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***Les Canadiens* as a Minority: The Politics of Representing the End of *La Nouvelle France* in 19th Century Anglophone Historical Novels**

Zusammenfassung

Eines der populären Themen im anglophonen Geschichtsroman Kanadas des 19. Jahrhunderts war die britische Eroberung Quebecs 1759. Der Essay behandelt mit Rosanna Leprohons The Manor House of De Villeraï (1859/60), William Kirbys The Golden Dog (1877) und Gilbert Parkers The Seats of the Mighty (1896) drei historische Romane, die im nationalistischen Klima kurz vor und nach Gründung des Dominion entstanden. Zum Zeitpunkt der Veröffentlichung waren die Franko-Kanadier aufgrund der massiven britischen Zuwanderung zu einer nationalen Minderheit geworden. Die Analyse der Romane zeigt ideologisch unterschiedliche Wege der Aneignung der „nationalen“ Vergangenheit Quebecs durch Romanciers der Mehrheitsgesellschaft und deren Vereinnahmung für ein gesamtkanadisches Nationalbewusstsein.

Abstract

One of the popular subjects of 19th century English-Canadian historical fiction was the period around the fall of Quebec in 1759. The essay focuses on three historical novels, published in the nationalist climate of Pre- and Post-Confederation: Rosanna Leprohons The Manor House of De Villeraï (1859/60), William Kirby's The Golden Dog (1877), and Gilbert Parker's The Seats of the Mighty (1896). By then, French Canadians had become a national minority due to the massive influx of settlers from the British Isles. My examination of the novels attempts to outline different ways by majority writers of accommodating French Canadian historical consciousness and integrating Quebec's "national" past into a pan-Canadian national narrative.

Résumé

Un des thèmes les plus populaires dans les romans anglophone canadiens du XIXe siècle était la conquête du Québec en 1759. Mon exposé traite de trois romans historiques publiés dans le climat nationaliste de la période avant et suivant la Confédération: The Manor House of de Villeraï (1859/60) par Rosanna Leprohon, The Golden Dog (1877) par William Kirby et The Seats of the Mighty (1896) par Gilbert Parker. En ce temps-là, les Canadiens Français étaient devenus une minorité au Canada suite à

l'immigration massive en provenance des îles Britanniques. Mon analyse tente de présenter trois approches littéraires différentes d'auteurs issus de la société majoritaire qui intègrent le passé "national" du Québec dans une conscience nationale pancanadienne.

In his 1973 essay "Occupied Country" André Laurendeau, co-chairman of the well-known B&B Commission, wrote: "The real problem, the real anguish, [of Quebec people] comes from being a minority in North America, a tiny minority of one to forty in the middle of a mass civilization" (Laurendeau 1977: 177). The title of the essay summed up wide-spread French Canadian feelings of being a threatened or even subdued minority within Anglo North America. Laurendeau's demographical argument was part of the dominant political discourse in Quebec at the time and coupled with fears of losing more and more political, economic, and cultural ground to the Anglo majority.

The discontent in modern Quebec with its minority position dates back to the 19th century, when due to immigration first chiefly from the British Isles French Canadians were transformed from a majority into a minority group. From 1840 onward they responded with appealing to their collective memory of being a linguistically and culturally distinct people. The ideological resistance to assimilation among the dominant part of Quebec's elites produced an undercurrent of English Canadian *angst* in the pre- and post-Confederation period. The need for articulating a Canadian national identity, most acutely felt in English Canada, challenged anglophone novelists to turn their attention to the history of French Canada. Of particular interest was the fall of New France which became a popular topic in 19th century English Canadian historical fiction.

This article will examine three Canadian "historical" novels which deal with a decisive event in the history of the French minority, the British Conquest of Quebec: Rosanna Leprohon's *The Manor House of De Villerai* (1859/60), William Kirby's *The Golden Dog* (1877) and Gilbert Parker's *The Seats of the Mighty* (1896). The three novelists interpret the significance of that event differently, as each has a different political agenda which shows in their ideological and aesthetic handling of history. John R. Sorfleet's 1973 comparative analysis of Kirby's and Parker's works approached them from a generic perspective, placing the discussion of historical setting, character constellation, plot, and ethical orientation within the larger framework of historical fiction versus historical romance (John R. Sorfleet 1973). While I basically share Sorfleet's arguments on the generic and ideological differences of the two works, I choose here a slightly different approach and scrutinize the historical matrix of the texts for their perception of the role of the French minority in Canadian society. To this end I would like to place my discussion first within the political context of the demographical shift in 19th century Canada in favour of the anglophone majority and the concomitant strengthening of the anti-assimilationist

mood in Quebec. In a second step I will deal with the treatment of the history of the Conquest by 19th century Canadian historians and show how despite also similar views on the how and why of the French defeat francophone and anglophone historians arrive at different conclusions with regard to the position of the French in Canadian society. Naturally, anglophone interpretations of the Conquest as a historical landmark of progress reflected the political and cultural ideologies of the dominant class of the majority, while francophone historians attempted to come to terms with the fall of New France as a 'national' trauma. It is no surprise that given "The Long Shadow of Sir Walter Scott" in 19th century Canadian literature (thus the title of chapter 5 in Carol Gerson 1989: 67-79) the historical novel lent itself to the artistic transmutation of the historical events, which will be the subject of the final part of this essay. The English Canadian writers examined here were familiar with major historical works which they tapped for information on the end of New France, but their representation was by no means uniform, as their fictional treatment of the history of the French Canadian minority varied due to their political leanings, class affiliation, and their handling of the form of the historical novel.

1. The Political Context

At the time of the Conquest New France had between 60,000 and 70,000 people. After the fall of Quebec, the colony's political and upper class elite left and immigration from France ceased. The story of the coming of English-speaking settlers is too well known to be repeated here in detail. For the first 80 odd years in the post-Conquest period the French were still a majority. The discontent of the Loyalist refugees with the rule of the French majority resulted in the *Constitutional Act* of 1791 which split up Quebec into Lower and Upper Canada, with 225,000 mostly French in Lower Canada as against ca. 80,000 British in Upper Canada (Granatstein 1996: 21). Mass immigration of about 1 million British people between 1815 and the mid-century led to a massive increase of the Canadian population (Cowan 1978). By 1851 the demographical balance had finally tipped in favour of an anglophone majority of 952,004 as against 890,261 French and during the following decades the demographical gap widened (Statistics Canada 2014).¹

In the immediate post-Conquest years calls for the assimilation of the French by what historian Michel Brunet has called "the English party" (mainly the new "British mercantile community"; Brunet 1971: 7-8) aimed at the complete anglicization of Quebec, or in the words of one of their partisans "the absorption of French by English colonists through the penetration of British law and language, and the Protestant religion" (quot. Taylor 1989: 85). However, Quebecers resisted British pressures to assimilate and were helped by the *Quebec Act* of 1774, a tactical piece

1 1861: overall population 3.2 mio. with 1.1 mio. French (Lower Canada) and 1.39 mio. English (Upper Canada); 1871: 3.68, with 1.19 F – 1.62 E; 1881: 4.3, with 1.35 F – 1.92 E; 1891: 1.48 F – 2.11 E. (Statistics Canada 2014).

of British legislation to immunize the French against the rebellious American colonies. The fact that the seigneurial landholding system, French civil law and the power of the Roman Catholic Church were left untouched enabled the French elites to foster a sense of ethno-cultural distinctness which remained a sting in the consciousness of the colonial master. The British Governor of Quebec, James Craig, complained about the *Canadiens* in a letter (May 1, 1810) to Lord Liverpool, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies:

[...] they are in language, in religion, in manner and detachment completely French – bound to us by no one tie, but that of Common Government, and on the contrary viewing us with sentiments or mistrust & jealousy, with envy, and I believe I should not go too far, were I to say with hatred. (Letter printed in Thorner 1998: 160-161)

The merging of the two Canadas through *The Act of Union* in 1840 followed a proposal of the *Durham Report* (1839) and clearly intended to weaken the French majority politically and culturally. For Quebec historian Claude Béranger “[...] it is clear from the start that the Union was set up as an instrument of assimilation founded on the domination of one people over another [...] Its effects were to be felt over a century in the *ultramontane form of nationalism* that dominated the province for so long and in the ideology of ‘la survivance’” (Bélanger 2014).

The assimilationist agenda met with vehement protest from one of the most influential 19th century French Canadian historians, François-Xavier Garneau, whose *Histoire du Canada français* (1845-48) preached the gospel of racial cohesiveness:

Il [Durham] annonça qu’il désirait imprimer au Bas-Canada un caractère anglais, lui obtenir un gouvernement libre et responsable, et noyer les misérables jalousies d’une petite société et les odieuses animosités de races dans les sentiments élevés d’une nationalité plus noble et plus vaste. Pour les Canadiens, ces mots de liberté, de nationalité plus noble et plus vaste, signifiaient l’anéantissement de leur langue et de leur lois. (Garneau 1969, vol. 5: 249).

Although Garneau at the time of writing knew that the French still held the majority, he spoke of Quebec as “une petite société”, because he was aware that anglophone immigration would soon turn the tables and threaten Quebec society with absorption into some larger anglo-dominant nationality. Did not examples from British history prove that the English had always absorbed other nations?

Nulle nation n’est plus habile qu’elle [Angleterre] dans cette opération difficile. Elle a l’expérience des siècles pour l’éclairer. N’a-t-elle pas absorbé d’abord la nationalité de ses propres conquérants, les Normands

français, ensuite celle des Écossais, et puis celle des Irlandais? (Garneau 1969, vol. 5: 273).

In a sweeping tour d'horizon through history from antiquity to the present day Garneau constructs the image of the Quebec nation as part of the "race française" which has "survécu aux immuables théocraties de l'Égypte et de l'Asie, aux savantes combinaisons politiques des Hellènes, à la sagesse et à la discipline conquérante des Romains" (Garneau 1969, vol. 1: 15-16). In other words, Garneau's vision of the French Canadians as a unique nation with a language, culture, and history of its own is in keeping with the Romantic ideal of *das Volk* whose uniqueness has to be defended against the pressures of anglicization. Garneau braces the notion of *survivance* to his isolationist message:

Un noyau s'en forme-t-il au milieu de races étrangères, il se développe, en restant isolé, pour ainsi dire, au sein de ces populations avec lesquelles il peut vivre, mais avec lesquelles il ne peut s'incorporer. Des Allemands, des Hollandais, des Suédois se sont établis par groupes dans les États-Unis, et se sont insensiblement fondus dans la masse, sans résistance, sans qu'une parole même révélât leur existence au monde. (Garneau 1969, vol. 1: 16)

Summing up: a century of British policy had failed to enforce assimilation, a fact that was partly acknowledged in the *British North America Act* of 1867, which not only re-established the Province of Quebec, but in contrast to section 41 of the *Act of Union* also made French one of the two official languages in politics (section 133).

2. The Fall of Quebec and 19th-Century Historians

One could expect that victors and victims each told a different, even contrasting story about the end of New France. Usually the victorious side cements its narrative of triumph and pushes the version of the defeated to the wall. However, both English and French authors with an historical interest seemed to have been reluctant for over half a century to examine the history of the conquest. For Quebec the defeat had been traumatic, in particular, as France – while assisting the American colonies during the War of Independence – did not help its former colony to turn the tables. Consequently, education in post-Conquest Quebec used Père Charlevoix's earlier *Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle France* (1744) which ended in 1731, thus allowing its readers to exclude the memory of 1759 from some painful historical soul-searching. As *the* historical authority on Canada up to the end of the 18th and well into the 19th century Charlevoix's study not surprisingly became the basis for Scottish painter, public servant, and writer George Heriot's *The History of Canada from its First Discovery* (1804) which also ended in 1731 (Taylor 1989: 88-89).

The first English-Canadian history to deal with the fall of New France was William Smith's *History of Canada from its First Discovery to the Peace of 1763* (1815). Smith uses moral and political arguments for his historical analysis. For him the reasons for the defeat of New France were the mismanagement, corruption and fraud of its leaders, in particular its intendant François Bigot and his clique who plundered the colony and enriched themselves immensely. As proof of this Smith quotes, for example, extensively from a pastoral letter by Bishop Henri Marie Dubril of Quebec read in all parishes in early 1759. Like an Old Testament prophet the good Bishop explains the disastrous situation of the colony not with "the number of the enemy", but with the wicked doings of those above who have now drawn God's wrath upon the colony. After listing "the various crimes against Heaven", the Bishop then calls for conversion: "O faithless Jerusalem, return to your God. And God according to his promise will deign to relent. Atone, my dear brethren, I say, atone speedily for the past, by tears of a sincere repentance [...]" (Smith 1815: 278). Smith puts the responsibility for the fall on the depravity of the French-Canadian rulers and their disregard of the common people and presents the British as the exponents of a superior and benevolent political system:

Under so corrupt a system, the wants and desires of the Colonists were never known. How happy, then, ought the Canadians to be, that God in his Providence, has severed them from the ancient stock to which they belonged, and committed them to the care of a Monarch, who, by making the success of his arms the means of extending his beneficence, has an incontestible right to their affectionate fidelity. (Smith 1815: 382-383).

This "salvation theory" (Taylor 1989: 93) of the Conquest became the accepted master narrative of the conservative elite in English Canada.

Its message was adopted also by John McMullen whose *The History of Canada, from its First Discovery to the Present Time* (1855) was written with the explicit intention to "infuse a spirit of Canadian nationality into the people generally – to mould the native born citizen [i.e. the French], the Scotch, the English, and the Irish immigrant into a compact whole [...]" (McMullen 1855, "Preface", n.p.). McMullen, who made ample use of Smith's *History*, presented the fall of Quebec as a victory of material, political, and social progress and as the deliverance of the *habitants* from a society that had reduced them to little more than slavery. Quoting a remark about the clemency of the British victors from Abbé de Raynal's *Histoire de deux Indes* (1770) he stated that after the war the *habitants* "enjoyed their increase [of the fruits of their labour] without fear of the extortions and oppressions of a Bigot, a Cadet, or the host of smaller fry, who had so recently enriched themselves at their expense" (McMullen 1855: 181). McMullen's hope for the forging of a common Canadian nationality, based on his application of Lord Durham's openly assimilationist agenda (see Taylor 1989: 154), was strong when he pointed out:

There are, it is true, the difficulties arising from a diversity of race to be overcome; but these may easily be removed by wise legislation. Past experience proves that identity of interests weakens the antagonism of races, as well as of individuals, and gradually wears out their mutual prejudices and dislikes. (McMullen 1855, "Preface", n.p.)

The second edition of McMullen's *History* (1868) contained a slight yet significant change in the "Preface" which maintained that the tensions between the English and French "[...] have already been ameliorated by wise legislation, and now present no insuperable difficulties to united national progress" (McMullen 1868: iv). This sentence, which undoubtedly referred to the *British North America Act*, reflected English Canadian optimism with regard to the incorporation of the French in the newly formed Dominion and the implicit hope for an absorption of the minority into the Anglo-Saxon mainstream.

The most popular anglophone historian in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was American Francis Parkman, to whose concluding sentence in *The Old Régime in Canada* (1874) most English Canadian readers would have subscribed without hesitation: "A happier calamity never befell a people than the conquest of Canada by British arms" (Parkman 1969: 204). Like Smith and McMullen he saw the conquest as the logical result of Britain's superior political system, unlike them, however, he bolstered his historical-political argument with racial stereotypes:

The Germanic race, and especially the Anglo-Saxon branch of it, is peculiarly masculine and, therefore, peculiarly fitted for self-government. It submits its action habitually to the guidance of reason, and has the judicial faculty of seeing both sides of the question. The French Celt is cast in a different mould. He sees the end distinctly, and reasons about it with an admirable clearness; but his own impulses and passions continually turn him away from it. Opposition excites him; he is impatient of delay, is impelled always to extremes, and does not readily sacrifice a present inclination to an ultimate good. He delights in abstractions and generalizations, cuts loose from unpleasing facts, and roams through an ocean of desires and theories. (Parkman 1969: 201).

In *Montcalm and Wolfe* (1884), his study on the end of New France, he devoted a whole chapter to François Bigot whom he saw as the typical exponent of a system of corruption fostered by the absolutist monarchy:

Not that he was answerable for all the manifold corruption that infected the colony, for much of it was rife before his time, and had a vitality of its own; but his office and character made him the centre of it, and, more

than any other man, he marshalled and organized the forces of knavery. (Parkman 1942: 20).

Parkman located the root of corruption in the French court and here specifically in the person of Madame Pompadour who as the mistress of “the pampered Sardanapulus of Versailles [Louis XV] [...] had bought the power to ruin France” (47) and consequently also Quebec. The title *Montcalm and Wolfe* was in tune with his Great Men of History approach with which he dramatized the fall of Quebec around the two heroic antagonists. Parkman (like McMullen) painted Montcalm, the defeated general, as the victim of the French Canadian rulers, as he was practically betrayed by the fraudulent machinations of the clique around Bigot and the Governor Vaudreuil. Montcalm’s positive, yet historically distorted image culminated in a heroic and tragic death scene (see Eccles 2003). On the whole, in the nationalist climate of the post-Confederation period Parkman’s characterization of the struggle between Britain and New France as “a Manichaeian conflict between the forces of light and darkness” or between progress and regress (Eccles 2003) fell on fertile ground and accounts for Parkman’s popularity in the Dominion as well as in Britain, as may be seen from the friendly reception of his work in Canadian magazines and, for example, the following remark in *With Wolfe in Canada; Or, The Winning of a Continent* (1887), an adventure novel by G.A. Henty, one of the most widely read British juvenile writers: “All the historical details of the war have been drawn from the excellent work entitled *Montcalm and Wolfe*, by Mr. Francis Parkman [...]” (Henty 6)

The view that the colony fell prey to the greed of the rulers of New France was also shared by two French Canadian historians, Michel Bibaud and François-Xavier Garneau. In *Histoire du Canada, sous la domination française* (1837, rev. 1843) Bibaud blamed the system of nepotism which

[...] commença à se montrer à découvert chez la plupart des fonctionnaires public de la colonie. Le marquis de la Jonquière [Gouverneur 1750-52] [...] était d’une avarice sordide; l’intendant BIGOT ne se trouvait pas assez riche, ou pas assez payé, pour soutenir dignement le rang qu’il occupait; et ils avaient l’un et l’autre des parens et des favoris à enrichir. (Bibaud 1843: 322)

The plunder of the resources of the colony, which continued during Vaudreuil’s governorship [1755-1760], was aggravated by the fact

[...] que le débordement de Louis XV et de ses courtisans, était imité, comme à l’envie, par l’intendant et par une partie des employés publics, au grand scandale de la population canadienne, et particulièrement de celle des villes de Québec et de Mont-réal [sic]. (Bibaud 1843: 352)

Though Bibaud's *Histoire* was the first by a French Canadian writer, it met with no friendly response and was soon dismissed for its political leanings. First, as a disciple of French classicism he passed an extremely severe verdict on most French Canadian rulers for their disregard of intellectual life which he saw as one of the basic reasons for the loss of New France. With the exception of the Governor La Galissonnière (1747-49), "qui fut le gouverneur le plus actif et le plus éclairé qu'ait eu le Canada" (Bibaud 1843: 315), because he worked for the common good and not for private gain, the governing class of New France "semblait, ou trouver son intérêt à tenir le peuple dans l'ignorance [...]" (Bibaud 1843: 315). Second, many French Canadian readers felt offended by what they regarded as the author's pro-British bias (see Céline Cyr 1985: 88), which, for example, showed in his initial comment of the follow-up work *Histoire du Canada et Canadiens, sous la Domination Anglaise* (1844): "Heureusement pour eux [the French Canadians left in Quebec after the Conquest] la saine politique dictait aux vainqueurs le devoir de se concilier leur attachement et leur fidélité par des procédés propres à obtenir ce résultat" (Bibaud 1844: 5). Such a remark was probably understood as unpatriotic and taken as a betrayal of the call for the preservation of Quebec's cultural, linguistic, and religious distinctness.

As a result Bibaud's work was fast condemned to oblivion in French Canada, unlike Garneau's *Histoire du Canada* which because of its patriotic fervour became the most popular history of French Canada, as, for instance, the following address of the omniscient narrator to the readers of *Les Anciens Canadiens* (1863), Philippe Aubert de Gaspé's historical novel on the fall of New France, indicates:

Vous avez été longtemps méconnus, mes anciens frères du Canada! Vous avez été indignement calomniés. Honneur à ceux qui ont réhabilité votre mémoire! Honneur, cent fois honneur à notre compatriote, M. Garneau, qui a déchiré le voile qui couvrait vos exploits! Honte à nous, qui, au lieu de fouiller les anciennes chroniques si glorieuses pour notre race, nous contentions de baisser la tête sous le reproche humiliant du peuple conquis qu'on nous jetait à la face à tout propos! Honte à nous, qui étions presque humiliés d'être Canadiens! Confus d'ignorer l'histoire des Assyriens, des Mèdes et des Perses, celle de notre pays était jadis lettre close pour nous. (Gaspé 1972: 162).

Garneau's analysis of the reasons for the Conquest was not fundamentally different from those given by Smith, Bibaud, McMullen, and Parkman, who all blamed the corruption of most colonial rulers for the loss of New France. Yet he understood the British victory not as a rescue or salvation from tyrannical rule, but as a result of a neglectful mother country which during and after the war had practically deserted its colony. Garneau saw the exodus of the French Canadian ruling class as a desertion of the common people who were left behind: "Cette émigration ne s'étendit point aux campagnes, où la population était attachait au sol" (Garneau 1969, vol.

4: 13). Garneau was particularly embittered by the response of Enlightenment French thinkers (such as Voltaire) who welcomed the defeat as a step

[...] vers la ruine de cette tyrannie inerte et sensuelle. La décadence de l'ancien régime monarchique était visible, mais elle pouvait se prolonger longtemps. Les événements arrivés en Amérique devaient la précipiter, et les penseurs qui voulaient une réformation complète dans l'organisation sociale, et qui voulaient appuyer cette réformation sur la liberté, oublièrent le malheur présent de la nation et surprirent la foule par des applaudissements qui profanaient à ses yeux le culte sacré de la patrie. Voltaire [...] célébra le triomphe des Anglais à Québec par un banquet, non comme le triomphe de l'Angleterre sur la France, mais comme triomphe de la liberté sur le despotisme. (Garneau 1969, vol. 3: 288-289).

Like the narrator of *Les Anciens Canadiens* (Gaspé 1972: 163) Garneau interpreted the French Revolution as the punishment of France for its neglect of Quebec. He mentioned a theatrical spectacle organised by Voltaire, who also played the central part, in celebration of liberty which ended with "un magnifique feu d'artifice au bruit d'une belle musique guerrière. L'étoile de Saint-George lançait des fusées, au-dessous desquelles on voyait représentée la cataracte de Niagara" (Garneau 1969, vol. 3: 289). For what Garneau felt was a complete French lack of patriotism France finally had to pay a high price:

Ce spectacle étrange donné par un Français a quelque chose de sinistre. C'est le rire effréné d'une haine forte que le malheur; mais ce rire effrayant a reçu depuis son explication dans les bouleversements et les vengeances à jamais mémorables de 1793. La cause des Canadiens fut vengée dans des flots de sang. Mais, hélas! la France ne pouvait plus rien pour des enfants abandonnés sur les bords du Saint-Laurent, et un peu plus tard elle en avait perdu le souvenir. (Garneau 1969, vol. 3: 289)

For English Canadians interested in New France Smith, McMullen and Garneau (whose *Histoire* appeared in English translation in 1860) were the most obvious sources up to the 1860s when they were joined by Parkman's extremely popular histories. Understandably Smith, McMullen and Garneau drew different conclusions from their historical analyses. For the former two the need for the assimilation of the *Canadiens* was out of the question and seen as the logical solution following the victory of the politically and morally superior side, whereas the latter wanted to instil in his French Canadian compatriots pride in their long history in North America and bolster their anti-assimilationist determination.

3. The Fall of Quebec in 19th Century English Canadian Historical Fiction

It is no wonder that the historical novel became one of the most popular fictional types in 19th century English Canada. Carol Gerson has shown in *A Purer Taste. The Writing and Reading of Fiction in English in Nineteenth-Century Canada* (1989) how the reception of Sir Walter Scott's historical novels not only contributed to the affirmation of Victorian Canada's idealistic-moralistic aesthetic standards with their focus on 'healthy' reading (see Gerson 1989: 67-79), but also to the fictional exploitation of the history of Quebec by English Canadian novelists (see also Gerson chap. 8 "The Old World of America": 110-131). Gerson explains "Scott's Canadian popularity" with

the obvious similarities between Scotland and New France as sources of literary material. Both nations, having suffered defeat at the hands of the English, had ceased to present a political threat. English-Canadian writers were quick to find in French Canada a New World counterpart to the folklore, history, and local colour of Scott's fiction, which they could develop with a mixture of condescension and nostalgia, [...] (Gerson 1989: 70-71).

Scott's model of emplotting Scottish history in *Waverley* (1814) could have been easily adopted for the fictional treatment of the fall of Quebec: an historical crisis, the past at a significant turning point, the clash between two differently developed hostile forces, and the victory of the progressive side. In *Waverley* the chief protagonist, a fictitious character, is entrapped in an historical conflict between a regressive and a progressive force, the abortive Scottish rebellion against England in 1745 (battle of Culloden). Georg Lukács calls Edward Waverley a middle and mediocre hero (Georg Lukács 1965: 39-40) who is wavering between the conflicting parties. Fascinated by the romance of Highland life (he is in love with the clan chief's sister) and blinded by the courtly flair of the Stuart Pretender Bonnie Prince Charlie he is gradually wrested from his romantic infatuation and finally united with the progressive side. Scott constructs history as a process of progress and uses irony to debunk Waverley's heroic vision as an anachronism (see Ewald Mengel 1986: 75-78). Yet his political sympathies do not lead the author to denounce the defeated Highlanders the memory of whose positive traits he tries to rescue through the conception of the middle hero as a mediating figure. Scott as a disciple of the Scottish Enlightenment historiographers, who envisioned a universal evolution of human history through a range of ever higher stages toward the final stage of civilization, enshrined this view in the symbolic marriage between middle hero and a damsel from the losers' side. As the Enlightenment thinkers assigned to each stage pros and cons, with the pros outweighing the cons in the civilized stage, the marital union suggested the marriage of the best of both worlds, thus alleviating regrets about the

vanishing of an older order. Douglas S. Mack has shown how Scott as a member of the Scottish elite with *Waverley* (and other of his Scotland novels)

is actively helping to generate and to sustain English acceptance of an Imperial British identity that is not exclusively English. In this new and complex British identity, Scott hopes, the Scottish Highlander will be permitted to occupy an honourable and honoured place, and will no longer be subjected to the 'indecent' of ridicule based on cultural incomprehension. (Mack 2006: 10)

In other words, Scott characterizes Scotland's opponent England as the epitome of civilization, the seat of prosperity and progress, and a benign power graciously granting the people of its newly gained possession a respected place, however subordinate, in its imperial network. At the same time *Waverley* aims at reconciling Scotland, where the memory of 1745 was still alive, with England.

In the face of Scott's immense Canadian reputation it is not surprising that readers and critics often either looked out for a Canadian Scott or had Scott's model in mind when reading and judging historical fiction. This did not mean that English Canadian writers followed Scott's model slavishly. On the contrary, Leprohon's, Kirby's, and Parker's different degree of historical consciousness, the space allotted to history in their novels and their views of the position assigned to the defeated French in the Canadian polity made each fictionalize the past differently. Leprohon tries to construct an exclusively French Canadian perspective, Kirby provides a picture nourished by his conciliatory bicultural vision, while Parker uses history mainly as a colourful background for dramatic adventures.

I could start with Julia Catherine Beckwith Hart's *St. Ursula's Convent; or, The Nun of Canada* (1824), not only the first anglophone Canadian novel from the pen of a native-born writer, but also the first to be set at the time around the Conquest. However, although the work appeared during the heyday of Scott, the novel does not qualify as historical fiction. The characters are fairly far removed from the historical context, the Conquest is merely a historical backdrop and history as history is next to no issue. At no point does the novel try to probe reasons for the Conquest, as a result of which the French-Canadian nun of the title has apparently lost husband and children and entered the Ursuline convent. Hart sacrifices history to the dictates of the sentimental genre: after breath-taking and melodramatic events husband and children turn up miraculously and the family is reunited.

What connects Hart with Leprohon are both writers' French family connections which explain their anti-assimilationist stance. Hart's mother was a *Québécoise* (on Hart see Lochhead 1991, xvii pp., Murphy 1988: 8-10), while Leprohon married into a French Canadian family and became the first English Canadian novelist to present Quebec life from within. This becomes particularly obvious in *The Manor House of De Villeraï*, her novel on the fall of New France, which in contrast to *St. Ursula's Convent*

shows more than an inkling of historical interest and guides the reader into the domestic and social domains of society in New France during *la Guerre du Conquête*. In footnotes Leprohon mentions explicitly Smith's (once) and Garneau's histories (several times) as sources for her novel (Leprohon 1985: 73, 74, 123). It is certainly not wrong to call the work even a fictional transmutation of Garneau's French Canadian nationalist perspective with its emphasis on the heroism of the losers. Important battles during the war culminating in the decisive battle on the Plains of Abraham with the deaths of the "gallant" generals Montcalm and Wolfe are mostly narrated in longer paragraphs by a heterodiegetic voice. Historical personages do not appear as actors in the story, but are just mentioned in historical asides. An omniscient narrator in few sentences passes moral judgment on the lack of support of the colony by France due to "the shameless prodigality of the immoral court of Louis XV and his royal favorites" (39) and "the shameless system of pillage and speculation carried on under the unprincipled Intendant Mr. Bigot" (42/43). John R. Sorfleet rightly remarks that the historical passages remain "somewhat unintegrated with the story" (Sorfleet, 1985: 10), as Leprohon only scratches the historical surface without enlarging on the reasons for the defeat.

Altogether, history is overridden by conventions of the sentimental novel. Leprohon's text is spun around a group of people that could have been lifted from an 18th century conduct book with a clear-cut split between virtuous and evil characters. The three chief characters whose observance of the book's moral code of conduct marks them as paragons of virtue are Blanche De Villeraï, the orphaned proprietor of the manor house, her fiancé Gustave de Montarville, a young officer who after a long absence in France has returned to defend the colony and claim his bride, and Rose Lauzon, a beautiful *habitant* girl who as Blanche's companion since childhood has received a good education. The novel reads like an illustration of virtue rewarded and evil brought to justice. The political subtext beneath the sentimental surface is different from that analysed by Markman Ellis for English sentimental fiction, which reached out to a much larger audience representing the politically powerless "middle station in life" and whose code of conduct contested aristocratic manners (Ellis 1996: 2-3, 17). 19th century Canadian society had no aristocracy and the political-economic elite saw the country before and after 1867 primarily as an (upper) middle class society. Hence the political legacy of sentimentalism in Leprohon's novel is taken in another direction. First of all, the narrator's comment "Men may dare, but women do endure. Men may falter, women never flinch" (17/18) sounds partly as imprisoning women in a traditional role, but is really a statement of female empowerment. Blanche is a strong and rational person, she actually holds the strings over Gustave by postponing her consent to a marriage that was decreed by her parents. In the end, when she realizes that her engagement with Gustave is one of social obligation, not of mutual love, she rejects her lover's hand and stays single, a remarkable act of rebellion against the role of the submissive woman. Second, in Rose's character Leprohon enshrines another tenet of the sentimental novel,

that “human [read female!] selves were made, not born” (Barker-Benfield 1992: xvii). Half-orphan girl, beset by an evil stepmother, chased by the libertine French officer Gaston De Noraye, and slandered by a jealous and snobbish female competitor, Rose’s virtue is finally rewarded: with Blanche’s explicit blessing she wins Gustave’s hand. She is thus allowed to step beyond the confines of the class into which she was born and her union with Gustave is a signal of the alleged harmony between the upper class and the lower orders under the seigneurial regime. Leprohon idealizes the seigneurial system that was abolished only five years (1854) before her novel appeared. Her social ideals are ambivalent and fed by the conservative norms of French Canadian Catholicism: Rose’s new social status is not so much the result of her own merit, but graciously bestowed on her by Blanche, the *seigneuresse* heroine. Her virtue is also guarded by the good offices of a kind village priest and a pious philanthropic lady. Third, and this is the legacy of Garneau, the upper class protagonists are separated into good and evil characters in accordance with their patriotic commitment or the lack of it. The rift is also between the French Canadians and the French. Blanche and Gustave as French Canadians are the real patriots, while the foppish Gaston de Noraye, a French officer, is a rake, fortune-hunter, and womanizer, and as such stands for the moral corruption of France whose neglect of the colony has brought about the loss of New France. Noraye’s unpatriotic attitude shows in his contempt for Canada and his response to the defeat:

Listlessly the Parisian dandy spoke of the termination of the war, declaring that but for the species of disgrace reflected upon the arms of France, he was almost indifferent with regard to the manner in which it had ended. Victory or defeat were almost the same to him, provided they brought the welcome opportunity of escape from a country which was scarcely fit for civilized people to dwell in. (143)

Leprohon’s intention was to awake in her anglophone readers interest in Quebec’s history and understanding for the French minority whose cultural distinctness she tried to capture also in scenes of local colour (e.g. the telling of voyageur lore during New Year’s festivities in the country) and in French expressions sprinkled throughout the text. The appeal of her sympathetic picture to French Canadians is attested by the success of the French translation of her novel, which from 1861 onwards was frequently reprinted, while the first English edition in book form (the novel had first been serialized in *The Family Herald*, a short-lived journal) had to wait until 1985!

By contrast, *The Golden Dog* and *The Seats of the Mighty* were extremely popular in English Canada, and their favourable reception betrays a strong anglophone interest in French Canada’s history in the wake of Confederation. Both works are much stronger embedded in history than *The Manor House of De Villeraï*. Kirby and Parker attempt to integrate the history of the French minority into some kind of pan-Canadian majority vision. Their literary appropriation of that history, which

shows on the level of content and structure, is founded on the awareness that French Canada had resisted assimilation, and that its existence must be accommodated in a nationally meaningful way. But published nearly two decades apart, the two novels have different ideological perspectives. Parker produces a pro-British narrative of triumph, whereas Kirby driven by a desire for harmonious bicultural relations in the new *Two Nations' Nation* refrains from taking a triumphant pose.

For Kirby the French Canadians were more than an exotic splash of colour on the face of the Dominion. He saw Quebec as a valuable part of the new Canadian polity and hence searched for those facets of French Canada which could be easily connected to his conservative societal ideal. *The Golden Dog* is set in 1748, yet the narrated events constantly evoke the memory of the Conquest which is mentioned explicitly only in the final chapter, where the novelist wraps up the fate of the chief protagonists. Kirby focusses on social relations and screens the society of New France for the confirmation of his Tory belief in a divinely ordained hierarchical social order.

Although several folkloric scenes in *The Golden Dog* could be placed in Scott's tradition, Kirby's artistic translation of history hardly taps Scott's model. While Scott with the choice of the subtitle *'Tis Sixty Years Since* for *Waverley* reflects on the gap between past and present, Kirby starts his novel in medias res and uses throughout an omniscient narrator whose unquestioned moralistic stance is heightened with the help of the machinery of the Gothic and the sentimental genre. In addition, Scott encapsulates history chiefly in fictitious, not great historical personages, and shows how ordinary people are affected by the breath of history, whereas Kirby gives plenty of room to historical actors, among them the rulers of New France, the Governor Count de la Galissonnière and the Intendant François Bigot. Quite a few of the novel's other protagonists are also based on real historical people whose characters and actions are changed because they are embedded in the work's moral scheme. In this way Kirby dehistoricizes history. The central political conflict – a commercial war between the fraudulent Bigot and the upright merchant Nicolas Philibert – is a moral conflict, not part of history as a process (see Klooff 1989: 219). The group of *honnêtes gens* around the Christ-like figure of Philibert attempts to curb Bigot's abuse of economic power. All evil emanates from the Intendant, who is the protégé of Madame Pompadour, and thus derives from the court of Versailles. Bigot's financial manipulations, plunder of the colony, personal enrichment, loose sexual mores, lavish parties, though to some degree based on historical evidence, mirror the depravity of the French court which strangles New France like a kraken. Pompadour's French Canadian counterpart, the young unscrupulous beauty Angélique des Meloises, spins intrigues which result in thwarted love, murder, and death. Driven by an indomitable will to win Bigot's hand she hires the witch-like figure of Marie Josephte Corriveau (taken by Kirby from French-Canadian folklore) to poison a mysterious lady whom Bigot has hidden in his country manor. The political conflict ends with the defeat of the *honnêtes gens*. Bigot's party marshals the

murder of the Bourgeois. The killer is a young man from one of the *honnêtes gens* families. As a weak character desperately in love with the cunning Angélique he is caught in the clutches of Bigot's clique, made senselessly drunk during one of their orgies and in an act of intoxication kills Philibert whose death is the ruin of his family: The killer's angelic sister Amélie de Repentigny who is engaged to Philibert's equally virtuous son enters the convent of the Ursulines, where in true sentimental fashion she is conveniently allowed to languish and die. At the same time the reader is made to believe that the murder seals the later fate of Quebec. As in a Greek tragedy the murder marks the fall of a leading house which entails the fall of the whole polis. The final chapter, not accidentally titled "The Mills of God Grind Slowly", wraps up the private and historical destinies. We are told that the good Governor and ally of the *honnêtes gens* La Galissonnière was later replaced by "the weak and corrupt administration of [...] de Vaudreuil" (Kirby 1877: 570) who gave free rein to Bigot with whom he probably shared the spoils of their plunder. The summing up of the reasons for the loss of New France could have come from the pages of Smith's and Garneau's history books:

These public vices bore their natural fruit, and all the efforts of the *honnêtes gens* to stay the tide of corruption were futile. Montcalm, after reaping successive harvests of victories, brilliant beyond all precedent in North America, died a sacrifice to the insatiable greed and extravagance of Bigot and his associates, who, while enriching themselves, starved the army and plundered the colony of all its resources. The fall of Quebec and the capitulation of Montreal were less owing to the power of the English than to the corrupt misgovernment of Bigot and Vaudreuil, and the neglect by the Court of France of her ancient and devoted colony. (Kirby 1877: 571)

In other words, New France collapsed from within rather than from without.

Had Kirby desired to write a story of triumph, he would have been critical of the absolutist monarchy, adopted Scott's regressive/progressive model and also shared the negative verdict on the society of New France in Parkman's *The Old Régime*, with which he was familiar (on Kirby's sources see Pierce 1929: 237-239; on Kirby and Parkman see Gerson 1989: 265). The narrator blames the defeat of New France on individuals, not on society at large, and presents the commercial war between Bigot and Philibert not as a conflict between a corrupt aristocracy and a vigorous middle class. Despite his designation as Le Bourgeois Philibert is an aristocrat who due to a plot at the Court of Versailles and Bigot had lost his estate in France.

The Golden Dog is structured like an allegory. Marie Lessard in her attempt to capture the moral frame in Kirby's and Gaspé's novels relates the composition to the Biblical Genesis: While *Les Anciens Canadiens* is "organisé par le paradigme du récit biblique de la chute ou de la perte du paradis terrestre", *The Golden Dog* is "organisé

par le paradigme du récit biblique du salut" (Marie Lessard, 1994: 86; on the allegorical quality of the novel see also Stacey 2005: 91). I cannot quite agree with Lessard's contrastive judgment and would argue that Kirby structured his story both in terms of paradise lost and salvation. The notion of the fall in Genesis is a clear undercurrent in Kirby's portrait of the novel's evil women. The murderous La Corriveau remarks in a conversation with another wicked woman appropriately called Mère Malheur:

"Mère Malheur, the fairest women in the world are ever the worst! Fair and false! fair and false! they are always so. No one better than another. Satan's mark is upon all of us!" La Corriveau looked an incarnation of Hecate as she uttered this calumny upon her sex. (Kirby 1877: 391)

Kirby's anti-feminist note is in keeping with certain Victorian views of women: Women meddling in politics, be they La Pompadour or Angélique, are the unnatural offspring of mother Eve who as the forces of evil help destroy Paradise. In the novel Versailles (i.e. La Pompadour) contaminates Quebec, whose basically sound society has its stronghold in an Eden-like countryside with idealized class relations between a pious seigneur class and its *habitants* (see Groß 1981: 77-78). This view is reminiscent of Benjamin Disraeli's backward-looking Tory propaganda in *Sybil: or the Two Nations* (1845) in which the replacement of an unprincipled by a responsible nobility represents the restoration of idealized feudal relations between the rulers and the common people. Disraeli developed his vision as an antidote to deep class divisions as a result of the Industrial Revolution, whereas Kirby wanted to reconcile the anglophone majority and the francophone minority. His sympathetic, even nostalgic picture of French Canada envisages Quebec society as a corrective for what he sees as "republican" tendencies within English-Canadian society. His understanding of the long history of the French minority as the prehistory to the building of the Canadian nation is a Tory projection into a harmonious future of Canada as the *Two Nations' Nation* which makes *The Golden Dog* an eminently political novel.

The novel's very friendly French Canadian reception can best be seen in a comment by Kirby's French translator, poet Pamphile Le May: "Je suis ravé! Comment vous, un étranger à ma religion et aux coutumes de mes ancêtres, avez-vous pu écrire les pages aussi belles de vérité que les pages du Chien d'Or?" (quoted Pierce 1929: 252). However, Le May's French translation of 1885 had deleted, altered, and added passages "for religious and moral reasons" (Hayne 1981: 57) and accordingly replaced Kirby's conciliatory bicultural vision with a reading of the novel as a work solely on French-Canadian culture which was fuelled by "a vision of French-Canadian nationalism" (Edwards 2009: 248; Edwards discusses these alterations in detail 245-249).

Gilbert Parker's praise of *The Golden Dog* was equally enthusiastic as Le May's, but for different reasons:

It is a singular thing ... that all the history of Canada had produced only one really notable work of fiction – William Kirby’s “Le Chien d’Or,” a veritable mine of information and research, a powerful and admirable piece of *romance*, not the easiest in the world to read, and yet one to which I wish to pay my earnest tribute. There was the Hudson Bay Company, with a history extending back to the times of Charles II., with Prince Rupert for its first Governor, *with all the series of adventures and moving incidents* which fell to the lot of the Argonauts of the far north; there was the City of Quebec, the point of conflict of life under the ancient regime, and that was all left untouched save by this man. I admire – William Kirby (from an interview in *The Globe*, Oct. 31, 1896, quot. in Pierce: 236; italics mine).

This comment sounds like a characterization of Parker’s own novel which adopts the form of romance by reducing history to “adventures and moving incidents”. For Dennis Duffy all 19th-century Canadian historical novels were romances with heroes struggling heroically in a fateful web spun by outside forces and with their quest impeded by narrative strategies of surprising coincidences, complicated plot structure, deferred actions, suspense, and dramatic turning-points (Duffy 1986: 1-3). Without going into a further discussion of romance (see chapter on romance and history in Buchenau 2002: 121-130) it may suffice to define Parker’s romance practice as exploitation of the adventurous potential of the story of New France with stereotypical characters of an heroic and villainous mould, and spiced with instances of love, intrigue and machinations in a world ruled by great emotions: These ingredients he grafts onto history without a sincere commitment to an understanding of the past.

And yet *Seats of the Mighty* could have been a more convincing historical treatment. The novel is based on an historical eyewitness account titled *Memoirs of Major Robert Stobo*, who as a prisoner of the French from 1757 to 1759 managed to effect his escape, rejoined the British and directed General Wolfe to the hidden trail up the cliff to the Plains of Abraham thus sealing the fate of New France (see Fridén 1953: 42-43). The events in the novel are told as a first person narrative, which is fuelled by the British perspective of Robert Stobo who is here called Captain Robert Moray and addresses his tale explicitly to British readers: “I sat and smoked, and – can you not guess my thoughts? For have you all not the same hearts, being British born and bred?” (Parker 1971: 42). In contrast to Leprohon and Kirby, Parker shows little sympathy for Quebec society – despite the central love story between Moray and the young Quebec beauty Alixe Duvarney. Screening the politics of Parker’s treatment of Quebec against his political creed – he was an imperialist and a Conservative MP in Westminster (since 1900) – one can say he regarded the victory over New France as an early culmination point in the heroic story of the British Empire. A year after its publication a theatrical adaptation of the novel was even performed in

London to honour Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee (see Adams 1979: 167; Ripley 1986). Parker's political agenda which shows in plot and character constellation was the confirmation of British superiority in his readers.

British heroism is exemplified in Moray's patriotic behaviour during his imprisonment, escape, and fighting on the Plains of Abraham. Parker distorts Stobo's story more than once and invents episodes such as the burning of one of Bigot's granaries by a furious mob of starving peasants, a scene which serves as the bleak picture of Quebec society as a divided community, with a criminal ruler full of contempt for the ruled and a people who in their authoritarianism are easily swayed from further violence by Bigot's skilful rhetoric.

The most memorable male and fictitious character is Tinoir Doltaire – a word play with the name of Voltaire? – who is a powerful protégé of Madame Pompadour. It is here that the author in another wild twist connects the history of the last Scottish rebellion against England in 1745 (the subject of *Waverley*) with the history of France. Moray, an orphan from Scotland, received from his dying guardian, a Jacobite partisan, a packet of love letters written by Bonnie Prince Charlie to a lady at the French court. Pompadour, who is an equally sinister presence here as in *The Golden Dog*, fears her as a dangerous rival and plans to eliminate her with the help of the incriminating letters. A search mission for these takes Doltaire first to Scotland and then to Quebec, and this is where the novel starts.

Parker's narrative modelling condemns the factual history of the Conquest to insignificance. The reader is made to believe that the chief conflict is individual, not political, and that the war is more or less a private feud, first on Pompadour's part who through Doltaire reacts to Moray's refusal of handing over the letters with the threat of military action, and second on the part of Doltaire who is long kept in the dark about Alixe's and Moray's love, but when he finds out, tries every means of snatching her from his antagonist.

Doltaire pulls all the political and personal strings and Moray would be in a completely hopeless situation, had he not French helpers, above all Alixe who turns out to be a highly resourceful woman, the offspring of a male fantasy known from many adventure novels in which a Pocahontas-like young female comes to the rescue of an attractive young male. The love plot is of symbolic political significance. The secret marriage between Alixe and Moray is not founded on mutual understanding of the *two solitudes*. Sharing Parkman's Anglo-Saxonist prejudice (Kelly 1989: 36, see also Parkman 1969: 201) Parker bundles all sorts of stereotypical distortions of the French national character into the figure of Doltaire: impulsive, scheming, immoral, revengeful, selfish, arrogant. Modelled as a sexually aggressive "Latin lover" (see Schleser 1989: 97-98) he confesses to Alixe that he will hunt her like game (Parker 1971: 55), and portrayed as a cynic of almost Byronic proportions he openly admits to Moray to have no patriotic love for his country:

"I never repent," he said to me one day. "I have done after my nature, in

the sway and impulse of our time, and as the King has said, after us the deluge. What a pity it is we shall see neither the flood nor the ark! And so, when all is done, we shall miss the most interesting thing of all: ourselves dead and the gap and ruin we leave behind us. By that, from my standpoint," he would add, "life as a failure is a spectacle." (Parker 1971: 39)

Consequently, Alixe's decision in favour of the morally upright Moray does not come unexpected, as her last encounter with Doltaire illustrates:

Suddenly there came into Doltaire's look and manner an astounding change. Both hands caught the chair arm, his lips parted with a sort of snarl, and his white teeth showed maliciously. It seemed as if, all at once, the courtier, the *flaneur*, the man of breeding, had gone, and you had before you the peasant, in a moment's palsy, from the intensity of his fury. "A thousand hells for him!" he burst out in the rough *patois* of Poitiers, and got to his feet. [...] "You used me, Tinoir Doltaire, son of a king, to further your *amour* with a *bourgeois* Englishman!" (Parker 1971: 182)

At no other point in the novel is the contest characterized as a conflict between French aristocrat and English bourgeois and it is indeed no such contest. First of all, Moray is quasi an aristocratic landowner who has inherited a plantation in Virginia from his Jacobite guardian so that from the perspective of class he is worthy to win the hand of his upper class French sweetheart. Second, Doltaire as the illegitimate offspring of a liaison of the French king with a *paysanne* straddles French society from top to bottom and stands for the French in general. His persuasive power is so seductive as to almost break Alixe's resistance who with utmost difficulty finds refuge at the shrine of the Virgin Mary. The scene is observed by an alarmed Moray from a hidden place. Sunnie Rothenberger reads this and other voyeur scenes within the framework of hegemonial relations. In Parker's day English Canadians had misgivings vis-à-vis the French minority whose peculiar way of life had to be closely watched. Alixe's choice of Moray does not only suggest French recognition of British superiority, but in Moray's scopophilic stance the desire for knowledge of the French is coupled with the desire of the majority for control of the minority (Rothenberger 2008: 95-97). Parker's and Claude G. Bryan's historical study *Old Quebec. The Fortress of New France* (1903), though on the whole much friendlier towards the *Canadiens* than the novel, voices some of the anglophone misgivings:

[...] the pioneer race of Quebec are still a people apart in the Great Dominion so far as their civic and social, their literary and domestic life are concerned. They share faithfully in the national development, and honourably serve the welfare of the whole dominion, – *sometimes with a too*

carefully and unsympathetic reserve – but within their own beloved province they retain as zealously and more jealously than the most devoted Highlandmen their language and their customs, and fruitfully conserve the civil laws which mark them off [...] clearly from the English provinces. (Parker and Bryan 1903: xxiii-xxiv; italics mine)

Conclusion

Of the three authors examined Leprohon and Kirby present a sympathetic picture of New France for whose defeat they blamed a corrupt governing class as the arm of the immoral Court of Versailles. Both wanted to contribute to a better understanding of the French minority among their anglophone readers. While Leprohon drew Quebec life and history from an explicit French Canadian point of view, Kirby and Parker employed a pro-British perspective, but each in a different way. Walter Scott's immense Canadian reputation explains why the historical novel became the most popular vehicle for acquainting English Canadian readers with the history of the Conquest. However, each of the writers utilized the historical material differently. Leprohon attached greater importance to the sentimental narrative than to the historical context. Sorfleet in his comparison of Kirby and Parker attested a deeper historical understanding to *The Golden Dog* for its integration of the characters into "the larger social framework" and its author's alertness to "socio-historical forces" (146). All this plus Kirby's "ethical values" (146) made the work a historical novel proper, while *The Seats of the Mighty* betrayed "Parker's historical insensitivity" and showed that his "forte was the purely imaginative novel, devoid of historical concerns [...]" (Sorfleet 1973: 133). Although I can agree with Sorfleet's verdict of Parker's limited historical consciousness, I would relativize his praise for Kirby's grasp of history a little. The strong moral subtext of *The Golden Dog* which serves to colour events with Kirby's Tory ideology is to the detriment of a less myopic view of the historical process which led to the fall of New France. Both authors' politics of representing the francophone minority had a different target: Kirby aimed at forging the new *Two Nations' Nation* into a conservative *entente cordiale*, whereas Parker exploited the machinery of the romance for his imperialist message of British racial superiority.

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