sont remarquablement similaires, et que MacLennan et Klein travaillaient avec soin vers une amélioration de l'image du Canada français chez les Canadiens anglais.

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Introduction

At the end of the Second World War, relations between Quebec's English- and French-speaking communities were in severe disrepair. This was largely caused by their opposition over the issue of conscription in both World Wars, which had worsened the pre-existing tension between the groups due to their economic and political inequalities. The majority of English Canada supported full conscription, while the majority of French Canada opposed it. After the Conscription Crisis of the First World War, Mackenzie King had appeased French Canada by promising that overseas conscription would never be imposed in Canada again. In 1942, however, Mackenzie King held a plebiscite asking if he might be released from that promise; the plebiscite was perceived as a betrayal by French Canada and, according to Ramsay Cook, was "[p]erhaps the event that most encouraged French Canadians to think of the government at Ottawa as a power dominated by English-speaking Canadians" (181).

While French-Canadian opposition to conscription during the Second World War was less violent than during the First World War, it was nevertheless an issue that still strongly divided Canada's linguistic communities. This division along linguistic lines may be seen in the results of the plebiscite: while 80% of Canada as a whole voted in the affirmative, 71.2% of Quebec voted in the negative, leading economist and Quebec nationalist François-Albert Angers to qualify the vote as a "vote de race" (Lacoursière 290). Taking into account the English-Canadian minority of Quebec, the statistics within Quebec also reveal a split along linguistic lines:

> Faisant abstraction du vote des comtés anglais de Montréal et des cantons de l'Est, ce sont 85% des Québécois qui ont ainsi voté "non" pour le service militaire à l'étranger. Ce résultat met en évidence le nationalisme canadien des

> francophones et la loyauté des anglophones pour leur héritage anglo-saxon. (Gravel 34)

French Canada's discontent with English Canada's position on conscription led to debates over the nature of the Canadian Confederation and a French-Canadian insistence upon the autonomy of the provincial governments as fundamental to the Canadian constitution and to the survival of French Canada. As one student of Université de Montréal writes in its student newspaper, *Quartier Latin*,

> L'autonomie provinciale n'est pas une création intellectuelle, mais une nécessité née de la situation unique de deux nations au sein d'un même pays […] En 1867, pour éviter l'annexion aux Etats-Unis, il devint nécessaire de grouper les états britanniques de l'Amérique du Nord. Deux seuls systèmes étaient possibles: l'union législative et le pacte confédératif. Seul, le second sauvegardait aussi l'intégrité des deux nations qui ne cessaient de s'affirmer de plus en plus. Nécessairement, on opta pour ce pacte confédératif, basé sur le principe de l'autonomie. Seulement en respectant l'autonomie des provinces contractantes, pouvait-on sauvegarder la nation canadienne-française. Il ressortait évidemment du passé que l'autonomie était pour elle une question de vie ou de mort. (Beaugrand-Champagne 1)

King's plebiscite therefore prompted a movement in French Canada to grow increasingly autonomous from English Canada, as the plebiscite proved that if the French-Canadian community did not take steps to ensure their political autonomy within Quebec, they would continue to be subject to the opinions and desires of the English-Canadian majority. This

movement gained impetus at the end of the Second World War, and would see its full fruition two decades later, in the Quiet Revolution.

A disproportionate amount of the wealth and power of Québec had been in the hands of its anglophone minority since the Conquest in 1759. By the 1940s, this imbalance of power had become so entrenched and racialized that, in the popular imaginations of both anglophones and francophones, English was associated with wealth, and French with poverty. Even Everett C. Hughes, who typically seeks to relativize French-Canadian stereotypes in his 1946 sociological work, *French Canada in Transition*, portrays the imbalance of power between Quebec's linguistic groups in racialized terms that cast the French-Canadian spirit as naturally incompatible with Canada's modern economy:

> The new industries are brought by invading agents, armed with capital and techniques from the older English and American centers of finance and industry. These efficient modern managers and technicians are alien to the French-Canadian world in culture—always so in language and temper, generally so in religion. The hands who work in the industries and who make up the bulk of the populations of the growing towns are natives of the region—French Canadians bound by sentiment, tradition, and kinship to the surrounding countryside.
>
> Thus the French Canadian, in becoming an industrial worker and a town-dweller, gets a culturally alien employer. He works under a system whose spirit is English-American, rather than French. (2)

While the imbalance of power between the anglophone and francophone populations of Quebec was very much a reality in the 1940s, it was also exaggerated within the popular imagination through stereotype. A significant proportion of the Montreal proletariat was Irish-Canadian, and

therefore anglophone and mostly Catholic, a fact which should have troubled the clear-cut association of the French language and the Catholic religion with poverty, and the English language and the Protestant religion with wealth. Yet, as Hugh MacLennan phrases it, "the myth persisted that the English were rich and the French were hewers of wood and drawers of water" (*The Other Side* 295).

Francophones were therefore much more likely to learn English than anglophones were to learn French, as speaking English was both a means of survival in Quebec's economy and a status symbol. Hughes notes that

> bilingualism is not frequent among the English. There are certain conventional reasons given. In fact, the English do not have to learn French to keep their positions in industry. The housewife does not have to learn French to keep her housemaid. If they were to speak French in these relationships—except in a joking or patronizing spirit, as is occasionally done—they would be in some measure reversing roles. For they would then be making the greater effort, which generally falls to the subordinate; and they would speak French badly, whereas the subordinate generally speaks English pretty well. The combination of lack of necessity and reluctance to put themselves into the subordinate position as regards language probably accounts for the failure of the English population generally to become fluent in French. In addition, except for formal relationships, the English population in general has little contact with French people. (83)

In the context of this estrangement of Quebec's major linguistic communities, two important anglophone Montreal writers produced literary depictions of Quebec's French-Canadian communities: Hugh MacLennan published *Two Solitudes* in 1945, while A.M. Klein published

The Rocking Chair and Other Poems in 1948. As we will see, both volumes seek to render French Canada attractive to English-Canadians and thereby counter the negative stereotype that English-Canadians typically held of French-Canadians as pro-fascist, anti-semitic protestors against conscription. In presenting French Canada in a sympathetic light, however, both authors elide the deeply entrenched economic and political inequalities between French and English Canada, as these elisions make literary representations of French Canada more attractive to English Canada. The method of this project is to undertake an in-depth synchronic literary-historical study of 1945 to 1948, the four years separating the publication of *Two Solitudes*, which coincides with the end of the war, from that of *The Rocking Chair*, in order to situate MacLennan's and Klein's portrayals of French Canada in their rich historical context. I will therefore be analyzing both English and French texts in order to bring the "two solitudes" into conversation with one another and provide a comprehensive view of literary representations of French Canada at the end of the Second World War.

The first chapter will examine how MacLennan and Klein negotiate the depiction of French Canada in English, when English is a language that is already loaded with hegemonic meaning. Following Madalena Gonzalez's lead, I will be applying the framework of Bakhtinian heteroglossia to the works of MacLennan and Klein in order to determine where their use of language falls on the spectrum from heteroglossia to unitary language. MacLennan's and Klein's heteroglossia will be compared to Gabrielle Roy's which, as she is of a linguistic minority within Canada, disrupts linguistic unity more than those of MacLennan and Klein who, as members of the linguistic majority, tend more towards linguistic unity.

In the next chapter, MacLennan's and Klein's depictions of the possibilities and consequences of the increased contact of their own communities with French Canada due to

urbanization will be pitched against Roy's and Alphonse Piché's depictions of urban French Canada, which suggest an autonomous French-Canadian community that is not in contact with either Montreal's English- or its Jewish-Canadian communities. Roy's and Piché's regionalism will then be compared to the cosmopolitanism of Alain Grandbois and Paul-Emile Borduas. While Roy and Piché adopt very different strategies from Grandbois and Borduas, the four contemporary French-Canadian authors are similar in that they do not reciprocate the interest that MacLennan and Klein show in the solidification of French Canada's relationships with the other communities of urban Quebec.

The third and final chapter will analyze MacLennan's and Klein's depictions of French-Canadian opposition to conscription during the Second World War in the context of French Canada's reputation among English Canadians for pro-fascism and anti-semitism. While MacLennan and Klein do address the pro-fascist and anti-semitic elements within French-Canadian culture, they also depict those elements as relatively minor; instead, both anglophone authors locate the roots of French-Canadian opposition to conscription in the French-Canadian resentment of their disenfranchisement within a political and economical structure that is dominated by Quebec's English-Canadian minority. MacLennan's and Klein's depictions are in keeping with those of Roy and Piché, which also stress French-Canadian disenfranchisement, over either anti-semitism or pro-fascism, as the main root of French-Canadian opposition to conscription.

While MacLennan, Klein, Grandbois, and Borduas are important and well-known names within the fields of both anglophone and francophone Canadian literatures, the inclusion of the relatively little known Alphonse Piché within this project is an innovation worth discussing. Piché has disappeared from critical view, but he was a well-respected poet in his own lifetime.

He published nine volumes of poetry and three selected works, received the Governor General's Award in 1976, and was made a member of the Order of Canada in 1992, among other distinctions. Two of his volumes fall within the temporal purview of this project: *Ballades de la Petite Extrace* (1946) and *Remous* (1947). Born in Chicoutimi, Piché settled in Trois-Rivières, which was the primary subject of his poetry, and he is still fondly remembered there as *le poète Trifluvien*. I have included him in this project because he is remarkable for his frank depictions of urban French Canada at a time when his French-Canadian poetic contemporaries were largely interested in either idyllic French-Canadian rusticity or metaphysical musing. As such, Piché gives a greater sense of the textures and concerns of his cultural context than any other French-Canadian poet of the period that I have come across in my research. The inclusion of Piché in the project also corrects, somewhat, its acknowledged tendency to generalize the Montreal experience to Quebec as a whole, as my three primary authors, MacLennan, Klein, and Roy, all lived in and wrote about that city (though, interestingly, none were born there: MacLennan hails from Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, Klein from Ratno, Ukraine, and Roy from Saint Boniface, Manitoba).

My inclusion of *Quartier Latin* in this project is also an innovation in English-language studies of the period. *Quartier Latin* was, and still is, the student newspaper of Université de Montréal, and I have chosen it as a valuable sample of the opinions being voiced by young, educated French-Canadians in the 1940s. *Quartier Latin* was a well-respected student publication: as Jean-Claude Picard notes in his biography of Camille Laurin, the father of Quebec's "loi 101" and a youthful contributor to *Quartier Latin*, the newspaper was "une véritable institution sur le campus de l'Université de Montréal et […] se présente sous la forme d'un vrai journal" (66). In addition to the quality of the newspaper, which earned it a special

mention for "*la haute teneur littéraire et la qualité de sa typographie*" by the Canadian University Press (CUP) in December 1945, I have also chosen to include *Quartier Latin* in my project precisely because its host of contributors includes an impressive number of young men, such as Camille Laurin, who would go on to be influential figures in Quebec culture, whether in politics or in the arts (Hébert 1). The list includes d'Iberville Fortier, who was Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages from 1984 to 1991, the Quebec nationalist and economist François-Albert Angers, the separatist Noël Pérusse, the playwright Claude Gauvreau, the separatist and journalist Jean-Marc Léger, the poet Rémi-Paul Forgues and the novelist Pierre Trottier. The judge Bernard Bissonnette and the abbé Lionel Groulx himself also wrote articles for *Quartier Latin*. The newspaper has therefore proven to be a useful resource in acquainting me with the rich variety of political opinion that was being voiced in Montreal between 1942 and 1948, and that often uncannily predicts the course of Quebec history for the next fifty years, with *la révolution tranquille* of the 1960s and 1970s and the separatist referendums of 1980 and 1995.

On the other side of the language divide, Everett C. Hughes's 1946 sociological study *French Canada in Transition* has proven to be a useful companion text to *Two Solitudes* and *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems*, as all three texts evince a similar desire to dispel English Canada's negative myths of French Canada and thus encourage good will between Canada's major linguistic communities. Incidentally, Hughes's study of the urbanization of French Canada met with the approval of one of *Quartier Latin's* contributors, Pierre Tanguay, who lauded the impartiality of his study: "L'auteur étudie avec impartialité ce sourd antagonisme qui règne dans toutes les nouvelles villes industrielles du Québec" (3). The similarities among Hughes's non-fictional, MacLennan's fictional, and Klein's poetic depictions of French Canada suggest that

they were all working closely, accurately, and, to the best of their abilities, impartially, with their shared cultural milieu.

MacLennan's and Klein's depictions of French Canada will be seen to be remarkably close, too, to those of their French-Canadian contemporaries. They are sympathetic portrayals that are exceptional in their efforts to counter the negative stereotypes that were familiar to English-Canadians, who generally had very little opportunity to relativize such stereotypes. MacLennan and Klein distinguish themselves from their English-Canadian contemporaries in understanding Quebec's bilingualism as a virtue rather than an inconvenience. Klein expresses his appreciation of his city's bilingualism in "Montreal":

> […] I,
> auditor of your music, cherish the
> Joined double-melodied vocabulaire
> Where English vocable and roll Ecossic,
> Mollified by the parle of French
> Bilinguefact your air! (32, ll. 27-32)

In the spirit of Klein's stanza, *Two Solitudes* and *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* may be understood as efforts to celebrate the "bilinguefactual" quality of Quebec and thus to encourage a *rapprochement* between English and French Canada. MacLennan's and Klein's desire for such a *rapprochement*, however, is exactly where they differ from their French-Canadian contemporaries, whose depictions of independent, urban French-Canadian communities reflect the larger French-Canadian impetus towards political and cultural autonomy from English Canada, at the end of the Second World War.

While *Two Solitudes* and *The Rocking Chair* hold key positions in my project as book-

ending texts, my aim in this project is primarily to establish a rich texture of synchronic discourse across the linguistic divide of post-war Quebec. In reading *Quartier Latin*, it quickly became obvious to me that French Canada's relationship with English Canada was a pressing concern for its young and opinionated editorialists. Curiously, that concern with English Canada does not manifest itself in the French-Canadian literary works of these years, such as *Bonheur d'occasion*, *Refus global*, and Piché's poetry. On the other hand, MacLennan, Klein, and Hughes are very interested in their French-Canadian neighbours. My aim in this project, then, is to present the two very isolated linguistic cultures of post-war Quebec alongside one another and in the considerable detail that is afforded to me by focusing upon such a precise period of Quebec history.

Chapter 1:

I Speak It Brokenly Myself:[1] Heteroglossia and Literary Portrayals of Bilingual Quebec

Translation is an inherently political process, as Sherry Simon suggests: "Every act of translation is a statement about human relations, about the ways in which languages, cultures, and individuals are the same or different" (12). While the intentions of the writer may be to communicate her subject's situation across the language barrier, thereby rendering that subject accessible and sympathetic to her monolingual other and opening up a possibility for understanding, that goal can only be attained through a problematic process of translation that cannot be wholly sympathetic to that subject. Hugh MacLennan, in *Two Solitudes,* and A.M. Klein, in *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems*, wrote English portrayals of French Canada that would be attractive to their English-Canadian audiences. To this end, both authors translate French Canada into English and employ heteroglossic techniques that seek to convey the bilingualism of Quebec. In *Bonheur d'occasion,* Gabrielle Roy also uses heteroglossic techniques to convey Quebec's linguistic diversity. A comparison of Roy's heteroglossia in *Bonheur d'occasion* to those of MacLennan in *Two Solitudes* and of Klein in *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* shows that while MacLennan and Klein desired a greater communication between English and French Canada and therefore strove to overcome linguistic difference in their texts, though to different degrees, Roy more frankly depicted the obstacles that linguistic difference constitutes to the communication and reconciliation of Quebec's linguistic communities.

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[1] MacLennan, *The Other Side* 161.

An anglophone writing about a francophone character in English does not have the same political significance as does a francophone writing about an anglophone character in French, for the literary depiction of French-Canadian characters in English re-enacts the resented assimilation of French Canadians to the English language through economic inequality. As a young Camille Laurin (who would later be the architect of Quebec's infamous "loi 101") points out in a *Quartier Latin* article opposing the teaching of "la langue du vainqueur" in Quebec schools, "environ 4% des citoyens de langue anglaise sont bilingues tandis que ceux de langue française le sont dans la proportion de 33%" (Laurin 6). Writing about Quebec in either English or French therefore involves the difficulty of writing in languages that are already contextually overladen with meaning. This difficulty is especially acute for English-Canadian authors such as MacLennan and Klein who wish to portray French Canada both justly and favourably, for writing about French Canada in English replicates the hegemony of English over French in Quebec. Both authors therefore employ heteroglossic tactics to indicate that their English is not hegemonic.

In her essay "*Two Solitudes*: Writing a French Novel in English: The Aesthetics of Minority Literature," Madalena Gonzalez fruitfully applies the concept of Bakhtinian heteroglossia to *Two Solitudes* to tease out the ways in which MacLennan defamiliarizes his English in order to portray the diversity of Canadian language. Following Gonzalez's lead, this chapter will similarly apply the framework of Bakhtinian heteroglossia to *Bonheur d'occasion* and *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* in order to compare MacLennan's, Klein's, and Roy's places on the spectrum from heteroglossia to unitary language, and how the heteroglossic or unitary qualities of their language coincide with the ways in which they choose to represent the French/English conflict in Quebec.

Bakhtin identifies heteroglossia as the fundamental characteristic of the novel. Unlike poetry, which is made up of the individual voice of the poet, the novel is composed of "a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships (always more or less dialogized)" (1079). Bakhtin contrasts heteroglossia, the diversity of language that exists within a specific sociocultural moment, with "unitary language":

> Unitary language constitutes the theoretical expression of the historical processes of linguistic unification and centralization, and expression of the centripetal forces of language. A unitary language is not something given but is always in essence posited—and at every moment of its linguistic life it is opposed to the realities of heteroglossia. But at the same time it makes its real presence felt as a force for overcoming this heteroglossia, imposing specific limits to it, guaranteeing a certain maximum of mutual understanding and crystalizing [*sic*] into a real, although still relative, unity—the unity of the reigning conversations (everyday) and literary language, "correct language." (1084)

While heteroglossia is the primary characteristic of the novel, Bakhtin argues that it is not characteristic of poetry, for "the poet, should he not accept the given literary language, will sooner resort to the artificial creation of a new language specifically for poetry[2] than he will to the exploitation of actual available social dialects" (1096-7). Bakhtin's assumption is that all poetry is lyric, and this will be important to remember in the discussion of Klein's poetry below, as he is not always lyric, being a good impersonal modernist trained in the school of T.S. Eliot (1096-7). Bakhtin's theory, though it does not map perfectly onto Klein's modernist poetics, is useful in analyzing texts that portray the Quebec linguistic divide, as it provides a framework for

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[2] This "artificial creation of a new language specifically for poetry" will be important for the upcoming discussion of Klein's "Montreal."

classifying the use of language as tending either towards unification or towards diversification which, in the context of Quebec, has important political resonances. English Canadians, belonging to the linguistic majority within Canada, will logically tend to expressions of linguistic unity, while French Canadians, belonging to the linguistic minority, will tend towards heteroglossic diversification.

The impetus behind MacLennan's *Two Solitudes* project is certainly towards unity, as he desires to bridge the linguistic divide and encourage the *rapprochement* Canada's linguistic groups. The dream that MacLennan reports to have inspired *Two Solitudes* is indicative of his motivations and methods in undertaking the project of portraying the Canadian French-English split, despite the fact that the project required that he portray a French Canada with which he was not intimately familiar:

> Its genesis came to me in a dream in which I saw a tall, angular blond man arguing with a stocky darker man. They were shouting at each other more in frustration than hatred, and in the dream a voice suddenly said, "Don't you see it? They're both deaf." (297)

Presumably, the two shouting deaf men represent English and French Canada. Their deafness symbolizes their inability to understand each other. MacLennan is observing the men and is not affiliated with either of them. As a monolingual English Canadian, MacLennan should, according to the logic of the dream, be affected by the same deafness as the shouting man who represents English Canada. MacLennan hears the voice that tells him to see that the men are deaf, however, and therefore cannot be deaf himself. Furthermore, the voice prompts MacLennan to *see* that the shouting men are both deaf. While MacLennan is not deaf in the dream, therefore, it is to his sight rather than to his hearing that the voice appeals. This synaesthetic sight of

deafness in the dream that inspired *Two Solitudes* suggests that in writing the novel MacLennan was starting from the understanding that he had to employ an indirect means of communication: as he could not write about French Canada in French, he would have to mimic French in English by means of defamiliarized accents and syntaxes. MacLennan's position as observer in the dream, furthermore, suggests that he understood his role to be that of an impartial observer of the conflict between English and French Canada. Finally, what the dream reveals most clearly is that *Two Solitudes* is a portrayal of the mutual deafness of *both* English and French Canada, and not a portrayal of French Canada alone. While MacLennan did have to reach beyond his immediate experience in his portrayals of French Canada, and this would constitute the greatest difficulty in the writing of the novel, the mutual deafness of French and English Canada was something that he felt keenly in his experience of living in Montreal.

Moving forward twenty-one years, MacLennan again employs the metaphor of deafness in order to talk about the lack of communication between English and French Canada in his 1966 essay "An English-speaking Quebecker Looks at Quebec," which urges that instruction in elementary schools ought to be bilingual all over Canada. He writes that English- and French-speaking Canadians "don't mind a dialogue, so long as it is a dialogue between two stone-deaf people—in fact they rather enjoy it—but if any understanding threatens to break through, their souls are troubled" (229). In this essay, MacLennan places the burden of guilt for the lack of communication between English and French Canada upon the laziness of the majority of English Canadians when it comes to learning French, of which he is, avowedly, also guilty, for, as he writes, to learn French "would require at least six months, possibly a year […] At my time of life—I am fifty-three—I cannot afford that year or half-year, nor can I afford the temporary retrogression it would impose on my mind" (161). He notes that "In Montreal there is no

apparent need to learn French in order to communicate; the Montreal *Canadiens* all speak English" (162). English Canadians, according to MacLennan, do not speak French because they are not required to and because they are not sufficiently interested in communicating with their French-Canadian neighbours to make the effort of learning the language. The roots of this desire to see English Canadians take an interest in and communicate with their French-Canadian neighbours can be seen in MacLennan's effort two decades earlier to make French Canada communicable and attractive to English Canada in *Two Solitudes*.

MacLennan had, however, very little contact with the French Canada that he wished to portray for his English-Canadian audience. Elspeth Cameron affirms that MacLennan, "like the majority of the English-speaking Montreal community […], lived a life that was almost hermetically sealed in the English-speaking sections of the city, with virtually no interaction with the attitudes, customs, and aspirations of the majority culture" (170). MacLennan compensated for his lack of personal experience of French Canada by looking to French-Canadian fiction: "MacLennan's knowledge of French Canada, on which *Two Solitudes* was based, came primarily from Ringuet's classic *Trente Arpents*" (168). As far as fictional sources go, *Trente Arpents* is a fairly reliable depiction of early twentieth-century French-Canadian life, as "Dr Panneton had based his novel on the meticulous notes he took on his patients at Trois-Rivières and on his chats with local farmers in the smoking car of the train to Joliette where he kept another office" (170). According to Cameron, however, MacLennan was still "uneasy" "in the absence of the first-hand experience he now believed to be essential to the novelist" (170).

MacLennan acknowledges the difficulty of writing about bilingual Quebec as a monolingual English Canadian in his essay "French Is a *Must* for Canadians":

> The old proverb about people who live in glass houses applies perfectly to me when I write about bilingualism in Canada. I can't blame my fellow Canadians of the English language for being unable to speak French because I speak it brokenly myself […] In a country like ours I should be able to speak it almost as well as English. My inability to do so is a constant shame to me, and I recognize it as the severest educational handicap in my entire life. (161)

As Cameron notes, MacLennan's "notion that the French-English split characterized Canada, and that he should be writing about it, flew in the face of his conclusion on completing *Barometer Rising* that a writer must create out of his own background in order to be authentic and universal," and this fundamental contradiction at the heart of the *Two Solitudes* is the source of the paradoxes of the novel, which will be discussed further below (167).

MacLennan's project of making French Canada attractive to English Canadians and thereby encouraging a *rapprochement* of the two cultures was troubled by his awareness of his lack of authority to describe French Canada, as he did not speak French and had very little contact with French-Canadian culture. He therefore devised a way of convincingly conveying the "Frenchness" of his characters, since it was essential to his project that they be explicitly and recognizably French-Canadian. At a basic linguistic level, creating convincingly French-Canadian characters in an English novel required that MacLennan write the dialogue of his French-Canadian characters in English, while conveying the impression that they are speaking French. He accomplishes this by means of what Madalena Gonzalez calls "defamiliarised English": "As French-Canadian culture is borne across [the linguistic divide] in a literal and metaphoric act of "translation" for an Anglophone readership, a strange, defamiliarised English is born and manifests itself in the language of the novel" (293). The heteroglossic effort of the

novel may therefore be seen in the ways in which MacLennan simulates the cadences of various Canadian accents in the novel. For example, the line "The weather, she's a bastard for sure," which is given to one of the French-Canadian farmers of Saint-Marc-des-Érables, exhibits the kind of inverted syntax that is characteristic of French-Canadian English (60). The farmer is speaking to a group of his fellows at Drouin's general store; he is therefore meant to be speaking "French," and this is indicated by MacLennan's use of defamiliarized English. When Athanase is speaking to Father Beaubien, however, we can presume that he is speaking French, but that "French" is written by MacLennan as flawless English. For example, Athanase argues with Father Beaubien that "A factory here is inevitable. Either we French develop our own resources or the English will do it for us" (172). MacLennan's heteroglossic technique of defamiliarized English is therefore used to convey a certain popular level of French that is associated with the working-class and not with the more educated level of French that Athanase speaks, as a *seigneur*.

MacLennan uses the same technique of defamiliarized English that he uses to indicate the farmer's lower level of French to indicate Athanase's "Frenchness" when he says to Yardley, in a discussion about the brewery and railway magnates of Montreal, "He is certainly the big fish in the little puddle" (30). Athanase is speaking English with Yardley, however. There is therefore a class implication to MacLennan's defamiliarized English: the aristocratic, French-Canadian Athanase speaking English occupies the same inferior position in the linguistic power structure of the novel as a working-class French-Canadian character such as Blanchard speaking French with Athanase. MacLennan's French-Canadian characters are therefore always at a disadvantage when speaking with English-Canadian characters, as they are always depicted as speaking in a language that is foreign to them, and never in their mother tongue. While MacLennan's

heteroglossic use of defamiliarized English to suggest "French" does convey the bilingual character of Quebec, therefore, it also replicates the cultural inequalities between English and French Canadians.

MacLennan also writes heteroglossia into the setting of the novel with details such as the "metal advertising posters that plastered the front of Polycarpe Drouin's general store with a strange mixture of French and English: *La Farine Robin Hood, Black Horse Ale, Magic Baking Powder, Fumez le Tabac Old Chum"* (4); similarly, in downtown Montreal, Paul notices the heteroglossia of his environment in the "signs screaming bi-lingually in red, white and yellow: BUVEZ COCA-COLA—THE PAUSE THAT REFRESHES—LA BIERE DE VOTRE GRANDPERE—THE REMEDY YOUR UNCLE USED; street signs telling him to keep to the right gardez votre droite no parking here ne stationnez pas ici" (252-3). MacLennan does not translate the French slogans into English, as he does with the dialogue of his French-Canadian characters, as the content of the slogans is not important; the mere juxtaposition of languages is enough to convey the bilingualism of his Quebec setting. When writing the dialogue of his French-Canadian characters, however, it is crucial that that dialogue be comprehensible to his anglophone audience, as he wants to encourage English-Canadian sympathy for those characters. He therefore translates their "French" dialogue into English, placing them at a disadvantage in the linguistic economy of the novel that replicates that of Quebec in the 1940s.

MacLennan thereby gallicizes his own English to signal the "Frenchness" of his French-Canadian characters while making them comprehensible for his anglophone audience. From this gallicization, Gonzalez draws the contention "that *Two Solitudes* is a novel in translation, not only in the metaphorical sense of an exercise in cultural transmission, but also in the literal sense of being translated from another language" (293). The contention is attractive and illuminating.

In the context of his genesis dream, however, as well as in the context of his lack of familiarity with French, it is perhaps more accurate to understand MacLennan as a mime than as a translator. Faced with the necessity of conveying the "Frenchness" of his characters, but being unable to use French, MacLennan bypasses the language itself and communicates "Frenchness" by means of syntax and cadence. It is necessary that MacLennan's portrayals of French-Canadian characters be considered convincingly authentic by an English-Canadian audience if he is to be successful in his project of rendering French Canada attractive to them. MacLennan suggests the authenticity of his portrayals of French-Canadian characters by mimicking French in defamiliarized English and thereby strives to overcome the limits of his own monolingualism, as well as of his lack of experience of French-Canadian culture.

MacLennan also strives to overcome these limits by choosing Paul as his protagonist. Paul has inherited both the French- and the English-Canadian cultures through his parents and is therefore able to speak with authority for both "solitudes." Indeed, by the end of the novel, Paul has become something of a mouthpiece for MacLennan's own project of writing a novel about Canada:

> because it used the English and French languages, a Canadian book would have to take its place in the English and French traditions […] Besides, there was the question of background. As Paul considered the matter, he realized that his readers' ignorance of the essential Canadian clashes and values presented him with a unique problem. The background would have to be created from scratch if his story was to become intelligible. He could afford to take nothing for granted. He would have to build the stage and props for his play, and then write the play itself. (365)

MacLennan invests Paul with his own project[3] and thereby aligns himself with this fictional *héritier* of both Canadian cultures. The need for this sleight of hand betrays MacLennan's own insecurity in his ability to describe both of his "solitudes," for he is only intimately familiar with the English-Canadian half; assigning his own fictional project to the authoritatively bilingual Paul therefore gives it a legitimacy he cannot claim for himself.

While MacLennan's French-Canadian characters are largely stereotypical, so too are the English-Canadian characters. As Marine Leland noted in her review of the novel for *The Modern Language Journal*, "All the characters in *Two Solitudes*, whether they be French or English, are oversimplified. The former are made to appear uniformly ineffectual and the latter are presented as singularly unattractive" (424). The oversimplification of his characters derives from the fact that MacLennan is less concerned with individual psychology than he is with the national myths of the popular imagination and how they contribute to the mutual deafness of French and English Canada. MacLennan returns to this theme in "An English-speaking Quebecker looks at Quebec":

> In each of the two solitudes, people behave as though an understanding of the other solitude would incur the wrath of ancestors who perpetuated here the dynastic, religious, and mercantilistic quarrels of two European empires now defunct as such. If a certain kind of Anglo-Canadian can convince himself that all French Canadians are priest-ridden, backward, and corrupt; if his counterpart in Quebec can feel sure that *Les Anglais* are all merciless Orangemen plotting to conscript him into another war […] the superegos of both are comforted. (230)

While MacLennan works closely and self-consciously with these stereotypes that English and French Canada have of each other in *Two Solitudes*, he is doing so in order to reveal them as

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[3] Cameron argues that "MacLennan presented Paul to record his own struggles in writing the first self-consciously Canadian novel, *Barometer Rising*" (171).

self-serving national fictions and thereby encourage goodwill between the two cultures. As both he and his English-Canadian audience would have been largely unfamiliar with the reality of French-Canadian culture, however, MacLennan must both make his French-Canadian characters correspond partially to the French-Canadian stereotypes with which they are familiar, in order for them to be recognized as French-Canadian characters, and have them depart from those negative stereotypes, in order to render French-Canadians attractive. The accuracy of MacLennan's depictions of French-Canadian characters is therefore important only insofar as his readers recognize those characters as French-Canadian and find them largely sympathetic. Since MacLennan is writing in English to an English-Canadian audience, it is sufficient for him to portray his French-Canadian characters speaking a defamiliarized English to create the impression of a faithful translation of French Canada that is both recognizable and attractive.

Faced with the problem of how to write about the Quebec linguistic divide in English, MacLennan attempts to portray both sides of that divide in a unitary language, while signaling the linguistic alterity of his francophone characters with defamiliarized English. MacLennan's place is therefore firmly on the unitary end of the spectrum from unitary language to heteroglossia, despite his use of heteroglossic techniques. By writing about French Canada in English, MacLennan does not intend to privilege English over French. He wishes to approach his subject matter as an objective observer, but as he is an anglophone writing for an anglophone audience, he must write in English, and this already jeopardizes the impartiality of his depiction of Quebec's linguistic divide. MacLennan creates a protagonist who is born of both cultures, and thereby has the bilingual authority that MacLennan desires for himself, and invests that protagonist with his own project of writing a Canadian novel that spans the linguistic divide. In addition to the fact that he did not speak French, it serves MacLennan's purpose better to write

his novel in one language, for his impulse is towards unification: his project is not so much to describe Canada as he has experienced it, but to encourage a future *rapprochement* of French and English Canada. While *Two Solitudes* is necessarily heteroglossic in that it portrays a bilingual environment, therefore, its main impulse is towards a unitary language that will ensure a maximum of communication and comprehension. MacLennan's impulse towards unitary language, however, is fundamentally threatening to French Canada when it is applied to the Canadian context, as its logical extreme is the imposition of a single national tongue and the disappearance of Canada's linguistic diversity. MacLennan was a staunch advocate for the preservation of Canada's bilingualism throughout his life, as he saw it as "the sole measure which can save Canada from absorption by the United States" (*The Other Side* 164). The form of *Two Solitudes*, however, enacts the very disappearance of French that he wanted to prevent through the creation of a novel that would present French Canada to English Canada in a positive light.

The disappearance of French in Canada was a very real fear for French-Canadian nationalists, as French Canadians were learning English in order to survive in the Canadian workplace while English Canadians had no incentive to learn French. In *Two Solitudes*, the three most important French-Canadian characters of the novel (Athanase, Marius, and Paul) are bilingual. Paul explains to Heather that Marius can speak English, but chooses not to: "He'd nursed his hatred of the English so carefully it was now a pretty fine flower. He could speak perfect English, but if anyone addressed him in English he affected not to understand a word of it. What he really wanted, of course, was vengeance" (314). Here, MacLennan partially blames the lack of communication between the English- and the French-Canadian communities of Montreal upon the stubborn resentment of nationalists like Marius. On the other hand, the only

English character who speaks French in the novel is Captain Yardley. MacLennan emphasizes the fact that Yardley speaks French clumsily but unselfconsciously, and that it is this *franchise* that charms his French-Canadian neighbours:

> He spoke French, but with terrible grammar and a queer accent mixed with many English words […] [T]hose who had met Yardley had not been able to help liking him. They admitted, almost defensively, that he was very different from their notion of an English-Canadian. He was friendly, there was nothing high and mighty about him, he was ready to ask them for advice. (21)

In "French Is a *Must* for Canadians," MacLennan observes that he himself is much more likely to hold a conversation with a French Canadian in English than in French, as a typical "[French Canadian Montrealers'] English is as good as [his] own, and [he] cannot practice [his] broken French on a bilingual *Canadien* without mutual embarrassment" (161). By making Yardley the exception that proves the rule of English-Canadian reluctance to speak French, MacLennan suggests that the lack of communication in Quebec is the result of English- more than French-Canadian stubbornness, as English-Canadians typically do not speak French out of an unwillingness to experience the discomfort of speaking in a language that they wield clumsily.

The English Canadian's privilege of speaking exclusively in her mother tongue in the 1940s is, however, the result of the socioeconomic inequalities of Quebec at that time, regardless of the socioeconomic status of the individual English Canadian who has "no *apparent* need to learn French in order to communicate" (MacLennan, *The Other Side* 162). Everett C. Hughes, too, provides similar comment upon the unwillingness to speak French that he notices among the English-Canadian community of "Cantonville":

> In public or in conversation with French people, English people express regret that they can't speak French. In private they more commonly excuse themselves by saying that the local French is unintelligible to a person who has been taught only "Parisian French." Or they may frankly say that this is an English country, and it is up to the French to learn English. (83)

In the context of this kind of English-Canadian attitude towards the French language, MacLennan's project of translating French Canada into English is very politically sensitive, especially since he is self-consciously guilty of the very faults that he criticizes. Though his intention is to make French-Canadian culture intelligible and attractive to English Canadians and thereby promote understanding and reconciliation between these two cultures, MacLennan winds up re-enacting the hegemony of English over French in Quebec at this time by writing about French Canada in English. This contradiction between MacLennan's generous intentions in writing *Two Solitudes* and the problematic effects of that text is a symptom of the contradiction at the heart of the novel, which is that MacLennan is an author who believes in writing what he knows, and in writing about French Canada, he is deliberately writing about that which he does not know.

Like *Two Solitudes*, *Bonheur d'occasion* was published in 1945 and is set in Montreal in the years leading up to the Second World War. Unlike MacLennan, however, Roy's focus is not the linguistic divide itself; rather, she treats the linguistic divide only insofar as it affects her characters. An example of Roy's more intimately psychological portrayal of the Quebec language divide is the scene in which Rose-Anna visits her leukemic son Daniel in the hospital, which is situated in the wealthy, anglophone neighbourhood of Westmount, and meets his nurse, Jenny, who speaks to Daniel in English. Roy does not translate Jenny's English into French;

unlike MacLennan, she does not impose linguistic unity upon a bilingual situation, but preserves its heteroglossia in full. The incomprehension that this preserved linguistic difference might present to her francophone reader is necessary to Roy's text, furthermore, as it is clear from Rose-Anna's reaction to Jenny speaking English to her son that it is not so much what Jenny is saying, but the symbolic value of English that is meaningful to Rose-Anna. The linguistic difference between herself and Jenny elicits a strong emotional response in Rose-Anna; she reacts with alarm, concern, and a certain degree of discomfort:

> —Elle parle rien qu'en anglais? demanda-t-elle avec un léger accent d'inimitié. Quand t'as besoin de quelque chose, es-tu capable de le demander?
>
> —Oui, dit Daniel simplement […]
>
> —Mais si elle te comprend pas?
>
> —Elle me comprend.
>
> Il avait eu un léger mouvement d'impatience. Et ses yeux cherchaient le sourire de Jenny au fond de la salle. Elle était quelque chose de merveilleux, de tendre qui était entré dans sa vie, et ils se comprendraient toujours même s'ils ne parlaient pas la même langue. (305)

By focusing upon the extra-linguistic bond between Daniel and Jenny, Roy both acknowledges linguistic difference and its potential to create barriers between individuals and suggests that those barriers are not absolute. In this passage, Roy privileges compassion and a common humanity over language and its concomitant affiliations of culture and race. This instance of extra-linguistic bonding, however, does not nullify the problem of linguistic difference. Later in the same passage, we witness Rose-Anna struggling to scrounge up a few English words with which to answer Jenny:

—*He's getting tired. Maybe, to-morrow, you can stay longer.*

Les paupières de Rose-Anna papillotèrent. Elle comprit vaguement qu'on la congédiait […]

Elle fit encore quelques pas hésitants et, dans sa répugnance à s'en aller, il y avait tout l'effort qu'elle mettait à se souvenir de quelques mots anglais […] Elle se contenta d'un bref sourire à l'adresse de Jenny. (309-10)

The linguistic difference between Jenny and Rose-Anna remains an insurmountable obstacle to communication. That the linguistic difference is so much more significant to Rose-Anna than to Daniel suggests that it is, in itself, less problematic than the sociocultural meanings that become attached to it through experience. Rose-Anna reacts to Jenny's English with timidity and embarrassment because this is not just a linguistic difference, but a marker of a difference of class. Rose-Anna recognizes that in this English hospital with his pretty English nurse, her son is more physically comfortable than he had ever been at home. The linguistic difference is therefore associated, for Rose-Anna, with all of the things that she cannot give her children, and with her shortcomings as a mother. Rose-Anna fears that Jenny has supplanted her in her son's affections, and indeed, it would seem that she nearly has. Rose-Anna asks Daniel,

—Tu l'aimes bien?

—Oui, c'est Jenny.

—Tu l'aimes pas mieux que nous autres toujours?

Une légère hésitation passa dans le regard fatigué.

—Non. (306)

Roy's treatment of the linguistic divide, then, is tied up with matters of class and filial affection: Rose-Anna's worry is not so much that her child will not be able to communicate with his nurse

and does not belong up on top of the hill overlooking Saint-Henri, but more that he will become assimilated to that environment, and that she will lose her child to this comfortable English affluence.

There is a deliberate association of English with wealth throughout the novel. For instance, in the opening scene of the novel, when Florentine notices the quality of Jean's suit, Roy specifies that it is a "vêtement d'étoffe anglaise [qui] ne rappelait pas les magasins du faubourg" and that that English cloth is associated with privilege: "Il lui apparut que ce seul vêtement indiquait un caractère, un genre d'existence comme privilégié" (22). Again, Roy reinforces the association of English with wealth and comfort as Jean makes his way home from the *casse-croûte* and looks up the mountain to Westmount:

> au-delà, dans une large échancrure du faubourg, apparaît la ville de Westmount échelonnée jusqu'au faîte de la montagne dans son rigide confort anglais. Il se trouve ainsi que c'est aux voyages infinis de l'âme qu'elle invite. Ici, le luxe et la pauvreté se regardent inlassablement, depuis qu'il y a Westmount, depuis qu'en bas, à ses pieds, il y a Saint-Henri. (45)

Roy deliberately contrasts the "rigid English comfort" of Westmount with the poverty of Saint-Henri. *Bonheur d'occasion* is therefore similar to *Two Solitudes* in that both provide fictional portrayals of a city that is divided along linguistic lines. Roy's treatment of the linguistic divide differs from MacLennan's, however, in that it is not the primary focus of her novel: portrayals of the linguistic divide are always refracted through the individual psychologies of her characters and are bound up with cultural and political inequalities. For Rose-Anna, language is tied up with filial love; for Florentine and Jean, it is tied up with wealth and personal ambition. The meaning of the linguistic divide varies from character to character, and is therefore not uniformly

either divisive or surmountable. Roy does not suggest that there can be perfect communication between English and French Canada, but she also does not deny the possibility of communication.

This difference between MacLennan's and Roy's approaches to the Quebec linguistic divide in their two novels of 1945 takes on political overtones if one considers the debate over Confederation at the end of the Second World War: Roy preserves difference where MacLennan seeks for unification, just as French Canada sought provincial autonomy where English Canada sought an increasingly centralized government. MacLennan's project of encouraging communication between English and French Canada in *Two Solitudes*, then, can be understood as a reaction to French Canada's increasing desire for autonomy from the political hegemony of English Canada. MacLennan desired Canadian unity and understanding, especially in the wake of the Second Conscription Crisis, and to this aim, he translated French into English; however, MacLennan does not acknowledge that this translation entails the hegemony of English over French in Quebec and reinforces the imbalance of power between the two languages. When we compare *Two Solitudes* and *Bonheur d'occasion*, it becomes apparent that *Two Solitudes* strives for unity, whereas *Bonheur d'occasion* frankly depicts the possibility that linguistic barriers can sometimes, though not necessarily, be insurmountable, and is therefore the more heteroglossic of the two novels.

Though Bakhtin theorized heteroglossia to be characteristic of the novel and not of poetry, A.M. Klein's *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* does contain heteroglossic elements, and this is a product both of Klein's modernism and of the volume's Quebec subject matter. The volume, though written in English, is peppered with French words and phrases; for example, M.

Bertrand "rolls the *r* in *charmante*" (41, l. 3), Gaston is remembered as a "*vaurien"* (43, l. 4), and, on a darker note, "Hormisdas Arcand" concludes:

> *Et, pour vrai dire*, what more political
>
> is there to say after you have said:
>
> *A bas les maudits Juifs!* (46, ll. 7-9)

Klein chooses these French words and phrases for their specific sociocultural resonances within the Quebec context of *The Rocking Chair*. M. Bertrand is a francophile who affects Parisian manners, and this is encapsulated in his rolling of the *"r*" in "*charmante*"; Klein thereby refers to a particular French accent to convey a meaning that is specific to Quebec culture. Klein could have described Gaston as a ne'er-do-well and have conveyed the same conceptual content as "*vaurien*," but the *joual* of "*vaurien*" immediately suggests a working-class French-Canadian background. Similarly, by writing "*A bas les maudits Juifs!*" rather than "Down with the damned Jews!," Klein calls up a whole culture of French-Canadian anti-semitism that is, arguably, the strongest motivation behind his composition of *The Rocking Chair*.[4] With the exception of "Montreal," *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* contradicts Bakhtin's claim that poets "will sooner resort to the artificial creation of a new language specifically for poetry than he will to the exploitation of actual available social dialects," for Klein draws upon the local linguistic resonances of Quebec in his poems. By including such heteroglossic elements culled from Canadian French in an English volume of poetry, furthermore, Klein emphasizes the connections between the two languages and cultures and suggests the possibility of a bilingual Canadian culture that is common to both English and French Canada.

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[4] The relationships among French Canada, anti-semitism, and *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* will be discussed in greater depth in the third chapter.

An exception to the heteroglossic use of language in *The Rocking Chair* is Klein's "Montreal." Rather than writing in French or in English, with "Montreal" Klein claims to have written a bilingual poem that would be comprehensible to both monolingual anglophones and francophones and reflect the "bilinguefactual" quality of the city. To that end, he writes "Montreal" in "an invented language [...] created on the basis of a Norman vocabulary common to both English and French," which is strikingly reminiscent of Bakhtin's "artificial creation of a new language specifically for poetry" (Simon 68). Klein's invented language is unitary, but not in the same way that MacLennan's defamiliarized English is unitary: while MacLennan mimics French in English for an English audience, Klein attempts to blend English and French in such a way that will be comprehensible to monolingual readers of both languages. Both authors strive for perfect comprehension, but MacLennan strives for perfect comprehension for anglophones, while Klein strives for perfect comprehension for francophones, as well. It is readily apparent, upon reading the first stanza, however, that "Montreal" is written in a defamiliarized English:

> O city metropole, isle riverain!
> Your ancient pavages and sainted routs
> Traverse my spirit's conjured avenues!
> Splendor erablic of your promenades
> Foliates there, and there your maisonry
> Of pendent balcon and escalier'd march,
> Unique midst English habitat,
> Is vivid Normandy! (29, ll. 1-8)

What Klein has done here is to choose only Latinate English words that have close cousins in French, and invent words such as "erablic" and "maisonry" that borrow from both languages.

Considering the political and cultural implications of the linguistic schism in Quebec, we must consider what this "bilingual" poem accomplishes and for whom. Like MacLennan's, Klein's aim seems to be a cultural consolidation through the overcoming of linguistic difference and, like MacLennan, he accomplishes this through the use of defamiliarized English, although his English is much more extensively defamiliarized, and therefore more heteroglossic, than MacLennan's.

Where MacLennan defamiliarizes his English by writing it with French-Canadian syntax, Klein defamiliarizes his English by drawing upon the common etymological roots of English and French, which stem largely from the Norman conquest of England. While both Klein and MacLennan write in a defamiliarized English in order to convey the bilingualism of Quebec, Klein emphasizes the etymological similarities of the two languages where MacLennan emphasizes their syntactical differences. This difference could, arguably, be the result of the fact that Klein, unlike MacLennan, was fluent in French, and was thus better able to see the similarities between the two languages, while MacLennan knew little French and was of the opinion that "when a man has grown up it is much harder to learn a foreign language, and it is especially hard to learn French" (*The Other Side* 163). Klein, furthermore, knew Yiddish and Hebrew as well as French and English and, as someone who identified more strongly with his Jewish community than he did with either of the two linguistic "solitudes," was perhaps better able to see the similarities and connections between Quebec's French and English communities.

Though "Montreal" fails as a bilingual poem, it does succeed in drawing out the similarities between English and French, for an English audience, and thereby decreases the imagined gap between the solitudes. "Montreal" presents English and French as two branches of the same etymological tree, and thereby counters the perception of the two languages as discrete

entities: rather than portray a city that is divided along linguistic lines, the air of Klein's Montreal is "bilinguefactual" (32, l. 32). While Bakhtin would qualify "Montreal" as a unitary poem, therefore, as it is written in an invented language, that invented language serves the same purpose as the heteroglossia of the rest of the volume: to draw attention to the connection between Canadian French and Canadian English.

Klein's emphasis upon how French bleeds into English in Quebec is appropriate in a context in which *l'anglicisation* was (and still is) an inflammatory topic of debate among Quebec nationalists: where Klein celebrates the permeability of languages, nationalists regard that permeability with horror, as nationalism depends upon the impossible task of separating languages, cultures, and "races" into discrete categories. One of the main characteristics that distinguish Canadian French from *le français de France* is the number of English loan words that Canadian French contains, and this is largely an effect of the historical imbalance in power between the two language groups. This anglicization of Canadian French can be seen in Roy's depiction of French-Canadian *joual* in *Bonheur d'occasion*, which is peppered with English words. For example, when he is telling Emmanuel his eerie story about the men who live on the dump, Alphonse says,

> Les gars de la dompe, ils avaient tout ça pour rien, sauf la visite du dimanche. Pis la tranquilité, ça, y en avait plenty […] T'avais la ville dans le dos, la ville pis son secours, la ville pis sa file de gueux qu'attendent leurs tickets pour le pain, la ville pis son vacarme à cause de bon Dieu sait quoi! Pus de clink clank de tramway, pus de grosses limousines te crachant au nez comme si t'avais la peste, pus de boucane, pus rien. (425-6)

Klein mirrors the anglicization of Canadian French that Roy depicts through the gallicization of his English poetry, which is accomplished by including French vocabulary and, in the unique case of "Montreal," by writing in a defamiliarized English that emphasizes the common etymological roots of English and French. Klein thereby suggests a mutuality of influence between French and English in Quebec.

Klein's approach, however, elides the inequality of the influence that French and English had upon each other in 1940s Quebec. Canadian English of the 1940s was not as influenced by French as Canadian French was influenced by English and, again, this is a product of the economic inequalities across the language divide, as French Canadians were required to learn English within the Quebec economy, while English Canadians did not meet with a similar necessity to learn French. Klein's depictions of linguistic difference are not loaded with the implications of economic and cultural difference that Roy's are and serve more to conceal and excuse the imbalance of power between the language groups of Montreal than to rectify it. It remains a volume written for an English-Canadian audience that seeks to justify the English-Canadian position.

Klein's use of language, in "Montreal," is in some ways similar to MacLennan's use of language when writing the defamiliarized English dialogue of his French-Canadian characters, though to a different degree: both gallicize their English to indicate that that English is not meant to signify hegemonic English, but also French, while remaining comprehensible to English-speakers. For MacLennan, this defamiliarized English is meant to gesture at a culture with which he is unfamiliar, but which he wishes to make familiar for his English-Canadian audience; Klein's defamiliarized English, on the other hand, serves to suggest that French is already familiar to him and to his readers, as it has such close etymological ties to English. While Klein

invents a unitary language to convey the proximity of French to English in "Montreal," he adopts heteroglossic techniques elsewhere in *The Rocking Chair* in order to suggest a similar familiarity with French, as the French words and expressions call up a network of local Quebec sociocultural meanings that are common to both English and French Canadians. Both Klein's unitary language and his heteroglossia serve the same purpose of calling up a specific Quebec context in which English and French rub elbows and influence each other, and *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* is therefore more heteroglossic than *Two Solitudes*, but less so than *Bonheur d'occasion*, which preserves linguistic difference more fully.

Though they adopt different approaches, the impetus of MacLennan and Klein is towards unification and reconciliation, and this has much to do with their sociocultural position as anglophones: whatever their espoused political positions might be, their language is the language of power, in this specific historical situation, and they want unity, where a speaker of the minority language, such as Gabrielle Roy, will want to preserve difference. This is apparent in Roy's portrayal of the impossibility of communication between Rose-Anna and Jenny: in *Bonheur d'occasion*, linguistic differences are sometimes irreconcilable. MacLennan and Klein, on the other hand, emphasize the possibilities of communication in their depictions of the linguistic divide. While those depictions are hopeful and well-intentioned, they also ignore the socioeconomic and historical inequalities of Quebec culture that can sometimes make a mutual understanding impossible.

Chapter 2:

Son village dans la grande ville:[5] Depicting French-Canadian Urbanization

The industrialization of Quebec produced a seismic shift in French-Canadian culture, and consequently, a questioning of French-Canadian identity. Traditionally, French-Canadian culture had been predominantly rural. The villages were presided over by the Catholic church and the *seigneur* and were populated by families that had lived there for generations. With industrialization, however, came urbanization, and a move away from the traditional French-Canadian way of life. It is this urbanization of French Canada that Everett C. Hughes studies in his 1946 sociological work, *French Canada in Transition*. He introduces his reader to his topic with the following passage:

> The Quebec of fiction and of the travel posters is a rustically quaint countryside in which the very houses and the layout of fields proclaim a rural culture unlike that of neighboring Ontario, New York, and New England. The stereotype includes also towns and small cities of a certain European cast in which a cathedral and monastery look down from a hill upon quiet rows of stone houses built wall to wall. Such a Quebec exists. After seeing it, the skeptical tourist begins to believe that the *habitant*, the French-Canadian farmer, speaks French not as a pose but simply because it is his native tongue.
>
> The Quebec of the news dispatches of the last decade is quite different. The newspapers and magazines report strikes, demonstrations of passionately

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[5]Roy 252.

> nationalistic students and mass meetings of protest against conscription. This Quebec, too, is real. (1)

Hughes begins his sociological study of French Canada by identifying two competing models of French-Canadian identity: a traditional, rural Quebec and a modern, urban Quebec. These two models are both based in the realities of French-Canadian life and profoundly fictional, as they transform the conditions of everyday existence into national mythologies.

Nationalists such as André Laurendeau opposed the urbanization of Quebec, as they saw it as involving a concomitant anglicization of French Canada and thus the loss of the traditional French-Canadian identity. The associations made among French-Canadian urbanization, anglicization, and the loss of the French-Canadian identity by French-Canadian nationalists can be seen in the following statement by Laurendeau from *Le Devoir*:

> Voyez-vous, les lâchetés sont plus faciles maintenant, les groupes français et anglais se mêlant très étroitement. À la cession, les 4/5 des nôtres étaient ruraux; plus de 60% sont aujourd'hui citadins et coudoient à tout moment les Anglais qui, au Canada, ont presque toujours habité les villes. (André Laurendeau, qtd. in Delisle 133)

Literary works of the 1940s, such as Gabrielle Roy's *Bonheur d'occasion* (1945), Hugh MacLennan's *Two Solitudes* (1945), Alphonse Piché's *Ballades de la Petite Extrace* (1946) and *Remous* (1947), Alain Grandbois' *Rivages de l'Homme* (1948), Paul-Emile Borduas' *Refus Global* (1948), and A.M. Klein's *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* (1948), negotiate the transformation of the French-Canadian identity at this time. While Gabrielle Roy and Alphonse Piché lay claim to urban space through local depictions and the articulation of a new, urban French-Canadian identity, Alain Grandbois and Paul-Emile Borduas take the urbanization of

Quebec as an opportunity to become cosmopolitan citizens of the world and eschew national mythology altogether. On the other side of the language divide, Hugh MacLennan welcomes the increased proximity between English and French Canada that urbanization entails as an opportunity for greater communication and understanding, while A.M. Klein is wary of the possibility that the transformation of the French-Canadian identity during urbanization might express itself as a violent nationalism that would target him and his Jewish community as scapegoats for their cultural upheaval. While MacLennan and Klein are interested in portraying French Canada and the possibilities and consequences of a greater contact with French-Canadians in urban settings, Roy's, Piché's, Grandbois's, and Borduas's works do not reciprocate that interest: Roy and Piché concentrate upon urban French Canada itself, while Grandbois and Borduas adopt cosmopolitan outlooks that transcend the Canadian context altogether. In general, the English-Canadian writers emphasize the connection and proximity of Quebec's linguistic communities, while the French Canadians emphasize their separation and distance.

Roy's *Bonheur d'occasion* was a ground-breaking work in its frank depiction of poverty in urban Montreal, a theme which had been hitherto neglected in the French-Canadian novel, as noted in Antoine Jobin's *Modern Language Journal* review:

> [E]ven in the face of a steadily declining rural population, such gifted novelists as Savard, Ringuet, Desrosiers and Grignan have rejected the city as an area of French-Canadian life worthy of observation. In French Canada, as in the United States, the urban population far exceeds the rural and this persistence in over-emphasizing the country theme has resulted in a one-sided and entirely inadequate

> representation of French-Canadian civilization and life, despite the more convincing and realistic approach of contemporary authors. (234)

It is arguably because the country theme was so important to the French-Canadian national myth that it took so long for the French-Canadian novel to move to the city. In writing an urban French-Canadian novel, Roy had to fictionalize Montreal and grapple with what it meant to be an urban French-Canadian in the 1940s. In writing this new urban French-Canadian identity, Roy is in critical conversation with the older rural identity. This can be seen in the way Roy often describes urban Saint-Henri as rural or village-like. Early in the novel, Roy begins describing Saint-Henri in a way that suggests that the French-Canadian *quartier* exists within the urban jungle in the same way that the rural village exists within the Laurentian wilderness, and is structured by the same institutions and relationships: "École, église, couvent: bloc séculaire[6] fortement noué au coeur de la jungle citadine comme au creux des vallons laurentiens" (32). Roy then guides the narrative eye outward to the poverty of the neighbourhood:

> Au delà s'ouvraient des rues à maisons basses, s'enfonçant de chaque côté vers les quartiers de grande misère, en haut vers la rue Workman et la rue Saint-Antoine, et, en bas, contre le canal de Lachine où Saint-Henri tape les matelas, tisse le fil, la soie, le coton, pousse le métier, dévide les bobines, cependant que la terre tremble, que les trains dévalent, que la sirène éclate, que les bateaux, hélices, rails et sifflets épellent autour de lui l'aventure. (32)

While it would at first seem that Roy is suggesting that Saint-Henri is like a village that has been transplanted to the city, she quickly deflates that suggestion by emphasizing the proletarian nature of Saint-Henri: it is a poor, industrial neighbourhood that is polluted by the noise and

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[6] Note that *séculaire* means ancient, and not secular. *Séculier* is the French equivalent of secular.

commotion of its factories. Furthermore, that neighbourhood has access to modes of international transportation that the village did not, and this threatens the cohesion of the urban French-Canadian community: the young Emmanuel hears a call to adventure in the sirens of boats and trains that draw him away from Saint-Henri. Roy thereby suggests both Saint-Henri's descent from the rural French-Canadian village and the profound differences of those two settings due to the proletarianization of French Canadians in the capitalist urban setting.

Similarly, when Emmanuel looks at Saint-Henri, he sees "Son village dans la grande ville! Car nul quartier de Montréal n'a conservé ses limites précises, sa vie de village, particulière, étroite, caractérisée, comme Saint-Henri" (252). While Saint-Henri has conserved a village-like character, it is compromised by the proletarianization that is forced upon it by the capitalist structure of the city. The new French-Canadian model of the *quartier*, then, is split between a rural spirit and an urban actuality. Emmanuel acknowledges this split as he continues to muse upon his neighbourhood:

> Il a, le jour, sa vie impitoyable de labeur. Il a, le soir, sa vie de village, alors, qu'assis au frais sur le pas de leur porte ou sur des chaises placées au bord du trottoir, ses gens s'entretiennent de seuil en seuil.
>
> Saint-Henri: termitière villageoise! (253)

In Roy's description, the traditional rural model of French Canada is recognizably preserved in the new urban model, but is also profoundly transformed by the new urban setting. Roy's choice of the word "termitière" suggests that the transformation is negative, as it connotes both the cramped conditions of the Saint-Henri apartments that are "emmur[és] lentement, solidement" by "[l]es filatures, les élévateurs à blé, les entrepôts," but also the insect-like dispensability of the lives of their working-class inhabitants (28). The novel is necessarily critical of capitalism, as it

depicts the failures of the capitalist system through the poverty of Depression-Era St-Henri at the outbreak of the Second World War. Emmanuel muses with bitter irony upon how the poor of his French-Canadian neighbourhood find "[l]e salut dans la guerre!" (338). As Philippe Tessier notes, Roy is critical of an economic system in which enlistment is considered a viable means of escaping destitution: "La guerre sert […] de toile de fond à une critique du capitalisme: le roman ne critique pas le conflit comme tel, mais plutôt un contexte qui propose la guerre comme solution pour lutter contre la pauvreté" (102).

Roy further criticizes the urban, capitalist setting of Saint-Henri through the deleterious effects of that setting upon Rose-Anna, who is originally from the village of Saint-Denis. Roy places great emphasis upon Rose-Anna's provenance from and attachment to the village:

> [Azarius] parlait d'avoir une maison avec un jardinet où il planterait des choux et des carottes. Et elle, qui venait de la campagne, était toute émue, toute joyeuse, à l'idée de voir pousser des légumes sous ses fenêtres. Mais c'était toujours des cheminées d'usines ou des masures entassées qui s'élevaient devant ses fenêtres. (83)

Roy draws a stark contrast between Rose-Anna's country origins and her actual urban context. The vegetable garden that Rose-Anna dreams of would be a humble substitute for the vast, open space of the country, and this is emphasized by Roy's choice of the diminutive "jardinet" over the more common *jardin*. Even this pitiful substitution is denied her, however, as she never gets her garden, and the view from her window is always of factory chimneys and cheap housing. The capitalist reality of her proletarian urban setting first diminishes and then denies her project to preserve the material conditions of her rural French-Canadian lifestyle.

The village quality of Saint-Henri endures in the character of its inhabitants, as it is not possible to replicate it materially in their urban environment and lifestyle. Even that personal village character, however, is modified by city dwelling, as Roy suggests in her description of the Lacasse family's visit to Rose-Anna's village after seven years of separation. When Azarius announces to Rose-Anna that they are going to visit her family, she falls immediately into a daydream that brings her back to the simplicity of her youth: "elle se voyait déjà là-bas, dans les lieux de son enfance; elle avançait à longues foulées, avec sa démarche de jeune fille svelte" (231). She then imagines the warmth with which she will be accepted back into her family:

> Elle se trouvait dans la maison des vieux, auprès de ses belles-soeurs, de ses frères, et entourée de leurs enfants qu'elle ne connaissait pas tous, les naissances se multipliant très vite chez eux. Elle parlait avec sa vieille mère qui, dans un coin de la cuisine, se berçait. Jamais démonstrative ni fort aimable, la vieille Mme Laplante réservait cependant un accueil chaleureux à sa fille qu'elle n'avait point vue depuis bien des années. (233)

Rose-Anna does not receive the welcome of which she had dreamed, however. Upon returning to Saint-Denis, it is quickly evident that she does not quite belong there anymore and has been transformed by the city:

> [A]lors qu'elle descendait du camion, vacillante, étourdie par une soudaine bouffée d'air frais et cherchant à défriper son vieux manteau, une gouaillerie lourde de son frère Ernest porta une première atteinte à sa joie.
>
> —Ben, nom d'une pipe, te v'la Rose-Anna!...dit le paysan en la détaillant d'un brusque coup d'oeil. Vieille pipe à son père, t'as envie d'en élever une quinzaine comme sa mère, je crois ben.

> Rose-Anna chancela sous cet étrange accueil. (261)

She returns to Saint-Denis not as the young, svelte girl that she was when she left, but as a married woman made heavy by numerous child-bearings, and this difference is immediately remarked upon by her brother. She does not receive the loving acceptance that she craves from her family, but hurtful appraisal. Rose-Anna's mother, too, receives her with chilly criticism rather than affection:

> [L]es premiers mots de la vieille femme étaient tout empreints de fatalisme:
>
> —Pauv' Rose-Anna, j'ai ben pensé que t'avais eu de la misère, toi aussi. Je le savais ben, va. Ça pouvait pas être plus drôle pour toi que pour les autres. Tu vois astheur que la vie, ma fille, on arrange pas ça comme on veut. Dans le temps, tu pensais avoir ton mot à dire…toi…
>
> C'était dit d'une petite voix pointue, sans émotions comme sans rancoeur. (264)

The criticisms that Rose-Anna receives from her brother and her mother are accurate: the third-person narration has already established that Rose-Anna's body is deformed by numerous childbirths and that her life is one of misery. It is evident from Rose-Anna's daydream of her return to the country that she imagines that the difficulties of her life are caused by the city, and that if she can get back to the country, she will return to being the girl that she was before she moved. When she does return to the country, however, she finds not only that she has been profoundly transformed by her time in the city, but that she no longer belongs in the country, nor is made welcome. Rose-Anna is neither entirely rural nor urban, but a hybrid of the two. Rose-Anna's pain and shame upon realizing that she no longer belongs in the country suggests the

larger French-Canadian cultural anxiety about the urbanization of French Canada and the loss of the traditional rural French-Canadian identity.

This anxiety is further registered in the Lacasse children's ignorance of and indifference to the country. Florentine does not seem the least bit torn by her decision to stay home—and arrange her fateful rendezvous with Jean—instead of going to the country with the rest of the family. The generational shift in the relationship to the country, however, is most poignantly suggested by Daniel's pathetic attempts to understand this "Richelieu" that is so important to his parents:

> Il était trop petit pour voir au dehors par les vitres de la voiture. Et pour lui le Richelieu pouvait être la bande de ciel bleu qui se déroulait à ses yeux dans le pare-brise, avec parfois, des tiges, des branches noires jetées là-dessus comme des arabesques […] (260)

If Rose-Anna's children do not feel an attachment to the rural village that is so important to the traditional French-Canadian identity, then the village-like quality of the Saint-Henri in which they live is no longer attached to the literal village itself, but has become its own quality, the quality of an urban French-Canadian *quartier*. In her emphasis upon both the similarities and the differences between the *quartier* and the village, Rose-Anna's transformation by the city, and the generational gap between Rose-Anna's attachment to the country and her children's indifference to it, Roy depicts a broader shift in the French-Canadian identity away from the traditional rural model and towards a newer urban model. The feeling of loss that accompanies that shift, however, is registered in Roy's depiction of Rose-Anna's nostalgia for her rural childhood.

While Roy's depiction of urban French Canada in the 1940s expresses a dissatisfaction with the conditions of this shift in French-Canadian culture, her solution is not to turn away from

the realities of that shift, but to grapple with them. This is suggested by the conclusion of the novel, which sees Florentine resigning herself to her marriage with Emmanuel and devoting herself to her family: “Elle devenait ambitieuse et secrètement solidaire des siens” (530). It is not a saccharine ending; Florentine’s affection for Emmanuel is cool and calculating in comparison to the passion that she had felt for Jean. Yet she means to do the best she can with what she has, and this kind of emotional pragmatism seems to be endorsed by the novel, although with a regret that a more idealistic love is not possible. This emotional pragmatism is a symptom of modernity, and it is with this kind of emotional pragmatism that Roy approaches the subject of urban French Canada: it is not her ideal material, but she is going to do what she can to love and improve it. Furthermore, Roy’s endorsement of Florentine’s newfound solidarity with her kin suggests that she, too, has become “ambitieuse et secrètement solidaire des siens”: as Florentine will raise her family up from squalor, Roy will enrich the urban French-Canadian identity through literary description that is both candid and celebratory.

In *Two Solitudes*, MacLennan also depicts the urbanization of the “Nouvelle France idyllique, agricole, rurale, de moeurs chastes,” as idealized by Lionel Groulx: the French-Canadian Tallards move to the city and convert to Protestantism (qtd. in Delisle 22). Athanase Tallard is both a hereditary *seigneur* with a leading role in the village and a member of Parliament. His move to the city and away from the Catholic church thereby disrupts the traditional partnership of *seigneur* and priest that assures “la cohésion de la province[, qui] tient aux structures d’encadrement économiques (la seigneurie et une certaine classe marchande), politiques (les notables jouent un rôle essentiel au Parlement) et religieuses” (Claval 403). MacLennan lays out the importance of the partnership between *seigneur* and priest at the outset of the novel: “All the good land was broken long ago, occupied and divided among seigneurs

and their sons, and then among tenants and their sons […] Every inch of it is measured, and brooded over by notaries, and blessed by priests" (1-2). Having adumbrated the traditional structure of rural French-Canadian life, the eye of the omniscient narrator then moves, however, from rural Quebec to Montreal, both anticipating the action of the novel and suggesting the sociological trend towards urbanization and the concomitant negotiation of a modern, urban French-Canadian identity.

Hughes notes, in his study of "Cantonville," that what distinguishes local, French-Canadian industries from those that are operated by outsiders (who are predominantly English-Canadian) is that the French-Canadian industries "do not make the town grow but proliferate and grow with it," while the English-Canadian-run industries "are the industries which changed the community from a small commercial town to one of Quebec's larger industrial centers" (47). "Cantonville" is a pseudonym that Hughes adopts to mask the identity of the town that he studies in *French Canada in Transition*. The study is meant, however, to expose certain general trends in French-Canadian culture, as is suggested by the breadth of the title. The adoption of the pseudonym, furthermore, renders Cantonville emblematic of French-Canadian culture as a whole. The distinction that Hughes draws between the growth patterns of French-Canadian and English-Canadian industries in Cantonville therefore suggests a general trend in the economical ethos that he has observed: the traditional French-Canadian seeks equilibrium with the rural milieu, while the English-Canadian seeks to expand beyond it.

The difference is fundamentally economic, as it is the difference between the seigneurial and the capitalist systems. These economic systems inform and structure the ways in which people understand and live their lives, and are therefore at the root of the cultural differences between French-Canadians and English-Canadians. A large part of the animosity that French-

Canadians felt for English-Canadians in the 1940s came from the fact that French Canada had to conform to the expansionist capitalism of English-Canadians in order to survive in the modern world. As Quebec became more capitalistic, it also became more industrial, urban, and secular, as villagers had to leave their parishes and the authority of the local *curé*.

Athanase Tallard, in *Two Solitudes*, loses his hereditary seigneurial status because he attempts to industrialize Saint-Marc-des-Erables and cuts his ties to the Catholic Church, for he thereby disassembles the institutions that, together, structure traditional, rural French Canada: the *seigneur* and the Church. Athanase can no longer be a *seigneur* if he becomes a Protestant industrialist. Despite all their dramatic differences, Athanase is similar to Rose-Anna in that when he attempts to transform his traditional French-Canadian identity, he finds that he no longer belongs in Saint-Marc-des-Érables—the villagers, including the loyal Blanchard, reject Athanase. The Tallard family therefore moves to the city, and by this move MacLennan suggests that any divergence from the traditional French-Canadian model will force the French-Canadian subject to leave the traditional French-Canadian rural setting and move to the city.

MacLennan's depiction of the urbanization of the French-Canadian identity differs importantly from Roy's, however, in that while Rose-Anna adapts to the city and survives, Athanase dies soon after he is forced out of the countryside. With Athanase's inability to adapt the urban setting, MacLennan suggests (as he does so often by other means) that identities are not fluid and negotiable, but fixed and exclusive. MacLennan dramatizes this conception of identity with Athanase's aimless wandering about Montreal after McQueen has informed him that he has been cut out of the Saint-Marc deal:

> Nearby was a club which he had recently joined but had seldom visited. It was one of the old English clubs, filled with men successful after the English

> fashion, rich, dignified and incredibly ignorant […] He could not go there any more now. They would talk about him if he did; but discreetly, in a patronizing tone, and never to his face […]
>
> Farther east was a French club to which he had belonged for years. But he could not enter there now, for they had demanded his resignation. (218)

MacLennan conceptualizes identity, as well as Montreal political, social, and cultural life generally, as two clubs, one English, and one French, and Athanase is not welcome in either. While Roy structures Rose-Anna's transformation according to a city/country dichotomy, MacLennan, like Laurendeau, aligns that dichotomy with the English/French dichotomy, so that to be urbanized is also necessarily to be anglicized. Athanase, despite his best efforts, is still too French-Canadian to survive in the modern, capitalist city, and the rigidity of his French-Canadian identity is solidified by the fact that Athanase dies in his ancestral seigneurial home in Saint-Marc.

Paul, on the other hand, is able to adapt to the city with more success than his father. Paul, however, is not purely French-Canadian. His mother, Kathleen, is Irish-Canadian, and the city is her natural habitat:

> Her old sense of the city's wholeness returned to her; it gripped her feelings and imagination the way she remembered it from girlhood […] It was good to be peaceful again, to be one's self; it was wonderful to be unknown in the crowd.
>
> She thought of Saint-Marc with loathing, as she told herself that if it had not been for Paul she would have left Athanase rather than go on living there any longer. In Saint-Marc she had never been permitted to be herself. (120-1)

As a Catholic Irish-Canadian, Kathleen troubles the equations of English with Protestantism and of French with Catholicism that structure Montreal culture. Furthermore, Kathleen was originally working-class and moved up in society through her marriage to Athanase, and unlike Roy's working-class characters, Kathleen gleaned pleasure from working in Montreal. Kathleen is therefore a character who is capable of transgressing the boundaries that partition Montreal with success and pleasure. When Athanase attempts such transgressions as converting to Protestantism or moving to the city, however, he perishes. Paul inherits Kathleen's ability to transgress boundaries: he is both Irish- and French-Canadian, he is bilingual, and he survives the move from the country to the city, his conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism, and the financial destitution of his family.

Paul is proletarianized by the reversal of his family's fortunes and by his urbanization, as is suggested by his interaction with Heather when he fixes her car:

> 'It wasn't flooded. Your choke wire was disconnected. That was all.'
>
> 'I wouldn't know a choke wire from—from a magneto.'
>
> 'Why should you? You'd only put garage hands out of work if you did.'
>
> She sat for a moment in the dark, touching the accelerator rhythmically with her toe. Then she turned to look at him. 'There's something the matter with that remark, Paul.'
>
> He made no reply as he wiped his hands on his handkerchief. Unreasonably, she had touched off the anger inside him. Unemployment could be nothing but an academic problem to her, if she ever thought about it at all. (303)

Paul has had a difficult, proletarian experience of the city that has made him sensitive to the injustices of the capitalist system. Rather than make this the basis of a new, urban French-

Canadian identity for Paul, however, MacLennan represents this proleterian difficulty as something to be overcome through further anglicization: Paul marries Heather, the rich girl from Westmount. While Paul is only half-French, and therefore half-proletarian, according to the logic of the novel, his children will only be a quarter French. Paul's narrative is therefore one of ongoing anglicization, and as Paul is the protagonist of the novel and very emphatically endorsed by MacLennan, so too is his anglicization.

The only alternative model that MacLennan provides for the urban French-Canadian is that of Marius. Marius, who, from the beginning of the novel, has been a fervent Quebec nationalist and a generally unpleasant human being, is only more so when Paul visits him in the second half of the novel:

> Marius refused to talk of anything but politics. His bitterness had retained some of its fire, but now there was a querulous note in his voice. His gestures were as automatically dramatic as ever. He claimed he was not a fascist; he was what he had always been, a straight-forward nationalist who hadn't changed a single opinion since the war. He criticized every other politician in Quebec: they had all betrayed the people, the whole lot of them had gone soft or been bought out. He kept repeating the same things over and over. Economics? What did economics matter? A pure race, a pure language, larger families, no more connection with the English, no interference from foreigners, a greater clerical control over everything—with these conditions Quebec would reach the millennium. Scientists could split the atom and circumnavigate the globe in a week, but Marius had no difficulty reducing everything to race, religion and politics. (374)

MacLennan's portrayal of Marius is a pastiche of the worst aspects of 1940s French Canada as manifested in historical figures such as Lionel Groulx and Camillien Houde. By setting up the contrast between Marius and Paul, MacLennan is suggesting that the alternative to Paul's anglicization is Marius' rabid, intolerant, and futile nationalism. MacLennan's endorsement of Paul's anglicization is in keeping with his project of encouraging the *rapprochement* of French and English Canada: like Yardley, he wishes to see the two solitudes "drawing together; but in a personal, individual way, and slowly, French and English getting to know each other as individuals in spite of the rival legends" (301). The future of Canada, according to MacLennan, lies in the mixture of its cultures. While this thesis is carried out in the narrative of Paul's anglicization, however, there is no correlative narrative of an anglophone's gallicization in the novel.

True, Yardley is briefly gallicized, as he moves to Saint-Marc-des-Erables and learns French, but he eventually moves to Montreal and then back to Halifax. Furthermore, his gallicization does not hold the same generative potential as Paul's anglicization, as Paul will, presumably, produce a future generation of one-quarter-French children with Heather. The procreative logic of *Two Solitudes* thereby suggests that the future of Canada lies in the anglicization of French Canada more than it does in the gallicization of English Canada. As Rosmarin Heidenreich argues, "Given the nature of the symbolic future union between Paul and Heather, it is clear that the optimism of the novel's ending is based on the premise of French assimilation" (131). MacLennan thereby suggests that the future of Canada lies not only in the *rapprochement* of its linguistic groups, but in the anglicization of French Canadians.

MacLennan's endorsement of the anglicization of French Canada is further suggested by the fact that Paul and Marius do not share the same mother: Marius' mother was Marie-Adèle,

Athanase's French-Canadian and piously Catholic first wife. Marius' obstinacy and impracticality may therefore be read as a consequence of the fact that he is fully French-Canadian, while Paul's preferable tractability is, in MacLennan's view, a consequence of his mixed heritage. The logic of the novel, then, seems to be that the future of Quebec lies in anglicization, as the urbanization of French Canada steadily increases the contact between French and English Canadians.

In contrast to MacLennan's assumption, which was shared by many French-Canadian nationalists, that the urbanization of French Canada would be accompanied by a concomitant anglicization, Roy's urban Saint-Henri setting is exclusively francophone. It is only when the narrative moves out of Saint-Henri to Westmount, with Daniel's hospitalization, that we encounter an English-Canadian character: Jenny.[7] Roy's depiction of urban French Canada therefore contradicts MacLennan's assumption that urbanization entails anglicization, as there is very little contact between francophone Saint-Henri and anglophone Westmount in the novel, despite the fact that the two neighbourhoods are, geographically, very close. Saint-Henri and Westmount are separated by economic inequality, and Roy stresses the importance of this separation in her depiction of urban French Canada; whereas MacLennan emphasizes the anglicization of French-Canadians in the urban context, Roy emphasizes their capitalization.

Roy's depiction of urban French Canada is daring in that it contradicts the traditional rural model of French-Canadian identity, which had been sufficiently aestheticized through artistic representations such as Louis Hémon's *Maria Chapdelaine* of 1916 to be accepted as appropriate artistic material. The subversive nature of Roy's representation of urban Montreal is

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[7] Cf. Ch. 1, pp. 24-26.

evident in the censorious review that it received in the 23 November 1945 edition of *Quartier Latin*:

> Superficiellement ces gens sont banals, leur vie n'offre rien d'intéressant. Or il y a deux façons de traiter la banalité superficielle, comme l'a démontré Joseph Warren Beach. L'un est de la reconnaître, et d'en faire un élément de l'effet artistique. L'autre est de l'ignorer comme étant de peu d'importance auprès des événements tragiques de l'existence de ces gens. La première méthode est celle de George Eliot, l'autre est celle de Balzac. Malheureusement Mlle Roy ne choisit aucune de ces méthodes, comme si elle ne réalisait pas la banalité de ces personnages où [*sic*], à tout le moins, ne l'appréciait pas comme un facteur de son problème esthétique. (Lapointe, "Bonheur d'occasion" 6)

The disdain that Lapointe feels for Roy's urban French-Canadian subjects is evident in his assumption that Roy must either be ignoring or unaware of the fact that her characters are banal. His recourse to Eliot and Balzac in criticizing Roy's work also conveys a contempt for her French-Canadian voice, which does not correspond to the European models that he has been taught to admire. Rather than recognize the innovation and courage of Roy's urban, French-Canadian voice, Lapointe suggests that she should be looking to the English and the French traditions for inspiration, practical methods, and artistic authority.

Interestingly, the same François Lapointe wrote a glowing review of *Two Solitudes* for the previous edition of the same newspaper, which appeared three days earlier on 20 November 1945:

> Le problème qui se pose à Paul Tallard (le héros du livre) est celui qu'André Gide à cherché à résoudre toute sa vie: retrouver une harmonie qui

> n'exclut pas sa dissonance. Two Solitudes nous décrit l'effort de Paul en vue d'établir un accord, un équilibre entre sa dualité d'éducation et de tradition qui conjugue en lui ses contradictoires influences, et d'intégrer à son moi conscient ces forces obscures qui rôdent sous la surface éclairée de la conscience, forces qui l'ont façonné, moulé. Plus j'y songe et plus j'y distingue, mutatis mutandis, une analogie frappante entre le cas de Paul et celui de Gide. (Lapointe, "Two Solitudes" 3)

Lapointe praises MacLennan by comparing Paul to a great French author, André Gide. This is indicative of Lapointe's Europhilia and its correlative disdain for French Canada, as well as explaining his dislike of *Bonheur d'occasion*, as it is a novel that is emphatically and deliberately French-Canadian, rather than European. That Lapointe appreciates *Two Solitudes* when he cannot appreciate *Bonheur d'occasion* suggests that it is specifically Roy's portrayal of urban, proletarian French Canada that he cannot stomach, as MacLennan depicts very little of this in *Two Solitudes*. Lapointe's reviews of these two novels suggest a cultural self-loathing that may also be read into the numerous *Quartier Latin* articles urging the students of Université de Montréal at the same time to be more proud of their French language and heritage, but to look to France to define the French-Canadian identity, such as this excerpt from an article by Guy Beaugrand-Champagne:

> [Q]ui sommes nous? Longtemps, à l'étranger, on nous a crus les descendants de je ne sais quelle bourgade de scalpeurs et de mangeurs d'herbe […] La vérité est celle-ci. Dans un siècle passé, il y avait en Europe, un petit carré de terre appelé clairement: France. Les hommes qui y vivaient s'étaient toujours fait remarquer par une qualité supérieure de leur groupement. Plusieurs

> groupements existaient dans le monde, mais celui-là, plus que tout autre, héritier des civilisations les plus brillantes et les plus fécondes, ce peuple de la France était un enfant plus brillant que les autres […]
>
> Or, il s'est trouvé des hommes pour qui la doctrine de la charité était la vie. Traversant l'océan et venant faire souche en notre pays neuf, ils apportaient avec leur doctrine, leur esprit, leur civilisation. Il se trouvait alors un double de la France, le Canada. (4)

Rather than look to France to validate the French-Canadian identity, as Beaugrand-Champagne does, Roy chooses the much more difficult project of finding worth and beauty, however meagre, in urban French Canada itself, and the decision cost her heavily with some contemporary reviewers.

The Trois-Rivières poet Alphonse Piché, Roy's contemporary, also painted frankly affectionate portraits of urban French Canada in his poems, though his subject was Trois-Rivières rather than Montreal. While Trois-Rivières was (and still is) a smaller city than Montreal, it was in the full swing of industrialization in the 1940s, as "[by] the late 1920s, Trois-Rivières was known as the pulp and paper capital of the world, a title it boasted until the early 1960s" (Roy-Sole 1936). Two of Piché's volumes fall within the temporal purview of this project, *Ballades de la Petite Extrace* (1946) and *Remous* (1947), and the change in Piché's tone from *Ballades de la Petite Extrace* to *Remous* registers the effects of industrialization upon Trois-Rivières. *Ballades de la petite extrace* is constituted of ballads that celebrate Trois-Rivières. For example, "Les Rues" conveys Piché's deliberate selection of French Canada over other, more grandiose, settings as he sings of "la rue sans émaillure" (38, l. 8) rather than of "l'avenue / Et ses jardins et ses châteaux" (38, ll. 1-2). Piché elevates the lowly street over the

richer avenue, prizing it for its unadorned honesty and lack of pretension. This preference of the low- over the high-brow is conveyed formally in the choice of the popular ballad form, with its catchy rhythms and rhymes. The diction, too, is distinctly low-brow in its inclusion of *joual* words such as "populo" and "matou." The poem, like the volume as a whole, seeks to do justice to the urban French-Canadian scene with a poetics that is both honest and affectionate, cherishing the scene for its simplicity and lack of finish—it is "la rue sans émaillure."

While *Ballades de la Petite Extrace* is largely positive in its depiction of the French-Canadian city, although acknowledging its poor and proletarian aspects, *Remous* is more critical of that urban scene and registers a nostalgia for the country that speaks to the importance of the shift in the French-Canadian identity from the rural to the urban. For example, in the first poem of the volume, "Bornes," the move from the country to the city is an experience of loss and hardship that is signaled from the first line, "Nous ignorons la paix étale de la plaine" (87). That "Bornes" is the first poem of the volume signals the importance of these themes for the volume as a whole. "Nous ignorons" becomes anaphoric as the poem continues, as Piché reminds the reader of the things that "nous" have forgotten: "les champs, la montagne hautaine" (87, l. 3), "la mer" (87, l. 9), and "l'espace où plonge le navire" (87, l. 11). The "nous" for which Piché speaks in this poem has forgotten the natural world. While the community that Piché speaks for would seem to be situated in an urban context, the importance of the rural to the identity of that community is emphasized by the speaker's remembrance of it. The speaker therefore both does and does not belong to the community that he speaks for, as he remembers that which the community has forgotten. This simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of the speaker dramatizes the disruption that the urbanization of French Canada has entailed for the French-Canadian sense of community.

Piché's use of natural metaphors to describe the community for which he speaks, such as the "bourgeons de la muraille," (87, l. 13) the "tige [qui] a percé l'asphalte et le béton," (87, l. 14) and the "parfums enfouis aux vases du bourbier" (87, l. 20) that are "gard[és] au secret de notre humble officine" (87, l. 19), however, suggests that a connection to the natural world remains an important quality of that community. The poem as a whole treats the collective French-Canadian identity as a natural organism that has been transplanted to an urban setting in which it survives, but is stunted, and that has forgotten the splendour and ease of the natural setting to which it originally belonged. Piché's approach to the subject of urban French Canada is less celebratory in *Remous* than in *Ballades de la petite extrace,* as he is critical of the effects of urbanization upon French-Canadian culture, but he nevertheless affirms the importance of the French-Canadian struggle, like that of the "tige," within the urban capitalist setting.

The evolution of Piché's poetics from *Ballades de la petite extrace* to *Remous* reflects a move away from the comforting towards the uncomfortable and unfamiliar. As noted, *Ballades de la Petite Extrace* is composed entirely of ballads, a popular and familiar form. While *Remous* does contain poems of a regular structure such as "Bornes," which is written in rhyming quatrains, it also contains free verse, such as "Prélude." Piché's move from ballad to free verse suggests that, as so many others had concluded before him, traditional forms were no longer adequate for the modern subject matter that he wished to convey. This can be seen in the second section of "Prélude," in which Piché describes the industrial factory as a suffering body that births the proletarian crowd.

The image of the factory comes at the end of the second section of "Prélude," which is divided into short segments. After mourning an immolated childhood (p.99, ll.1-2), disjointed

stones (99, l. 3), and a love that has fled this vain existence (99, ll. 5-6), and searching for "la clé du prodige unique" (100, l. 19) the speaker's sudden apostrophe of the city is startling:

Squelette d'usine,

Ombilic de la foule:

Cité! Tu fascines

Et soûles notre muse! (100, ll. 37-40)

The turn from mourning a past childhood and lost love to praising a present factory is suggestive of the urbanization and concomitant loss of the rural that Piché laments in "Bornes," as well as recalling Rose-Anna's nostalgia for her rural childhood in *Bonheur d'occasion*. The short, accentual lines that begin the factory passage, furthermore, contrast starkly with the longer lines of free verse that preceded the passage and suggest the poverty and harshness, both material and emotional, of that factory setting. The next stanza begins with lines that claim the factory for "nous":

À nous: tes flancs

Où gîtent nos blessures,

À nous: tes pavés,

Tes grappes humaines. (101, ll. 41-4)

While Piché's depiction of the city here is harsher and is more insistent upon suffering than the celebratory "rues sans émaillures" of *Ballades de la Petite Extrace*, he is nevertheless claiming that suffering, industrial city for an inclusive "nous." These lines, like those of the preceding stanza, are short and accentual, suggesting that even if the speaker is claiming the urban environment for a collective "nous," that urban environment is still harsh and poor.

With the next line, however, “Astreintes à la semaine longue,” Piché returns to free verse, and the tension between these lines of free verse and the preceding short, accentual lines suggests the strict regimentation of urban factory life that must give way to occasional expressions of chaos, for the sanity of the workers (101, l. 44). The following long line, “Devoir, plaisir, repos, douleur, chair,” too, expresses Piché’s interest in the stark contrasts of grueling work and pleasurable abandon that constitute the life of the urban factory worker (101, l. 46). After this brief and sudden access to the liberty of free verse, however, the section ends with two perfect lines of iambic trimeter: “Pour prolonger en nous / L’élan de nos mystères!” (101, ll. 47-8). The pat quality of iambic trimeter after the tense strain of the short accentual lines and the welcome abandon of the long lines of free verse underlines the dubious quality of the speaker’s sudden affirmation that this experience of urban factory life is capable “de prolonger en nous / L’élan de nos mystères!” “Mystère,” furthermore, rhymes with the “chair” of the second line of free verse, which adds to the pat quality of the poem’s ending and further suggests that it is meant to be read with a certain irony: the speaker is trying, desperately, to find worth and beauty in the factory setting in which he finds himself after the death of the childhood and love that he has mourned in the preceding sections of the poem, but that search has yielded questionable results.

Piché describes the city as that which “fascines / Et soûles notre muse” (100, ll. 39-40); he thereby suggests that the new urban and industrial setting, though it is a source of suffering, is also a rich source of artistic inspiration. Piché’s choice of the word “soûles,” however, suggests that that inspiration is not necessarily wholesome: it is a tawdry inspiration sprung from hardship. The sudden affirmation of the last lines of the second section of “Préludes” is not entirely convincing, and this is indicative of the desperation with which Piché attempts to sublimate the suffering of French-Canadian workers into a “mystère.” The poem is deliberately

ugly, with its "[s]quelette d'usine" (100, l. 37) and "[o]mbilic de la foule" (100, l .38), its "flancs / Où gîtent nos blessures" (101, ll. 41-2). One would imagine that François Lapointe, the harsh student critic of *Bonheur d'occasion*, would not approve of Piché's poetry, as Piché and Roy share a project of establishing an urban French-Canadian identity through literary descriptions of the city that appropriate and honour the sufferings of its inhabitants.

Though he, too, is responding to the urbanization of Quebec, the cosmopolitan Alain Grandbois provides a striking contrast to Roy and Piché, who develop their urban French-Canadian voices by focusing upon specifically French-Canadian scenes. Grandbois, too, depicts the conditions of urban life in poems such as "Ah toutes ces rues": "Mes pas poursuivant la chimère d'un asphalte luisant et sans fin" suggests both the thrilling possibilities and the terrifying scale and concomitant anonymity of the modern city, much like Piché's city that "fascines / [Et] soûles notre muse," but also reduces human beings to "[des] grappes humaines" (73, l. 2). Unlike Piché, however, Grandbois does not situate himself within a specifically French-Canadian urban context, but addresses the urban condition universally: "les villes se succédaient / Les rues de mille villes se succédaient toutes pareilles avec le même signe anonyme de la pluie" (73, ll. 4-5). While Roy and Piché depict a specifically French-Canadian suffering in the urban setting, Grandbois depicts a similar suffering as universal to the urban condition, generally.

Grandbois' poetry is distinctly cosmopolitan and does not make reference to French-Canadian settings. For example, in "Le Silence," which appears in *Les Rivages de l'Homme* in the same year in which Klein's *Rocking Chair* was published (1948), Grandbois sets his poem on an emphatically global scale: the "quarante millions de beaux cadavres frais […] chant[ent] avec leur sourde musique" (106, l. 97; l. 100):

De Shanghaï à Moscou

De Singapour à Coventry

De Lidice à Saint-Nazaire

De Dunkerque à Manille

De Londres à Varsovie

De Strasbourg à Paris […] (106, ll. 101-6)

Grandbois is not concerned with the local sufferings of French Canada, but with the global suffering of a war-torn world. The contrast between Piché's and Grandbois' focus is most clear if we compare their use of "nous": while Piché, in "Bornes," used the pronoun "nous" to speak for the urbanized French-Canadian community, Grandbois uses it to speak for a universal humanity.[8]

Grandbois' cosmopolitanism is, arguably, an effect of his extensive travels, but also of his age. Grandbois was born in 1900 and is of a different generation than Piché, who was born in 1917. From 1920 until 1939, Grandbois trotted the globe, travelling to France, Italy, Belgium, Austria, the Netherlands, Russia, Germany, Tahiti, Morocco, Algeria, Turkey, China, and Japan, among other destinations. His first volume of poetry, *Poèmes d'Hankéou* (1934), was published in China, and it was only with *Iles de la nuit* (1944) that Grandbois made his poetic debut in Quebec.

Jacques Brault, a later French-Canadian poet, expresses the importance of Grandbois' voice in postwar Quebec:

[Les poèmes de Grandbois] ne nous parvinrent qu'à la fin de la guerre, au moment où nous étions encore mal remis de la fureur du fascisme […] Pour nous

---

[8] Similarly, in "Devant ces bûchers fraternels," from *Iles de la nuit*, Grandbois is concerned with a universal human struggle against "la morte odeur des villes," rather than with a specifically French-Canadian struggle (p.62, l.4).

> qui l'avons lu au sortir de l'adolescence, Alain Grandbois représentait "la santé de la parole", selon la juste expression d'Yves Préfontaine […] Le droit de parler haut et fort, sinon bien, appartenait à ceux qui pouvaient en payer le prix: Anglais, curés, politiciens. Le Québec murmurait son malheur d'exister comme une vieillesse au secret de l'enfance […] Le grand souffle d'une poésie libératrice nous enveloppa, balaya nos petites peurs muettes. L'un des nôtres, Fernand Ouellette, s'en souvient: "Avec lui, le vivant, le poème et l'esprit devenaient au Québec ce qu'ils étaient partout ailleurs, des domaines infinis." (5-7)

While Grandbois chooses cosmopolitan over French-Canadian themes, his very cosmopolitanism is experienced by readers such as Brault, Préfontaine, and Ouellette as a liberation from the constraints of the traditional French-Canadian rural identity and an affirmation that the French-Canadian is a citizen of the world.

While Grandbois was a real person, whereas Paul Tallard is a fictional character, it is nevertheless fruitful to compare the two for their experience of what MacLennan calls the "strait-jacket" of French-Canadian identity. Paul defines the term for Heather in the following conversation:

> 'I must be stupid,' Heather said, 'but I don't understand. What do you mean?'
>
> 'You aren't French. You aren't in a minority. You English have always been on top of the world. You don't know the feeling of the strait-jacket.'
>
> 'Do *you* feel in a strait-jacket?'
>
> 'In a couple of them. If you have no money you're always in one. But a French-Canadian is born in one. We're three million people against a whole

> continent.' He looked around at her, smiling to take the drama from his words. 'I don't intend to stay this way.' (313)

Paul's experience of his French-Canadian identity as a restriction is similar to the experience that is voiced by Brault and, like Grandbois, Paul relativizes his experience of his identity by travelling the world. Unlike Grandbois, however, when Paul returns to Canada, he discovers that his art must be concerned with the representation of Canada:

> As Paul considered the matter, he realized that his readers' ignorance of the essential Canadian clashes and values presented him with a unique problem. The background would have to be created from scratch if his story was to become intelligible. He could afford to take nothing for granted. He would have to build the stage and props for his play, and then write the play itself. (365)

The effect of Paul's travels is not a realization that the tensions and dynamics that govern Canadian culture are akin to the tensions and dynamics that govern cultural contexts worldwide, but a reaffirmation of the "strait-jacket," though now redefined as a Canadian, rather than a French-Canadian garment: he must write Canadian stories because he is Canadian, and those Canadian stories can only be understood by those who are familiar with the Canadian context.

In contrast, when Grandbois returned to Quebec, his poetry remained universal in its themes. His poetry is not concerned specifically with Quebec, but with the conditions of human existence in the modern world. In this way, Grandbois truly escapes the "strait-jacket," and this was understood and felt by his young French-Canadian readers such as Brault: Grandbois establishes a model of French-Canadian identity that is not only urban but cosmopolitan and that takes its place among the other nations of the globe. Grandbois' emphasis upon universal

humanity over regional identity is expressed in "Parmi les heures," which appears in *Les îles de la nuit* (1944):

> Nous tous avec des coeurs nus comme des chambres vides
>
> Dans un même élan fraternel […]
>
> Nous lèverons nos bras au-dessus de nos têtes
>
> Nous gonflerons nos poitrines avec des cris durs
>
> Et nous tournerons nos bras et nos cris et nos poitrines vers les points cardinaux.
>
> (24, ll. 35-47)

Again, the "nous" that Grandbois speaks for is a universal humanity, as opposed to the local French-Canadian "nous" that Piché addresses. Grandbois, furthermore, sets his poem on an emphatically universal geographical scale: while he does not situate the poem in a specific location, he also has his universal "nous" turn and address their cries to each of the cardinal points. Grandbois thereby universalizes his French-Canadian voice in a way that bypasses urban French Canada and its relationship to English Canada altogether, in contrast with MacLennan's Paul who, in becoming cosmopolitan, realizes that he must address the problem of the relationship between French and English Canada. While the relationship between French and English Canada was MacLennan's main concern, it is not shared by Roy and Piché, who are concerned with an urban French Canada that is separate from English Canada, nor with Grandbois, who is interested in a cosmopolitan "élan fraternel" that transcends the Canadian scene.

Refus global, the 1948 manifesto of Les Automatistes, a group of young French-Canadian artists led by Paul-Émile Borduas, calls for a similar "élan fraternel" that would elevate a universal humanity over regional identities. The group's cosmopolitan aims are immediately

evident from the title itself, and the manifesto enacts the process of transformation from a rural French-Canadian identity to an urban, cosmopolitan identity. The manifesto begins by addressing and establishing its intended audience:

> Rejetons de modestes familles canadiennes-françaises, ouvrières ou petites bourgeoises, de l'arrivée au pays à nos jours restées françaises et catholiques par résistance au vainqueur, par attachement arbitraire au passé, par plaisir et orgueil sentimental et autres nécessités. (65)

The manifesto then proceeds to present a brief history of Quebec and a criticism of the provincialism of its educational institutions, its clergy, and its art. The manifesto is therefore rooted in its French-Canadian situation. It then expands beyond those origins, however, and rejects them in favour of a "brûlante fraternité humaine" that recalls Grandbois's "élan fraternel": it is universal and free both from the authority of the Church and from the traditional French-Canadian identity, which are metonymically represented by the "goupillon" and the "tuque":

> Au diable le goupillon et la tuque!
> Mille fois ils extorquèrent ce qu'ils donnèrent jadis.
> Par-delà le christianisme nous touchons la brûlante fraternité humaine dont il est devenu la porte fermée. (67)

Refus global is therefore both an acknowledgement of French-Canadian history and origins and a manifesto to move past that history and the fetters of the traditional French-Canadian identity: "Le passé dut être accepté avec la naissance, il ne saurait être sacré. Nous sommes toujours quittes envers lui" (74). *Refus global* is iconoclastic: it reveals that which has been sacred in

French-Canadian culture to be extortionary and obsolete in Borduas's urban French-Canadian context.

The collective nouns that Borduas uses to refer to the French-Canadian population mirror the industrialization and urbanization of French Canada. He begins with an anaphora of "petit peuple": "Un petit peuple serré de près aux soutanes" (65); "Petit peuple issu d'une colonie janséniste" (65); "Petit peuple qui malgré tout se multiplie dans la générosité de la chair sinon dans celle de l'esprit" (66). "Petit peuple" suggests a small, village-like people. As Borduas continues his narration of French-Canadian history, however, he exchanges "petit peuple" for "foule":

> Les progrès matériels, réservés aux classes possédantes, méthodiquement freinés, ont permis l'évolution politique avec l'aide des pouvoirs religieux (sans eux ensuite) mais sans renouveler les fondements de notre sensibilité, de notre subconscient, sans permettre la pleine évolution émotive de la foule qui seule aurait pu nous sortir de la profonde ornière chrétienne. (71-2)

The progression from "petit peuple" to "foule" suggests proliferation, but also urbanization, as the experience of being part of a crowd is one of the fundamental aspects of urban life. Borduas' critique of the exploitation of the "foule" by the "classes possédantes," furthermore, suggests an urban capitalist context in which the size of the population allows both for an anonymity and a dispensability of workers that enables their mistreatment. Borduas then goes on to talk about the "prolétariat":

> [Les hommes nouvellement au pouvoir] se dévouent à salaire fixe, plus un boni de vie chère, à l'organisation du prolétariat; ils ont mille fois raison. L'ennui est qu'une fois la victoire bien assise, en plus des petits salaires actuels, ils exigeront

> sur le dos du même prolétariat, toujours, et toujours de la même manière, un règlement de frais supplémentaires et un renouvellement à long terme, sans discussion possible. (75)

"Prolétariat" suggests an even larger group than "foule," and thus suggests the growth of the urban population; "prolétariat" also heightens the political overtones that are already present when Borduas is writing about the "foule," and thus suggests a worsening of work conditions that gives rise to a greater political consciousness in the people. Borduas' progression from "peuple," through "foule," to "prolétariat" in his manifesto suggests the urbanization and industrialization of French Canada, as well as the increasing political awareneness of its workers.

Refus global was revolutionary at the time of its publication and was an important text for the *Révolution tranquille* of the 1960s. It has moreover been an important text for the establishment of a modern, urban French-Canadian identity. What is ironic, however, is that, like Grandbois's, it is Borduas's choice of a cosmopolitan identity over a specifically French-Canadian identity that was so powerful and effective for the formation of a modern French-Canadian identity. In this drive for cosmopolitanism, Grandbois and Borduas are very different from Roy and Piché, who contribute to the formation of a modern, urban French-Canadian identity by focusing upon the urban French-Canadian milieu. All four of these authors, however, are concerned with the transformation of the French-Canadian identity from the traditional, rural model to a modern, urban model, in the cases of Roy and Piché, or to a cosmopolitan model, in the cases of Grandbois and Borduas. Neither of these models, however, is concerned with French Canada's relationship to English Canada.

MacLennan differs from his French-Canadian contemporaries in that he portrays the urbanization of the French-Canadian identity as involving a concomitant and ultimately

acceptable anglicization, and this is arguably because MacLennan himself was English-Canadian. A.M. Klein was Jewish- rather than English-Canadian, but his approach to the subject of French-Canadian urbanization is similar to MacLennan's, in that he is interested primarily in the consequences of that transformation for his own community, while our French-Canadian authors focus primarily upon the transformation itself.

Klein, like MacLennan, wrote in English and was involved in the anglophone Montreal literary scene; unlike MacLennan, however, Klein was also fluent in French, having studied law at the Université de Montréal and lived briefly in Rouyn. Klein's position was therefore different from MacLennan's in that he had a greater knowledge and contact with French Canadians. Klein's Judaism also differentiates his position from MacLennan's, in that he was an outsider to the English/French dichotomy that MacLennan depicts in *Two Solitudes*. Prior to *The Rocking Chair*, Klein's poetry had been concerned mainly with Jewish themes. *The Rocking Chair*, however, turns away from his formerly favoured subject matter, the only overt reference to Judaism being the Fascist slogan "*A bas les maudits Juifs!"* of "Hormisdas Arcand" (46, l. 9). Brian Trehearne notes that

> ['Political Meeting'] and 'Hormisdas Arcand' are evidence that Klein's scrutiny of the Québécois is in part an anxious examination of the potential for anti-Semitic violence in his own world, and they contribute to these portraits—a few of which are merely amusing—a disturbing context in which ancestral rhetoric may be overturned by racism at any moment. (155)

While Klein, like Roy, Piché, and Borduas, charts the transformation of the French-Canadian identity from a traditional, rural model to a modern, urban model, Klein registers an anxiety about the violent and exclusionary potential of such self-conscious identity-building that his

French-Canadian contemporaries do not appear to share. A similar concern can be read into MacLennan's depiction of the violence and exclusivity of Marius' nationalism. Klein and MacLennan, as outsiders to the French-Canadian community, therefore seem to be aware of the surge in French-Canadian nationalism that accompanies the consolidation of a modern, urban French-Canadian identity in ways that their contemporary French-Canadian authors are not.

The structure of *The Rocking Chair* as a whole re-enacts the urbanization of French Canada. The volume begins with the eponymous "The Rocking Chair," in which the rocking chair is a metonymy for the traditional, rural French-Canadian identity: it is "no less / an identity than those about it. And / it is tradition" (1, ll. 20-2). The rocking chair and, by association, French Canada, are represented as rural, religious, and "static":

> It is act
>
> and symbol, symbol of this static folk
> which moves in segments, and returns to base,—
> a sunken pendulum […] (1, ll. 24-7)

Klein seems to be suggesting that French Canada will always be so: rural, religious, and staunchly traditional. As one progresses through the volume as a whole, however, one encounters a French Canada that is emphatically urban, with poems set in specific urban Montreal locations such as the Oratoire de St. Joseph ("The Cripples"), the Hotel Dieu hospital ("For the Sisters of the Hotel Dieu"), and the Université de Montréal ("Université de Montréal). While the volume does also contain rural poems such as "The Snowshoers" and "The Sugaring," this mixture of urban and rural poems after the opening statement that the French-Canadians are a "static folk" seems to ironize that statement: this is not a culture in stasis, but one that is grappling with its

modernization. The transformation that French-Canadian culture is undergoing is suggested strongly in "Air-Map":

> How private and comfortable it once was,
> our white mansard beneath the continent's gables!
> but now, evicted, and still there—
> a wind blew off the roof?—
> we see our fears and our featherbeds plumped white
> on the world's crossroads. (9, ll. 1-6)

In "Air-Map," Klein sympathizes with the bewilderment of a rural and traditional culture that suddenly finds itself forced into modernization and a cosmopolitanism suggested by "the world's crossroads."

The placement of "Air-Map" soon after "Political Meeting" is significant. "Political Meeting," which is dedicated to Camillien Houde, is the most potent expression of Klein's wariness of the growing French-Canadian nationalism that has accompanied the identity crisis caused by Quebec's urbanization. The demagogue of "Political Meeting" exploits the rural, folkloric imagery of the "Rocking Chair" that opens the volume in order to elicit the "body-odour of race" that rises at the end of the poem. "The Rocking Chair" is largely a celebratory poem; when its themes and images are transported to an urban context, however, they become sinister and manipulative, as the demagogue uses them to construct a racial identity that is exclusive and potentially violent. In using rural imagery to incite an urban nationalism in the audience of "Political Meeting," Klein suggests both that the move from a rural to an urban environment is an important cause of the xenophobic nationalism that he observes in his French-Canadian environment and that those rural origins are being mythologized for demagogic

purposes. The myth of a rural French Canada as imagined by nationalists such as Lionel Groulx, therefore, has very little to do with the reality of those rural origins themselves and everything to do with the identity crisis of urban French Canada and the need to consolidate that community through myth. Groulx wrote,

> Nous sommes liés, indissolublement liés à une portion de l'univers physique. (…) De la terre à nous s'exerce un déterminisme, non pas absolu, mais considérable. Comme le passé, comme l'histoire, le pays est notre maître. L'on est fils de sa terre, comme on l'est de sa race, de son temps. (qtd. in Delisle 62)

Delisle notes that the theme of the link between a people and its land "n'est pas sans rappeler le mot d'ordre de l'Allemagne hitlérienne, lancé par Walter Darré: "Blut und Boden", le sang et la terre" (62). From mythologizing the link between the land and its "native" people, it requires only a very small logical step to justify persecuting those who do not, according to the national myth, belong to the soil.[9] As, historically, the primary targets of such pogroms of alien elements have overwhelmingly been Jewish, Klein, understandably, regarded the urban French-Canadian nostalgia for their rural origins with mistrust and fear. The difference between Klein's evaluation of the danger of French-Canadian nationalism and MacLennan's is due to the difference in their positions within Quebec culture: Klein, as a Jewish-Canadian near the end of the war, is much more wary than MacLennan.

Klein's demagogue, in "Political Meeting," is similar to Marius when he speaks at the anti-conscription rally at the beginning of *Two Solitudes*:

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[9] Groulx's rhetoric of French-Canadian indigeneity to the Quebec soil is also objectionable in that it elides the facts of Native American indigeneity and of the genocide of Native American cultures that accompanied the French (and English) settlement of Quebec.

> Marius had no idea how he was doing this, nor even what he was saying. His own unhappiness and frustration had been filling up a well inside him for ten years and now he felt he could go on speaking out of it forever. The listening crowd leaned forward and gave him back a mysterious elation in exchange for his words. They loved each other, Marius and all these strange people. (45)

While MacLennan represents Marius as ultimately ineffectual, and thereby suggests that Quebec nationalists are not to be taken seriously, Klein registers a real fear of the potential for violence that this sort of nationalism holds. At the same time, Klein makes efforts of compassion with poems such as "Air-Map," which attempt to understand the nationalism that he fears as a product of a profound and unsettling change in French-Canadian culture. "Air-Map" contextualizes "Political Meeting" as an insular and highly traditional culture's self-defensive reaction to a bewildering new urban and cosmopolitan context. The juxtaposition of the two poems does not sweeten the "body odour of race" that rises from "Political Meeting," but it does serve to explain the source of that stench.

Klein, furthermore, recognizes the subjectivity of his understanding of French Canada and its identity struggles by ending the volume with the self-reflexive "Portrait of the Poet as Landscape," which is an assessment of the poet's place in modern society. As such, it is both possible to understand the poem as reflecting Klein's assessment of his own place as a poet in his society and injudicious to completely identify Klein with his poet-figure. We can infer that the poet-figure is Jewish from the following lines:

> He suspects that something has happened, a law
> been passed, a nightmare ordered. Set apart,
> he finds himself, with special haircut and dress,

as on a reservation. (53, ll. 96-9)

The imagery of the "special haircut and dress" and the alienation of the poet-figure recall the imagery of the concentration camp, as Bentley first argued (29). The passage, however, is framed by uncertainty: it is not certain that a nightmare has been ordered, but only suspected. While the possibility of xenophobic violence is alarming, it does not materialize. At the end of the poem, the poet-figure is still alienated, but not violated:

he

makes of his status as zero a rich garland,

a halo of his anonymity,

and lives alone […] (56, ll. 160-3)

Klein's study of the potential for xenophobic violence in an urbanizing French Canada seems to conclude that French Canada is ultimately indifferent to the Jewish poet and, by extension, to him and his Jewish community. This conclusion is supported by an analysis of the works of Roy, Piché, Grandbois, and Borduas, which are clearly focused upon the development of their own French-Canadian responses to urbanization rather than with their relationships with either Jewish- or English-Canadians.

The crucial difference between Klein's and MacLennan's depictions of the French-Canadian transition between a rural and an urban identity is that Klein acknowledges, albeit implicitly, that he fears the potential violence of French-Canadian nationalism. MacLennan, instead, registers that potential violence with the character of Marius, and then ridicules and discredits it by rendering Marius ineffectual and implicitly endorsing the anglicization of Paul. This wariness of French-Canadian nationalism, interestingly, is not present in the works of French-Canadian contemporaries such as Roy, Piché, Grandbois, and Borduas; indeed, those

authors do not even seem to recognize the growing Quebec nationalism that was being expressed in *Quartier Latin*, at the time. MacLennan and Klein are concerned with the relationship between an increasingly urbanized French Canada and their own communities, whether English- or Jewish-Canadian. Those concerns are not shared, however, by Roy, Piché, Grandbois, and Borduas, who are concerned more with the consolidation and possibilities of their own urbanized artistic voices, whether explicitly French-Canadian, as in the cases of Roy and Piché, or cosmopolitan, as in the cases of Grandbois and Borduas.

Chapter Three:

The Body-Odour of Race:[10] Portrayals of French-Canadian Opposition to Conscription

Part of the difficulty of studying French-Canadian opposition to participation in the Second World War, particularly in literature, is that it is often impossible to discern opposition that is motivated by an understandable frustration over the under-representation of French-Canadian interests in an English-Canadian-dominated government from opposition that is motivated by anti-semitism and pro-fascistic sentiment. In anti-conscription literature, both fictional and editorial, both brands of opposition often take the form of an exclusive concentration upon Quebec and upon the need to defend French-Canadian interests within the province, to the exclusion of international concerns. There was certainly a marked inequality in the degree of economic and political control held by French Canadians in comparison to the English-Canadian minority of Quebec, and there was a definite need for French Canadians to take more control of the Quebec economy and government if they were to improve their situation within the province, as they would do two decades later in the Quiet Revolution. That very nationalist impetus, however, contains an immense potential for intolerance and xenopobia, and the rhetoric of 1930s and 1940s French-Canadian nationalism was often uncomfortably close to that of Nazi Germany or fascist Italy, as Esther Delisle argues in *Le Traître et le Juif*, her study of anti-semitism in 1930s and 1940s Quebec, of which Lionel Groulx is the figurehead: "Le langage et l'époque de Groulx sont ceux de la montée du nationalisme d'extrême droite, du fascisme et du nationalsocialisme. Baladant sa plume à l'intérieur de ce spectre, il emprunte aux uns et aux autres des thèmes, un certain vocabulaire, des tics de langage" (23).

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[10] Klein 16, l. 40.

What further complicates the process of untangling anti-English from anti-semitic sentiment in French Canada is that the former was often the root of the latter. As the sociologist Everett Hughes noted in 1946, "the symbolic Jew receives the more bitter of the attacks which the French Canadians would like to make upon the English or perhaps even upon some of their own leaders and institutions. When French Canadians attack the English, they pull their punches […] Against the Jew, however, attack may proceed without fear either of retaliation or of a bad conscience" (218). According to Hughes, then, French-Canadian anti-semitism could be understood as a safety valve for the frustration felt towards the English-Canadian elite. If one were to continue this logic, the putative virulence of French-Canadian anti-semitism might be taken as an indication of the severity of the frustration felt towards English Canadians.

Both then and now, the Quebec of the 1930s and 1940s is notorious for its anti-semitism. As Ira Robinson notes in his recent study of Canadian anti-semitism, "there was a widespread perception [among English Canadians] that antisemitism in Quebec was worse than it was in the rest of Canada" (76). While it is undeniable that there was anti-semitism in Quebec in this period, as Delisle makes abundantly clear in *Le Traître et le Juif*, it is also important to remain critical of Quebec's reputation of being *especially* anti-semitic and wary of indiscriminately extending the anti-semitism of a couple of vocal individuals to a whole culture. Delisle makes this distinction when she insists, "Il n'y est question que de l'antisémitisme de Lionel Groulx, de l'Action nationale, des Jeune-Canada et du Devoir de 1929 à 1939. Locuteurs qu'il ne faudrait pas confondre avec l'ensemble de la population canadienne-française de cette époque" (27). She also notes that the (then) anti-semitic newspaper *Le Devoir* was often on the brink of bankruptcy and not particularly popular, with only 15 000 subscriptions (Delisle 30). While it is impossible to ascertain exactly how common or strong anti-semitic sentiment was among French Canadians

of this period, the fact that Quebec's most notorious organ of anti-semitic literature was not particularly popular does raise suspicion as to whether Quebec's reputation as particularly anti-semitic within Canada is warranted. A.M. Klein and Hugh MacLennan, in *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* and *Two Solitudes*, are critical of French Canada's anti-semitic and pro-fascist reputation among English Canadians, and work to relativize it by rendering complex and sympathetic portrayals of French-Canadian attitudes towards the war. Klein's and MacLennan's analyses of French-Canadian anti-conscriptionism are strikingly similar to Roy's, as they depict opposition to conscription as rooted in French Canada's frustration with English Canada and disenfranchisement within the Canadian government and economy, rather than in active pro-fascist or anti-semitic sentiment.

The virulence of French-Canadian opposition to participation in the Second World War was largely a reaction to the imposition of conscription during the First World War, and this can be seen in the lack of differentiation between the First and the Second World Wars in French-Canadian representations: both were characterized as wars motivated by nationalism and economics, and the battle against fascism, which is the crucial difference between the two wars, was seldom discussed. An example of this focus upon economics and nationalism to the exclusion of the threat of fascism may be seen in an article opposing conscription in *Quartier Latin* in December 1944: a numbered list entitled "Pourquoi sommes-nous opposés à la conscription?" opens with "Parce que nous croyons que cette guerre est, comme toutes les autres [*sic*] une guerre purement économique dans laquelle nous n'avons que peu à gagner et beaucoup trop à perdre" (Dupuy 1). Dupuy then goes on to explain that because French Canadians constitute a minority on the North American continent, "nous considérons la perte de notre capital humain comme une entrave majeure à notre survivance," and that French Canadians are

not constitutionally obligated, under the Westminster statute, to participate in a conflict that does not directly affect their territorial integrity (*ibid*.). No mention is made of the threat of fascism or of the persecution of Jews and other minorities in Germany, despite the fact that the article appeared in December 1944, when the genocidal nature of the Third Reich was well-known in Canada. Dupuy's failure to address the Nazi genocide leaves him vulnerable to charges of anti-semitism.

Anti-semitism was certainly not unique to the French Canadians of Quebec. Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, according to his biographer, "thought of [Jews] as aggressive and clannish and disturbingly prominent in international finance, although at the same time he deplored any overt discrimination against them" (Robinson 66) and, after having met Adolf Hitler, wrote in his diary that "Hitler…will rank some day with Joan of Arc among the deliverers of his people" (qtd. in Robinson 95). Anti-semitism was also present within the English-Canadian minority of Quebec: Dean Ira Mackay of McGill wrote that "The simple obvious truth is that the Jewish people are of no use to us in this country" (qtd. in Robinson 71), and Jewish students at McGill "were required to score 750 on their matriculation examination while gentile students had to score only 600" (Robinson 72). Jewish historian Irving Abella has characterized Canada of the early twentieth century as being "a benighted, xenophobic, anti-Semitic country" (qtd. in Robinson 59).

As a multilingual Jewish poet who had studied both at McGill and at Université de Montréal, A.M. Klein possessed an exceptional depth of insight into both French- and English-Canadian anti-semitism, as well as into how anti-semitism intersected with English/French relations in Quebec. He was critical of how charges of anti-semitism were used by English Canadians to discredit French Canada:

> Editorial writers go out of their way to give the impression that the entire province of Quebec is a domain of intolerance…This is simply not the truth and one has a right to question the motive of such wholesale prosecution…either the pious defence of a discriminated minority [i.e. the Jews] is being used as an instrument of denigration against the French-Canadian minority; or the crusader…is pointing to Quebec antisemitism only to draw attention off his own. (from "The Tactics of Race Hatred" [1944] qtd. in Robinson 76-7)

Klein wrote this skeptical statement at the same time as he was working on *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems*.[11] This strongly suggests that part of the project of that puzzling volume was to determine to what degree Quebec merited its reputation for anti-semitism, and that Klein was responding both, as Brian Trehearne argues, to his own need for "an anxious examination of the potential for anti-Semitic violence in his own world," and to French Canada's need for a defense against English Canada's exaggerated and disengenuous charges of anti-semitism (155).

"The Rocking Chair," the first poem of the volume, introduces Quebec as a highly traditional, rural, and "static" culture (1, l. 25). As has been discussed in the previous chapter, this depiction is in keeping with the older, rural model of French-Canadian identity. Klein begins, then, with "tradition," which is a central concept of the poem (1, l. 22). That tradition is celebrated, as the tone of the poem is warm and wholesome, and the form of the poem—four octets of roughly iambic pentameter, rhyming (although often half-rhyming) ABABCDCD—is familiar and comfortable to read. There is an undercurrent of violence, however, beneath the peaceful, familial images of the rocking chair as "cradl[ing]" (1, l. 8) the "pensive mother

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[11] Indeed, "Portrait of the Poet as Landscape" begins with a jibe at editorial writers that suggests the contemporaneity of the two compositions: "Not an editorial-writer, bereaved with bartlett, / mourns him, the shelved Lycidas."

knit[ting] / contentment to be worn by her family" (1, ll. 7-8) and as the "old man's pet, pair to his pipe" (1, l. 9); the rocking chair is also "the toddler's game and dangerous dance" (1, l. 12) and, at the end of the poem, it rocks with a feverish obsession: it "moves in segments, and returns to base" (1, l. 26) and is "loosed yon, leashed hither, motion on no space" (1, l. 28). There is a suggestion of masochism, too, in the

> Anjou ballad, all refrain,
> which turns about its longing, and seems to move
> to make a pleasure out of repeated pain […] (1, ll. 29-31)

While "The Rocking Chair" is largely celebratory and opens the volume with a positive depiction of traditional, rural French Canada, the poem does contain darker elements that foreshadow the disturbing development of its themes that we will find in "Political Meeting." Furthermore, Zailig Pollock has theorized that with "Anjou," the second syllable of which "[Klein] pronounced exactly like 'Jew,'" in recordings of Klein reading the poem, Klein inscribes the Jew at the heart of his depiction of traditional, rural French Canada (Pollock 179). This covert inscription of the Jew at the heart of Klein's depiction of Quebec, Pollock argues, suggests the similarity that Klein saw between the French-Canadian and the "Jewish attitude to tradition and suffering" (179). Indeed, Pollock points out that in a 1946 letter to *Poetry* magazine, Klein wrote that

> [The Jew and the French-Canadian] have many things in common: a minority position; ancient memories; and a desire for group survival. Moreover the French-Canadian enjoys much—a continuing and distinctive culture, solidarity, *land*—which I would wish for my own people. (179)

Klein's analysis of French-Canadian culture, then, is simultaneously an argument for the similarity of that culture to his own, despite its reputation for anti-semitism. The cultural solidarity and attachment to folklore that Klein depicts in "The Rocking Chair" are qualities that he values in his own Jewish culture.

"Political Meeting" may be understood as the sinister negative of "The Rocking Chair": the symbolism of rural French Canada that was largely positive in "The Rocking Chair" is manipulated and degraded by the "tricks, imitative talk" (15, l. 21) of the "country uncle" (15, l. 20) demagogue in "Political Meeting": the "national bird" (1, l. 3) of "The Rocking Chair" becomes the "ritual bird which the crowd in snares of singing / catches and plucks" (15, ll. 9-10) in "Political Meeting," a dismemberment which, Zailig Pollock argues, "underlines the potential for tradition to divide as well as to unite" (190). The demagogue debases the rhetoric of family that is central to "The Rocking Chair," too, to bolster resistance to conscription:

> Calmly, therefore, he begins to speak of war,
>
> praises the virtue of being *Canadien,*
> of being at peace, of faith, of family,
> and suddenly his other voice: *Where are your sons?* (16, ll. 30-3)

By first presenting a largely positive image of French-Canadian tradition in "The Rocking Chair" and then debasing the rhetoric of that tradition in "Political Meeting," Klein suggests that French-Canadian opposition to participation in the Second World War is rooted in family feeling and cultural solidarity, especially when these are manipulated by demagogues. Klein's location of the roots of French-Canadian resistance to conscription in familial and cultural solidarity

suggests both his empathy for that resistance and his growing ambivalence about these virtues, which he had held very highly in his earlier poetic devotion to his Jewish community.

Hughes' aforementioned theory that "the symbolic Jew receives the more bitter of the attacks which the French-Canadians would like to make upon the English" is implicit in "Political Meeting": while the orator "would [not] blame the clever English" (16, l. 35), his rhetoric of tradition and solidarity results in a "body-odour of race" (16, l. 40) that reeks disturbingly of fascism and would be threatening especially to Jews, who are the traditionally favoured scapegoats of fascists. Klein shows that French-Canadian resentment of the English is easily redirected into anti-semitism, both of which fuel French-Canadian opposition to fighting against fascism with the Allied forces. This logic is only implicit in "Political Meeting," however, as there is no explicit mention of anti-semitism. Klein thereby emphasizes the psychology and culture of anti-semitism over its effects and suggests that anti-semitism is not fueled by a hatred for actual Jews, but by a need for a convenient symbol towards which one can redirect a hatred for another, unattainable target: the English-Canadian elite.

In this light, Klein's criticism of the English-Canadian "wholesale prosecution" of Quebec as a "domain of intolerance" takes on an added dimension: not only is "the pious defence of a discriminated minority […] being used as an instrument of denigration against the French-Canadian minority [and] pointing to Quebec antisemitism only to draw attention off his own," but the English-Canadian exaggeration of French Canada's anti-semitism is also being used to distract attention from the fact that that anti-semitism is partly a result of their oppression by English Canadians. The issue of anti-semitism in Quebec, then, in Klein's analysis, is related to the inequality of French/English relations. The motivations behind the project of *The Rocking Chair*, too, gain an extra dimension if French-Canadian anti-semitism is understood as a

symptom of the inequalities between English and French Canada: if Klein can contribute to a positive image and greater understanding of French Canada through his poetry that, as it is written in English, is being read by an English-Canadian audience, he might thereby contribute to a lessening of the misunderstandings between French Canadians and English Canadians in Quebec, and, consequently, of one impetus for French-Canadian anti-semitism.

The only poem that overtly depicts anti-semitism in *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* is the short and satirical "Hormisdas Arcand." The poem is a thinly veiled portrait of Adrien Arcand, the leader of Quebec's Nazi-identified party, the Parti National Social Chrétien. The poem's tone is derisive and dismissive of Arcand's "historic manifesto" (46, l. 2) which consists solely of "*A bas les maudits Juifs!*" (46, l. 9). "Hormisdas Arcand" does not occupy an important position in the volume and is only one in a series of portrait-poems; this placement suggests that while characters such as Arcand are present in Quebec culture, they are merely one element of many. Klein depicts Arcand as an eccentric outlier, and not as an important cultural or political force. A reader might readily make a connection between the anti-semitism of "Hormisdas Arcand" and the "body-odour of race" that rises from "Political Meeting," and thereby draw a negative conclusion about "Quebec fascism." To conclude that French Canada was generally pro-fascist and anti-semitic, however, would require that the reader overlook the bulk of the thirty-seven poems that constitute the volume, which depict a variety of other and equally important facets of French Canada, such as the self-deprecatory Francophilia of "M. Bertrand" and "Librairie Delorme," the cannibalistic wholesaling of Quebec's resources in "Sire Alexandre Grandmaison" and "Annual Banquet: Chambre de Commerce" and, most importantly, Klein's touching praise of the sisters of the Hotel Dieu who "fluttered to [him] in [his] childhood illnesses / —[him] little, afraid, ill, not of your race" (6, ll. 8-9). Klein portrays French-Canadian

pro-fascism and anti-semitism in "Political Meeting" and "Hormisdas Arcand" and thereby recognizes their disturbing presence in French-Canadian culture. He does not generalize those unsavoury views to French Canada, however, and *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems* supplies a rich variety of aspects of French Canada that serve to relativize the negative English-Canadian perception of French Canada.

The conclusion that Klein reaches at the end of the volume, in "Portrait of the Poet as Landscape," is that while there is anti-semitism in Quebec, it actually has very little to do as yet with him or his Jewish community. Of course, this is true of anti-semitism generally: it is not provoked by any action or characteristic of actual Jewish people, but by an ideological complex that is entirely divorced from reality. As Delisle asserts,

> Scruter la communauté juive afin de comprendre l'antisémitisme est une grossière erreur de perspective doublée d'une absurdité. Cette perspective inversée est aussi pernicieuse, en ce qu'elle suggère que les Juifs en chair et en os ont un lien quelconque—pis, une responsabilité—avec les crimes imputés à la terrifiante figure du Juif telle que dessinée par l'antisémite. (34)

If we assume that Klein is, at least partially, assessing his own place in Quebec society in "Portrait of the Poet as Landscape," as is justifiable in a self-reflexive poem that is concerned with the place of the poet in society, it appears that Klein has recognized that anti-semitic attention is directed at him only insofar as he is recognized as bearing the label of "Jew," and that Quebec society is otherwise indifferent to his existence: "he simply does not count, / except in the pullulation of vital statistics" (50, ll. 16-7). While anti-semitism is directed at the symbol rather than at any of his inherent qualities, furthermore, that anti-semitism never materializes into

actual violence towards himself. The only suggestion of Jewish persecution in the poem occurs in the fourth section, and it occurs entirely in the poet-figure's head:

> He suspects that something has happened, a law
> been passed, a nightmare ordered. Set apart,
> he finds himself, with special haircut and dress,
> as on a reservation. Introvert.
> He does not understand this; sad conjecture
> muscles and palls thrombotic on his heart. (53, ll. 96-101)

While the "special haircut and dress" are, again,[12] reminiscent of concentration camps, they are in the head of the poet-figure, whose paranoia is thus disturbingly revealed. Klein thereby recognizes the presence of anti-semitism in his environment and registers its dangerous potential, but also insists that that potential remains a matter for paranoid and "sad conjecture," and is not the immediate and obvious danger that English Canada might imagine to be feared by a Jew in Quebec.

Having recognized his fear of persecution as paranoid, the poet-figure resigns himself to the indifference of his milieu:

> […] he
> makes of his status as zero a rich garland,
> a halo of his anonymity,
> and lives alone, and in his secret shines
> like phosphorus. At the bottom of the sea. (56, ll. 160-4)

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[12] Cf. p. 72.

Klein's examination of Quebec in *The Rocking Chair* thereby ends with the assessment that French-Canadian culture does contain anti-semitic elements such as Arcand and has the potential to be worked up into a "body-odour of race," but that it is, on the whole, indifferent to him as a Jewish subject, and does not merit the "wholesale prosecution" by "editorial-writers" that he had previously criticized as calculated both to cast French Canada in a negative light and to distract English-Canada from the unflattering reality of their own anti-semitism.

Klein's conclusion that French Canada is more indifferent than hostile to Jews seems accurate if we examine the opinions voiced in *Quartier Latin* from 1942 to 1948. My research only turned up one direct mention of Jews, and it was a passing comment in a general tirade about the state of the post-war world: "Les juifs réclament, d'une façon générale" (Mercier Gouin). Though it is only a passing comment, it is perversely admirable in its compression, as it manages to call up a depth of unsavoury attitudes towards Jews in only six words: by calling upon the anti-semitic stereotype of the whining Jew who seeks to make a profit out of his misfortunes, Mercier Gouin suggests that the horrors of the Holocaust are being exaggerated to the advantage of the Jews. It was, unfortunately, a "commonplace in this era, that 'the Israelites aspire—everyone knows this—one happy day [*sic*] when their race will dominate the world,' and that the persecution of the Jews in Germany was a pretence put forward by the Jews for their own purposes," even among such important national figures as André Laurendeau (qtd. in Robinson 95-6). The offhand nature of Mercier Gouin's comment and its similarity to the "commonplaces" of this era suggests that the scarcity of such comments in *Quartier Latin* is not necessarily an indication of a lack of anti-semitism among its editorial staff and writers, but could instead be due to a tacit understanding that such opinions are not to be printed; as Norman Fergus Black noted in 1944, "no single responsible citizen could be induced publicly to proclaim

himself an apostle of antisemitism" in Canada (qtd. in Robinson 65). The indifference that Klein notes in his French-Canadian milieu therefore manifests itself as a silence on the Jewish question in *Quartier Latin*: it is a passive cruelty that is well encapsulated in anti-conscription pro-fascist Paul Bouchard's statement, "We don't want to see thousands of young Canadians die overseas to save international Jewry's finances" (qtd. in Robinson 78).

In this context, the silence on the Jewish question in French-Canadian post-war literature is troubling. An example of this silence is Alphonse Piché's 1946 volume, *Ballades de la petite extrace*. The volume contains three leftist criticisms of war: "Légende," "En guerre," and "Ô Canada." Piché presents war as an exploitation of the poor for the benefit of the rich that is disguised by the false nationalist rhetoric of honour and glory. Unlike his nationalist contemporaries, Piché does not equate the rich with the English and the poor with the French and thus make his opposition to the war a basis for the solidification of a French-Canadian identity. Piché's opposition to the war is economic and political and is more interested in the solidarity of class than of culture.

While Piché does not resort to easy dichotomizations of English and French, however, he does keep the same disturbing silence on the Jewish question as the student editorialists of *Quartier Latin*, when writing about the Second World War, and this leaves him open to similar charges of anti-semitism, or simply of political and historical ignorance. Indeed, Piché's description of the millionaires "[g]orgés de suif comme pourceaux" (57, l. 17) in "Légende" recalls the Nazi trope of the *Judensau*, or jew-pig; these millionaires are the instigators of the war in the poem, and Piché's use of swinish metaphor is redolent of the perverse anti-semitic theory that the Jews were somehow the instigators and beneficiaries of the war, as it is the Jew who supposedly controls international finance. While Piché does not blame English Canada for

forcing involvement in the war upon French Canada, he does employ potentially anti-semitic imagery in his criticism of a war instigated by the rich and fought by the poor.

The war is fought by the "bon peuple qui [se laisse] traire / Chaque vingt ans [ses] galopins" (57, ll. 25-6). Piché thereby equates the Second World War with the First, suggesting that both are products of nationalism and economics. The equation of the two wars elides the important difference between them, which is the fight against fascism. This elision, like his questionably anti-semitic imagery of swinish millionaires, opens Piché up to charges of anti-semitism, as he either did not believe the reports of the Nazi genocide or did not consider them important enough to merit comment in his depiction of the war. Instead, "Légende" concentrates exclusively upon a leftist criticism of the war as an exploitation of the poor for the profit of the rich, and is therefore written more like a poem of the thirties than of the forties.

In "En guerre," Piché offers a similar criticism of the war that elides mention of the fight against fascism. The poem deflates the nationalist wartime rhetoric of glory and honour by satirizing it: instead of departing heroically for war, the "Petits soldats des grandes guerres" (72, l. 2) leave "[s]acrant" and "gueulant" (72, l. 1). The battlefield is a "formidabl[e] ragoû[t]" (72, l. 6) and the fate of the soldier is to see "ses tripes mystère / Dedans ses mains comme un joujou" (72, ll. 13-4). The poem ends upon an ironic call to arms that deflates even the expectation that, if the experience of going to war is, itself, horrifying, it is a means of gaining financial and social security, as Roy's impoverished characters expect:

> Blessés, crevés, vétérans, hères,
> Maigres chômeurs, enrôlez-vous
> Pour les batailles d'après-guerre
> Avec des gens de rien du tout. (73, ll. 25-8)

As in "Légende," Piché's criticism of war is founded on economics and seeks to deflate nationalist wartime rhetoric; his criticism is similar to the nationalist anti-conscription editorials published in *Quartier Latin*, which argue that fighting with the Allies is tantamount to "aimer assez un autre pays pour lui sacrifier le sien" ("Bourdes impérialistes récentes"). What differentiates Piché's stance from those of French-Canadian nationalist editorialists is that he is as critical of the political motivations of French Canadians as he is of those of English Canadians. Both "Fils d'Albion" (82, l. 1) and "Enfants des Gaules" are "grands amateurs de toute guerre / Parfois de dos et parfois frères" (82, ll. 4-5), in "Ô Canada." The strife between English and French Canadians is understood to be a clash of similar imperialist desires for wealth and dominance:

> […] les Canadiens
> Se font entre eux mille misères
> Cherchant des poux entre voisins
> Comme la France et l'Angleterre… (83, ll. 17-20)

Piché is not a French-Canadian nationalist of the ilk of Lionel Groulx and André Laurendeau, as he is critical of his own "petite extrace" and does not succumb to easy nationalist narratives of an innocent French Canada ruthlessly oppressed by English Canada. Furthermore, his politics lean decidedly to the left, while the majority of French-Canadian anti-conscription sentiment was voiced by deeply conservative figures such as Lionel Groulx. Piché's failure to mention either fascism or the oppression of the Jews in Germany, despite his leftist politics, supports Klein's portrayal of French Canada as fundamentally indifferent to Jews.

For the English-Canadian writers of *Preview*, on the other hand, the fight for socialism and the fight against fascism were one and the same. In the February 1943 edition of the little

magazine, a piece entitled "Unity" and attributed to "A Political Worker" argues that "[t]he victory of fascism would make impossible perhaps for hundreds of years the accomplishment of the working class's task of leading the struggle for a classless, socialist society" (February 1943, no. 11). In his introduction to the reprint of *Preview*, Patrick Anderson, the lead editor, calls the little magazine "a war-saturated, highly documentary and strongly socialist publication" (iv). Indeed, in the opening statement of the first edition of *Preview*, the fight against fascism is represented as fundamental to the group's collective artistic identity, as they identify themselves as "[a]ll anti-fascists," who "feel that the existence of a war between democratic culture and the paralysing forces of dictatorship only intensifies the writer's obligation to work" (March 1942 no.1 "Statement"). While the socialist Piché does not address the problem of fascism, then, politically like-minded poets on the English side of the language divide make the fight against fascism central to their artistic practice. Like Piché, however, the *Preview* group makes no reference to the fight against anti-semitism; the fight against fascism seems to be entirely political to them.

The failure to address the issue of fascism is not, however, unique to Piché or to French-Canadian literature. In "A Note on Canadian War Poetry," a criticism of the recently published anthology *Voices of Victory*, F.R. Scott observes that "[j]udging by this volume, nothing has altered in the realm of poetry or politics since 1914" (4). It is strange that the socialist, French-Canadian Piché should share a failure to address the threat of fascism with the conservative, English-Canadian poets of *Voices of Victory*. An explanation for Piché's silence might be found in Neufville Shaw's "Electrical Plant," in which he advances an insightful explanation for the working class French-Canadian indifference to the threat of fascism: "Their disillusionment in the newspapers is complete. Their old evaluation of the world is gone and the loss of what faith

they had hasn't been replaced by anything for fear it, in return, will be exposed as a hoax. It is far safer to reject everything" (5). Shaw suggests the tension between linguistic groups within the working class with subtle details. The piece opens upon a foreman with "a rough Cockney accent" berating a young man for getting dirt in the rubber. The foreman then explains to the narrator, "Braidley saw him trailing rubber on the floor—gawddamn frog." As "frog" was a derogatory term for the French, in the 1940s, placing that word in the mouth of the Cockney foreman deftly and economically suggests a whole power structure in which, as Everett C. Hughes affirms, "[t]he English person in industry is several times more likely than the French to be an executive, an important technician or engineer, a foreman, or an office worker" (64).[13] By depicting the inequalities of the linguistic power structure alongside a working-class indifference to the cause of anti-fascism, Shaw suggests that the two are related and, by extension, that the opposition to war of predominantly working-class French Canada is rooted in their disenfranchisement within the Quebec power structure and in the racism that they experienced daily from their English-Canadian foremen and managers.

Shaw urges the reader to "remember that all the long chain of fascist aggressions beginning with the Japanese invasion of China up to Munich have been explained away as curious little foreign wars which really shouldn't excite anyone," and to understand that the working class is therefore "inclined to wonder, not consciously perhaps, just why this particular conflict should possess any more importance than the others" (6). Shaw's depiction is in keeping with Klein's *Rocking Chair,* in that Shaw understands the over-emphasized French-Canadian susceptibility to fascist demagogues to be largely a product of indifference rooted in political

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[13] The speech of the workers, too, suggests a French-Canadian cadence and accent and is similar to MacLennan's defamiliarized English: "Once they told us all was bad in Russia. Now they tell us all is good and all is bad in Germany. Maybe all is good. We don't know maybe—" (5).

disenfranchisement rather than of genuine fascist enthusiasm; he sees the working-class to be at "an impasse, with the men in a dangerous transitory stage expressed in a lack of any positive interest and an enthusiasm for debunking" (6). This disillusionment itself is not so dangerous as its unsustainability: "as a bewildered group cannot possess a negative attitude indefinitely, they [then] show signs of being inclined to listen to anybody who appears to be of themselves and convinces them he has their welfare at heart" (6). The disillusionment of the French-Canadian working classes, in Shaw's view, makes them ripe for demagogues like the one portrayed by Klein in "Political Meeting."

The absence of any mention of fascism and the disillusioned tone of Piché's war poems are therefore symptomatic of a general atmosphere among French-Canadians: they resented the exploitation of the French-Canadian working class by the English-Canadian elite and typically understood the war effort as merely another aspect of that exploitation. Klein and Shaw are therefore consistent in their representation of the French-Canadian opposition to conscription and indifference to the cause of anti-fascism as products of disillusionment and disenfranchisement, rather than of genuine sentiments of pro-fascism or anti-semitism.

Roy's *Bonheur d'occasion* is heavy with such disillusionment, the most virulent voice of which is Jean, who makes the following argument for not participating in the war:

> Nous autres, on nous dit que l'Allemagne veut nous détruire. Mais en Allemagne, à l'heure qu'il est, du monde tranquille comme nous autres, pas plus méchant que nous autres, se laisse monter la tête avec la même histoire […] D'un côté ou bien d'un autre, il y a quelqu'un qui se fait coller une blague. Ça se peut que ça soit eux autres qui se trompent. On le sait pas. Mais moi, j'ai pas envie d'aller tuer un

> gars qui m'a jamais fait de mal et qui peut pas faire autrement que de se laisser mener par ses dirigeants. (41)

Jean's argument turns upon the fact that one cannot trust propaganda, no matter whether it is Canadian or German. Jean also expresses a strong resistance to being led by one's government in his pity for the gars "qui peut pas faire autrement que de se laisser mener par ses dirigeants." If there is an animosity to be found in Jean's statement, it is for his own government rather than for Jews or any other minority. While Jean is expressing hypothetical pity for the young German soldier, that pity is based only upon a basic human similarity to himself, and not upon any racial or class affiliation.

That pity, moreover, is ultimately disingenuous and self-serving. Jean is a shrewd young man, and this "impulsion de pitié au nom de laquelle le jeune homme se permettait de juger" is really a mask for his own self-interest, as he understands the opportunity to stay home and not fight as "une chance vraiment personnelle, sa chance à lui d'une ascension rapide" (33). Jean's manipulation of the rhetoric of pity to justify his refusal to fight is only one instance of Roy's satirization of rhetoric, the most scathing of which is Roy's portrayal of Azarius, who is Jean's interlocutor in the debate discussed above.

Although Jean is a loathsomely self-interested character, he is still painted in a more flattering light than Azarius, and this is arguably because even if Jean's motives are objectionable, he is at least conscious of the rhetoric that he is wielding. This is not true of Azarius, who embodies the blind, uncritical attraction to rhetoric that is the main target of Roy's criticism and that Klein, too, criticizes in "Political Meeting." Roy describes Azarius as "parl[ant] haut, d'une voix richement timbrée, et [employant] souvent des mots sonores qu'il déformait, dont il ne saisissait pas tout le sens mais dont il semblait écouter la résonance en lui

avec un plaisir très vif" (38). Roy's description is dripping with disdain for the human attraction to the aesthetic and emotional appeal of rhetoric regardless of its actual conceptual content and moral import.

Even the rhetoric of democracy does not escape Roy's criticism, as Azarius is the only character other than Emmanuel who voices a recognizably anti-fascist, pro-democratic position in the novel. When one of his buddies at the Deux Records argues that Canada is fighting only to help England, Azarius answers that they are fighting "d'abord pour arrêter l'Allemagne féroce comme toujours qui plongea sur la Palogne sans défense et qui a déjà tout coupaillé l'Autriche et la Tchécoslaquie" (39). Roy's satirization of Azarius is most obviously evident in his mispronunciation of "Pologne" and "Tchécoslovaquie," examples of the "mots sonores qu'il déformait;" Azarius' deformations suggest that he is profoundly ignorant of the arguments that he is voicing and is perhaps only providing a faulty echo of government propaganda.

Roy employs the same technique of mispronunciation in la mère Philibert's dialogue with Emmanuel when she exclaims about "les Palonais, les Ukariens" (48). This formal similarity highlights the parallels between the two conversations, that between Jean and Azarius and that between Emmanuel and la mère Philibert. Jean and Emmanuel are doubles for one another in the novel: they are friends who recognize and respect each other as intellectual equals, they are both suitors of Florentine, and they are both critical thinkers, a quality that is highly endorsed by Roy's narration. The crucial difference between Jean and Emmanuel is compassion: Jean is entirely selfish, while Emmanuel is highly compassionate. Roy demonstrates the difference between their capacities for compassion most clearly in their respective relationships with Florentine. Jean is exploitative and scornful and eventually abandons Florentine, who is pregnant

with his child. Emmanuel, on the other hand, is kind. He respects Florentine for the very working-class background that Jean scorned, and marries her at the end of the novel.

There is an irony, then, to Jean calling upon the rhetoric of pity to justify his refusal to fight for democracy, as he proves to be a pitiless character. The conversation between Emmanuel and la mère Philibert counterpoints that between Jean and Azarius, as Emmanuel voices a democratic argument to counter la mère Philibert's xenophobic reasons for not fighting to save "les Palonais, les Ukariens" who, she argues, "[sont pas] comme nous autres. Ça bat leurs femmes, ça se nourrit à l'ail" (48). La mère Philibert pairs this xenophobia with the disillusionment and indifference that Shaw notes in "Electrical Plant" and that Jean, too, calls upon in his argument against enlistment: she blames Emmanuel's enrollment upon "leurs beaux parleux, là, qui courent les rues pour ramasser les jeunes gens que t'as écoutés" (48). Like Shaw, Emmanuel recognizes the root of la mère Philibert's opposition to participation in the war to be indifference:

> Ici même, il avait bien devant lui, songeait-il, la troublante indifférence du coeur humain à l'universalité du malheur; une indifférence qui n'était pas calcul, ni même égoïste, qui n'était peut-être autre chose que l'instinct de conservation, oreilles bouchées, yeux fermés, de survivre dans sa pauvreté quotidienne. (48)

Emmanuel is critical, though understanding, of la mère Philibert's indifference, though he does not share it. Emmanuel's disillusionment manifests itself, instead, as skepticism. He is compassionate and holds democratic ideals, but he is also critical enough of himself to recognize that these attractive principles are not his primary motivations for enlisting in the army: as Emmanuel continues to argue with la mère Philibert that "si la maison du voisin brûlait, vous

iriez ben y porter secours," he eventually concedes to her that "c'est pas pour sauver la Pologne[14] que je me suis engagé" (49). Emmanuel has enrolled in the army because he feels "[l]a tentation […] qu'ont les ours et les bêtes en cage et les naines aussi du cirque…La tentation de casser leurs barreaux pis de s'en aller dans la vie…Une tentation, mon vieux, que t'as oubliée: la tentation de se battre" (53).

While Emmanuel does present a democratic and humanitarian explanation for his enrollment in the army, it is also only a partial explanation. The main impetus for Emmanuel's enrollment is personal, and more visceral than virtuous: he feels that fighting is his "seule chance de redevenir un homme" (53). The counterpointing of the conversations between Jean and Azarius and between Emmanuel and la mère Philibert, then, serves to express the two central ideas of *Bonheur d'occasion*. Firstly, the fact that both Jean and Emmanuel call upon the rhetoric of pity to argue opposite positions demonstrates that rhetoric is tractable and deserving of skepticism. Secondly, though both Jean and Emmanuel are disillusioned by the rhetoric of war and by the disenfranchisement of their community, Jean's disillusionment develops into an indifference to the suffering of others, while Emmanuel's develops into a skepticism that does not stunt his capacity for compassion. By dramatizing these two outcomes of French-Canadian disillusionment, Roy is both recognizing the tendency to indifference within her French-Canadian community and criticizing that indifference as a form of passive cruelty. Instead, she endorses Emmanuel's compassionate skepticism.

Emmanuel continues to grapple with both his personal and the general motivations behind the war throughout the novel, and Roy casts his questioning nature as a great virtue. It is

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[14] Note that "Pologne" is spelled correctly when Emmanuel says it, indicating that he, unlike Azarius and la mère Philibert, is not speaking from ignorance. The difference in pronunciation is not merely a matter of accent, as Emmanuel's dialogue, like that of Azarius and of la mère Philibert, includes *joual* elements such as "ben."

Florentine, however, at the end of the novel, who reveals the simplicity of Jean's motives to him: when he asks her why he, her father, and her brother have enrolled, she says "C'est parce que ça faisait votre affaire de vous mettre dans l'armée" (338). Florentine's answer is the most direct renunciation of rhetoric in the novel: the war is motivated by visceral impulses and rhetoric is merely putting lipstick on a pig. Through the arguments of Jean and la mère Philibert, however, Roy also recognizes that the disillusionment that Florentine expresses can develop into a cruel indifference to the suffering of others that was endemic in representations of the French-Canadian working class and was often the root of the anti-semitic and pro-fascist sentiment for which Quebec was infamous.

Hugh MacLennan's approach to the depiction of French Canada during the Second World War contrasts starkly with Roy's: rather than depict French-Canadian indifference, MacLennan depicts characters who directly contradict the "wholesale prosecution" of French Canada as anti-semitic anti-conscriptionists. *Two Solitudes* is, as Gonzalez words it, the product of "MacLennan's self-appointed task [of bridging] the gap between the two communities and traditions thanks to the new Canadian novel" (301). His French-Canadian characters are therefore designed to dismantle the negative image of French Canadians that was so commonplace among English Canadians. The problem with MacLennan's approach is that he has a tendency to dehumanize his characters by flattening their psychological complexity into a nearly allegorical instrumentality of meaning. A competing drive of the novel, however, is to emphasize the individual over the collective and to complicate the "rival legends" that have become so entrenched in Canadian culture (301). *Two Solitudes* therefore constitutes a paradox: it is a didactic and allegorical novel that is intended to teach us to "know each other as individuals" (301). Though MacLennan seems to have intended the characters of the novel to

become increasingly individual and complex, they in fact become increasingly flat, as MacLennan's own ideals gradually dominate their individual psychologies. Interpretation of *Two Solitudes* therefore requires an awareness of the disjunction between the ideals that MacLennan valorizes in the novel, which are largely admirable, and the flaws in his delivery of those ideals. An example of this conflict between form and content is that while MacLennan's well-intentioned aim is to present a positive image of French Canada to his English-Canadian audience and thereby dismantle the stereotypical image of xenophobic, anti-conscriptionist French Canada, he does so by writing a narrative of *rapprochement* that is, in fact, a narrative of anglicization,[15] and which presents his French-Canadian protagonists as admirable for their lack of stereotypically French-Canadian characteristics.

Athanase and Paul Tallard both support the war efforts of their respective generations, and in this they are depicted as atypical. By supporting full conscription in the Great War, Athanase reaches "the focal-point of his unpopularity with the other members of parliament from his own province" (20). MacLennan does not, therefore, suggest that the English-Canadian understanding of French Canada as being virulently anti-conscriptionist is false, but instead suggests that the dichotomy is overly neat and divisive and that there is variety of opinion within French Canada. A vignette that provides a concise demonstration of this aspect of MacLennan's project is when Marius, Athanase's eldest son and Paul's half-brother, observes a group of French-Canadian soldiers and he is "reminded […] that all French-Canada was not against the war. One of the finest regiments in the British Empire was French-Canadian" (51).[16] While MacLennan does focus upon exceptions to French-Canadian stereotypes, he also gives voice to

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[15] Cf. Ch. 2, p. 49.

[16] This is a very strange and uncharacteristic thought for Marius to have, and is one of the moments in which MacLennan uses one of his characters as a mouthpiece for his own political views.

the expected First World War French-Canadian anti-conscription position through Father Beaubien, who understands conscription as the English provinces "trying to force their conquest on Quebec a second time" (5), and through Marius, who is consumed with "bitterness against the English who were forcing the evil of war upon him" (42). By depicting a French-Canadian character who, by supporting conscription in the earlier World War, acts in an English-Canadian fashion, MacLennan complicates the division between English and French Canada in his own war years while simultaneously affirming the importance of that division, as Athanase is rejected by his community for his cooperation with the English.

Athanase's story constitutes the first half of the novel, and there is a deliberate progression from Athanase to his son, Paul, in the second half. While Athanase was exceptional because he defied "what every French-Canadian thinks" in favour of "what [he thinks] himself," Paul is exceptional because, as the son of a French-Canadian father and an Irish-Canadian[17] mother, he is bilingual and belongs to both cultures (213). The struggle between cultures that was external for Athanase is internal for Paul, who has to "feel for Quebec and feel for the whole country at the same time" (363). The progression from Athanase to Paul is a progression from external to internal cultural conflicts and from clearly defined communities to complicated personal mixtures. While Paul is, like Athanase, exceptional, he is so for reasons that reflect a generational difference between himself and his father and that help to create a narrative of evolution and *rapprochement*. Captain Yardley articulates this evolution when he reflects that

> the country was changing. In spite of them all it was drawing together; but in a personal, individual way, and slowly, French and English getting to know each other as individuals in spite of the rival legends […] Paul would never be as

[17] That Kathleen is a Catholic Irish Canadian rather than a Protestant English Canadian further serves MacLennan's project of complicating the neat division between "two solitudes."

> simple as his father had been. He would see to it that his battle to become himself remained a private one. And Paul was the new Canada. All he needed was a job to prove it. (301)

For both Paul and "the new Canada," the novel suggests that the job that they need is the Second World War. While the First World War had been divisive and led ultimately to Athanase's downfall, MacLennan frames the Second World War as a bonding opportunity for the "two solitudes," as it will "destroy the burden of their identities" and thereby free Canada of the "rival legends" (369). The novel ends with a vision of the Second World War as a crucible for national unity: "even as the two race-legends woke again remembering ancient enmities, there woke with them also the felt knowledge that together they had fought and survived one great war they had never made and that now they had entered another" (411-2). This is precisely the kind of nationalist rhetoric that Roy warns us to be skeptical of in *Bonheur d'occasion*.

In the grand nationalist vision of *Two Solitudes*' ending, however, MacLennan loses sight of Paul's individual psychology, and this constitutes one of the most important splits between the novel's form and its content. In one of the few passages in which Paul reflects upon his decision to enroll in the army, he says to Heather, "'The day after war begins […] you and I will be wanted.' With some bitterness, he added, 'Then we'll be respected'" (370). The reflection is reminiscent of the indifference that Shaw notes in his electrical plant workers, and Paul's attitude towards the war is strikingly similar to Emmanuel's in *Bonheur d'occasion,* when he says that to fight is "ta seule chance de redevenir un homme" (53). For both young French-Canadian men, the war constitutes an escape from a society that stifles them. Their reasons for fighting are not nationalistic, but personal. In Paul, one can detect the French-Canadian cynicism and dissatisfaction with social conditions that is detected by Klein, in the *Rocking Chair and Other*

Poems, that is expressed by Piché, in his war poems, and that is depicted by Roy, in *Bonheur d'occasion*, though it is nearly overpowered by the bombast of the narrator's nationalist rhetoric.

The split between Paul's disillusionment with wartime rhetoric and the narrator's nationalist depiction of a Canada unified by war is a product of MacLennan's competing desires to represent French Canadians accurately and to represent them as sympathetic figures to his English-Canadian audience. To give full expression to Paul's dissatisfaction would require a fuller condemnation of the inequality between Canada's linguistic communities than the novel gives voice to; such a condemnation, however, would be at counter-purposes to MacLennan's project of rendering French Canada attractive to English Canadians. The contradictions of the novel, therefore, may be understood to be the result of MacLennan's conflicting good intentions. Those contradictions, furthermore, are indicative of how badly French Canada's image was in disrepair, and return us to Klein's criticism of the "wholesale prosecution" uttered by "editorial-writers." In order to repair French Canada's image, Klein and MacLennan seek to locate the roots of French Canada's opposition to conscription where Roy, too, locates them: in French-Canadian disenfranchisement and concomitant disillusionment, rather than in pro-fascism or anti-semitism.

Conclusion

My analysis of MacLennan's, Klein's, Shaw's, Hughes's, Roy's, Piché's, and Borduas's works reveals some striking similarities across the linguistic divide: all of these authors sympathetically depict a French-Canadian community that is disenfranchised within the Quebec economy and grappling with the effects of urbanization, industrialization, and war. Whereas MacLennan and Klein depict their French-Canadian neighbours in the interest of improving the relationship between that community and their own, however, Roy's and Piché's depictions of urban French Canada suggest an insular community that has very little contact with either English- or Jewish-Canadians. While MacLennan's and Klein's projects are sympathetic to French Canada as they work to portray French Canadians to English Canadians in a more flattering light, those projects are also contrary to the projects of Roy and Piché, which encourage the autonomy of French-Canadian communities simply by presuming such autonomy to exist.

A comparison of the uses of heteroglossic language to portray the bilingualism of the Montreal setting in *Two Solitudes*, *The Rocking Chair and Other Poems*, and *Bonheur d'occasion* reveals this same difference between Roy, on the one hand, and MacLennan and Klein, on the other, as Roy preserves differences of language in her text, while MacLennan and Klein clearly seek to overcome those differences. *Two Solitudes* and *The Rocking Chair* are therefore both unitary texts, though Klein's use of language is more heteroglossic than MacLennan's. Roy does not present the obstacle of linguistic difference as absolutely insurmountable: while Jenny and Rose-Anna are separated by language, Jenny and Daniel are not, and Roy does stress the importance of their extra-linguistic bond. Roy therefore acknowledges both the possibility that communication can occur despite linguistic difference and

the possibility that linguistic difference cannot be overcome. In Roy's acknowledgement of the barrier that linguistic difference can sometimes pose to communication, however, she differs from the depictions of MacLennan and Klein, which strive to overcome that difference and encourage the possibility of communication between Quebec's linguistic groups. MacLennan accomplishes this by means of a defamiliarized English that conveys the "Frenchness" of his topic and characters while making that "Frenchness" comprehensible to an anglophone audience. Klein, on the other hand, suggests the possibility of communication between Quebec's anglophone and francophone communities by attempting to write a bilingual poem that highlights the similarities between the two languages, and also by drawing upon local Quebec expressions and words in his English poetry, which implies a bilingual Quebec culture that is (or should be) common to both anglophones and francophones. The language of both *Two Solitudes* and *The Rocking Chair* thereby communicates their author's desires for an increasingly integrated bilingual Quebec culture, while the language of *Bonheur d'occasion* communicates Roy's desire for communication, but also for a preservation of difference.

Similarly, an analysis of MacLennan's and Klein's depictions of the urbanization of French Canada reveals an interest in increased contact with French Canada that is not shared by their French-Canadian contemporaries. Whereas MacLennan unwittingly depicts the possible anglicization of French Canada through urbanization and Klein examines the potential for xenophobic violence in the disorienting urbanization of the traditionally rural French-Canadian identity, Roy's and Piché's depictions of urban French Canada do not reveal a similar interest in their neighbours. Roy and Piché are concerned with creating regionalist depictions of urban French Canada that redeem that setting from its suffering and squalor, rather than with their relations with either English or Jewish Canada. Grandbois's and Borduas's writings similarly

expand the potential of the French-Canadian artistic voice beyond the confines of the rural setting, but they do so by means of cosmopolitanism. While Roy and Piché are concerned with varieties of regionalism, whereas Grandbois and Borduas are concerned with cosmopolitanism, none of the four contemporary French-Canadian artists reciprocate the interest that MacLennan and Klein show in an increased contact with their linguistic other within the newly urban setting.

The French-Canadian focus upon their own communities to the exclusion of others that is depicted in the works of Roy and Piché takes on a sinister cast when it is considered in the context of the Second World War and of Quebec's reputation for anti-semitism and pro-fascism within Canada. Roy and Piché locate the roots of French-Canadian opposition to conscription in a French-Canadian disillusionment due to their disenfranchisement, rather than in pro-fascist or anti-semitic sentiment; Roy, however, is critical of the potential for that disillusionment to become an indifference to the suffering of others, while Piché's elision of the issues of fascism and anti-semitism in his leftist portrayals of the Second World War leaves him open to charges of anti-semitism or of historical and political ignorance. The similarities between MacLennan's and Klein's representations of French-Canadian opposition to conscription and those of their French-Canadian contemporaries are striking and suggest that these English Canadian authors were thinking deeply and sensitively about French Canada. MacLennan's and Klein's concern for their neighbouring French-Canadian communities is remarkable, given the climate of estrangement that existed between Quebec's linguistic communities in the 1940s.

MacLennan and Klein seem to have noticed an increasing tendency in French-Canadian culture to self-affirmation, as can be seen in the works of Roy and Piché, but also to insularity. It is this tendency to insularity that they hoped to combat through their English depictions of French Canada, which constitute a kind of bridge across cultures. Though those bridges can be

problematic because of their hegemonic potential, they are also constructed out of good will and a desire for communication and understanding. My research into French-Canadian literature of the period has not turned up any such attempts at bridging the differences between English and French Canada from the French-Canadian side. This is arguably because the affirmation of a French-Canadian identity and the effort to increase French-Canadian control of Quebec's economy and government required a fictional separation from English Canada, and even from those, such as MacLennan and Klein, who were sympathetic to the cause of French-Canadian enfranchisement. The juxtaposition of MacLennan's and Klein's depictions of French-Canadian communities and those of their French-Canadian contemporaries reveals a pervasive desire for autonomy, in French Canada, that would flourish, two decades later, with the Quiet Revolution.

In conclusion, a note upon the method of this project: I have chosen a very specific period—only four years!—and studied it in synchronic depth. At the conception of the project, I was concerned as to whether I would find enough material to work with within that narrow time-frame, but the richness of what I have found has far surpassed even my highest expectations. There are a dozen more authors that could have been included in this project, given space and time enough, including Patrick Anderson, Hector de Saint-Denys-Garneau, and the obscure Ralph Allen, who wrote a very curious pro-conscription novel called *Home Made Banners* in 1946. Furthermore, in my two years of research, I did not have time to read *everything* of possible pertinence that was turned up by my rummaging through *The Canadian Checklist*. My parting words, then, are that the field is a fertile one, and well worth further reaping.

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