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STUDIES

Poetry and Polemics: The Confederation Group of Canadian Poets in Jacques Ferron's *La nuit*

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Jacques Ferron's *La nuit*,[1] a short novel published by the Éditions Parti pris in 1965, is remarkable for its English-Canadian "reference."[2] It is in fact the first French-Canadian novel to feature an English-Canadian protagonist identified as having been born and brought up in Quebec interacting with a French-Canadian protagonist.[3] While this aspect may in retrospect appear less than surprising—after all, contacts between the two major linguistic groups in Quebec's increasingly urbanized society had multiplied after the First World War, a process accelerated during the *Révolution tranquille*, in full swing when *La nuit* appeared—it nevertheless marks an important step in the evolution of Quebec literature. What truly astonishes even the twenty-first-century reader, however, is the presence in this mid-twentieth-century Quebec French-language work of an "'English-Canadian' literary code" (Olscamp, "*Les confitures de coings*" 165) that references the nineteenth-century Confederation Group of Canadian poets. *La nuit* thus offers a rare French-Canadian example of Canadian literary "crossing-over," where the text is the field of encounter not only of characters from the two linguistic groups but also of their literatures, proving the continued verity of Charles G.D. Roberts's observation (in the 1890 Introduction to his translation of *Les anciens Canadiens*) that "the point of contact between the two races in Canada is at the present day as rich a field for the romancer as de Gaspé found it at the close of the *old régime*."

Indeed, *La nuit* is a landmark in the history of the textualisation of the English language in Quebec literature because of its first-time-ever incorporation of English-Canadian poetry into a French-language text.[4] This striking innovation surprisingly received no critical commentary during the work's first reception; that it later became the subject of a rare unanimity amongst Quebec critics was no doubt due in large part to the then socio-political (post-October Crisis) context and to Ferron's public commitment to Quebec sovereignty.[5] Thus, Guy Monette's 1983 judgment that Ferron's

use of Confederation-Group poetry in "Les confitures de coings," the author's revised version of *La nuit* published in 1972 in a collection entitled *Les confitures de coings et autres textes*, transformed the text into a "weapon of cultural guerilla warfare,"[6] was subsequently cited and adopted without further discussion,[7] despite Monette's remarking, in a footnote, on Ferron's judicious choice, assimilation, and integration of this poetry into his work.[8] The publication of "Les confitures de coings" (subtitled "version entièrement nouvelle de La nuit" but described by Ferron in a letter dated 27 July 1971 to Gérald Godin as a "version corrigée") in effect cast a shadow of retrospective interpretation over *La nuit.* Given Ferron's comment in the "Appendice aux Confitures de coings," another text in the collection, that the title had been changed to insist on the poisoning of the English-Canadian protagonist,[9] and the fact that it was impossible for several years to buy *La nuit*, many people were under the impression that the author wished "Les confitures," published after the disillusionment caused by October Crisis, to become the official version. Ferron clearly intended, nonetheless, that the two versions of the work should coexist; he expressed his own preference for the "first version" in a letter to Jean Marcel dated 11 March 1974[10] and agreed to the 1979 publication of *La nuit* by Les Éditions France-Québec/Fernand Nathan. Furthermore, with the exception of the elimination of the English-language epigraph from "Les confitures," both versions contain the same quotations of English-Canadian poetry.

The present article aims therefore to shed new light on the functioning and significance of this innovative heterolinguistic and plurigeneric technique employed in *La nuit*, considered from the standpoint of that novel's 1965 publication rather than that of *Les confitures de coings et autres textes.* While the literary "code" clearly has a political dimension, a close analysis shows that the strategy operates in a far more complex way than that hitherto recognized of merely ridiculing and rejecting the English-Canadian poetry and poets referenced. On the contrary, it will be shown that the polyphony created by the combination of the diverse poetical voices with those of the narrator, the English-Canadian protagonist, and the implicit author, gives rise to a complex web of paradoxical meaning. Four aspects of the "code" create a heightened sense of ambiguity: first, the literary genre referenced (poetry); second, its heterolinguistic nature (that is, the appearance of English in the French text); third, the technique of its presentation, characterized by a blurring of voices and viewpoints; and, finally, the meaning of the poems quoted, considered in their textual, intertextual and referential contexts. The embedding of this English-language

poetry in the French-language text can furthermore be seen as emblematic of Ferron's literary representation of his ambivalent stance towards the English-Canadian "other," an ambivalence that constituted an important element of his own identity as a Québécois.[11]

Ferron's fictional work, like that of Gide, bears a strong autobiographical imprint: the Ferronian narratorial voice makes frequent if more or less veiled references to the author's life, family, friends and acquaintances, as well as to the Quebec society and history to which he and his forebears belonged. This tendency begins with *La nuit*, however, it being the first of Ferron's novels to identify many aspects of the fictional French-language narrator-protagonist's life with that of the author.[12] Because the significance of the English-Canadian literary "code" cannot be fully appreciated without an understanding of these links between the two parallel worlds (fictional and non-fictional), the present article begins with a brief presentation of the relevant points of contact. I then analyze the various elements of the English-Canadian literary "code" with a view to demonstrating its effect.

The Genesis and Socio-political Context of *La nuit*

After a flirtation with communism that led to his 1949 arrest during an anti-NATO street protest, Jacques Ferron, a medical doctor passionately committed to social justice, joined the *Parti socialiste démocratique* (PSD, the Quebec branch of the CCF) in the mid-1950s, standing for election under its banner in the federal elections of 1958. It was in all likelihood through this party that he met the man who would inspire the fictional English-Canadian protagonist of *La nuit* (and of *La charrette* and *Le ciel de Québec*), the Anglo-Montrealer F. (Frank) R. Scott, a founding member of both the CCF and the PSD. In 1960, however, Ferron broke vehemently and vociferously with the PSD over its refusal to recognize that Quebec had the same right to self-determination as did Algeria, castigating F.R. Scott in particular for his hypocrisy on this issue.[13] He then joined with Raoul Roy, the founder (1959) of *La Revue socialiste,* a journal in which Ferron had published from its inception, in creating (August 1960) the *Action socialiste pour l'indépendance du Québec*, a tiny separatist group on the far left of the political spectrum.

Although from different generations and linguistic communities, Ferron and F.R. Scott had much in common. Both rebelled against the politics and ethics of the bourgeois capitalist societies from which they emerged and, endowed with a strong social conscience, both became politically-

active socialists. Furthermore, both felt an overriding literary vocation which they strove to fulfill while practicing another profession in order to make a living. F.R. Scott, a professor of constitutional law at McGill University at the time of their meeting, had gained infamy in English Canada—and renown in French Canada—because of his public stance against conscription during the Second World War. Scott's fame in Quebec was heightened because of his role in the case culminating in the Supreme Court of Canada's 1957 declaration that the notorious "Padlock" law to "protect Quebec against communism" was unconstitutional. His reputation was further enhanced in Quebec by his involvement in two subsequent Supreme Court of Canada victories, that over the then-ruling Prime Minister Duplessis in the 1959 *Roncarelli* case, and the 1962 triumph over government censorship in the case concerning the alleged obscenity of *Lady Chatterley's Lover.*

F.R. Scott was both strongly attached to Quebec, the province to which his paternal ancestors had immigrated in the 1830s,[14] and deeply committed to the survival of Canada as an independent nation. In 1963, while serving as Dean of the McGill Faculty of law (1961 to 1964), he was appointed to the federal Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism as a constitutional law expert and as a representative of Quebec's English-speaking minority. The Commission, whose mandate was to inquire into and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution, was set up in July 1963, in part as a response to the recent secessionist turmoil in Quebec: the first FLQ bombs exploded in Montreal in April 1963.

As his own response and alternative to this violence, Ferron founded, in the fall of 1963, the federal Rhinoceros Party, aiming to reveal through the use of irony and satire what he considered to be the ridiculous nature of the Canadian confederation. Scott, for his part, believed in the necessity of a strong central government and therefore opposed greater autonomy for Quebec. He viewed Confederation as a historic union of colonies that provided for the protection of the French language and the Catholic faith; for him, the linguistic rights of the English minority in Quebec were entitled to the same protection as those of the French majority. Thus, at the turbulent time that Ferron penned *La nuit*, F.R. Scott, the model for its English-Canadian protagonist, held an important position on a Royal Commission

inquiring into how to save the confederation whose very existence Ferron derided as absurd.

Ferron would also have known F.R. Scott as a multi-faceted writer who published articles commenting on Quebec politics and history, both translated French-Canadian poetry and theorized translation, and who himself wrote poetry.[15] F.R. Scott was in fact the only English-Canadian poet invited to the first *Rencontre des poètes canadiens*, held at the Manoir Montmorency in September 1957; he also attended the second (1958) *Rencontre,* where he gave a speech and participated in the discussions, claiming to be the voice of the (English-speaking) "minority within the minority."[16] Ferron met F.R. Scott at various literary launchings held in Montreal during the 1960s where, according to Gilles Marcotte, the two men frequently conversed.[17] As will be seen, while *La nuit* references both F.R. Scott's political and literary natures, the English-Canadian literary "code" targets above all the writer.

The Elements of the English-Canadian Literary Code

La nuit takes the form of a tale told in the first person wherein the Québécois narrator François Ménard recounts his strange adventures one summer's night in Montreal during the early 1960s,[18] which culminate in his recovering the soul he had lost some twenty years earlier. This first narrative—which just might be the account of a dream—is embedded with a series of abrupt cinematic-style analepses wherein François recalls crucial events of his past, including, in particular, the loss of his soul. In the *incipit*, a prelude to the first narrative, François, describing himself as a married fortyish bank employee living and working on the south shore of Montreal, confides that his workplace and financial success have gradually led him back to the politics he had abandoned upon joining the Bank, as well as to the "temerity of his almost-forgotten youth" (12). His tale of the night's events then begins: awakened "one night" by a phone call from an unknown Anglophone asking to speak to "Frank," François, after denying being him, answers, in jest, that "Frank" is dead—possibly inadvertently poisoned by him—and that his body is on the carpet. The persistent stranger, who, the reader now learns, is himself named Frank, calls back to ask that François meet him in front of the morgue in Old Montreal, bringing with him "his" (Frank's own) corpse. According to François's version of what happens after their ensuing meeting, it would seem that Frank does indeed end up dead that night, possibly poisoned by the gift of quince jam that François brought him in lieu of the cadaver, which he says he had to

burn. François, however, emerges triumphant: his encounter with a black prostitute (whom he meets through Frank) evokes the memory of his mother's death and enables him to recover his soul, thereby freeing him from living parasitically on that of his long-suffering wife, Marguerite.

Numerous critics have pointed out the national and mythic dimensions of François' individual quest. For Simon Harel, *La nuit* is innovative in that it allows for the entry of the "stranger" on the literary scene at a time when the Parti pris movement privileged cultural unanimity in the form of decolonization psychology (103-04). But for Harel, this "stranger" is not the English-Canadian character—who is simply François's double, the incarnation of his "internal alienation"—but rather the Italian taxi-driver Alfredo Carone, who, in "ferrying" François over the Jacques-Cartier bridge, functions as a mediator permitting passage between different worlds. As will be seen, however, the English-Canadian literary code is a textual element that endows Frank with a role and significance beyond that of the double, beyond the English-Canadian "other" as embodiment of the French-Canadian alienation creating their identity as a dominated subject.

The first element of the English-Canadian literary code is paratextual. The novel's epigraph is composed of two English-language sentences, printed in italics, followed by an author's name in non-italicized capitals: "*What a night! / Something was almost ritual about it.* / DUNCAN CAMPBELL SCOTH." The second element is made up of five textual passages where Frank is reported as quoting English-language poetry. Although the text indicates that François thinks Frank's father has written some of this poetry, neither Frank nor the text directly attributes its authorship.

The novel is divided into seven numbered (untitled) sections; four of the poetry passages appear in the third section, with the fifth in the fifth. The third section is largely devoted to François's flashback (on his way to meet Frank) of their first meeting twenty years earlier. The young François, who had "converted" to communism while undergoing treatment in a tuberculosis sanatorium, took part in an anti-NATO street demonstration, where he was knocked unconscious by a policeman. Frank was the officer in charge of the police suppression of that protest. Arrested and brought before a judge for trial (related in the fourth section), François denied being a communist; this, he says, was the "betrayal" that caused him to lose his soul. Frank, finding the soul on the ground, pocketed it; according to François, Frank's purpose in calling him that night, some twenty years later, is to "regularize" this possession by purchasing it. François, who con-

siders Frank to be the "clever artisan and the malicious witness"[19] of his denial, seeks to recover his soul.

François's third-section analepse depicting this first meeting has Frank quoting from two poems. The first lines are drawn from Duncan Campbell Scott's "On the way to the Mission,"[20] while the second are from Frederick George Scott's "The Laurentians."[21] The section ends with François returning to the tale of his second meeting with Frank on the night in question, when he reports Frank as quoting two lines (slightly modified) of the quatrain of "The Laurentians" recited twenty years earlier. Then, touched by François's gift of quince jam, Frank declaims four lines from Roberts's poem "Kinship."[22] Finally, in the fifth section of the text (the last where Frank is seen alive), a section composed of the first narrative intercut with François's reflections on the events, his childhood memories and an authorial intrusion, Frank quotes verses drawn from Bliss Carman's "Low Tide on Grand Pré."[23]

Some preliminary observations can be made on the basis of this summary description of the English-Canadian literary code. First, it creates an English-language poetic voice that pervades the novel, present in both the paratext and the text. Second, it associates the English-Canadian character with poetry from the moment the narrator-protagonist first encounters him. Third, the putative epigrapher is the author of the first poem quoted by the character. Fourth, the lines Frank quotes do not express any overtly chauvinistic or patriotic sentiments. Finally, François's ability to report the verse quoted by Frank indicates both an in-depth knowledge of the English language and a certain sensibility towards poetry on his part.

Why does Ferron choose these poets and these particular lines of poetry for inclusion in his novel and why does he not translate them for his Québécois reader? Even though, as Monette points out, all of the poets belonged to what is now called the Confederation group of Canadian poets, this group was neither as homogenous nor as chauvinistic as his article might lead one to believe. Indeed, until Malcolm Ross's 1960 delimitation and retrospective labeling of the group as the "Poets of the Confederation" in his Introduction to the anthology *Poets of the Confederation* (ix), diverse appellations were used, the most common being "the Sixties Group" or "Group of the Sixties," because all of its members were born during the 1860s.[24] The four poets quoted in *La nuit* hailed however from different regions of the far-flung pre-Confederation British North-American colonies: Roberts and his cousin, Carman, were both born in New Brunswick, but Carman moved to the United States in 1886 (where he was considered an American poet), and Roberts, who left Canada in 1897, did not return

until 1925. F.G. Scott, born in Montreal, spent most of his working life in Quebec City, while Duncan Campbell Scott spent almost all of his long life in his native Ottawa. According to D.M.R. Bentley, it was Roberts's precept and example that incited these (and other) poets living in diverse regions to form, in 1880, a loose group centered around the ideal of technical excellence and his 1897 departure for New York marked the end of the group's disintegration.

Indeed, the extracts incorporated into *La nuit* eloquently illustrate the diversity of the poetry written by the members of this "group," whose purpose was not to "sing the landscapes of Quebec and Canada in patriotic verses" (Monette 423) but, rather, to prove that a Canadian could be a poet. Ross is very clear on this point: "It is fair enough, I think, to call Roberts, Carman, Lampman, and Scott our 'Confederation poets'. Not that they were avowed and self-conscious prophets of the new Canadian nationalism. [...]. Our men *were* poets—at their best, good poets" (ix). Furthermore, while the fact that D.C. Scott, F.G. Scott, Roberts, and Carman belonged to the first generation of English-Canadian poets writing in the new Canadian Confederation was undoubtedly one reason that Ferron chose them, it does not explain the functioning and significance of the particular references and quotations selected for *La nuit.*

The Functioning of the Code I: the Epigraph

The first element of the code is the novel's English-language epigraph. An epigraph's importance arises from its privileged paratextual position and its metatextual nature. Generally considered to be an emanation of the *auctorial* voice,[25] it functions as an intermediary between the title and the text; for that reason, its full significance can only be assessed in the context of the latter. However, the choice of language of this epigraph is what first strikes the francophone reader. It is hard to overstate the shock value, in 1965, of an English-language epigraph to a work entitled *La nuit* and published by the overtly separatist Parti pris: remember that the FLQ bombs that claimed their first victim, Wilfred O'Neil (a 65 year-old war veteran), exploded during the night of 20 April1963. Furthermore, the layout of the book's cover, which emphasizes the name of the publishing house and of the collection, "paroles," of which it is a part, situates *La nuit* in the turbulent socio-political and linguistic context of its publication. The number "4," printed in large-type next to the title, identifies the work as the fourth in this collection inaugurated, the year before, by Jacques Renaud's *Le Cassé,* a *succès de scandale* because of its use of *joual.* An English-lan-

guage epigraph in a book placed explicitly in a series of liberating "words" clearly raises the problematic of the place of the English language in that French-language work and, by extension, of the place of the English language and literature in Quebec literature and society.

However, the epigraph raises two further issues: why have these particular lines been chosen, and why has their author been identified? These questions, which can only be answered with reference to the text, provide a key to the greater complexity of meaning wrought by the code. According to Genette, an epigraph's importance often lies in the identity of its author and the indirect effect of endorsement resulting from the appearance of that name at the beginning of the new text (147-148). This rationale does not appear to apply here—except *a contrario*—since it is most unlikely that the francophone reader will recognize the name of the English-Canadian poet D.C. Scott. Indeed, Potvin, the first Québécois critic to address the question, confused the putative epigrapher with F.R. Scott's father, F.G. Scott ("Sémiologie de la variante" 87). This confusion appears natural, perhaps intended, in light of the similarity of the two poets' names and the novel's blurring of the boundary between the worlds of fact and fiction. Monette, for his part—having been alerted, it would seem, to the existence of the Confederation Group by a professor at Queen's University (426)—identified the epigrapher as D.C. Scott, but said that he had been unable to trace those lines in that poet's work (425).

The epigraph is in all probability apocryphal. I could not find it either, and none of the experts on D.C. Scott's work whom I consulted—Stan Dragland, Tracy Ware, Leslie Ritchie, and Bentley—were of the opinion that he wrote them. There is also the matter of the curious spelling of the family name of the putative author: Scoth, rather than Scott. Although this may be a simple typographical error (as both Potvin and Monette seem to assume), this spelling, given the fact that Ferron himself likely wrote the epigraph, could also be the author's way of making fun of the name Scott.[26] Since the "th" sound does not exist in French, the francophone reader will pronounce the name in the same manner as "Scott." Ferron, who treasured arcane allusions for their power to create a bond between himself and the reader willing to decrypt them,[27] famously played fast and loose with others' works, and downplayed the idea of "originality." In an unpublished 1971 letter to Jean Marcel dated 15 September 1971, for example, he wrote, "I have rarely quoted others and almost all my quotations are fraudulent."

But why attribute a "fraudulent" epigraph to the poet D.C. Scott in particular, drawing further attention to his name through the use of capital let-

ters? The importance of this name lies in its similarity with that of the English-Canadian protagonist (and his real-life model), who introduces himself as Frank Archibald Campbell, and who quotes D.C. Scott's poetry during their first encounter. The two tripartite names both contain "Campbell," as well as explosive consonants and sounds not found in the French language. This first element of the English-Canadian literary code thus links the English-Canadian authorial voice with the "poetical" English-Canadian protagonist of the novel, who is both a writer and a translator.[28] The epigrapher and the character share similar names and supposed Scottish origins, they are associated with poetry and with a nocturnal experience, and their names intertwine in a manner that blends the fictional characters with a series of real-life referents. The name Frank Archibald Campbell also alludes to two other members of the Confederation group, Archibald Lampman and William Wilfred Campbell and brings to mind as well both F.R. Scott, the inspiration for the fictional character, and (through him, as well as through the shared name Scott with the epigrapher) his father, F.G. Scott, another member of the Confederation group. Thus the English-Canadian character's tripartite name, a clever combination of allusions to the poets of the Confederation Group and to F.R. Scott, clearly emphasizes his poetic nature and supposed Scottish roots.

The lines of the epigraph, which elaborate enigmatically on the title's rich evocation of "night," suggest that the novel will be about this Anglophone speaker's nocturnal adventures. It establishes an English-Canadian perspective and "poetical" voice which, through the epigrapher's name, are linked to the English-Canadian protagonist, who continues that voice and perspective in the text. The speaker marvels over a "night" that he remembers as having had "something almost ritual about it." Read retrospectively, the "ritual" aspect applies to the manner of Frank's death which, occurring after he drinks and then eats bread, evokes the celebration of the mass.[29] The "ritual" allusion also ties in with the textual reference to a holocaust (or ritual burnt offering) implicit in the François's joking that he has burned Frank's corpse. Furthermore, the fact that the English voice of the epigraph marvels over the "ritual" nature of his nocturnal experience suggests (again in retrospect) that the death of the Anglophone protagonist operates at a symbolic level, and that, still alive, the latter participates in the creation of the novel. Read retrospectively, then, the epigraph points toward a different version of the nocturnal events recounted by the francophone narrator, reinforcing the ambiguous and oneiric quality of his narrative. Moreover, the presence of this English-Canadian author's name and voice in the paratext endows him with the potential status of a collaborative

author of the work. This status is confirmed later in the text when the francophone authorial voice intervenes explicitly in the narrative and elevates the character "Frank" to his own plane by directly questioning him about what he calls "their" novel. I will return to this issue in the following section.

But why would Ferron link this fictional character with the poets of the Confederation Group and with D.C. Scott in particular? Several reasons other than that given by Monette explain this choice. First, it is a way of taunting the character's referential target, F.R. Scott, a resolute and vociferous literary Modernist who championed the literature of (amongst others) D.H. Lawrence and T.S. Eliot, and who disparaged the poetry of his father's generation as old-fashioned and "Victorian."[30] In 1925, while a law student at McGill, Scott founded (with A.J.M. Smith) the *McGill Fortnightly Review*, where he published his satirical poem "The Canadian Authors Meet" that mocked the members of the Canadian Authors' Association (founded in 1921 to promote the interests of Canadian writers) and that mentioned, in particular, Carman, Lampman, Roberts, Campbell, and D.C. Scott.[31] The choice of name and of poetic repertory for the English-Canadian protagonist reveals, therefore, an acerbic attitude with respect to F.R. Scott, iconoclast. The fictional character's deprecatory attitude towards his father's poetry echoes that of Scott towards that of the Confederation group, but his quoting of the group's poetry points towards a fundamental similarity between them, implying that it is not so easy to escape one's patrimony. Thus, while working at the referential level to "debunk the debunker"—quick to decry others' shortcomings, F.R. Scott could be blind to his own sometimes authoritarian and conservative attitudes—the literary code also reflects on the problematic of the coexistence of two literary heritages in Canada.

This interpretation rests on the assumption that Ferron was familiar with F.R. Scott's literary tastes. Scott, one of the few Montreal Anglophones who tried to forge links between the writers of the two linguistic groups, organized a number of poetry nights at his home during the 1950s. Although it appears unlikely that Ferron attended any of these soirées "chez Frank"—Micheline Sainte-Marie (then married to Louis Portugais), who was present, has no recollection of Ferron (who of course was not a poet) having been there[32]—he was certainly aware of these efforts of literary "rapprochement," as well as of Scott's translations of French-Canadian poetry and his presence at the first two francophone poets' *Rencontres*. Further, Ferron's reference to Frank Scott as "the little poet"[33] in his letter to the editor of *Le Devoir* published 22 October 1962 is direct evidence

both of his knowledge of Scott's poetical activities and of his deprecatory attitude towards them.

Moreover, the text of *La nuit* furnishes proof of Ferron's familiarity with F.R. Scott's literary tastes by alluding to poems contained in Scott and Smith's 1957 collection of satirical verse, *The Blasted Pine. An Anthology of Satire, Invective and Disrespectful Verse Chiefly by Canadian Writers.*[34] Both Scott's satirical "The Canadian Authors Meet" mocking the *literati* and naming the Confederation Group poets referenced in *La nuit*, and his "The Call of the Wild,"[35] a parody of Roberts's poem "Kinship" that Ferron has Frank Archibald Campbell quote upon receiving the gift of quince jam, are reproduced in this anthology. It also contains "A Psalm of Montreal," Samuel Butler's poem that Frank Archibald Campbell claims to have translated into French, and whose refrain ("O God! O Montreal!") F.R. Scott habitually quoted to express his impatience with and disdain for attitudes he considered obsolete (Djwa 94). Finally, *The Blasted Pine* contains F.R. Scott's poem, "The Canadian Social Register," making fun of a 1947 Montreal proposal for a kind of social *Who's Who* that resembles the *Almanach de Gotha*, a directory of Europe's nobility and royalty published in Gotha, Germany between 1763 and 1944. By entitling the report that Frank Archibald Campbell is writing in the novel the "Gotha of the Quebec," Ferron appears to be accusing his fictional character of carrying out just the sort of activity that F.R. Scott decried in this poem.

The reason Ferron attributes the novel's epigraph to the poet D.C. Scott in particular, even though that poet did not write those lines, is because of the link thereby created between him and the fictional English-Canadian protagonist and, through him, F.R. Scott. Important similarities between the life and work of D.C. Scott and those of Frank Archibald Campbell and his real-life inspiration motivate this attribution, thereby enhancing the polysemy of *La nuit.*[36] D.C. Scott's father, like that of Frank Scott and the fictional Frank Archibald Campbell, was a clegyman. Prevented by the family's precarious finances from studying medicine, D.C. Scott joined the Department of Indian Affairs at age 17, rising to become its deputy superintendent in 1913, a post he held until his 1932 retirement. Like F.R. Scott (and Ferron's English-Canadian character), D.C. Scott was bilingual; like them, he crossed the linguistic and cultural Canadian divide, making conscious efforts through his life and work to forge links between the two communities. He wrote the 1942 catalogue for the Ottawa exhibition of his friend, the painter Clarence Gagnon, who exhibited his illustrations for *Maria Chapdelaine* at Scott's house. In his 1922 presidential address to the Royal Society of Canada, D.C. Scott, arguing in favour of the bilingual-

ism of the Society, said that it "here represents not a division of race, but a union of nationality, and joins the company of intellectuals by the dual interests of the two great sections of our people" (Matthews 3). Like F.R. Scott again, D.C. Scott was actively committed to the advancement of poetry in Canada: together with Archibald Lampman and Wilfred Campbell, he wrote a literary column for the Toronto *Globe* entitled "At the Mermaid Inn" (1892-1893), which contributed to the founding of literary criticism in English Canada (Ritchie 1023).[37] In addition to publishing essays of literary criticism, D.C. Scott also undertook the editing and the promotion of the literary works of his good friend Archibald Lampman, after the latter's premature death at the age of 37.

Ferron clearly demonstrates his familiarity with the Confederation Group of poets and their poetry by referencing them in *La nuit*. How he knew of them and the extent of his familiarity is of course a matter of speculation, but the fact that not all of the poetry quoted appears in any one anthology suggests a fairly extensive knowledge. Two French-language works likely provided him with information. First, the 1930 edition of Monseigneur Camille Roy's *Manuel*, bearing the new title *Histoire de la literature canadienne*, included, for the first (and last)[38] time, a section on the history of English-Canadian literature based, as Roy explains in his Preface, on his friend Lorne Pierce's 1927 work, *An Outline of Canadian Literature.*[39] This 1930 *Manuel* would have been in use at the collège Jean-de-Brébeuf when Ferron was a student there.[40] Dividing English-Canadian literature into four periods, Roy's *Manuel* gives the label "Confederation Group" not to the poets quoted in *La nuit* but rather to the preceding generation, because it was their period of writing (the second,1840-1880) that saw the birth of the Canadian confederation (268). According to Roy, the poets Roberts, Carman, Lampman, and D.C. Scott were the principal representatives of the "famous 'Group of the Sixties'" who wrote during the third period (1880-1900) (268-269). Including entries on all of the poets quoted in *La nuit*, Roy writes that Scott, the "current Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs," is the "poet of ideas" who seeks, through polished craftsmanship, to give them artistic form in his "delicate" poetry (281).[41] Roy also makes mention of Scott's collection of short stories situated in Quebec, *In the Village of Viger.* It is noteworthy that another of Scott's short stories, "Labrie's Wife,"[42] has similarities with *La nuit*, in that the text takes the form of a diary written by the Scottish-Canadian Archibald Muir, who recounts his rivalry with the French-Canadian Labrie.

Secondly, Ferron likely read the Spring 1946 issue of Guy Sylvestre's journal *Gants du Ciel* which, devoted to English-Canadian poetry, con-

tained seven (translated) articles by Anglophone literary critics. In his essay entitled "L'Âge d'or de notre poésie," E.K. Brown, noting the tendency of each "new" generation to denigrate that of its predecessor, affirms that the most admirable English-language poetry written in Canada was that penned during the period between 1885 and 1900. Discussing in particular the poetry of Lampman, Carman, and D.C. Scott, Brown writes that Scott's poems on Indian subjects reveals his sensibility towards a social class which, deprecated by others, Scott sought to integrate into the national community (16).

Did Ferron read A.J.M. Smith's essay, "Duncan Campbell Scott," that appeared in the first number (1959) of *Canadian Literature,* and that pleaded for a re-evaluation of the poet whom Smith argues was the most original of his generation? It is remarkable that many of the characteristic elements of Scott's poetry cited by Smith in this article are also present in *La nuit*. Scott's poetry, writes Smith, is that of a man enraptured with the sight and sound of birds and fascinated by dreams and by night (16)—fully one-third of the poems in his first collection are nocturnes—as well as by the simultaneous presence of opposites. Many of his poems (including "The Height of the Land," "Night Hymns on Lake Nipigon" and "Powassan's Drum") describe nights having "ritual" aspects.

Finally, Scott, who travelled often to the north during his long career with Indian Affairs to negotiate treaties with the Amerindians, was inspired by this contact to write poetry about their plight. The contrast between the lyrical empathy he expressed in this "Indian" poetry—including, as will be seen, the poem cited in *La nuit*—and the policy of their assimilation that he both espoused and implemented as a civil servant has long animated debates among literary scholars.[43] It is Scott's divided nature that best explains Ferron's attribution to him of the epigraph: the putative epigrapher is a figure torn between, on the one hand, his obligations to his career and "race" and, on the other, his poetic sensitivity and empathy for the "victims" of his actions. Scott's name thus both provides a key to and enhances the complexity of the novel's English-Canadian character associated with him. As will be seen in the next section, the English-Canadian poetry that Frank Archibald Campbell quotes reveals that he suffers from the same dilemma.

The Functioning of the Code II: the Poetry of the Text

An analysis of the English-Canadian poetry of the text of *La nuit* shows that it too plays a more complex role than that of simply "ridiculing" the

poets and heaping scorn on the poetry because it constitutes an "abusive and illusory appropriation" of Quebec.[44] In order to appreciate the ambiguity and the wealth of meaning generated by the poetry, it is necessary to distinguish the various voices and perspectives of the narrator, the narrator-protagonist, and the implicit author utilized in its presentation. The flashback containing the first two quotations is exemplary in this regard:

> Arrivé devant nous, Frank a surpris nos sourires. Il s'est arrêté, fasciné, intimidé, surtout retenu par mon compagnon, à cause du filet de sang sur son jeune visage. Il n'a pas pu s'empêcher de penser à son père.
>
> But his eyes were jewel [*sic*] of content. [*sic*]
> Set in circles of peace.
>
> Son père, le pasteur anglican qui, en toute sérénité, écrivait des vers au milieu de la tranquillité québécoise et des collines laurentiennes rehaussées pour les besoins du poème.
>
> These mountains reign alone, they do not share
> The transitory life of woods and streams;
> Wrapt in the deep solemnity of dreams
> They drain the sunshine of the upper air.
>
> Un imbécile. Lui, son fils, parce qu'il était intelligent, il a dû se faire flic. Il n'avait pas un grand choix: flic ou Canadiens [*sic*] français. Ni l'un ni l'autre ne le tentaient vraiment. C'est pour cela qu'il a fait un bon flic.
>
> Frank s'était penché sur mon compagnon et de sa grande main lui avait délicatement touché le sourcil: "Ce n'est rien, avait-il dit, ce n'est rien du tout." Il s'était redressé content. Il nous considérait encore, mais nous ne sourions plus. Alors il s'en était allé tristement. (54-55)

Monette interprets this passage as meaning that the young François, hearing Frank quote poetry that Frank's father wrote, thinks the latter is an imbecile whose poetry is ridiculous. However, nowhere does the text indicate who in fact wrote the poetry quoted, and although the first two lines of the excerpt give the young narrator's viewpoint, those following the quotation cannot be his, since François has never met Frank before, knows nothing about him or his father, and does not have access to his thoughts. The perspective is therefore either that of the narrator (François twenty years later) or that of the implicit author. But how could the older narrator have access to Frank's thoughts, and how could he reproduce these lines of English-language poetry heard (after having been knocked out) twenty years earlier? Furthermore, while the text indicates, by means of quotation

marks, words that Frank speaks out loud, there are none around the poetry. The inference is therefore that the passage reproduces Frank's interior monologue, presented by the implicit author, describing his reaction to the wounded young French-Canadian protestors lying before him on the sidewalk.

The English-Canadian poetry is thus a strategy by which the implicit author distinguishes his voice from that of the narrator and communicates directly—if cryptically—with his reader. Ferron clearly knows that the fictional protagonist's father did not write the first passage of poetry quoted. Indeed, the English-Canadian character quotes these lines from D.C. Scott's "On the Way to the Mission" not because "his father" wrote them or because he wants to ridicule them, but because they seem to him to apply to his own present situation. This poem recounts the murder of an Indian by greedy white men who then discover on the sled, instead of the expected furs, the body of the Indian's Christian wife that he was taking back to the Mission for burial. The lines Frank quotes describe the expression on the face of the Indian who, knowing that he was tracked, accepts his certain death with serenity. Scott, responsible for the policy of assimilation of native peoples, criticizes in this poem the violence and cupidity of the white society to which he belonged, and shows empathy and sensitivity towards its victims. In thinking of these lines, Frank Archibald Campbell, the policeman in charge of suppressing the protest against Federal government policy (and who, as François later learns, seeks to assimilate French-Canadians into English-Canadian society "for their own good"[45]), compares the wounded demonstrator to the Indian martyr and himself to the greedy white assassins. By having Frank quote these verses, the author is therefore portraying the character in a somewhat sympathetic fashion, because they indicate that he both empathizes with his victims and is conscious of the irony of his position.

But if Frank's father didn't write those lines, why do they come to his mind when he thinks, involuntarily, of his father? The verb "s'empêcher" suggests a conflict between Frank and his father (developed further in this passage, as well as later on in the text), which ties in to that between English and French Canadians. The blood on the protestor's face calls to Frank's mind his father's priestly role—his ministering to others—that gave him the time and tranquility to write poetry, a vocation which contrasts sharply with his own partisan role as policeman.[46] It is thus not François but Frank who criticizes his own "father's" poetry (which he goes on to quote), bitterly (jealously?) calling the latter an "imbecile." Frank reflects that, being intelligent, he was himself forced to choose between

becoming a "cop" or a French Canadian, neither of which really appealed to him. Furthermore, although he is good at his chosen vocation, Frank is not happy with it. The lines from "The Laurentians" express his feeling of isolation and his desire for a different life, the "transitory life of field and streams." His envy of the French-Canadian protestors' smiling complicity and his chagrin over his own state are suggested by the choice of adjectives ("fascinated," "intimidated") and adverbs ("delicately," "sadly") used to describe his attitude and actions towards them.

When, twenty years later, François tells him that the wind and the heat have carried the ashes of Frank's incinerated body heavenward, Frank repeats the last two lines he had earlier quoted from "The Laurentians," modifying them to describe his (allegedly) changed situation. For "mountains," Frank substitutes the pronoun "It," referring to his corpse, which, in the form of ashes, now "drains the sunshine of the upper air" (56). Saying that he finds it "infinitely poetical" that his ashes, mixed with the dew, should fall over the city, Frank tells the sceptical François that the nighthawks are louder than usual because his ashes have excited them. Why this repetition and modification of the earlier poetry quoted? Frank is presenting himself to François as being both "poetical" and ironic. He assumes François will understand the English-language poetry, which is indeed the case, since François tells the reader, in an aside, that he could care less about the poetry of Frank's ashes (57). Haunted by his isolation, expressed by the image of the mountains "standing alone" in his "father's" poem, Frank seeks complicity with François through this poetry, obviously believing that the latter would appreciate it. This also proves correct, since, although François's immediate reaction is one of purported indifference, he later confides that it was Frank who first taught him about the nighthawks and the poetry of their cries, a poetry that he says he could only later grasp.[47]

François then reports what seems to him to be Frank's exaggerated reaction to his gift: exclaiming three times, "Quince jam!,"(58) Frank asks how François could possibly have known, thanks him "from the bottom of [his] heart," and then "adds', in apparent explanation of this emotion, the lines drawn from Roberts's poem "Kinship." Once again, François neither translates nor attributes this poetry, but instead reports his own interpretation of why Frank has quoted it: "I assumed his mother must have made quince jam" (58). His next comment shows that, far from ridiculing this poetry, François reacts positively to it: "He was, all in all, *neveurmagne* his job, quite a sympathetic guy, the said Frank Archibald Campbell."[48]

This favourable evaluation of Frank, which shows that François distinguishes the man from his occupation and that he finds the former "sympathetic," can only result from the poetry Frank has just quoted to him. Indeed, François, who still suffers from the premature death of his "mère cadette" (so-called because she was younger when she died than he now is), identifies with what he interprets as Frank's attachment to and yearning for his own mother expressed in those lines. The fact that Roberts was referring to Mother Nature aids a layer of irony to this reaction for the reader who knows the poem (as Ferron clearly did). Obsessed by a childhood intuition of being one with nature, Roberts was expressing, under Carman's influence, a kind of pantheistic transcendentalism. These lines translate the speaker's (and Frank's) desire for an experience that would take him out of his present state into a mystical and therapeutic union with nature. But if François misinterprets the word "mother" in the poem, his reaction nonetheless reveals poetry's polysemy, its ability to be interpreted imaginatively according to the needs of the reader, and its power to unify through artistic beauty. Furthermore, as the reader later learns, François was right on at least one level—Frank's mother did indeed make quince jam!

The fourth section continues François's flash-back account of the events following his first meeting with Frank, namely his trial and the loss of his soul. In the fifth section François returns to his narration of their second encounter, relating, by means of direct speech, their conversation during their walk through the streets of Old Montreal to the Alcazar (a bar where Frank has his "headquarters") and, later, at that bar. Frank, eloquent and expansive, does his best to charm, to find a common ground with, and to draw out the suspicious François; the latter responds in brief sentences, often in the negative, that contrast with his mental reactions, reported by means of his interior monologue. After explaining that tasting the jam will bring back his childhood memories (75), Frank recites, in French, Butler's poem "A Psalm of Montreal" (which he claims to have translated), and then goes on to explain why quince jam means so much to him. It brings back his memory of the childhood intuition he experienced, while breakfasting on bread and quince jam in the walled garden of the rectory in Quebec City, that "Life" (real life, as opposed to his cloistered existence) was passing by, in French, on the other side of the wall (78-79). Frank relates his father's annoyed reaction to his lingering over this delightful sensation of "French liberty"—indeed, Frank suspects his father, the symbolic representative of the English in Quebec, may share this feeling—as well as his mother's wincing at the French voices who delight in calling out their ani-

mals' English names. Finishing this account by saying "All that is very far away and very close to me" (79), Frank then quotes the three lines from Carman's "Low Tide on Grand Pré," apparently as a poetic expression of his feelings.

Described by Desmond Pacey in 1950 as "the most nearly perfect single poem to come out of Canada" (8), Carman's poem connects into and elaborates on *La nuit*'s preponderant thematic of memory and loss. As Ware points out, "Low Tide on Grand Pré," in the tradition of "return" poetry, contrasts two distinct temporal orders, the epiphanic (time outside time) and the linear (including the cyclical), and poses the problem of their integration (38). Observing the sunset at low tide on Grand Pré, the speaker remembers a personal moment of transcendental communion that he experienced at the same time of day and at the same place with a person now absent. Frank quotes the lines where the speaker, from the standpoint of his bereaved present, refers to that past moment. The speaker's question ("Was it a year or lives ago") underlines his present alienated state, while his comparison of summer to a bird which they "caught" provides a concrete image of the moment they arrested the passage of cyclical time. In quoting these lines, then, Frank compares himself to the poem's bereaved speaker; François's gift has evoked the memory of the childhood mystical moment that he hopes to be able to regain.

This time, however, François reacts violently against Frank's poetry quotation. His interior monologue, reported in free indirect speech, shows that once again François thinks he understands the meaning of the verses, which he thinks Frank's father has written, no doubt because earlier in the speech Frank talked about his father's poetry.[49] François scornfully rejects the notion that the sentiment expressed might be sincere.[50] However, the reader cannot accept this unreliable narrator's words as gospel.[51] François's interpretation is, once again, a literal one, and the very violence of his reaction suggests that something else is at play. Could it be that, moved by the beauty of the lines, François feels the need to steel himself against his feelings of empathy for this "enemy"? Ferron, who knows Frank's father did not write this poetry, offers these lines to readers for their own interpretation in the context of the novel. An intertext never operates in a univocal fashion, but rather invites the reader to construct his own sense, which will vary according to his knowledge, situation and sensibility.

Furthermore, immediately after François's angry outburst, the implicit author distances himself from his character by shifting the narrative voice to one that remarks dispassionately on the use of the bird as a symbol in

literature, thereby assimilating Carman's device in the lines just quoted with the use of the nighthawk in *La nuit.* Remarking that the nighthawk brought "him" closer to Frank, this narrator goes on to cite (with attribution) Melançon's description of that bird in *Charmants voisins*. Then, in what he refers to as his "*interpolation,*" the implicit author comments on Melançon's literary style in this quotation that he (the author) has "chosen," and goes on to address his fictional English-Canadian character directly: "Frank, que serons-nous aux yeux de cet homme nouveau, sur le point d'apparaître [the man who will soon set foot on the moon]? Verra-t-il une différence entre un Ecossais et un Canadien français? J'en doute, et si j'ai peine à te haïr, c'est peut-être que ma haine est déjà périmée…"(81).

The implicit author, who has chosen the quotes of English-Canadian poetry for his character, thus steps out from behind his fictional narrators' voices to comment on the story he is writing and to reveal his own ambivalence towards those sentiments which, attributed to his French-Canadian protagonist, are here shown to be a projection of his own. Casting doubt on the relevance of the conflict described in his story, the implicit author then underlines his fundamental collaboration with "Frank" in the creation of *La nuit* by referring to it as "their novel": "Un peu Baluba,[52] mon cher Frank, notre roman" (82). The effect of this authorial intrusion, linked as it is to the English-Canadian poetry, is therefore not to reject that poetry but rather to reinforce its unifying potential and to increase the ambiguity of the text.

* * *

This study has revealed the paradoxical effects created by Ferron's singular heterolinguistic strategy in *La nuit.* Frank's anguished and divided nature is shown by his "poetic" reactions to the exercise of his police duties: the poet contests the very order that the policeman is duty-bound to uphold. The choice of poetry for quotation by the English-Canadian protagonist both deepens that character's complexity and creates a certain sympathy, even empathy, for him on the part of the Québécois narrator, which reflects that of the implicit author. The English-Canadian literary code also contains an implicit criticism of the Québécois narrator-protagonist and of the francophone reader too ready to reject the poetry out of hand. By not translating this English-language poetry, the author is both flaunting his own knowledge of English and of English-Canadian poetry—which can of course also be seen as one-upmanship over the English-Canadian protagonist and his model—and distinguishing himself from his "unreliable narrator." The bursts of English language can also be seen as figurative

"bombs," serving to alert the narrator and reader to the existence of a more nuanced or complex political reality than that promoted by the adherents to violent protest.[53]

Moreover, the presence of the English-language poetry in the French text offers a multi-layered and ambivalent reflection on the problem of the coexistence of the two linguistic communities in Quebec. Rather than a wholesale rejection of the relevance of English-Canadian literature in Quebec, this heterolinguistic technique can be seen, amongst other things, as a commentary on the solution of bilingualism proposed by many, notably F.R. Scott.[54] The fictional Frank is in many ways the "ideal" English Canadian: cultivated, bilingual, interested in and sympathetic to the Québécois. *La nuit* demonstrates however that, given the socio-economic context, even—and perhaps especially—this seductive English Canadian is dangerous to the French-speaking population, simply because he insists on keeping his own language. The Québécois protagonist, on the rise in the capitalist society where financial power is in the hands and therefore the tongue of anglophones, must work in English, thereby becoming increasingly isolated from francophone society and culture. Ferron repeatedly stressed in his articles that the survival of French-language literature in Quebec depended on that of the French language in all areas. To restrict language to the domain of "culture" was, he wrote, a "golden trap"[55] because, once cut off from its sources, French would atrophy, as in Louisiana. It is remarkable in this connection that only the novel's English-Canadian character quotes poetry and wants to talk literature. François's expressed lack of interest in French-language literature can be seen as a sign of the nefarious effects of his bilingualism and of his assimilation into English-language capitalist society. Frank boasts that he has translated Butler's poem into French. Why then does he not translate the English-Canadian poetry he quotes to François? When he wants to mock his fellow Anglo-Montrealers—showing that he is different from and better than them—, he translates. But when he wants to express his innermost feelings, this perfectly bilingual English-Canadian familiar with Proust's writing quotes English-Canadian poetry in English. By leaving this poetry in the original English, Ferron expresses his concept of language as the "transplant, in an individual brain, of a sense of commonality, which allows the individual to be a country, to be part of a people."[56]

However, although Frank's quotation of English-Canadian poetry demonstrates that he is not "Québecquois" (129), its presence heightens the ambiguity of *La nuit*. Poetry, by definition polysemic and polyvalent, is the opposite of ideological or nationalist discourse. It is the literary expression

of the individual identity of the poet, who inhabits not a country but a language. Its power to break down national and other boundaries between individuals is illustrated by the authorial intrusion following the lines from "Low Tide on Grand Pré." Always relevant to the novel's plot and to its multi-level thematic structure, the poetry Frank quotes continues the voice and the perspective introduced by the English-language epigraph. The French-language text acts as a sounding-board for this English-language verse, whose significance is not limited to the narrator's literal interpretations. Ferron uses it to transmit his imaginative construct of Frank's tragedy as a sensitive being who, caught between two cultures, two languages and two identities, was forced to make a choice antithetical to his nature. The poetry shows the character's lucid consciousness of his paradoxical condition as well as his yearning to transcend it, a desire that is realized by his "ritual" death. Frank's last words, written for François, in French, testify to his repentance and his "conversion": "JE SUIS UN TARLANE. ADIEU. J'AI VECU DU MAUVAIS COTE DU MUR. JE DEMANDE PITIE" (130). This final *cri de coeur* shows that Frank's transformation, like that of François, has been wrought by a return to his past; the recovery of his childhood epiphany has brought the realization that he must put an end to his old life before he can find a new one "on the other side of the wall." Only by unlocking this English-Canadian literary code, however, can the full significance of Frank's paradoxical ambiguity and the redemptive nature of his "ritual" death be appreciated.

Notes

1 The page references in this article are to the 1971 reprint of this 1965 edition.

2 On the general concept of "*anglicité*" ("Englishness") in Ferron's work, see Bednarski, *Autour de Ferron* and "De l'anglicité chez Ferron: retours et prolongements." For a discussion of the element of *anglicité* in *La nuit*, see Murphy, *Great Scott! L'anglicité surprenante de* La nuit *de Jacques Ferron*. This article is a revised and translated version of Murphy, "Le code littéraire 'canadien-anglais' dans *La nuit* de Jacques Ferron."

3 Archie Cameron, the Scottish-born protagonist of Aubert de Gaspé's *Les anciens Canadiens,* is of course an ancestor of *La nuit*'s English-Canadian protagonist. See, in connection with this intertext, "L'intertextualité littéraire: *La nuit* ou Les nouveaux Canadiens" dans Murphy, *Le Canada anglais de Jacques Ferron (1960-1970),* forthcoming at Les Presses de l'Université Laval.

4 For a study of heterolinguism in nineteenth-century French-Canadian literature see Grutman, *Des langues qui résonnent*.

5 See, for example, Ferron, "L'alias du non et du néant," published in *Le Devoir* (19 April 1980) on the eve of the 1980 Quebec referendum on sovereignty-association. In December 1970, Ferron negotiated the surrender of the Rose brothers (members of the

FLQ Chénier cell responsible for the kidnapping of Pierre Laporte) at their request, an event that marked the end of the October crisis.

6 "*Les Confitures de coings* se transforme alors en instrument de guérilla culturelle car ces citations constituent en fait un florilège des oeuvres des Poètes de la Confédération"(423).

7 See Olscamp, "*Les confitures de coings* ou la cohérence dans l'ambiguïté" 165-166 and Michaud, "Lire à l'anglaise" 143. As the titles of their articles indicate, both Olscamp and Monette focus on the "Les confitures de coings." For a comparison of the two versions, see Potvin 1980 and Pelletier 1983. While *La nuit* has never been translated into English, Ray Ellenwood's translation of "Les confitures de coings" first appeared (1974) in *Exile* under the title *Quince Jam*; his translation of the whole collection was published under the same title by Coach House Press in 1977. It would appear that it was Ellenwood's identification of two of the authors of the English-Canadian poetry in his "Translator's Note" that led to Monette's pursuing the question (Monette 426, n. 28).

8 "[M]ais encore fallait-il conna"tre ces textes (peut-être même les apprécier) pour les assimiler aussi judicieusement et les intégrer à une oeuvre littéraire québécoise dans laquelle ils sont loin d'être un simple hors-d'oeuvre"(423).

9 "Alors j'ai regretté que 'La nuit' n'ait été qu'une fiction. Elle le restera mais j'en change le titre pour insister sur le poison." Ferron: 1977 [1972] 104-105.

10 "Quant aux Confitures de Coings, le début indique un repli schizoïde; ce sont les simples corrections apportées à la première version qui ont le plus d'allure." Unpublished letter from Jacques Ferron to Jean Marcel, Fonds Jacques-Ferron, MSS 424, bo"te 16, Archives Nationales du Québec, Montréal.

11 See Murphy, *Le Canada anglais de Jacques Ferron (1960-1970). Formes, fonctions et représentations*.

12 The author takes this process a step farther in the overtly autobiographical "Appendice aux Confitures de coings ou le congédiement de Frank Archibald Campbell," where he has the narrator say: "Or donc, qui est François Ménard? Il ne faut pas être bien malin pour deviner que c'est moi dans ce personnage dont j'apprécie l'humilité et le principe de cette humilité, une humiliation qu'il n'a pas été seul à subir [...]." Ferron 1977 [1972]: 105.

13 See "Adieu au PSD," *La Revue socialiste* 4 (1960), reprinted in *Escarmouches* 1 23-45.

14 Scott's great-grandfather, John Scott, was born in England in 1791 and arrived in Canada in 1831. His grandfather, William, a doctor praised for his courageous fight against successive Montreal epidemics, was named to the McGill Chair of Anatomy and became the President of the Order of Doctors and Surgeons of Quebec. His father, Frederick George Scott (1861-1944), was an Anglican priest and a poet (Djwa 14-15).

15 F.R. Scott's first translations of Anne Hébert's poems appeared in the *Northern Review* in 1952. In 1960, Hébert and Scott published their correspondence relating to Scott's translation of the "Tombeau des rois" (as well as Scott's latest version of that poem) under the title "La traduction. Dialogue entre le traducteur et l'auteur" in *Écrits du Canada français*. Scott's article "Canada et Canada français" appeared (in French) in the "personnalist" review *Esprit* in 1952. He regularly published articles on Quebec in *Canadian Forum*, including the 1942 article explaining the French-Canadian attitude to conscription. His first book of poetry, *Overture*, appeared in 1945, followed by *Events and Signals* in 1954. Both Scott's *The Eye of the Needle* and *The Blasted Pine* (edited with A.J.M. Smith) appeared in 1957. In 1964 F.R. Scott and Michael Oliver edited a collection of texts (published under the title *Quebec states her case. Speeches and articles from Quebec in the years of unrest*) concerning French-Canadian nationalism, with a view to informing English Canadians about the issues underlying the crisis in Quebec.

16 Djwa 372-374. With respect to Scott's activities as a translator of French-Canadian po-

ets, see also "Frank Scott, gentleman traducteur," in Godbout 2004 and "Evenings chez Frank: *Literalism* as Entente Cordiale" in Simon 2006.

17 "Il me semble qu'il [F.R. Scott] était presque toujours là, aux lancements des Éditions du Jour et de HMH. C'était l'époque. Jacques Hébert avait lancé la mode, au cours des années 60, en faisant un lancement chaque semaine. [...]. L'homme était grand et devait pencher la tête pour se mettre au niveau de la plupart de ses interlocuteurs. Avec Jacques Ferron, il parlait, physiquement, à peu près d'égal à égal. Je les voyais, d'un peu loin, discuter de je ne sais trop quoi."

18 A textual reference (128) to the FLQ enables the reader to situate the events of the first narrative as occurring sometime after early 1963.

19 "[L]'artisan habile et le témoin malicieux de mon reniement" (60).

20 "But his eyes were jewel [*sic*] of content / Set in circles of peace" (54). This poem first appeared (1905) in D.C. Scott, *New World Lyrics and Ballads.*

21 "These mountains reign alone, they do not share / The transitory life of woods and streams; / Wrapt in the deep solemnity of dreams / They drain the sunshine of the upper air" (54). This sonnet, of which these lines form the first quatrain, first appeared (1910) in Frederick George Scott, *Poems,* with the notation that it was written in 1903.

22 "Back to knowledge and reneval [*sic*] / Faith to fashion and reveal, / Take me mother, in compassion / All thy hurt ones fail [*sic*] to heal" (58). This poem first appeared in *Harper's Magazine* in August 1894.

23 "Was it a year or lives ago, / We took the grasses in our hands,/ And caught the summer flying low" (79). This poem, written in June 1886, was first published in the *Atlantic Monthly* of March 1887.

24 Although Ross's selection of Roberts, Carman, Lampman and D.C. Scott as "Poets of the Confederation" furnished the first generation of university-trained Canadian literature specialists with what they would consider post-Confederation and pre-Modern Canadian poetry, it was William Douw Lighthall who, in dedicating his 1922 anthology *Old Measures: Collected Verse* "To the Poets of the Confederation," first used the term. See Bentley 4. Bentley notes further that A.J.M. Smith went so far as to describe the group as a "national school of reflective nature poetry" in his 1960 Introduction to *The Oxford Book of Canadian Verse* (5).

25 Genette 142. Genette borrows the term "auctorial" from German-language critics to indicate both the presence of the author (real or fictional) and the sovereign authority ("autoritas") of that presence in his work.

26 The word "Scoth" is one letter away from "Scotch," a word that designates both the Scottish people and their whisky and, as a verb, signifies to put an end to something. The word also calls to mind the verb to "scoff."

27 See, for example, Ferron's comments in a letter to John Grube: "Maintenant je sais que j'ai un lecteur, et je dois penser à lui et, faute de le conna"tre, lui donner une plus grande place, ou plutôt un rôle par quelques procédés. Du premier vous vous servez dans vos poèmes. C'est l'ellipse: si le lecteur retrouve les mots que vous avez retranchés, votre poème le ravit d'être un lecteur intelligent et il vous en est reconnaissant. Il admire vote enjeu car vous avez misé sur cette intelligence" (Ferron, *Une amitié bien particulière* 83).

28 Frank Archibald Campbell writes the"Gotha of the Quebec" and claims to have translated Samuel Butler's poem into French.

29 "L'émoi du garçon quand Frank lui a demandé du pain! Pourquoi pas des hosties?" (106).

30 In an editorial that appeared in the *McGill Fortnightly Review* on February 28, 1927, Scott wrote: "Canadian literature—if there be such a thing—is overburdened with dead traditions and outworn forms. We are a pitiful extension of the Victorians. If a living, native literature is to arise, we must discover our own souls, and before that can happen a mass of débris has to be removed" (quoted in Djwa 90).

31 "The air is heavy with Canadian topics / And Carman, Lampman, Roberts, Campbell, Scott, / Are measured for their faith and philanthropics, / Their zeal for God and King, their earnest thought." The poem denounces also the old-fashioned aspiration "To paint the native maple and […] to set the selfsame welkin ringing" (*Collected Poems of F.R. Scott* 248). According to Bentley, Scott's poem rests on a "truncated and demeaning approach to Canada's literary and cultural history" that reduces these poets to "exemplars of the Modernists' self-serving stereotypes of Victorian and colonial ideas and attitudes" (2).

32 Communication from Micheline Sainte-Marie dated August 10, 2008. In his Preface to *Poems of French Canada,* Scott, recalling having invited to his house small groups of poets of both languages in the mid-1950s, mentions the names of Louis Portugais and Gaston Miron, but not that of Ferron.

33 "Frank Scott, dit le petit poète" (Ferron, *Les lettres aux journaux* 205).

34 See also Bednarski, "Translating Ferron, Ferron Translating" 46-47.

35 The first stanza reads as follows: "Make me over, Mother Nature / Take the knowledge from my eyes, / Put me back among the pine trees / Where the simple are the wise."

36 See in general Leslie Ritchie, "Duncan Campbell Scott," Stanley Dragland, ed., *Duncan Campbell Scott. A Book of Criticism*, and Bentley 131.

37 See Barrie Davies, ed., At *the Mermaid Inn: Wilfred Campbell, Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott in the "Globe" 1892–3*.

38 The subsequent (1939 and following) editions, bearing the title *Manuel d'Histoire de la Littérature canadienne de langue française,* dealt only with French-language literature.

39 "*Nous avons dû ici recourir à une précieuse collaboration. En 1927, M. Lorne Pierce publiait à Toronto* An Outline of Canadian Literature (french and english) [*sic*]. *Après entente cordiale avec notre excellent ami M. Lorne Pierce, nous avons largement utilisé son ouvrage, la partie qui traite de la littérature canadienne-anglaise, ainsi que les notes précieuses qu'il a bien voulu nous communiquer. Nous le remercions ici de sa grande bienveillance*" (8-9).

40 Robert 421. For an account of Ferron's years at Brébeuf, see Marcel Olscamp, *Le fils du notaire* 133-227.

41 "Né à Ottawa en 1862, aujourd'hui assistant surintendant général des Affaires indiennes, ami de Lampman, qui l'engagea à faire des vers, D.C. Scott a publié des contes et des poèmes. Son oeuvre principale en vers: *The Magic House and other Poems* (1893); *Labour and the Angel* (1898); *New World Lyrics and Ballads* (1905); *Lundy's Lane and other Poems* (1916); *Beauty and Life* (1921). Sa poésie est délicate, il est le poète des idées, il cherche à leur donner, par une technique soignée, une forme aussi artistique que possible. —On a de lui un recueil de contes ou *short stories*: *In the Village of Viger* (1896)."

42 In *The Witching of Elspie*.

43 See, for example, Melvin Dagg, "Scott and the Indians" and Dragland, *Floating Voice*: *Duncan Campbell Scott and the Literature of Treaty 9*.

44 "Guy Monette a démontré que ces extraits poétiques étaient en réalité composés de vers tirés de l'oeuvre de quatre poètes anglophones de Montréal appelé les 'Poètes de la Confédération.' Le traitement pour le moins cavalier que Ferron fait subir à ces auteurs est une façon de les ridiculiser: 'Les oeuvres des poètes de la Confédération se voient récusées et tournées en dérision parce que, comme les oeuvres du père de Frank, elles ne cerneraient pas la vie et constitueraient une appropriation abusive et illusoire du domaine québécois'" (Olscamp, "*Les confitures de coings* ou la cohérence dans l'ambiguïté"165-166, quoting Monette 423).

45 Frank writes in his Gotha (129), "Si l'on éprouve de la sympathie pour eux [the French Canadians], par atavisme irlandais, gallois ou écossais, qu'on se dise que la meilleure façon de les aider est encore de chercher à les perdre."

46 It should be noted in this connection that F.G. Scott (F.R. Scott's father) enlisted as a

chaplain during the First World War and ministered at the Front to the wounded (anglophone and francophone alike). Furthermore, F.G. Scott was a popular figure amongst the francophone population of Quebec City. See Djwa 22-23.

47 "Pour la troisième fois je prêtai attention aux cris de l'engoulevent, un oiseau que j'ignorais avant cette nuit et qu'il m'avait enseigné: 'Écoutez, François, écoutez les cris de la nuit.' Il m'avait dit encore: 'Mes cendres les inspirent: ils sont plus perçants, plus nombreux.' Et il avait ajouté: 'N'est-ce pas poétique?' Une poésie que je ne parvenais plus à saisir, que je retrouverai plus tard en pensant à Barbara" (111).

48 "Je supposai que sa mère en avait déjà fabriqué, de la confiture de coing. Il était somme toute, neveurmagne son métier, un homme plutôt sympathique, le dénommé Frank Archibald Campbell" (58).

49 "Il [Frank's father] écrivait des poèmes qui obéissaient à toutes les règles, des poèmes bien aussi forts que le filet du pêcheur; il voulait lui aussi capter la vie qui lui échappait pour la fixer en anglais, la Vie qui coulait en français de l'autre côté du mur" (79).

50 "Il les savait donc tous par coeur, les poèmes de son vénérable père! Bien commode, l'imbécile! Oui, n'est-ce pas, pour montrer qu'au-dessus de leur finance et de leur police les bons Ecossais entretiennent des jardins suspendus…"(79).

51 This bank manager intends, after his night's adventures, to reassume his "disguise," and to live a future commensurate with his past: "fleeing his own revolt," he will find peace, submission, security and honour in the midst of mediocrity": "Bien malin qui pourrait me prendre à présent: dans moins d'une heure j'aurai repris mon déguisement de quadragénaire descendant vers la cinquantaine […] s'écrasant pour mieux s'étendre et s'étendant ainsi pour boire les pétroles, […] un avenir à la mesure de mon passé, un maquis approprié au personnage, qui, fuyant sa révolte, trouve paix, soumission, sécurité et honorabilité au sein de la médiocrité." (120-121)

52 The creation myth of the Baluba, members of the larger Luba family of tribes in southeastern Congo, features a struggle between two creators, the prime creator (Fidi Mkullu) and the trickster-creator (Kaddifukke). According to this myth, Fidi Mkullu is obliged to recognize that the trickster-creator is an integral part of creation. See David Adams Leeming, *Creation Myths of the World* 62-63.

53 I am indebted to an anonymous *Canadian Poetry* reviewer for this suggestion.

54 Bilingualism was in effect a means of protecting the English language in Quebec. In a 1967 comment on a proposed draft of the Commission's first report, F.R. Scott explicitly laid out his view of language as a human right: "The right to one's language in all personal and private relations is a human right. It is as inherent in man as his freedom of speech or of conscience. It starts with mother and child; it continues into wider social groupings. It is not granted by the State or by Constitutions. Laws may protect it and may prescribe conditions under which it may be reasonably exercised, particularly in dealing with state authorities." (Quoted in Fraser 8).

55 "Tout recommence en '40," *Le Quartier latin* 44. 39 (1962), reprinted in Ferron, *Escarmouches* 1 56.

56 "[La] langue, greffe d'un sens commun dans le cerveau de chacun, qui permet à chacun d'être d'un pays, de faire partie d'un peuple" (Ferron, *Du fond de mon arrière cuisine* 275).

41

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