La littérature écrite en anglais au Québec après 1976 : Une étude de cas de six œuvres écrites en anglais au Québec basée sur la théorie de la littérature mineure par Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari

English Writing in Quebec after 1976: A Case Study of Six Literary Works Based on the Theory of Minor Literature by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari

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Mémoire présenté
pour l’obtention de

LA MAÎTRISE ÈS ARTS
Littérature canadienne comparée

Sherbrooke
Septembre 2012

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank my thesis director Dr. Gregory J. Reid who has guided me throughout this long and meandering adventure. His knowledge on the subject of Anglo-Québécois Literature has proven many times crucial to the accomplishment of my thesis.

I would also like to thank my life companion Geneviève Durand who has given me two beautiful sons while I was writing my thesis. Her support was unconditional, and her love was what kept me going throughout the darker moments.
RÉSUMÉ

Se basant sur la théorie de la littérature mineure pensée par Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari dans leur manifeste *Kafka : pour une littérature mineure*, cette thèse étudiera des œuvres écrites en anglais se déroulant au Québec par des écrivains et écrivaines anglophones soit Québécois ou Québécoises, ou vivant au Québec, afin de vérifier si ces œuvres peuvent être perçues comme faisant partie d'un courant littéraire mineur. Inspiré par le débat qui entoure la nomenclature d'une communauté Anglophone vivant au Québec comme étant Anglo-Québécoise, je tenterai d'examiner si cette littérature contient les éléments nécessaires afin de se reterritorialiser au sein du Québec comme une littérature Anglo-Québécoise. Cette thèse analyse en tout six œuvres, trois pièces de théâtre et trois romans: *Balconville* de David Fennario, *Paradise by the River* de Vittorio Rossi, *Very Heaven* de Ann Lambert, *Jump* de Marianne Ackerman, *Birds of Passage* de Linda Leith, et *Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain* de Jeffrey Moore. Ainsi, l'objectif principal de cette thèse est de vérifier s'il y a des parallèles entre la théorie de la littérature mineure écrite par Deleuze et Guattari avec ses trois caractères, soit la déterritorialisation de la langue, le branchement de l'individuel sur l'immédiat-politique, l'agencement collectif d'énonciation, et les six œuvres « Anglo-Québécoises » et voire à quel point ce corpus peut-être lu comme une littérature mineure.

MOTS CLEFS : Littérature mineure, écriture mineure, minorités, Québec, Anglo-Québec, Littérature Anglo-Québécoise, Anglophone
ABSTRACT

Referring to the theory of minor literature developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their work *Kafka : pour une littérature mineure*, this thesis investigates contemporary English writing in and about Quebec as a possible minor phenomenon. Motivated by the debate around the affirmation of a possible Anglo-Québécois community, I investigate if such a literature has the elements to reterritorialize itself within Quebec as an Anglo-Québécois literature. This thesis analyzes in total six works, three plays and three novels: David Fennario’s *Balconville*, Vittorio Rossi’s *Paradise by the River*, Ann Lambert’s *Very Heaven*, Marianne Ackerman’s *Jump*, Linda Leith’s *Birds of Passage*, and Jeffrey Moore’s *Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain*. Therefore, the main objective of the thesis is to parallel Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of minor literature with its three features, where minor works are written in a deterritorialized major language, demonstrate a political potential and are built upon a collective enunciation, to six “Anglo-Québécois” works in order to see to what extent this corpus can be read as a minor literature.

KEY WORDS: Minor literature, minor writing, minorities, Quebec, Anglo-Quebec, Anglo-Québécois literature, Anglophone
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Introduction

This thesis is a study of six works written in English by Quebec authors under the scope of minor literature, a concept developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their foregrounding essay *Kafka: pour une littérature mineure*. Deleuze and Guattari define a minor literature as a literature written in a major language but in a minority position. They write, “une littérature mineure n’est pas celle d’une language mineure, mais plutôt celle qu’une minorité fait en une langue majeure” (29). According to the two literary philosophers, a minor literature is characterized by three main features, “la déterritorialisation de la langue, le branchement de l’individuel sur l’immédiat-politique, l’agencement collectif d’énonciation” (Kafka 33), thus, a deterritorialization of language, a connection between the writer and his work to politics, and a collective assemblage of enunciation. In order to verify to what extent the authors who write in and about Quebec in English are influenced by French and the Québécois culture, and thus show a potential to be read as a minor literature, three novels and three plays are considered: *Jump* by Marianne Ackerman, *Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain* by Jeffrey Moore, *Birds of Passage* by Linda Leith, *Balconville* by David Fennario, *Paradise by the River* by Vittorio Rossi, and *Very Heaven* by Ann Lambert. Each work will be analyzed in order to verify if, or to what extent and how, the English texts are influenced by French. Indeed, I believe there is a potential that this mixing of languages and local cultures create a linguistic and literary environment that cannot actualize itself in English elsewhere than in Quebec.
The Authors and Their Works

Marianne Ackerman is very active in the English artistic milieu of Quebec. She is a novelist, playwright, freelance journalist and publisher of the online arts journal *The Rover*. *The Rover* is an independent review of art and culture in Montreal. The journal was launched in October 2008 as a platform for some of the writers and would-be writers of Montreal. She is also the former founder, with Claire Shapiro, of the bilingual theatre company Theatre 1774 which is now held by Guy Sprung under the new name Infinitheatre. The company Theatre 1774 was an experimental project with the objective of creating and producing a bilingual, or even multilingual, theatre in which Francophone and Anglophone artists collaborated. Theatre 1774’s inaugural production, *The Echo Project*, was directed by Robert Lepage, and the company subsequently presented a number of plays written by Ackerman, including *L’Affaire Tartuffe*, or *The Garrison Officers Rehearse Molière* (1991), *Woman by a Window* (1992), *Celeste* (1995) and *Blue Valentine* (1996). Ackerman’s first novel *Jump* is set in Montreal. Myra Grant, an Anglophone freelance journalist, Francophile, and separatist is literally in love with the city. Consequently, Myra is perfectly bilingual, knows many French-Québécois artists and journalists, and has as friend a director of a bilingual theatre company. She is also writing a book about the future of Quebec, which is an answer to Quebec Premier Jacques Parizeau’s outburst that the ethnic vote and money had made him lose the 1995 referendum¹. The narrative offers many

¹ "C’est vrai, c’est vrai qu’on a été battus, au fond, par quoi ? Par l’argent puis des votes ethniques, essentiellement. Alors ça veut dire que la prochaine fois, au lieu d’être 60 ou 61 % à voter OUI on sera 63 ou 64 % et ça suffira'" (Parizeau).
interesting moments where French and English mix together allowing an insight into how the
English-speaking people and French-speaking people communicate with each other.

Jeffrey Moore is a Montreal-born author, translator and lecturer at the Université de
Montréal. He also works for museums, theatres, dance companies and film festivals around the
world. *Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain* was his first novel. It is the story of Jeremy Davenant, a
literature professor with forged credentials, who by no means believes he has control over his
own life. Since childhood, Jeremy has been convinced that his destiny lies in what is written on a
page his uncle plucked from an encyclopaedia. Early in the novel, Jeremy moves to Montreal
and starts working at a Montreal university. His life veers into chaotic mischance and obsession
when he falls in love with Milena, a Rom woman he saw by chance while he was looking for an
apartment to rent. Eventually, the novel becomes a quest to decode both “the Page” and
Milena, leading to moments of farce, terror and, for a brief spell, bliss. Jeremy’s time in
Montreal allows the reader to see how the city is a mix of languages and cultures amidst a
French-Québécois culture. Since Jeremy is British, and was raised in Ontario, his outlook is
mainly one of an outsider who nonetheless knows French and participates in the Montreal
scene.

Linda Leith is very involved in the Anglophone literary scene in Quebec. She is the
founder of the Blue Metropolis - Metropolis Bleu, a bilingual literary festival; she helped
establish QSPELL (Quebec Society for the Promotion of English-language Literature) – later the
Quebec Writers’ Federation (QWF). Moreover, Leith was the first to lobby for Mavis Gallant’s
nomination for the Athanas-David prize, which Gallant won in 2006. This prize is one of the eleven annual Prix du Quebec given by the provincial government to a Quebec writer to honour the body of his or her work. Gallant was the first English-language writer to win the prize. In addition, Leith has written many articles on the subject of English writing in Quebec, and her latest book, *Writing in the Time of Nationalism* is about the lead up to and founding of the Blue Metropolis. Partly autobiographical, Leith’s first novel *Birds of Passage* transports the reader into the world of post-communist Budapest. The plot of the story revolves around Alice, a multi-cultured Anglophone woman who now lives in the Hungarian capital. We learn that before Budapest, she had lived in England, Ireland and Canada (Montreal). Amidst political revolution and Eastern-European male centrism, Alice tries to understand how she can remedy her failing marriage with her husband Daniel who is a Montreal-based theatre director. Daniel despises Budapest and does not want to live in Hungary. Eventually, we learn that the novel is written by Grábor, a Hungarian playwright and good friend to Alice. Grábor writes as if he were Alice, and shares her personal and familial experiences.

David Fennario is a playwright and a political activist in favour of Quebec independence. He grew up in the working-class district of Pointe-St-Charles, a place he would make the centre of most of his plays. Fennario wrote his first plays for the Centaur Theatre, the main English Quebec stage. In chronological order, they are: *On the Job* (1975), *Nothing to Lose* (1976), *Toronto* (1978), *Balconville* (1979), *Moving* (1983). He then co-founded the Blackrock Community Group, a community theatre. Of his post-Centaur period we can find plays such as his agitprop work *Joe Beef* (1984), his one-man show *Banana Boots* (1988) which is about the
tour of Balconville in Northern Ireland, and Gargoyles (1997) which presents the history of Montreal. The play Balconville was a box-office success. It is also the first play of importance to present a group of English-speaking people as a marginalized group. Gregory Reid writes how “Fennario’s Balconville stands out as the first significant piece of English-language literature in this [post 1976] historical context that portrays the English characters living in Quebec” (Is there 80). Others, such as Michael Benazon, believe that Balconville is a play that reveals some of the difficulties the poor English-speaking community have gone through in accepting the changes that occurred during the 70s, especially concerning the power shift that went from the English-speaking middle class to the French-speaking middle class with the election of the Parti Québécois in 1976 (From Griffintown to Verdun). Hence, part of what Balconville does is to acknowledge the social change that has occurred for the English-speaking people in Quebec.

The play is set in Pointe-Saint-Charles, Montreal. Three working-class families live in the same building. They meet, argue, party and fight on their shared balcony. In the summer heat, they talk about the harsh economic times, the landlords, and the politicians who do not fulfill their promises. The characters are French, English, employed, unemployed, and angry.

Vittorio Rossi is a playwright, translator, director, screen-play writer and actor. He is very present in the Quebec scene, both Anglophone and Francophone. Indeed, his identity as an Italian-Canadian living in Quebec has allowed him to diversify his activities. Rossi has succeeded in portraying the Italian community both in theatre and on television. Including Paradise by the River, Rossi has written ten plays that have characters of Italian descent. His play, The Chain, broke attendance records at Centaur Theatre. His acclaimed play, The Last Adam, won the
Canadian Authors Association Literary Award for Drama in 1996. As an actor, in addition to his work in his own plays, Rossi has included roles in the films *Snake Eater II: The Drug Buster* (1991), *Canvas: The Fine Art of Crime* (1992), *Le Sphinx* (1995), *Strip Search* (1997), *Suspicious Minds* (1997), and the award-winning *Post Mortem* (1999); and television series such as *Malarek* (1989), *Urban Angel* (1991), *Bonanno: A Godfather's Story* (1999) and the number-one-rated television show in Quebec for its three-year run, *Omerta* (1996, 1997, 1998). The play *Paradise by the River* is set during WWII; it retraces the history of a group of Italian immigrants who for the most part are naturalized Canadians. The story follows Romano, a soon to be father and owner of a fast-growing construction company; he is eventually sent to a war camp after being wrongly accused of being a Fascist. The play also presents Romano’s family and friends who remain in Montreal during the war, recounting the incumbent war measures and the general xenophobic climate, especially directed towards those of Italian origin.

Ann Lambert is a Quebec-based playwright, and an English teacher at Dawson College. She wrote four plays before *Very Heaven* (*The Wall, Self Offense, Force of Circumstance, and Parallel Lines*). *Very Heaven* premiered at Centaur Theatre on April 1999 as part of Gordon McCall’s first season as the company’s artistic director. It is set in a small town in the Eastern Townships. The story is about three sisters who are brought together because of their mother’s recent death, and her last request that her daughters spread her ashes near the family cottage. In their time together, they meet Stretch Lachance, the local handyman, their childhood stable boy, and their mother’s former lover. The play follows the characters who each complete a rite of passage allowing them to let go of their past filled with anger and secrets, and begin a new life.
The Theory of Minor Literature

Lois A. Renza describes Deleuze and Guattari's concept as one that attempts "to conceive minor literature as an anti-authoritarian and anti-author-centered event. Such a literature is politically and metaphorically a 'third-world' kind of writing which eludes the totalitarian formulations of formalists, oedipal and bourgeois modes of organization" (29).

Ronald Bogue explains in his work "Minor Writing and Minor Literature":

[A minor literature is a] rapprochement of three distinct categories of literature: secondary literature whether it be of a minor nation or linguistic group in relation to a major tradition, or that of a humble, minor movement or tendency (e.g., American local colorists) within a larger tradition; marginal literature, or the literature of minorities; and experimental literature, which "minorizes" a major language (in the sense that a minor key in music may be said to chromaticize and destabilize the harmonic order of a major key). (104)

The concept of minor literature allows a (re)thinking of a type literature; one that is caught in a process of linguistic change. Hence it does not try to explain, interpret or decipher a complete work of art as a finality. With the concept of a minor literature, we can accompany different writers and works and reflect upon the transformative process. Bogue explains how the theory of minor literature helps in analyzing a work of literature,

[Deleuze] simply invents a way of thinking about a work, one that has the dual purpose of articulating the logic of a work's construction from the perspective of
the artist and of formulating philosophical concepts of sufficient inner consistency to sustain that logic. The purpose of his analysis is to think alongside the work of art, not to explain it or stand in for it, but to create a philosophical analog that invites the reader to imagine the work in a new way that necessarily entails a new understanding of the world. (115)

As a critical tool, the theory of minor literature does not offer stable or definitive answers on literature; it deconstructs literature, or a type of literature that poses a philosophical and/or sociological problem.

Paradoxically, Deleuze and Guattari have written very little about the subject, a single chapter in their respective book; yet, it was groundbreaking and innovative. Traces of their theory can be found in their previous works, such as *Mille Plateaux* and *Critique et Clinique*, which examine, among other things, language and literature. The theory itself can be seen, to some extent, as eclectic and as *bricolage*, since it presents several revolutionary ideas, without empirical or objective data to strengthen the hypothesis. Bogue cautions those using the theory, "it is important to be aware of the presumptions that underlie the concepts one appropriates, if only to be cognizant of the alterations one has imposed on them in adapting them to different uses" (116). Indeed, many have applied the concept of minor literature to texts that were not directly connected to language and without specifying that they were extending the theory for their own ends. The slippage generally happens because Deleuze and Guattari explain in depth the function of language with its limits and possibilities, yet, their explanation concerning the
political and collective features of minor literature is so short that it is difficult to use it as a theoretical tool. Hence, many use different minority discourses to explain the sociological and political aspects of being part of a minority and its related literature. Nonetheless, although the former uses language and the later uses sociology, they are still intricately connected, yet cannot be used as one and the same thing. One has to be careful when using concepts that link society, literature, and minorities given that they often follow an ideological pattern which is simply repeated and (re)used for the benefit of the major discourse. In his work *Shooting Arrows: Deleuze and Guattari’s Theory of Minor Literature*, James Bland writes how “[t]he sociological level is already over-coded, and to ask a question on the field is already to assume too much, for the social field is nothing other than a field of static conventions, dominant ideologies, and metaphysical bigotries” (230).

Moreover, we have to consider that those writing in a minor fashion are not necessarily from a minority per say. The minor is a treatment of language that is accessible to everyone, “[t]he major and the minor are two different treatments of language, one which consists in extracting constants from it, the other in placing it in a constant variation” (Deleuze, A Thousand 10). In some cases, the minority can locally be the majority, and still write as a minority, as an example, in certain parts of the United-States Afro-Americans and Latin-Americans are still considered a minority even though they have become larger in numbers; on other occasions, a minority’s writing can follow a major discourse, such as contemporary French-Québécois literature when considered on a North-American perspective. Therefore, a minority is indefinite in number. Deleuze writes that “minorities are not necessarily defined by smallness of their
number but rather by becoming or a line of fluctuation, in other words, by a gap that separates them from this or that axiom constituting a redundant majority” (A Thousand 469). Bland believes that this aspect of minor literature is an implicit answer to the question, “what happens when a minority becomes the majority” (231), and also when a majority becomes a minority, all this without considering the demographics of the group writing, but the way in which its literature is written.

Feature 1: The Deterritorialization of Language

The deterritorialization of language is a phenomenon where a major language is metamorphosed because its new minor position no longer allows a rendering of the original meaning. As such, to adapt to this new situation and fill the void left by the deterritorialization in meaning, a reterritorialization has to take place, Deleuze and Guattari write, “la langue compense sa déterritorialisation par une reterritorialisation” (Kafka 37). Minor literature is a way of writing that shows elements of this deterritorializing-reterritorializing effect, hence it is a specific usage of a language characterized by a local reality.

Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of minor literature is not grounded in complex linguistic theory; rather, they attempt to open a literary discussion on a minor literature. Their metaphysical assumptions about minor writing are built against the hegemonic discourse of language. Bland offers this explanation about minor literature,
[as] theorists attempt to formulate a conceptual language that renders the chaos
of natural phenomena intelligible as chaos, Deleuze and Guattari attempt a
description of literature which is at once conceptually precise without denying its
naked intensity, or its nomadic becomings. (4)

The nature of minor literature, conceptualized in the becoming, escapes the set rules of
linguistics; instead of being, language is becoming. The concept of becoming follows the
presumption that the deterritorialization-reterritorialization process can be endless, since the
meaning of the reterritorialised word can once again be deterritorialized, and when both
becomings “interlink and form relays in a circulation of intensities [it pushes] the
deterritorialization even further” (5). This is why, in a minor language “there is neither imitation
nor resemblance, only an exploding of two heterogeneous series on the line of flight composed
by a common rhizome that can no longer be attributed to or subjugated by anything signifying”
(Deleuze, Dialogues 5). Deleuze’s stance is not to try and find out what the word means, but
more to open the way to what the word makes possible; what does it offer to the world.

**Feature 2: Political Quality of a Minor Literature**

The connection between the individual and the political makes every action a political
action, hence writing a text in a minor position is a political action. “Tout y est politique” write
Deleuze and Guattari (Kafka 30). The political feature allows an understanding of a literature
that has the tools to escape the dominant forces. The concept has also allowed the literary
world to (re)think the ways of reading minor/secondary/marginal/experimental literature; it questions canonicity and pushes us into a (re)evaluation of binaries such as minor-major, minority-majority and central-peripheral/marginal. Claude Millet believes that to choose the minor is to go against the grain, against the status quo of the established power,

[op]ter pour le mineur, c'est donc refuser de mettre la littérature au service du pouvoir, du pouvoir de l'État, du pouvoir de la bourgeoisie, et du pouvoir de la civilisation moderne, qui recouvre les deux premiers dans sa force, puissante et barbare, d'uniformisation, d'égalisation, et du déracinement. (143)

Indeed, the minor acts as a subversive mechanism which works against the normalizing forces of the major. Inevitably, the literary works, written in a minor context can only situate themselves towards the major that surrounds them, thus occupying a place that might not be considered theirs by the forces in place. The occupation or the appropriation of this literary space is in its nature a political action. The minor becomes in many ways the opposite of the major since the natural tendency of minor writing is imbedded in an implicit resistance to standardization as well as a contestation of the notion of homogeneity.

Feature 3: The Collective Enunciation in a Minor Literature

The third feature, being that a minor literature is built upon a collective enunciation, reveals how it is impossible to have an individuated voice in a minor position. "Les conditions ne sont pas données d'une énonciation individuée" write Deleuze and Guattari (Kafka 31). Hence,
no writer can willingly or unwillingly be an individuated voice for his community. Either because
of the absence of talent or of a collective consciousness (see Deleuze, Kafka 31), this condition
allows a literature that is different from anything major. It is the literature itself “qui se trouve
chargée positivement de ce rôle et de cette fonction d’énonciation collective” (Kafka 31); it is
the literature that creates “une solidarité active” (31) and allows an expression of “une autre
communauté potentielle [et] de forger les moyens d’une autre conscience et d’une autre
sensibilité” (31). Accordingly, the collective enunciation allows a building of a potential
community based the minor voices that are writing the community to come.

English Writing in Quebec

English writing in Quebec is an example of a literature written in a major language in a
minority situation. The language it uses and its content have the potential to reshape the major
English-Canadian and French-Québécois literatures since theoretically a minor literature works
from within, and disturbs the established frontiers of the major language and literature in which
it functions. Lianne Moyes writes, “[n]i canadienne ni québécoise, l’écriture de la langue
anglaise au Québec est déterritorialisée: elle est produite au Québec dans la langue du Canada
anglais. Le terme ‘déterritorialisation’ décrit souvent une pratique mineure de la langue d’un
pays à l’intérieur d’un autre pays” (28). As a pragmatic example, many English writers in
Quebec, along with their francophone colleagues, refuse what Levis-Straus defines as
‘monoculture’ since they believe their writing to be plural, heterodox, and communal, and even
though similar to other Canadian works because written in English, they do not represent a
country or a nation. Others, however, show a reluctance in being portrayed as writers that are
part of an English-speaking community. In fact, only Gail Scott openly admits that she is an
Anglo-Montreal author (but not an Anglo-Québécois) (see Scott “Mirroir inconstant”).

At this moment in time, there is still a strong narrative that works against depicting English
Quebec literature as a minor movement. Much of what has been written in English in or about
Quebec can still be read as part of a major trend since it presents no signs of linguistic
deterritorialization. Therefore, it remains unrealistic to present a corpus of English writing in
Quebec as exclusively part of a minor literature. However, using the theory of minor literature
as presented by Deleuze and Guattari allows an identification of a possible phenomenon, or as
Lianne Moyes writes in her article “Écrire en anglais au Québec : un devenir minoritaire?,” “la
littérature anglo-québécoise [est] une littérature à venir” (27), “[prise dans] un processus qui
transforme la notion même d’ ‘une minorité’ en lui reconnaissant une force culturelle
potentiellement innovatrice” (27).

Historically, English writing in Quebec has a long and fruitful tradition, we may think of
names such as Leonard Cohen, Mordecai Richler, Mavis Gallant, Louis Dudek, Hugh MacLennan,
and Irving Layton; all of them writers who have lived and written at some point in Montreal, and
are recognized as founders of modern Canadian literature. Their merits are great and their place
in the Canadian canon is uncontested; however, if one wants to consider them as English
Quebec writers, or even Québécois writers, he/she will have to justify the adjunct since it
reveals the problematic and dichotomous understanding of the term Québécois. Before the Quiet Revolution this was not an issue since the English-speaking writers of Quebec saw themselves only as Canadian writers. In fact, in many regards they were at the center of Canadian Literature. In her article “Quebec Fiction in English During the 1980s: A Case Study in Marginality” Linda Leith makes the interesting observation that “any discussion of the English-Canadian literary tradition in the period at least since the 1940s will reveal the centrality of the older generations of writers who lived in Quebec. The fiction of English Canada came of age in Quebec” (96). The first half of the 20th century saw the promotion of a cultural and literary division that was cultivated by both linguistic communities. Through their literary narratives which have frequently excluded the other, the English- and French-speaking communities have to an extent constructed their understanding of self mainly in opposition to the linguistic other. Referring to Benedict Anderson who understands the construction of communities or of “nationality, [as] cultural artefacts of a particular kind” (4), we realize how in time, only myth could explain the neighbour, a myth which also supported the belief of intrinsic differences, and the quasi-inevitability of “two solitudes”. Stereotypically, the English society was concerned by industries and economy and the French society on spirituality, a deep attachment to the land, and a protective attitude with their language, emblem of their French heritage. The economic and mythic domination of the English community resulted in what Marc Levine defines as a sense of “une minorité majoritaire” (Reconquest 3). In his work Notre société et son roman, Jean-Charles Falardeau advances the double-axis hypothesis in which English Canadian literature is seen to operate on a horizontal axis (individuals in relation to each other and
society) in contrast to the vertical axis (of man in relation to the cosmos) of Québécois writing.

From then on each linguistic group developed a singular allegiance: the Anglos considered themselves Canadians or even North-Americans, the Canadien-Français French-Canadians living in the province of Quebec, which during the Quiet Revolution became Québécois. Gregory Reid notes how the belonging of the Anglophones was anchored more in language than in the Quebec territory, “[t]he English of Quebec may have traditionally thought of themselves as simply English Canadians who happen to live in Quebec, or even more firmly as members of a particular region or municipality of Quebec, or as constituents of other ethnic communities where English has been the lingua franca” (Constructing 70).

During the 60s, a period known as the Quiet Revolution, we note a change in the “minority-majority” perception for both communities in Quebec. The surge of French Quebec nationalism, added to the linguistic and political measures taken by the provincial government, broke the traditional “minorité majoritaire” for the English-speaking community, making the French majority “major” demographically, economically, and politically. In the preface to Garth Stevenson’s book A Community Besieged, we can read the following,

[u]ntil the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s English-speaking Quebeckers seldom thought of themselves as a minority and the Quebec government had little influence on their lives. Over the last generation their situation has been totally transformed, as Quebec governments have sought to promote the French language, to reform education and social policy, and to influence the Quebec
economy. Quebec's dissatisfaction with its status in the Confederation and the
growth of the sovereignty movement have also placed the interests of the English
minority at risk. While many English-speaking Quebeckers have responded by
migrating to other provinces, most have stayed in Quebec and tried to adapt to
their new circumstances. (Preface)

Hence important shifts have occurred in the 60s and 70s, such as the emergence of a new
French-speaking business class, an increase of the migration from the English population and its
capital to English-speaking places, mostly Ontario (Toronto), political decisions taken by the
government to enhance the growth and stability of French within the province, especially in
Montreal, measures such as linguistic bills (63, 22,101 and 178), a limited access to English
schools, an obligation to post French commercial signs\(^1\), and the installation of a French working
environment. Lianne Moyes write that "[d]es écrivains et des critiques considèrent que les
années 70 marquent une rupture : c'est à ce moment-là que la littérature anglo-québécoise se
sépare de la littérature canadienne" (La littérature 424). All these elements have participated in
a minorization of the English-speaking community living in Quebec.

At the same time, a strong Québécois literature (written in French) was building, leaving
even less space for English literature. Mary Soderstrom believed that "[l]'avènement d'une
littérature forte en français issue du Québec a eu pour résultat d'occulte la production

\[^1\] It is possible to post in another language than French; however French must also be present on the sign and it
must be predominant.
Anglophone (qtd in Bordeleau 15). These events have had the effect of Gallicizing the province, and also crystallizing Canada’s perception of Quebec, making the Québécois culture a solely French one. So unless its members have decided to live in exclusion, they have been learning to live in and adapt to a society that functions in another major language.

The first element to bring them together, as a community, was a need to protect their own linguistic rights. In her book, *L’invention d’une minorité : les Anglo-Québécois*, José Legault pinpoints this aspect, “[u]ne nouvelle identité collective a commencé à se construire, beaucoup en réaction et en opposition certes à l’affirmation nationale des francophones et aux gestes faits en son nom par le gouvernement québécois” (57). To be heard, its leading members had to enter the political realm and develop a discourse that functioned within the French-speaking majority. Unfortunately, this politicization also gave them a negative public image even among their peers. Taras Grescoe claims that Quebec’s English community is “one of the most strident, self-righteous minorities in North-America” (46), and “one of the most paranoid bunches of loud-mouth buffoons on the continent” (46). Concerned by the future of the collective, the discourses of political activists such as William Johnson, academic, journalist and author, and Howard Galganov, political activist and radio personality, have swiftly taken a melodramatic tone, and they have become not only very different in nature from the other English political texts written elsewhere in America but also from the English-speaking community of Quebec itself. This difference demonstrates the malleable quality of social narratives. Although some people, such as Grescoe, despise such political figures, they are nevertheless voices that have
participated in a social and political affirmation that illustrates the reluctance attached to a
minorization process.

The relegation to a minor position, however, is not acknowledged by everyone. Many see
today’s literary works as a continuation to the earlier golden age of Montreal writing. As an
example, Moyes raises the fact that the term “Quebec” and its derivatives are absent in Hood’s
introduction to Fatal Recurrences: New Fiction in English from Montreal. She sees in this the
symptomatic attitude of denial in which people live in the past ((Dis)articulating Identity 212-
213). Although this stance is mainly found in authors prominent before the 1970’s, many of the
younger generation also cannot identify as Québécois, such as Neil Bissoondath who says, “[j]e
me méfie de toute identification nationale, ça ne me dit rien. La seule boîte que j’accepte c’est
celle de l’écrivain canadien, mais uniquement parce qu’on y retrouve une très grande variété,
parce qu’elle est immense” (qtd in Bordeleau 17). Yet at the same time, he answers Bernard
Pivot’s question “Mais enfin, pouvez-vous me dire ce qu’est un Québécois?” this way “un
Québécois c’est quelqu’un comme moi.” Following Bissoondath’s argument, he is as much a
Quebecer as he is not, entering and exiting this identity at will. Robert Majzels is another
example of an author who seeks self-understanding outside the national. He writes:

Homère, en parlant de contes anciens, a inventé un terme pour désigner les gens
d’Asie mineure dont le langage, pour une oreille grecque, était un bara-bara
incompréhensible. Il les a appelés barbarophones, qu’ils soient Grecs ou non,
étaient les personnes ayant un défaut de langage ou un accent prononcé. En ce
lieu peuplé d'anglophone et de francophones, permettez-moi d'être un barbarophone. (20)

He refuses to choose an identity based on a specific language except his own; he thus sets himself neither outside nor inside but on the margin. He believes creativity is on the frontiers of definitions, in the liminal spaces. These comments feature the elements of Deleuze and Guattari's conception of minor literature since they refuse to choose the empowering, the nation and the master. Instead these writers opt for the other, the periphery, and, the barbarity. Hence, they find themselves at a crossroad of becomings, characterized by shifting languages and identities.

English in Quebec and its Potential for Deterritorialization

The history between French and English goes back a long way. In her article “English Usage in Contemporary Quebec Reflection of the Local,” Pamela Grant notes that for 10 centuries French and English have been in contact and influenced each other. In Great Britain, the lexicon of English was transformed and Gallicized by the Norman occupation; in North America, French “became marked by English starting in the 18th century, with the level of borrowing higher in Canadian French than it was in France” (177), and the influence is on-going even though Canadian French has developed a defensive position to protect itself against “English contamination” (177). Canadian English, more specifically in Quebec, has also been “marked by French over the years, to a much lesser degree than the reverse” (178).
Consequently, while English borrowings into French are seen as “something to be avoided as a threat to the survival of the French language” (181), there is a “casual attitude toward Gallicisms in Quebec English” (181). In her article, “Une obsession nationale: l’anglicisme,” Chantal Bouchard explains the resistance to Anglicisms as a struggle against assimilation. Consequently, the casual attitude of the native English speakers shows a relatively confident attitude towards their linguistic position.

The first hint of the deterritorializing-reterritorializing effect on English spoken in Quebec comes with the debate around the process of naming this potential literature/language. In a general way we define this literature as English writing in Quebec, however of late, the terminology Anglo-Québécois literature has been used, although contested. Anglo-Québécois literature is a French term defining an English-speaking community and it shows an overt deterritorialization of English-Québec, especially considering that it is not the community itself who has begun the process but the linguistic other. When we read Leith’s article “Quebec Fiction during the 1980s,” we understand that many repudiate the term Anglophone,

Most of the twelve writers consulted on this question during May 1989 object more or less strenuously to the term, they believe it “compartmentalizes” them too much: “there’s a presumption of ghettoization” (Rigelhof), “it’s pigeonholing” (Sparling), and “Anglophone makes you feel more and more marginalized” (Lawrence). Some find this too political a designation (Homel, Lawrence); and a few dislike the word “Anglophone” (Phillips, Aitken, Radu, Fergusson): “it’s an
ugly word” (Homel). A few do think of themselves as “Anglophones” (Kevan, Szanto), and one both recognizes that “Anglophone” only means something in the provincial context and relishes the fact that “Anglophone reeks with the peculiarity of being here” (Scott). All of them object to having their work described as “Anglophone fiction” if only because the term “Anglophone” seems properly applicable to the spoken rather to the written language. (106)

Nonetheless, the fact that the community itself participates in the building of the discourse around the term Anglophone, even if it is refuting the term, is evidence to the deterritorialization and reterritorialization process. The nature and presence of the term ‘Anglo’ in the literary discourse, as a word defining the English-speaking people of Quebec, is probably the most profound disarticulation for the language. Worldwide the term Anglo is mostly applied as a prefix to indicate a relation to the Angles, England or the English people, as in the terms Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-American, Anglo-Celtic, Anglo-African and Anglo-Indian. In Canada, Camlot explains how the word Anglo was first used as a colloquialism to distinguish between “English-speaking” as opposed to “French-speaking” Canadians, but it “increasingly refers more specifically to the Anglophone as opposed to the Francophone Quebecers” (14).

The Political Feature of Writing in English in Quebec

Since language is political in Quebec, associating English writing to Quebec’s territory instead of Canada’s inevitably disturbs the perceived frontiers of both Québécois and Canadian
literatures. The reterritorialization of English in a French Quebec is not without consequences.
The French speaking majority might, at times, have a tendency to work against linguistic diversity. Gilles Marcotte and Josée Legault are two of these voices that try to undermine the actual presence of a hyphenated Québécois culture and literature. Consequently, when asked if he believes in the presence of an Anglo-Québécois literature, the renowned author and critic Gilles Marcotte claims that “[i]l n’existe évidemment pas telle chose qu’une littérature anglo-québécoise, puisqu’il n’existe pas de littérature franco-québécoise” (6). Similarly, in her book L’invention d’une minorité: Les Anglo-Québécois, Legault proposes that their existence as a community is an illusion. Legault’s thesis revolves around her belief that the community invented itself for strategic reasons and not because it was different from its Canadian counterpart. Interestingly, Legault deconstructs her own argumentation by denying the presence of an Anglo-Québécois phenomenon, just to later recognize an Anglo-Montreal one.
Her convoluted understanding of what can or cannot be Anglo depicts the fleeting nature of the process of reterritorialization. Moreover, the act of writing “Anglo-Québécois does not exist,” or “Anglo-Québécois is not this but that,” creates a precedent in which the word reterritorializes itself even more in the Québécois lexicon and literary discourse. The harder critics like Marcotte and Legault try to stop the pluralisation of the term Québécois, the more they participate in it.

1 In her article "Trois solitudes" in Le Devoir, Legault writes : "Heureusement, il existe à Montréal un nombre croissant d'anglophones qui ne craignent pas l'aventure que représente cette recherche. Que l'on songe aux companies de théâtre—Centaur, Bulldog Productions, Black Theatre Workshop et Theatre 1774—ou aux nombreux auteurs, poètes et compositeurs, la volonté de communiquer et de créer une culture anglo-montréalaise distincte est indéniable. " (A6)
Since the word is used so often, the presence of an Anglo-Québécois community gains in credibility in the collective unconscious.

Indeed, while the term Québécois is a reference to the territory of the province of Quebec, like Ontario, or P.E.I. could be, it is also a way of understanding the French-speaking majority and everything associated to it: culture, literature, and language. Marcotte attributes a uni-linguistic French voice to whatever is connected to Québécois (Marcotte 6). His answer reveals the revolutionary nature of minor literature since it can undermine this homogenization.

In his article “Constructing English Quebec Ethnicity: Colleen Curran’s Something Drastic and Josée Legault’s L’invention d’une minorité: Les Anglo-Québécois,” Reid reveals how the idea of an Anglo-Québécois community disturbs the classics of Canadian literature by associating themselves to what is happening in Quebec. He argues that there

[is] a new generation of English Quebec writers -- which would include novelists such as Linda Leith, Gail Scott, Robert Majzels and Kenneth Radu, as well as playwrights David Fennario, Vittorio Rossi, and Marianne Ackerman -- who have responded with equanimity to the growth of Québécois nationalism and the minorization of English Quebec. (71)

These writers, question the “binary oppositions set up [by authors such as Josée Legault who] have the tendency to identify a “true Québécois” as nationalists and sovereigntists, and an Anglo-Québécois as, almost by definition, an opponent of independence” (77). However, the English writers of Quebec, who are from a multitude of backgrounds (Irish, Indian, Italian, etc.)
and identify themselves as active members in the transformation of a Québécois identity, can also be in favour of Quebec's independence, such an example can be found in David Fennario.

The Collective Enunciation in English Quebec Writing

The collective enunciation, being that one cannot stand as an individuated voice for his/her community, results in a pluralisation of the social narrative. We observe this in the discourse about English writers in Quebec where the concept of heterogeneity comes as a leading quality of their body of work (see Moyes Écrire en anglais). Similarly, we can read on a Université de Sherbrooke web page¹ devoted to the subject of Anglo-Québec literature,² created and edited by Gregory Reid, that Anglo-Québécois literature shows “resistance to any singular, fixed identity usually signalled through the inclusion of multiple languages, cultures and ethnicities” (Home Page). Although heterogeneity does not necessarily imply a minor quality, the way in which it is used for the English-speaking community seems to be an attempt to valorize a body of work that is produced by writers of various origins, different spheres and ages. Hence, most writers expose personal ways of writing both thematically and stylistically. The only quality that seems recurrent to a majority of writers is that most are unread.

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¹ http://pages.usherbrooke.ca/angloquebec/index.html

² “[The] web site is dedicated to the controversial proposition that there is an Anglo-Québécois literature. It is designed to display copious examples of English-language literature in, about and from Quebec as well as the reception and scholarly treatment of that literature and information about the various organizations, institutions, associations, media, publishers, theatre companies, and individuals who promote or affect this literature, and thereby facilitate research and discussion of the field.” (Home Page)
wonder that many have portrayed this community and their body of work as “isolated” (Coleman 15), “muted, made invisible and marginalized” (Leith, Quebec Fiction 97) on both the Québécois and the Canadian scene. Deleuze and Guattari specify that these aspects are key to the exploration of the minor, since they allow a literature that stands outside of the major.

Returning to the term “Anglo,” which is a key word in defining the relationship between the English-writing community and Quebec society, we understand that at this moment in time, “Anglo” escapes its own original meaning since it cannot be only applied to a homogeneous linguistic body; it is caught in a series of becomings. Deleuze and Guattari argue that in a deterritorialized language there is no longer a normal relationship between the word its meaning and its possible metaphors, “nous ne sommes plus dans une situation de langue riche ordinaire, où par exemple le mot chien désignerait directement un animal et s’appliquerait par métaphore à d’autre chose (dont on pourrait dire comme un chien)” (Kafka 40). Deleuze adds that a minor writer such as Kafka kills all metaphors, all symbolism, all significations, even all designation (40). In this context, ‘Anglo’ is no longer a qualifier for ‘written by an Anglo,’ but simply ‘written in English’. Reid highlights this fact when he discusses the dilemma Ian Martel presents with his novel Life of Pi (Is there 60). Martel is from a well-known Franco-family, yet he wrote a bestselling novel written in English, and won several prizes for it (2002 Man Booker and Hugh MacLennan Prizes). The presence of Martel in a potential Anglo-Québécois corpus shatters any metaphors or symbolism connected to what Anglo is. In this perspective, we can also add Rossi who is of Italian descent, and Fennario and Ackerman who have Irish blood.

Under the perspective that Anglo is going through a metamorphosis characterized by a
deterritorialization-reterritorialization in both French and English, the traditional stereotypes connected to the term seem to fail.

In a series of articles titled the “The Anglo” posted in the Gazette, Alexander Norris explores the idea that “a very different breed of English speakers [...] has emerged, as many of Quebec’s more traditional, longer established Anglophones die off or leave the province” (May 29 1999). He develops the image of a new kind of Quebec Anglo, one that is not of Anglo-Saxon origin, has had an extensive education in French, speaks English, French, and often a third language without any resentment, lives East of the Main, and is more interested in the right to be a full, employable equal “with the new cultural linguistic regime of Quebec society” (June 5 1999) than in linguistic rights. Although it is impossible to judge on the scale of a whole society, it is possible to say that the writers and thinkers have indeed gone this road. Linda Leith writes in French and English, and so do Lianne Moyes, Gail Scott, and Sherry Simon; Marianne Ackerman has participated in the creation of a bilingual theatre scene and Rossi presents trilinguistic plays. Charles Taylor, a renown philosopher and active author, calls this situation one of “deep diversity” (16), a mutatis mutandis, where each writer is “a bearer of individual rights in a multi-cultural mosaic” (16), that is a writer who has a sense of his Anglophone identity, yet hewing and embracing the heterogeneous society of which he is part. In this context, it becomes impossible to act as a major voice, a voice that would impose his vision and understanding of a homogeneous society through literature.
Chapter 1: The Deterritorialization of English in Quebec

The main characteristic of a minor literature, according to the philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, is that it is written “[avec une langue qui] est affectée d’un fort coefficient de déterritorialisation” (Kafka 29). The deterritorialization of language is evidence to a socio-linguistic situation where a demographic minority speaks in a major language. This major language, in a minority position, can in time be modified by the neighbouring majority. Their understanding of a deterritorialized language comes from Kafka’s writing. Kafka was a Jewish author, who wrote in a German that was inflected by Czech and Yiddish. Kafka was in a position where he had to write in relation to a deterritorialized German which was Prague’s administrative language for commercial and other bureaucratic transactions, a territorialized Czech language and culture, and also, in relation to an already deterritorialized Yiddish language. Ronald Bogue writes, “[b]y treating Kafka as a minor writer, Deleuze and Guattari call attention to his status as a member of an ethnic minority and citizen of a minor/proto-nation within a foreign based empire, while insisting that his formal and thematic innovations in literature have direct social and political implications” (105). For Deleuze and Guattari this situation entails that the Czechs as well as the Jewish community living in Prague were cut off from their literature because it was impossible for them to write in their own language, since German was the official literary language; however, on their side, Germans were cut from their language because they lived as a linguistic minority in a country that did not speak German. Deleuze and Guattari raise this question when they write, “[l]’impossibilité d’écrire autrement qu’en allemand, c’est pour les juifs de Prague le sentiment d’une distance irréductible avec la
territorialité primitive tchèque. Et l'impossibilité d’écrire en allemand, c’est la déterritorialisation de la population allemande, elle-même minorité oppressive qui parle une langue coupée des masses” (Kafka 30). Hence, because German was spoken only by a small number of people, in a country that was using mostly Czech, German was deterritorialized. The writing of Kafka allows readers to understand how German was modified because of its socio-linguistic position as a minority language. This moment in history marks a turning point in literature. A new language is presented to the world, a language that depicts a becoming other of language, a linguistic shift where two Germans co-exist: the official German found in legal documents and the deterritorialized German, found in Kafka’s writing. Deleuze uses the expression “becoming-other of language” (Critique 15) for writers who create their own language within a language. He writes that this new language is a “sort of sovereign language, which is not a different language, nor a rediscovered patois, but a becoming other of the language, a minorization of that major language” (15). It can thus be also applied to the Czechs who spoke German in Prague, like Kafka, since they transformed the German. Prague German is deterritorialized from Germany and reterritorialized in Prague. It has thus lost many of its original German markers and has been inflated by its new linguistic milieu. Indeed, the deterritorialized German is inflected by Czech, and sometimes even by Yiddish, and its long tradition. Kafka’s language becomes a testimony of his hyphenated nature, his ambivalence, his mixed tradition and his multiple origins. Ronald Bogue notes about Kafka and his minor language, “this linguistic dispossession allows Kafka to discover a minor usage of German, an intensive, unsettling disequilibrium within the language that opens it up to creative
deformations” (104-105). Kafka’s German escapes the homogeneous structures and conventions. It is a language influenced by many origins, both cultural and linguistic. As such, a deterritorialized language is understood as a major language used in a minor way; it is a language in the process of becoming a new language, a derived language, a regionalized language; one that is evolving in order to find new ways of expressing its own new reality; an expression that is different from that of the major culture(s) it comes from.

Considering how German was cut off from its linguistic source, and that eventually it came to be reterritorialized in Prague, we can wonder if the English spoken in Quebec has the same deterritorializing potential. Without a doubt, the English-speaking people are a minority in French-speaking Quebec; hence, like German in Prague, English is a major language evolving in a minor context. However, that might be the only resemblance between both languages. Evolving in a different time and location, Quebec English and Prague German have important differences. First, while German Prague was isolated from its linguistic source, English in Quebec evolves in a North-American context where English is omnipresent, not considering that on a world-wide scale English has become the business and vehicular language, and that the internet participates in imposing English as a major language. Second, English in Quebec is not the administrative language, French is. This aspect, however, might have the tendency to participate in the minorization process. As such, even though English as a minor language in Quebec has a very short history, it has been submitted since the Quiet Revolution to a strong French-Québécois culture. It is only since the 1960s that the French-speaking majority has emerged as Quebec’s leading force, and only since 1974 that French was legislated (Bill 22) as Quebec’s official
language. Bill 22, *Loi sur la langue officielle*, was sponsored by the Quebec Liberal government of Robert Bourassa. It made French the language of civic administration and services, and of the workplace. Only children who could demonstrate sufficient knowledge of another language of instruction would be exempted from receiving their instruction in French. In 1976, the Parti Québécois was elected and introduced the Charter of the French Language, known as Bill 101. It made French the official language of the state and of the courts in the province of Quebec, as well as making it the normal and habitual language of the workplace, of instruction, of communications, of commerce and of business. Education in French became compulsory for immigrants, even those from other Canadian provinces, unless a "reciprocal agreement" existed between Quebec and that province (the so-called Quebec clause). Therefore, although the possibility for a deterritorialization of English in Quebec is less than it was for German in Prague, it still exists.

English in Quebec has a deterritorializing potential because it disturbs what Frank Davey calls the ‘territorialization’ of a language and a culture (see ‘And Quebec’). A territorialization of a language is the presumption that a specific literature is done in a given language on a specific territory. He writes that

[Lucie Robert], like many contemporary francophone-Quebec critics, treats the "literary" in Quebec as a territorialization both of the French language and of French ethnicity. Her study of "the institution of the literary in Quebec" does not attempt to address Quebec literatures written in English or other languages, nor
does it comment on this omission. Robert’s work, in what it leaves said and
unsaid, suggests at least two versions of the word ‘Quebec’—her own with its
*accent aigu* and an unaccented ‘Quebec’ that can generate words like
anglophone- and francophone-Quebeckers. (7)

Through her French-speaking Québécois character Jacques Laflamme, Ackerman offers a key example about how French territorializes itself in Quebec; for Jacques the territory is mainly defined by the language of the majority who inhabits it, “Paulette would meet him for lunch in front of the Queen Elizabeth Hotel. L’Hôtel Reine-Elizabeth. Jacques peppers his French with anglicisms, but he never, ever refers to a landmark in English. Le territoire est français” (166). Gregory Reid sees in this passage an example of the linguistic reality of Quebec, “[t]his rule goes a long way toward describing Quebec French, but it also defines Quebec English, which is not only subject to Gallicism but also must use French names for most Quebec landmarks and institutions” (Is there, 73). Adding Reid’s observation to Davey’s argument, we come to two conclusions: the first is that although French is the main language in Quebec, English as a minor force has the potential to install itself as a peripheral literature, hence breaking the myth that writing in Quebec is solely done in French. Indeed, it is only until very recently that French critics and scholars have begun to pay more widespread attention to English writing in Quebec. The second conclusion is that in this process of reterritorializing itself within Quebec, English writing in Quebec first had to go through a process of a deterritorialization. The deterritorialization of English in Quebec happened because of a linguistic situation in which it had become impossible to use any other terms than French ones, hence the reterritorialization becomes a visible
repercussion of the deterritorialization. Whether it is through syntactic modifications from Canadian English or the shifts in the semantic level, English writing in Quebec is starting to distinguish itself from its Canadian and American counterparts. Institutionally, the Guide to Canadian English points out that “with increasing contact between the languages, [...] more and more French words [...] have been assimilated into English, resulting in a new Canadian, regional dialect: Quebec English” (404). The Oxford Companion to the English Language also notes that “the most marked feature of local [Quebec] English is the influence of French” (832). These definitions are symbolic recognitions of a specific linguistic situation for a specific group of people. Chantal Bouchard notes how “les personnes ont tendance à emprunter des mots et des expressions aux langues des sociétés dominantes et fortes au plan politique, économique et culturel” (68). Although she is discussing how English words have entered the French Québécois lexicon, we can posit that the English language in Quebec has started to show an influence of French exactly because Quebec has become a strong society on the political, economic and cultural levels.

The Reterritorialization of English in Quebec

Deleuze and Guattari believe that an act of reterritorialization can include an underlying primitive and driving oedipal force connected to the Zion dream (Kafka 45). For the two philosophers, the Zion Dream for a writer is to envision the past with quasi-holiness and thus to use it as reference to understand an unstable present; in other terms, in a context where one’s
language is deterritorialized a writer will either give past meanings to an actual word or an actual meaning to archaism. Reid observes this tendency in Quebec; he writes that “the need and desire to reterritorialize the language with its incumbent risk of reactionary rationalization and mythic quests for ancient origins and connection to folklore and the land can be applied to both French Canada, and English in a nationalist Quebec” (Is there 82). In his thoughts about contemporary Quebec, Robert Majzels believes that this gazing into the past is not healthy, he writes “[a]ujourd’hui, en cette période et en ces lieux places sous le signe de la déterritorialisation et de la déstabilisation, la nostalgie de formes anciennes, des anciens romans, la défense des frontières, et des genres dénotent des réflexes conservateurs et constituent des stratégies empoisonnées” (19). Deleuze and Guattari illustrate this when they write, “Le chanteur canadien peut aussi faire la reterritorialisation la plus réactionnaire, la plus œdipienne, oh maman, ah ma patrie, ma cabane ollé ollé” (45). Similarly, the stereotypical white English-speaking writer living in Quebec can, just like the ‘chanteur canadien’, enter an œdipal quest of self understanding, “oh literary English tradition of Montreal, ah Westmount Montreal, my minority i-ho i-ho.”

Looking into the six works under study, we do not find many oedipal quests, longing for the past, or any attempts to valorize the ‘Englishness’ of the people speaking English in Quebec. Indeed, instead the authors mostly seem to follow Deleuze and Guattari’s second way of dealing with a deterritorialized language which is to choose to use the language as it is, “dans sa pauvreté même. Aller toujours plus loin dans la déterritorialisation... à force de sobriété” (Kafka 35). Moore and Ackerman create worlds in which their characters have an active interest in
their Gallic environment. The characters have accepted the changes that have occurred in the Québécois society. Most of them speak decent French, and the narrative reveals this capacity. In Leith’s novel, the characters have a double way of seeing the world, first they show an opening to different places and cultures, yet there is a critical undertone towards the nationalisms evolving in these places. Nonetheless, following the thoughts of Leith’s characters, the evil lies not in the fact that Quebec has made French its official language, but more in the vindictive attitude some French-speaking people have towards the English-speaking people. Although written earlier, it is interesting to see how Fennario explores the relationships between the two linguistic communities that live within the same poor working class, Pointe-Saint-Charles, Montreal. He presents a group of people who are from different linguistic origins, French and English, but who are both uncultured, poor, and lack job security. Also, they believe that their precariousness is related to the way the government leads the province. Fennario set the play amidst the early 70s when the Liberal Party of Robert Bourassa was governing, hence the power in place was mainly French-speaking. His main achievement is thus to not only break from the rich English stereotype, but to give voice to two minor communities. The only two works that could be considered having a connection to mythic origins would be Lambert and Rossi’s plays. In Very Heaven, Lambert mentions the exodus of the English-speaking community from their traditional villages to bigger cities, in this case a village in the Eastern Townships to Montreal. The daughters remember how, when they were young, French and English did not mingle. However, the relationship between Stretch (Francois Lachance) and Rose, and later Stretch and Harriet, suggest that things have evolved since. The revisiting of the past that
happens in the play is not accompanied by a strong sense of longing for the past; instead, it
seems that to live in the present is the only way to access the rite of passage which eventually
allows the sisters to live a more serene present and future. In the case of Paradise by the River,
the play revisits the origins of the Italian community of Quebec and Canada. However, the play
cannot only be read as a mythical quest for the past. It is also a celebration of the present,
where one can see how difficult it was, at one point in time, to be part of the Italian linguistic
minority.

In her article “La literature anglophone du Québec,” Lianne Moyes has made several
interesting observations about introductions to different anthologies concerning English-writing
in Quebec¹. Her conclusions reveal many elements which portray a necessity for mythical and
spiritual reterritorialization. Even if the content of the anthologies is much diversified, the
introductions tend to all have the same elements in which there is need for reterritorialization
yet not always fitting with Quebec’s specific linguistic reality. According to Moyes, the
introductions show

¹ Moyes has studied 9 anthologies to come to her conclusions: Montreal English Poetry of the
Canadian Fiction (1980), Fatal Recurrences (1984), Telling Differences: New English Fiction from
Quebec (1988), Montreal mon Amour: Short Stories from Montreal (1989), The Other Language:
Tense: New English Fiction from Quebec (1997).
1) le désir de rester en continuité avec le passé, de se relier à une tradition de l'écriture en langue anglaise; 2) la conviction que l'écriture anglaise au Québec, particulièrement à Montréal, se caractérise par une succession de plusieurs vagues d'activité; 3) l'assertion que les écrits de langue anglaise existent et qu'ils contribuent à la vie culturelle du Québec; 4) la justification de l'absence de thèmes politiques et de traces d'influence de la culture de langue française; et 5) l'insistance sur l'hétérogénéité des pratiques poétiques et esthétiques des textes qui figurent dans l'anthologie. (428)

The first two preoccupations are closely related. The idea of continuity found in the anthologies consists of a declining and regeneration tendency that has occurred over the last decades. It is with this idea of periodical regain that the directors can present either one of these anthologies as a sign of revitalization of English writing in Quebec. As such, they present the history of literature written in English in Quebec as a linear and continuous happening. However, situating Anglo-Québécois writers within a long tradition of writers overlooks the historical events that have affected the writers. It also overlooks the fact that a large proportion of the literature being written in Quebec has nothing to do with the past and has everything to do with the present (Moyes, La littérature 428).

Because of their desire for legitimacy, the editors are unable to introduce the new authors as a different kind of people who are emerging from a new reality and writing in a different language. They place them as followers of MacLennan and Richler who were writing
before and amidst the Quiet Revolution (1960-1966) and the election of the first Parti Québécois government (1976); hence, before the main linguistic shift that has occurred in Quebec. We can propose that works predating the Quiet Revolution do not tend to reveal Québécois elements since they were not yet in a minor position. As Reid explains, etymologically the concept of an Anglo-Québécois literature, one that is concerned by a Québécois reality, can only exist once the term Québécois does.

"Anglo-Québécois" cannot predate the term "Québécois" which emerged in the 1960s and only became the accepted appellation for residents of the province (as opposed to Quebec City) in the 1970s. Anglo-Québécois literature, in the most meaningful sense of the term, begins with playwright David Fennario’s bilingual drama Balconville first presented at Montreal's Centaur Theatre in 1979.” (Is there 81)

The editors, however, present contemporary literature written in English in Quebec as part of a major literature connected to the past. Symbolically, this reterritorialization discards any idea that a deterritorialization has ever happened. Although I cannot vouch that the literature under study is definitely minor or major, referring to it as only major does omit the opportunity to investigate it as a possible minor phenomenon. Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari raise the issue that some minor literatures have from time to time the dream to become major, they write, "combien de style, ou de genre, ou de mouvement littéraires, même tout petits n'ont qu'un rêve: remplir la fonction majeure" (Kafka 50).
The Motif of Stuttering

In a minor situation, the clash of languages destabilizes speech and makes language uncertain. Deleuze and Guattari speak of this situation in terms of stuttering. They first identify two possible ways to include the discourse of stuttering in one's narrative. The first is to specify that a character is afflicted by this condition by adding specifications like “he stuttered,” “he stumbled” or even “he sputtered.” This method leaves the reader imagining the whole scene. According to Deleuze, this way of writing, which is only an alternative to “he said” or “he murmured,” is the habit of weak novelists. The second way of exploiting the motif of stuttering is to make the character stutter. Balzac made one of his characters, le père Grandet, in his novel *Eugénie Grandet*, stutter when he was dealing and doing business, or he made his other character Nucingen, in the novel *Comédie humaine*, talk in a distorted patois. Deleuze, when talking about these moments, believes that Balzac incorporated this element for his own pleasure (Critique 135). Yet, at the same time, and maybe not realizing it, he also incorporated the language of a minority, one that not many authors are ready to include since it is an uncomfortable language, one that has a hard time to come to completion.

In the works under study, the presence of stuttering *per se* is not very present. Jeremy, in *Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain*, is the only one who actually stutters. His affliction is revealed when he becomes anxious and nervous; in this conversation Jacques is telling him why he is not the type of guy for Milena, a Rom girl he fell in love with without actually knowing her,
[Jacques:] ‘If you’re not underdogging it, Jeremy, Third-Worlding it, you’re just not in the running. If you’re not in some minority.’ [Jeremy:] ‘I am a minority. You, frog boy, are in the m-majority, remember.’ ‘Your stammer, I admit, might work to your advantage.’ ‘F-fuck off.’ ‘If you’re not black, or lesbian, or insurrectionary...’ (94)

The motif of stuttering comes only twice in the novel and seems to be, in the construction of Jeremy, an unfinished feature of Moore’s character.

Other than actual speech, we can bridge the motif of stuttering to the authors’ technique of introducing a linguistic other to the text. I want to propose that the presence of a foreign tongue in a text makes this text, as a metaphor of speech, stutter. This blending disturbs the natural flow of a text; instead of consistency and fluidity, it offers jerks, twists and strangeness. There are two ways to observe the pattern. The first is to write that the characters are speaking in another tongue, and write what they are saying in English. The second way is to actually write what they are saying in the said language, hence use a code switching style of writing. Each piece of literature under study has a different approach, *Birds of Passage* uses the former, “‘Are you a feminist?’ She finally blurts out in amazement in guttural French” (83).

*Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain* uses French, Spanish and Ukrainian, “‘Tengo mucho hambre’ he said dully (33), “‘Chauffeur arretez’ he commanded” (99). *Jump* also shows an egalitarian approach to language since Ackerman writes both in French and English, “David speaks first.
‘Rien à faire.’ Emmanuel answers back testily. ‘I’m beginning to come around to that opinion’” (151).

Deleuze proposes a third way to make a text stutter. This time it is not the characters that stutter; it is the language itself that does. It is the writer who stammers in his speech. The minor language he uses is affected by a speech disorder involving linguistic hesitations, involuntary repetitions, and unfamiliar sounds. Deleuze writes “c’est l’écrivain qui devient bègue de la langue : il fait béguayer la langue en tant que telle. Un langage affectif, intensif, et non plus une affection de celui qui parle” (Critique 135). The stuttering thus induces a becoming other of language, and exposes a shapeless and unfinished literature.

In order to understand more specifically Deleuze’s concept of stuttering as a becoming other of language, we can look into his interpretation of a minor language.

C’est donc une variation ramifiée de la langue. Chaque état de variable est une position sur une ligne de crête qui bifurque et prolonge en d’autres. C’est une ligne syntaxique, la syntaxe étant constitué par les courbures, les anneaux, les tournants, les déviations de cette ligne dynamique en tant qu’elle passe par des positions du double point de vue des disjonctions et des connexions. Ce n’est pas la syntaxe formelle ou superficielle qui règle les équilibres de la langue, mais une syntaxe en devenir, une création de syntaxe qui fait naître la langue étrangère dans la langue, une grammaire du déséquilibre. (Critique 140-141)
Klaus Wagenbach’s observations on Kafka present some of the changes in Kafka’s language. “In Kafka, we can find the features of poverty related to language, yet, all these features are used as a creative process... at the service of a new soberness, a new expression, a new flexibility, a new intensity” (qtd in Deleuze, Kafka 42). He comes to this conclusion after noting how Prague’s German was influenced by Czech. The minor language resulting from this cohabitation shows an incorrect use of prepositions; an abuse of the pronominal form; the use of all-purpose verbs (such as geben for the verbs put, sit, put down, take away, which from then on becomes an intensive); the multiplication and succession of adverbs; the use of a lexicon with words referring to pain; the importance of the accent as interior accent in the word, and the distribution of consonants and vowels as internal discordance (42).

The minorization of a language is not necessarily done by a single linguistic group but by everyone who speaks the language in a specific milieu. In the process of becoming an Anglo-Québécois language, we should also observe how the French-speaking community transforms and makes English stutter. Under this perspective, the reterritorialization is not only done by a direct clash between French and English, but also by the contact of two kinds of English, spoken by two communities. This way, there would be two forces working on the becoming: French-Québécois language on English speakers, and English spoken by the French Québécois.

When looking at the three plays under study, we realize that only two of them present interesting results on a linguistic level, Balconville and Very Heaven. Paradise by the River uses code-switching a great deal, however, the characters languages are not distorted, neither in
French nor in English; they are all grammatically perfect. We can however note that specific accents were used for the performance. Here is a list of the linguistic observations made in the plays Balconville and Very Heaven. I have extracted all the moments when Franco-Québécois characters speak a flawed English. It has to be noted that the numbers given for each type of linguistic deterritorialization are from the two plays combined and that the examples given for linguistic deterritorialization were taken randomly from either play. The following results cannot be taken as a thorough investigation, yet I believe they remain interesting and can be a starting point for a more in-depth study. In order of importance: the doubling of the pronominal subject, such as, “Me, I Think” or “The plan, it’s simple” (32 times); the incorrect use of verbs, such as the omission of have/has in the present perfect, a conjugation mistake in simple present third person singular in (omission of s), the use of present instead of past (18 times); confusion between pronouns (object-subject-possessive pronouns) especially with me instead of I (12 times); the use of French words when the English term is unknown to the character (10 times); the misuse of prepositions, especially with phrasal verbs (7 times); a misuse or a mixing of the articles a-an-the (5 times); a misuse of certain negatives any-none-no-not (4 times); the use of “faux amis” in dialogue (4 times); over usage or mistakes of adverbs (3 times); the use of double negatives in a simple negative situation (1); conjugation of plural nouns (1 time); mistakes in past participles (1 time); inversions such as “That woman, she’s a little bit crazy, I think” (1 time).

Through Deleuze’s third aspect of the motif of stuttering, we see that to minorize a language is not necessarily to blend two languages, although in Quebec this event is inextricably connected to this linguistic metissage. A minor language is foremost how an author, or a group
of authors, work a language. The authors use the creativity that sparks from their environment, which can be minor or not, and present a minor usage of language. In the case of the English-speaking community of Quebec, we see that the influence of a Franco-Québécois community can be a driving force that pushes language beyond the typical limitations of standard English.

Two Linguistic Studies on the English Language in Quebec

The deterritorialization of language is a metamorphosis of language both linguistically and in the regime of signs. In their consideration of the German in Prague in the late 20th century, Deleuze and Guattari believe that in a deterritorializing process authors can artificially enrich the language of origin to inflate it with all the possible resources of symbolism, fantasizing and esoteric sense, and hidden signifiers. They can also simply use the language as it is, in its very poverty (Kafka 34). A deterritorialization allows a greater freedom (Renza 10) since there is a will to experiment with language, to use words in a new way, and to integrate new words of different origins.

Two contemporary linguistic studies examine the influence of French on English in Quebec: “An English ‘Like no Other’: Language Contact and Change in Quebec” by Shana Poplack and “English Usage in Contemporary Quebec Reflections of the Local” by Pamela Grant. These studies are relevant to the study of the deterritorialization of language. “An English ‘Like no Other’” is an exhaustive study of the spoken language of Anglo-Quebecers, as Poplack names them. She has designed her project to assess “the impact of a majority language on the
structure of the minority language in a situation of long term contact” (186). Poplack compares the English spoken in three urban cities, Quebec City (Qc.), Montreal (Qc.) and Oshawa-Whitby (Ont.). The assumption is that the smaller the minority the greater the “contact induced change” (187), hence theoretically, Quebec City’s native English speakers should show the most French influence. Poplack presents many examples of how English is influenced by French: “I called him and you-know, asked him to go over and get me <FR deux chiens-chauds, tout garnis>”; “but then again, you gotta be very careful. Because they -- they’re cutting the corners right away, bonhomme or no bonhomme” (195).

Poplack also notes a very positive attitude towards French-English issues, especially within the younger participants (post Bill 101). She writes, “participants in our study describe a socio-linguistic situation which can be characterized as maximally conductive to convergence. The participants are also in agreement that French has in fact influenced Quebec English, particularly as regards to lexicon” (209-210). Not surprisingly, many of them say they have close familial or friendship ties (205). The study shows that in the interviews one third of the English Quebec participants mentioned the linguistic effects of language contact, language mixing, linguistic convergence, and, 80 % of them believe that French is influencing English, especially lexicon and code switching (205-206).

However, Poplack’s final conclusions demonstrate that there is almost no grammatical influence of French on English, since the borrowings and code-switchings represent less than 1% of the words spoken during the interrogations of the participants (210). The “majority of lone
French-origin words in the Quebec English Corpus are used meta-linguistically (i.e. dépanneur) in the context of explanation or translation (garderie/day care) (208), hence, used with full speaker awareness. Poplack’s conclusions suggest that French is not replacing English in Quebec (202), nor does it transform it.

Although Poplack’s methodology is rigorous, these conclusions must still be taken with a certain scepticism. Pamela Grant’s study “English Usage in Contemporary Quebec Reflections of the Local,” highlights certain aspects which undermine these conclusions:

[Polack] deliberately does not consider as borrowed items any of the following: expressions or compounds, anything other than—one French-origin words; any proper names, thus excluding not only governmental and business titles, but political entities, geographical and topographic features, names of events, and a multitude of other cultural references; any—established loanwords, here defined as French-origin words attested to in the Canadian Oxford Dictionary (Barber 2004) prior to the birth of the informant, thereby excluding those English words whose frequency of usage or whose meaning reflects the influence of French and overlooking many subtle differences between established meanings and local meanings of existing words; any metalinguistic, rhetorical or special discourse use indicating speaker awareness of the word’s French origin, thereby eliminating the deliberate manipulation of linguistic codes in which Quebec anglophones delight. (183)
Pamela Grant’s approach varies from Polack’s. To understand to what extent French influences English in Quebec, she considers more lexical items. She classifies them as follows: “direct borrowings; loan-translations; high frequency usage of words rarely used elsewhere; semantic extensions; and orthographic and typographic variants” (183). Her observations are based on scholarly works on the topic published in recent years, analysis of usage as reflected in written texts and the media, a study of a number of Anglo-Quebec literary works, and several surveys of English usage in Quebec. These five classifications can help us understand in what way the deterritorialization and reterritorialization process is taking place in the English spoken and written in Quebec.

**Direct Borrowings**

Grant sees the full lexical borrowing as “the most obvious type of borrowing” (183). Some of the words she quotes as example are, single words (*poutine*), collocations (*vieille souche*), initialisms or acronyms (*cegep*), and proper names. In the list she offers, it is interesting to note how some words come from other languages through French, for example *Ouananiche* (Montagnais) and *méchoui* (Arabic). Grant remarks how a neighbouring of two languages creates new possibilities, such as a mix of the languages, “[o]ne recurring feature is the linguistic playfulness which often marks Quebec English usage. For example, Quebec English borrowings may mix the two languages, may borrow anglicisms back into English, or may borrow popular québécismes” (184). She gives example such as: “A steamie all-dressed is a hot dog with the works”; “Flyé is Quebec French, and increasingly Quebec English, for scatterbrained or flighty”;
“Kétaine (or quétaine) is something borrowed from Quebec French, meaning tacky or kitsch” (184). As for proper names, because of the steps taken by the various governments since 1960 to make French the official language on all levels in Quebec we find that most institutional, social and political entities have unilingual French designations, hence it is not surprising that “there is a heavy concentration of French proper names of government departments and agencies, businesses, organizations and events” (185).

Loan-Translations

Loan-translations are “direct translation of French expressions” (185). In some cases the syntactic construction is borrowed from French (estates-general: états généraux); in other cases the direct translation of the French expression reflects the image of the original French (square head: tête carrée; welcome class: class d’accueil).

High Frequency Usage of Words Rarely Used Elsewhere

Considering Grant’s observations, this category shows how English in Quebec uses many words that are mostly unseen and unread in other English speaking countries, “sometimes there is a slight semantic shift involved, with the English usage reflecting nuances of the French cognates” (186). Words like Anglophone and Francophone “are in very common use across Canada but are restricted to more formal linguistic context in the US and Britain”; “Collectivity is sometimes used to refer to the community” (186); “Population can be referred to the general public, rather than with reference to demographics” (186).
Semantic Extensions

Semantic extensions, false cognates, false friends, faux-amis, or semantic shifts “are words in English which are used with the meaning of a French word that has a similar form. These are particularly common in English and French because of the intertwined histories of the two languages” (186). Many of these words remain “dubious or simply unacceptable, even in local usage [...because the] extended meaning of the gallicism clashes with the accepted meaning of an existing English language term” (186-187). Grant enumerates a list of faux-amis, here are a few: Actually (truth of statement) can be confused with actuellement (at this time); delay (postponement) and délai (deadline); syndicate (commercial or criminal group) and syndicat (labour union) (187). Interestingly, some of the semantic extensions have made their way into “accepted local English usage” (187). Words like animator (moderator, host, group leader or coordinator), coordinates (address, phone no., etc) and gallery (verandah) are often seen in Quebec English (187).

Orthographic and Typographic Variants

A variant is a direct grammatical influence of French on English, it can be “in variations of spelling, capitalization, use of accents or punctuation” (188). Québécois, dépanneur, Ste-Catherine de Hatley, or francisation are well documented examples of these variants.
Following Grant's conclusion, English in Quebec shows signs of what Deleuze and Guattari call signs of the deterritorialization-reterritorialization process. Although the coefficient cannot be seen as high, the presence of a metamorphosis of language shows that English is reterritorializing itself in Quebec as a language that is influenced by French both culturally and linguistically. Grant's classification is helpful to recognize the process within literary works and understand what the authors are doing with language. Within the framework of the theory of minor literature, I can use the classification as a guideline to evaluate if and in what ways the six works under study write in an English that has been modified by it Québécois environment.

A Case Study of the Deterritorialization of English in Novels

*Jump*

Ackerman novel's details in length Montreal's territory, either by naming the buildings, the streets, the public places, the institutions, the restaurants or the bars. This physical description of the city, which is done mainly with French terms, allows us to understand how the lexicon related to landmarks has participated in the deterritorialization-reterritorialization process. Returning to Jacques Laflamme's words, one of the characters in the novel, who notes how in Quebec "le territoire est français" (166), we can believe that the English speakers of Quebec have had but little choice to follow the francization of the territory. Here follows examples of terms that refer to streets and public places:
[Sally’s] turf is her mother’s turf, the Plateau Mont-Royal, a mongrel mix of immigrant enclave and yuppie chic, east of the Mountain and up from Sherbrooke” (16); “on l’Avenue de l’Esplanade, with a great view of Parc Jeanne Mance and Mont Royal” (35); “The hub of the Plateau is The Main. St.Lawrence Boulevard, also known as le boulevard St-Laurent, depending upon where you’re from or when you arrived” (48); “Autoroute 40” (49); “Myra walks towards home, cutting through the leafy oasis of Carré St-Louis, past rubies on the wooden benches by the fleur de lys-shaped swimming pool” (74); “rue St-Anne” (17); “Carré St-Louis” (301); “the corner of de la Gauchetière” (319); “north of Autoroute 40”; “the expressway [...] Décarie” (348).

And, examples that refer to institutions, scholarly establishments, restaurants, hotels and shops:

“Sally overslept and missed her morning classes at the CEGEP du Vieux Montréal” (68); l’Ecole [sic] Nationale de Théâtre (83); “English language CEGEP” (97, 161); “Université de Montréal” (114); “Place du Canada” (147); “Place des Arts” (164, 243); “Place d’Armes” (165); “l’Hôtel Reine Elizabeth” (166); “Palais des Congrès (183); “the L.A. producer was going to be at the Cépage” (215); “French still did not work Chez Eaton” (228); “CEGEP du Vieux Montréal” (246); “[he] decided to risk an alley near l’Air du Temps” (253); “Le Continental Bistro Américain” (269); “she [...] shouted ‘La gare centrale’” (320).
Most of the words above are direct borrowings from French. Otherwise, referring to Grants' category of orthographic and typological variants, we observe that a variety of landmarks can be written in two different ways and this even though they refer to the exact same landmark or place. We can observe this aspect in the naming of streets, the first way of being written is the English way using a dot after the "St.", the second the French way with an hyphen between the "St-" and the proper name, "St. Catherine" (12) "Ste-Catherine" (48-235); "St.Lawrence" (174), "St. Lawrence/St-Laurent" (49); "St. James, now la rue St-Jacques" (99); "St-Denis street" (51); "St-Denis" (177); "St.Cuthbert street" (112). Similarly, other places, like a park, can be given in either language, "Parc Jeanne Mance" (35), "Jeanne Mance Park" (51). The city of Montreal has itself a bilingual nature since it is written throughout the text in both languages without any distinction, Montreal (1) and Montréal (22, 261). Interestingly, other words such as ‘Metro’ are only used without the accent, hence only in their English version: "headed towards the Metro" (229). Similarly, Ackerman keeps the accent on “Céline Dion” (60). ‘Céline’ can also be written without the accent, especially by English-speaking people. Céline Dion herself omits the accent when promoting her international career. Keeping the accent shows one’s knowledge of her Québécois origins, and of the French language.

For Nicole Brossard, these types of linguistic moments show the emotional connection between a place and the language in which it is spoken. Brossard writes about how she once had to negotiate with a fellow translator about the language that should be used to name a pond in a Montreal park,
Pour ma part, je disais qu’il serait intéressant de conserver l’expression “Lac des Castors” dans le texte anglais. Ce faisant, je voulais que même en anglais Montréal reste français. De son côté Patricia me répondit : je crois qu’il est important de dire “Beaver Lake” parce que les anglophones vont se reconnaître. En somme, amicalement nous étions en train de négocier des espaces de mémoire affective, des territoires à partir desquels nous fondaient une partie que nous sommes. (12)

Under this perspective, markers carry not only territorial emplacements, but a whole set of memories and emotions associated to the memories. One can argue that these markers are also anchors into collective belonging and spatial appropriation by one or another linguistic group. We can see here the direct link between the choices and aesthetics of minor literature and the ongoing negotiation of individual and collective identities.

Otherwise, in *Jump*, as it is set during Quebec’s second referendum (1995), we inevitably find a series of political related words that cannot be translated in English but also a list of words that could be used in English but Ackerman decides to keep the French version allowing the reader to experience the political zeitgeist. Some words are related to the parties and their allegiances, “Parti Québécois” (28); “leader of the Bloc Québécois” (104,162); “She is a goddamn rich anglo Péquiste” (36); others are related to the referendum and one’s political position towards it, “the Non side is ahead” (11); “the Oui option” (13); “the Oui campaign” (104); “neither federalists nor indépendantistes” (82); “indépendantiste” (104).
There are many food related words in the novel that are written in their original French form. These do not necessarily all minorize Quebec English, nonetheless it shows the influence of one language over another: “café au lait” (67); “pistou” (178); “mousse” (180); “Myra ordered crème brulée” (328), of them most are related to France French and it’s culinary tradition, but some words like “poutine” (119) are specific to Quebec. Other words like, “salmon paté” (24) are a mix of French and English, since the French version ‘pâté’ has two accents, and the English version none, ‘pate.’ Ackerman’s ‘pâté’ is written with only one of the two accents. Likewise, when naming the beer “St. Ambroise Rousse” (88), Ackerman uses the term ‘Rousse,’ which means ‘amber,’ but connects it with the English way of writing ‘Saint’ (St.). The commercial way of naming the beer is St-Ambroise. Otherwise, we read words related to newspapers, television and radio programs: “Le Devoir” (68); “a regular news program at Radio Centreville” (118); “Radio-Canada” (148); “Le Point” (193).

Overall, Jump is built on many linguistic instances that are typical to Quebec, like bilingual sentences, “Aren’t you, chéri?” (13); “Allô? It’s me again. Jack, your tea is on the counter. Don’t forget those pills, hein? Tu les prends toutes” (14); “Ah bon. Hello” (22); and, “Every maudit step is a blow-up with her” (25); “He races ahead in the text to check on his next bon mot” (87); “something a little more, ah, vivante [sic]” (228); “she said bonjour” (318). These sentences not only reveal an encounter between two languages, but the triviality connected to this type of bilingual conversation. Indeed, both the English-speaking characters and the French-speaking characters accept and use this bilingual way of communicating. This reaches one of Poplack’s conclusions that there is a positive attitude among English-speaking people towards French
(192) and towards French-English issues (205). Ackerman peppers her novel with a lexicon which signals not just a cohabitation of the English-speaking and French-speaking communities of Quebec, but the sometimes harsh confrontational interactions between the two communities. She grasps their daily interactions in words such as ‘pepsi’ and ‘frog,’ which define French-speaking Québécois, and “anglo,” “tête carré” (153) and “les anglais” (160) which mainly define the English-speaking Québécois. We can read these words in passages like “you think les anglais are more objective?” (33); “dusty anglo law firm” (46); “her contacts in the anglophone milieu” (69); “narrow minded frogs and geriatric anglos” (76, 134); “Pepsi frog killer” (152); and, “tabernac de pepsi” (153); “head butt from a tête carré” (153); “she was moving to Calgary with an anglais” (160); “Damn frog” (286). The term ‘anglo,’ as Camlot noted earlier, which was once used to differentiate English and French-speaking Canadians, refers more and more to the two linguistic groups in Quebec (see Camlot 14). The term has thus begun a modification in meaning and is reterritorializing itself as such in the English of Quebec and Canada.

Words related to art are more often than not written in French, possibly an attempt to show one’s knowledge of local culture, “intermissions are passé” (89); “fake artiste” (247); “vernissage” (226, 228, 232, 265); look at “Québécois art. La Patrimoine [sic]” (169); “young protégé” (186). Likewise, many English-speaking characters use French expressions to display a heightened language, to miss a “rendezvous” (113, 178), to do a “faux pas” (88); to fake “nonchalance” (241), “How clichéd” (246); “Mal du pays” (129). People also swear in French: “paying off that maudit mortgage” (35); “Sacrament! Now I know see why he couldn’t stand to live with you” (36). And, through the story we find words specific to Quebec’s reality: people
wear a “toque” (sic. should be a tuque which is a winter hat, and not a chef hat) (220); “[stand] in slush on the corner of Ste-Catherine and Ste-Somethingerother” (240), “slush” being a mix of ice, snow and water; they go see “the Habs” (nickname of the Canadiens hockey club) (298), and they spend some time at “the chalet on Lake Memphremagog” (chalet being normally used for a wood cabin, or a habitation on a mountain) (313). Two observations can be made about the different lists given above. First, it can be argued that a number of these words, especially concerning food, are lexicon that do not minorize English since, even though they are originally French words, they have been part of English for decades, if not centuries. Therefore, what is surprising is not their use but more their ease of use. Indeed, we find such a large amount of these words that we believe important to note it, and believe that the closeness to a French speaking society has influenced the text in that matter. The second observation, which is closely related to the first, is that many of the noted words have no possible alternatives (protégé, tuque, slush, etc), or that the alternatives do not quite exactly fit the Quebec context.

Joey’s bilingual adaptation of Samuel Beckett’s play Waiting for Godot comes as a metonymy for the friction that can be involved in the cohabitation of languages, or a choice of language. Myra sees “[b]ilingual Waiting for Godot on the eve the referendum on the Main, dividing line between French and English” (136) as the perfect enactment of Montreal linguistic reality. However, Becket’s estate has refused Joey’s project of a bilingual play, only a faithful representation or an official translation can be done. They even threaten Joey with legal action if he does not comply. Joey decides to present the play anyways, and sees this as free publicity. The multi-linguistic aspect connected to the play builds tension among the actors as well. On
the night of the première, French-speaking Emmanuel and English-speaking Davies turn their acting into an ego contest, and when it is time to explain themselves, their arguments quickly turn from their performance to their linguistic origins. The next words are spoken between act 1 and 2 of the opening night, "'Son-of-a-bitch! Creep! Murderer! Pepsi frog killer' he howls. 'You’re trying to ruin me out there, you goddamn separatist.' Emmanuel sniffs ‘C’est quoi ton problème, calisse?’ How’d you like to get a head butt from a tête carrée? Okay, here you go, tabernac de pepsi!’” (152-153). Everything about and around the play shows that in times of linguistic uncertainty difference becomes a source of tension, or that the myth of the two solitudes is an irresistible alibi and excuse.

Joey’s play also sheds light on the creative possibilities involved in writing against the major. A minor writing, writes Deleuze and Guattari, is affected by a “poverty of lexicon” (Kafka 42). Minor writers use their language as a new “creative force, as a new sobriety, a new expression, a new flexibility, a new intensity” (42). For Ronald Bogue, this allows minor writers to “experiment with language” and “engage the [...] forces of creative deformation” (108). Like Joey, the writers in Quebec live in a place where their language is fictional and frictional since it evolves in a minority position and is thus constantly opposed to the French majority of Quebec. Lise Gauvin believes that one of the effects of writing in a minor condition is to have an over-consciousness of one’s own language. She defines this over-consciousness as “une conscience particulière de la langue qui devient ainsi un lieu de réflexion privilégiée et un désir d’interroger la nature des langues et de dépasser le simple discours ethnographique” (Littératures mineures 19). The authors can either benefit from or hinder this linguistic situation, but in no way can
they escape it. The linguistic situation in Quebec makes everyone more aware and more self-reflexive about writing. We can thus believe than the English-speaking authors are more conscious about the choice of language than any other English-speaking writer who is living in a uni-lingual environment. This position allows writers to explore the space that exists between languages, both French and English, often with humour and playfulness.

Remembering that Deleuze and Guattari propose that a writer can “find his own patois” (33), his own language and his own way of writing, we can read how Joey reshapes and transforms Waiting for Godot to fit the political situation of Quebec with its newly elected government and the incoming referendum.

Vladimir: What do we do now?

Estragon: Nous attendons.

Vladimir: Yes but while waiting.

Estragon: What about hanging ourselves

Vladimir: Hmmm. It’d give us an election.

[...] “the word is EE-REC-TION, Mr. Paré.” “No keep it, keep it,” says Joey (87).

Joeys adaptation is beginning to work. The carefully constructed mix of English and French heightens the power plays of communication (88).
Likewise, cross-linguistic playfulness can lead to humorous instances. The next example reveals how the resemblance between a French name and an English adjective leads to a pun about the former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, "[...] I especially liked the part where you referred to the prime minister [Jean Chrétien] as cretin [moron]" "I didn’t say cretin" (132). Interestingly, the same pun can be made in French since ‘cretin’ and ‘crétin’ have a similar pronunciation and the same signification.

**Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain**

*Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain* multiplies the inter-linguistic moments, of which most are direct borrowings from French. The overall impression that comes out of the novel is that Moore, who is a translator as well as an author, plays with the bilingual nature of Montreal. Moore often juxtaposes and superposes French and English in a translating process creating a palimpsest. The most obvious example in the novel comes in the passage where the "Centre communautaire ukrainien, [sign does] not quite [conceal] the English underneath" (55). This passage suggests that in Quebec languages have historically overlapped each other; hence, one often blurring the other and leaving a need for explanation. As the passage suggests, French has established itself as the major language in Quebec, hence concealing English in different ways. The palimpsest is also a reminder that in Quebec there is a spatial and territorial appropriation through language. Moore’s way of writing allows us to understand part of the deterritorialization-reterritorialization process that is taking place for Quebec English. Similar to Ackerman’s novel, although on a smaller scale, the words related to territory, cultural entities or
institutions are given in French, or in a bilingual fashion, “Sous-sol à louer” (25); “rue Valjoie” (99, 121, 240); “Salle 222” (111); TéléRencontres” (280); “la belle province” (283); “Le Devoir” (provincial newspaper) (299); “CLSC” [Centre local de services communautaires] (287); and, “maison de santé” (346).

Moore’s writing reveals how the cohabitation of two cultures and two languages opens to possibilities; it allows a movement between languages, a creative deformation impossible in a uni-linguistic context. An example can be read in the pun made by Milena, Jeremy’s girlfriend, while she was having an argument with a waiter, “I wouldn’t get upset. When I say fuck, it’s with a ‘ph’” (224), the reference being that both ‘phoque,’ (a seal in French) and “fuck” have the same pronunciation, however while the French term refers to an animal, the English one to a swearword. Here are other examples of the translative process and playfulness that is found in the novel, “[the apartment’s] suitability as a pit stop, a stop-gap (a pied-à-merde)” (28); “at the expenses of being called a grippe-sou, a skin flint” (29); “Lâches les portes le beigne! (literally, ‘let go of the doors, you doughnut’)” (30); “A VENDRE/FOR SALE” (37); “I was growing sadder and sadder – vin triste – as I watched the grieving widow (55); Jeremy “disappears into the Femmes [ladies rest room]” (129); “je suis out” (159); “[l] said out of the blue, ‘Je t’aime.’ (In French, this doesn’t sound so bad, not as jarring as the English)” (201); “Sabrine said he looked déchu (fallen)” (261); “I know I should mind my onions” (283), which is a direct translation from the expression se mêler de ses oignons (mind one’s own business). “A VISITEUR sign” (348); “my heart sank as we kissed à la française” (342); “She was in a maison de santé – a sanatorium, a nut house” (346).
We also find some semantic extensions, “I am not inscribed yet” (112), which derives from the French verb ‘inscrire,’ should normally be ‘register’ the ‘correct syntax should then be “I am not registered yet.’ Also, we read “if I was you” (248) a translation from si j’étais toi, however since it is in the conditional tense it should be ‘if I were you.’ We can see in these examples a direct influence from French on English, where the speaker uses words in English but with the French meaning. In other instances, Moore observes how a literal translation from one language to another might not render the true meaning. We find such a moment when someone tells Jeremy that the person he is looking for is someone who works at “God’s Hotel,” he does not understand until he translates it into French, “Hôtel Dieu” (291, 346); needless to say that this building is not a hotel but a hospital. In passages like this one, Moore becomes both the author and the translator.

Otherwise, many of the borrowings are food related. Although one can observe that it is normal to find French terms connected to food because of its culinary tradition, there is an overwhelming number of them in the novel. “French charcuterie” (80, 198); “sommelier” (wine steward) (106); “Daphnée paused to sample another vol-au-vent” (152); “un flan de poireaux” (155); “fruit de mer” (156); “champagne rosé” (157); “I’ll go for your fabled bisque de homard and swordfish amandine” (223); “[I cook] French stuff like... boeuf bourguignon and canard à l’orange and... coq au vin, bouillabaisse... coquille saint Jacques” (225); “Queen of entrées” (230); “artichoke bottoms cooked à blanc and filled with sauce béarnaise, and served with neatly-stacked pont neuf potatoes” (231); “pièce de résistance” (234); “Harfang” (brand of wine) (234); and, “Boréal Noir” (sic Boréale Noire) (303).
Moreover, *Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain* offers a variety of local words that illustrates how the novel explores the local linguistic contacts and cultures. The first example shows how certain words can change from their original meaning. The term “bloke” is English slang for a man; however, in Quebec it specifically defines an English-speaking person, often with a negative undertone. Hence in the passage: “The only English-speaking ‘bloke’ Arielle had gone put with” (43), means the only English-speaking person she has gone out with. Similarly, the term “Frog” (94) is used by English-speaking people to define a French-speaking person; this term is also rarely used in a positive context. The word “separatist” (93) is used in the novel, it defines a person who wants the independence of Quebec. Although an English word, in Quebec I see it as a high frequency usage of a word rarely used elsewhere (at least not in a Canadian context). In the publication process, a decision was made to keep the accents to the words: “dépanneur” (27,80,232,251,352); “metro” (29,70); “cinema” (93,199,250,342); “Québécois” (197); “we were next to an après-glee-club group” (223); “I was passing by a new high-tech salon [...] named Chez Délilah” (259); “we saw [...] Astérix and Jean Chrétien” (259); “Céline Dion” (173). Elsewhere the text is scattered with French moments like: “L’art d’ennuyer c’est de tout dire” (28); “white kepî” (37); “Saturday rendez-vous” (64); “Be good, hein?” (69); “I pushed the bouton d’allumage” (102); “féministe fatale” (218); “half an inch, un demi-pouce” (228); “broken rendez-vous” (259); “post-coïtum triste” (238); “coup de théâtre” (252); “a vortex of déjà-vu” (353). Finally, the novel plays with the nearby native communities. Stereotypically, the community members sell contraband cigarettes on the reserve, so in the passage, “He asked [...] for a ‘cartoon’ of Lucky Strike” (80) (a carton of cigarettes) which Milena later calls
“Kanwuckie Strikes” (80); Milena is talking about the Kahnawake Native reserve outside of Montreal.

*Birds of Passage*

This novel shows great potential for a deterritorialization of English, yet, when analyzed, we realize that its deterritorialization is very low, if not solely artificial. There is a clash between what we read, Alice’s thoughts, and Grábor, a Hungarian playwright, who is writing them. Indeed, the context should allow English to be deeply reworked under the influence of Hungarian; instead, English is used in a major fashion. Since it is made clear in the novel that Grábor does not master English, the language should mirror his inability to express his ideas. There are some linguistic hints but they are so thin that Leith has to remind the reader twice that Grábor is the actual author. The only Hungarian occurrences in the narrative are single words scattered throughout the narrative. Moreover, most of them are about food and alcohol, of which *pálinka*, a traditional liquor, represents about half of these. Others are *samizdat* (9), *palacsinta* [Hungarian pancake] (32), *gulyás* [goulash] (3), *csípétke* [Hungarian pinched noodles] (65), “lángos” [Hungarian deep fried bread] (114), “slivovica” [Slovakian liquor] (222). We can also read Hungarian expressions such as: “*Kicsi a világ*” [It’s a small world] (158), “*Egészégedre*” [cheers] (189), and “*Kezi csókolom*” [I kiss you, respectful greeting] (190).

The most obvious elements of the deterritorialization-reterritorialization process in the novel are again related to landmarks or institutions. Indeed, some are given solely in Hungarian.
(keeping the accents), Gymnázium (31), Népszabadság (36), Szent Korona [Budapest newspaper] (114), “Mikulás” [Santa Claus] (121); others are written partly in Hungarian, partly in English, Bârtók Radio (10), Gólya Steps (11), Prézsház Street (12), János Hill (13), Börzöny mountains (13), Október 6 Street (14), Vén Diák bar (35), Gellért Hotel (49), Szabadság Bridge (50), Szabadság Hill (69), János Hill (69), “Lujza Blaha Square” (94), “Mari Jázai Square” (94), Szent István Boulevard (110), Deák Square and (112), “Molnár Club” (125), “Fény Street” (141), “Dékán Street” (144), Tanács Boulevard” (176), “Váci Street” (180), “Vörösmarty Square” (180), “Gellert Hill” (195); and, some all in English: “Moscow Square” (12) [moszkva], “Hill of Roses” (13) [megdagad], “Academy of music” (31) [zene], “People’s Republic Street” (35) [család], “Heroes’ Square” (94) [hős], “Martyrs’ Street” [mártír] (140), and “Liberty Monument” (148) [szabadság]. Paradoxically, Leith writes that Alice resists translating landmarks,

Alice has resisted translating Hungarian street names into English since the day she discovered a magical path along the Danube named after Liszt that lost some of its lustre when she learned that ‘Liszt’ means ‘flour.’ [...] And golya, which is pronounced ‘goya,’ is far more beautiful word than stork. (54)

As for the presence of French in the text, here follows a list of which most are direct borrowings: “papier-maché” (19), “Gens du Pays” (62), “La Presse” and “Le Devoir” (63) (Quebec newspapers), “Anglo” (77) “Pierrette a [...] soignée woman” (84), “Québécoise” (86), “viola” (102), “La Bohème” (113), “vernissage” (127), “café” (148), “puréed spinach” (177), “cul-de-sac” (198), “nostalgie du danger” (227). There are a few hints of Montreal’s landmarks, such as “St-
Henri”, “Lionel-Groulx Métro station”, and “Musée des Beaux Arts” (60), “Université de Montréal” (129); a reference to Quebec’s politics, “René Levesque” (62), “Parti Québécois” (62), “Ile d’Orléans” (62). Since Leith has lived in both Montreal, Quebec and Budapest, Hungary, the words of the different lists resonate with her emotional ties to these specific territories and their respective languages. Leith’s writing reveals a need for negotiation between different linguistic spaces.

A Case Study of the Deterritorialization of English in Plays

*Balconville*

Fennario is credited for “[introducing] the Québécois expression ‘Balconville’ into Canadian English” (Reid, Monuments 139). The original French term refers to people who stay at home for their vacation and stereotypically spend these on their ‘balcon’, on their balcony, implying that they do not have the means to offer themselves something more expensive. Fennario appropriates the term and uses ‘balconville’ to portray a group of working-class people amidst the summer heat. Hence, even though not on vacation per se, they are still poor and on their ‘balcon’. In the second act, scene two, we see Johnny and Paquette, on their balcony, watching the ballgame on TV –on separate TV’s.
JOHNY: *watching TV* Aw shit. Bunch of bums!

PAQUETTE: *watching TV* Maudits Expos [...] 

Away, away ... câlice

JOHNY: *watching TV* Aw, shit! Le merde! Move your ass! Move your ass!

PAQUETTE: *watching TV* Il est temps, tabarnac! [...] 

PAQUETTE AND JOHNY: *together* Grimsley, ya bum! ... Aux douches!

Fennario creates a play in two languages, where both French and English evolve side by side, or more explicitly they intertwine in the building of meaning. Fennario does not separate French and English, nor does he offer any translations, he makes them work together as one language. Fennario also portrays a working-class form of expression that ties into his political ambitions for the play and for moments of class identification. As the next three passages show, language in *Balconville* not only works through linguistic intermingling, confrontation, and borrowing, but also in terms of verisimilitude of speech patterns used in proletariat theatre for the purpose of class consciousness.

JOHNY: Love that walk, Diane.

DIANE: Fuck you!

PAQUETTE: Hey, watch ton language, toi (1.3)

Or else.

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THIBAULT: C'était le fun. Me I like that, but the girls grew up. They get old. [...] 

PAQUETTE: Hey, Thibault. You have a girlfriend? 

THIBAULT: Me? Sure I got two of them. Deux. [...] 

CECILE: Pauvre homme. He was such a good boy when he was young” (1.3). 

And, 

JOHNY: Fuckin' gorf. Pepper. Get on your own side 

PAQUETTE: Hey, watch that, eh? Fais attention, okay? 

JOHNY: We were first, ya fuckin’ farmers. Go back to the sticks. 

PAQUETTE: Hey reste tranquille, eh? (1.4) 

The mix of language is not the only aspect of the play which participates in the 
deterritorialization-reterritorialization process. Indeed, many words specific to Quebec pepper 
the language of the characters. Again the most terms are those related to landmarks and 
politics, we can read, “My mother once she takes me to the Oratoire [Oratoire St-Joseph], 
because I get the polio” (1.4), “the Bank of Montréal” (1.4), “When I was a little girl in Lac St-
Jean” (1.4), “Québec” (1.4) “Montréal” (2.3), “Chez Momo is here” (3.3), “Separatists” (1.3), 
“FLQ moi. Boom! I blow everything up. Boom” (1.4), “Lévesque” (1.4). There are also a series of 
swear words: “Aw, shit. La merde” (1.3), “Aw shit! Le merde! [sic]” (1.4), “hostie,” “crisse,” and 
“câlisse” (1.3). 

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Otherwise, we find some local expressions, “Come on. A Québec quickie” (1.3), referring to a sexual intercourse of short duration; “not so bad for a peasoup” (1.4), referring to francophones who stereotypically ate pea soup because of its low cost; “just the Pepsi’s next door” (1.4), also an expression for French-speaking Québécois; and, “They got funny heads. Square heads” (1.4), which is a pejorative reference to English-speaking people. The terms ‘peasoup’ and ‘Pepsi’ are not only used by English speakers of Quebec. There is nothing unique or surprising with these expressions, what is interesting is the frequency with which they are used.

*Paradise by the River*

Rossi does not shy away from using different languages within his plays. Filippo Salvatore identifies Rossi’s language as “l’italianais, un language qui révèle l’origine ethnique et le statut socio-économique des personnages” (qtd in Moyes, La littérature 435). A multiplicity of languages can disturb the forces implicated in the major conception of literature. As an indication of this disruption, many have criticized Rossi’s use of languages. Reid remarks that “Rossi’s plays have been explicitly criticized because the characters spoke Italian but not French, because there was too much Italian dialogue, and because of mistakes in […] Italian and French passages” (Is there 87). Similar to Kafka who had a ‘poor’ use of German, Rossi is criticized for his poor French and Italian. For Rossi, the critics have missed his intention: the realism involved in the play. In the case of *Paradise by the River*, Rossi wanted to show the difficulties for an immigrant community to communicate,
when [a character] had to utter something that contributed to the plot, I made him say it in English. So why the Italian? For that brief moment where you are watching a scene where an RCMP officer or someone is questioning a client back in 1940 they didn't know how to talk. That's what I was trying to let you understand [that they couldn't communicate] and if I did it in English, it wouldn't make sense. I said, come on guys if this was a film there would be subtitles and you'd have no problem with it. And it was not confusing at all, because 90% of the time where he spoke Italian he was cursing ("ah, you sons a bitches" and so on). When you hear someone screaming and cursing in Italian or in English, you're not really losing an element of the plot. What you're missing perhaps is details like what he is actually swearing about. (Reid, Face)

Paradise by the River is a play set during WWII; hence, we cannot expect to find the same level of linguistic elements that are related to the post-Quiet Revolution period. Instead of finding different French terms related to landmarks, politics and arts, what we can observe is a high level of code-switching. The code-switching is the coexisting use of more than one language, or language variety, in conversation, in a manner consistent with the syntax and phonology of each variety. Some scholars of literature use the term code-switching to describe literary styles which include elements from more than one language, as in novels by Chinese-American, Anglo-Indian, or Latino/a writers (see Torres In the Contact Zone). From the presence of code-switching, we can infer that many people of the Italian community are either bilingual or trilingual. It may give an impression that they treat language equally; not giving preference to one
or the other, yet reality might be much more complex where people usually use language that is context specific and draws upon different networks of place, belonging and community. Here is an example where Paradise by the River uses a multi-linguistic dialogue mixing English, French, and Italian,

Maria: Hélène ne bouge pas.

Bruno: Your French is getting better.

Hélène: Che bella giornata oggi. Io molto contenta. (1.1)

The presence of code-switching can be seen as conductive to a beginning of deterritorialization. Here are the few elements that show a timid beginning of a deterritorialization of English: Hélène is called “Mademoiselle Beauchamp” (1.1); Marie is complimented as being “Une vraie artiste!” (1.1); Cenzo greets Hélène with an “Enchanté” (1.3), and later tells her “Je t’aime” (2.5). The most evident reterritorialization happens in the names of people and territory, in every case Rossi keeps the French appellation, “Hélène” (1.1), “Ville Émard” (1.1), “Montréal” (1.1), “M. Lefebvre” (2.3), “M. Beauchamp” (2.6).

Very Heaven

The play Very Heaven is set in a traditional English-speaking village where English-speaking people now only go for the summer vacation. The location allows Lambert to play with the linguistic shift that has occurred in the province since the 70s. Indeed, with the linguistic
laws that were installed that decade, the names of places and institutions have been Gallicized. In the next passage we read how a street has become French,

LEE: Where was your place?

STRETCH: Up Brown's Hill. Now they change the name – Chemin de la Montagne.

(1.4)

French is mostly used in the presence of Stretch, the local handyman and former lover of Rose, the mother of the three daughters who meet at the family’s house. We can read passages such as “Chriss. I’m sorry” (1.4), “All of you trotting to the manège [merry-go-round]” (1.4), “you just have to turn it... the temperature... really higher. (Beat) Maybe. Mine too, it’s like that” (2.1), “Bonne fête” (2.1), “Merci” (2.1), “Jesus de Plâtre” (2.1), “It’s not her affair [it is none of her business]” (2.1), “Oui, Madam” (2.1), “Ch’peux pas. Calice” (2.1), “in the dépanneur [sic]” (2.3), “she was... very passionée [sic]” (2.3). The three sisters and the mother also use French at times, “CEGEP Diploma” (1.3), “call Mme. Labreche [Labrèche]” (1.5), “La pièce de résistance!” (2.1).

Nonetheless, there are moments when Lambert’s English does not reterritorialize itself in Quebec. We see such examples in words that are written without an accent “Montreal” (1.1) and “dépanneur” (2.3), or titles that are given in English although the person is from a French-speaking origin, “Mr. LeBaron” (1.4).

Through her play, Lambert uses humour to show how the confrontation of languages can result in misunderstandings and incomprehension. Humour remains a delicate aspect of
language since it requires an understanding of the possible nuances and sub-texts. The next passage presents Stretch who is being played with by Lee, one of the three sisters of the play,

LEE: Hey Stretch? Talk to me in French. I’m way out of practice.

STRETCH: What do you want me to – Qu’est-ce que tu veux que je dise –?

LEE: I don’t know anything

STRETCH: Tes yeux sont comme la mer.

LEE: My eggs are like shit?

STRETCH: Ben no.

LEE: I understood thank you. (1.4)

Conclusion

Every time a language is deterritorialized a reterritorialization movement follows. Bogue argues this movement of language “entails a dissolution of cultural codes” (109), which is connected to Deleuze and Guattari’s insistence on the becoming other of language. Indeed, the reterritorialization is a necessary reorganization of meaning since a void was left after the deterritorialization. The reterritorialization of language is done with words, sounds and expressions that gravitate in the immediate environment of the writer. Hence, Deleuze and Guattari’s observations that a writer builds his language with his “visions and auditions”
(Critique 16), for them the 'visions and auditions' form the limits of language. It is why the reterritorialization movement of the English language in Quebec is characterized by a Gallicization, especially since the language laws have been put in place which resulted in an increase of bilinguals among Anglophones, a more casual attitude towards borrowings, an increase of prestige of French and more important a lexical need (see Grant-Russel 1999). Referring to the six literary works and Grant's linguistic study “English Usage in Contemporary Quebec,” we realize that the shift concerns mainly land markers, institutions, and politics. These are all concrete markers of Quebec's collective and institutional identity that are “not negotiable” in its on-going identity politics. Hence the reason why works speak of “rue Valjoie,” “CEGEP,” “CLSC,” “Parti Québécois,” “indépendantiste” and not “Valjoie street,” “College,” “local clinic,” “Québécois Party,” and “member of an independence movement.” These French words that constitute a part of the lexicon of the English-speaking community of Quebec are inflated by a Québécois context and culture, and, they inevitable metamorphose the lexicon of local English.

Overall, the three plays show fewer borrowings than the novels. Although we read many passages in French, they are mostly spoken by the French-speaking characters, so there are not as many signs of a deterritorialization of English. Also, the English used in the plays is generally absent of French words. Nonetheless, we see a high level of code-switching, revealing not only that the Anglophones portrayed in the plays have a good knowledge of French, but probably the English-speaking audience also.
Chapter 2: The Political Feature of Literature Written in English in Quebec

For Deleuze and Guattari the second feature of a minor literature is “que tout y est politique” (Kafka 30), and “que le branchement de l’individuel sur l’immédiat politique” (33). The common understanding of the word “politics” is “[ce qui est r]elatif à l’organisation du pouvoir dans l’État, à son exercice. Institutions politiques” (Le Petit Larousse Illustré 1999), therefore, although the two philosophers do not define explicitly their own conception of what is political, we can believe that a minor literature engages in the political discourse by writing about the different power relationships in a given society, and for a specific group. Although we can argue that any type of literature can engage in a political discourse, what is particular about a minor literature is that its writing operates on a more individual level, every aspect of society reaches the individual, and the individual interacts with each aspect of his society. Deleuze and Guattari explain this event with a metaphor of social triangles: in a minor situation, every social triangle (personal-familial, bureaucratic...) inevitably interacts with the personal one, “le triangle familial se connecte aux autres triangles, commerciaux, économiques, bureaucratiques, juridiques qui en déterminent les valeurs” (Kafka 30). The philosophers see this social interaction between the individual, or the familial, and the different elements of society as a political event since it engages in a restructuration of the power relationship between the different social aspects. The interaction happens because the space in which a minor literature evolves is limited; Deleuze and Guattari write, “son espace exigu fait chaque affaire individuelle est immédiatement branchée sur le politique” (30). Hence, “everything is political” in a minor literature because the personal, understood as an individual or a collective minority, has to
negotiate with every social aspect that builds his or her society. A major literature operates differently; it appropriates every aspect of society and includes it in the personal, there is no need for social negotiation,

[...] dans les « grandes » littératures [...] l’affaire individuelle (familiale, conjugale, etc) tend à rejoindre d’autres affaires non moins individuelles, le milieu social servant d’environnement et d’arrière fond; si bien qu’aucune de ces affaires ôdipienne n’est indispensable en particulier, n’est absolument nécessaire, mais que toutes « font bloc » dans un large espace. (30)

Needless to say that writing in English in Quebec is a political action. It is impossible to avoid it. If not for funding, the politics include the relationship between individual authors and the two linguistic communities; the writing of the work itself as well as the reception of the work. Linda Leith notes that in order to understand “what makes the situation of English Montreal so unique [one has] to step back from the literary world to see the political context in which these writers have been working. That context is the fissure between English Canada and Quebec” (Writing 25). In the investigation about literature written in English in Quebec, it is primordial to investigate the political context in which these writers are writing and how it affects their writing, and also how the reading and reception of these individual authors and works is politicized either because of the language or the content.

As a literature that writes on two frontiers, English writing in Quebec has the possibility to be a force that questions the values of the Canadian and the Québécois nations. All depends
to what extent they accommodate to French-Quebec nationalism, or participate in English-
Canadian centralism. For Lianne Moyes, Anglo-Québécois can be seen as a minor force that
shares the same quality as any other minor forces which "is the disarticulating or non-
coincidence of the categories of identity, language, culture, and territory, categories that line up
in conventional accounts of the nation" (Disarticulating 212). As Moyes' metaphor of
disarticulation shows, the process of deconstruction is not a peaceful one. Mainly, if we
consider that some of the literature written in English in Quebec has been modifying national
narratives, it does so by focusing on its own specificities and concerns often connected to life in
a French-speaking milieu grounded in a specific neighbourhood or city.

The discourse on the politics of writing in English in Quebec is exploded and very
heterogeneous; some enter the debate cheerfully and others want to stay away from the idea
that writing in English in Quebec is a political action. An example comes with volume 26 of
Québec Studies which is dedicated to the question of English writing in Quebec. The issue
discusses the paradigmatic shift from English writing by authors who happen to be in Quebec to
Anglo-Quebec writing thus acknowledging a possible minorization of a literature. The critical
responses, which even become emotional, go from complete negation to a complete
acceptation. Overall the issue is a literary debate about how or if English writing in Quebec can
be understood and read as Québécois. In this discussion, there is a reaffirmation of the
minorization of the community since 1976 which coincides with the first election of the PQ
government, an exodus of the English community to other provinces and the installation a
series of linguistic laws which had as objective the francization of Quebec's social spheres
(school, work, governmental institutions and services, etc.). It is only with the post-1976
generation that a discourse has opened to consider English-speaking writers of Quebec as part
of a minority literature; writers "marked with [their] engagement with a singular Quebec reality.
And whose production enacts in practice a place for *la culture d'expression anglaise* that is
neither defensive nor nostalgic" (Schwartzwald 1).

Within this field of study, there is a reaffirmation that language in Quebec is a delicate
issue. Gilles Marcotte notes how, for some people, French and English are caught in "une lutte à
mort [dans laquelle] l'une d'elle finira par l'emporter" (10), since "l'impérialisme linguistique
anglais [...] ne peut voir la langue française que comme résidu colonial, [... et] le nationalisme
québécois [...] n'imagine de salut pour le français que [...] l'unilinguisme intégrale" (10).
However, even Marcotte cannot deny that literature is not so simple. For the critic, the question
of Anglo-Québécois literature is a modern outlook on Quebec society, a place of plurality and
cultural multiplicity. Indeed, this approach is more appealing than the traditional duplicity in
which there is an endless threat for one of the two languages. Hence Marcotte agrees that
English writing in Quebec is a literature that has its place in Quebec, although he specifies not in
the "Québécois" corpus.

The writing of an individual writer acts as a magnifier; it exposes the politics involved in
the relationship between major and minor communities. Deleuze and Guattari write that
"[l']affaire individuelle devient donc d'autant plus nécessaire, indispensable, grossie au
microscope, qu'une tout autre histoire s'agite en elle" (30). For the English writers in Quebec,
writing might imply revealing how they inhabit Quebec as an Anglophone artist, and thus taking
a political stance. One day or another, they could have a need or a desire to situate themselves
in terms of language(s), and/or culture(s), hence towards English Canada and/or French Quebec,
even if it is denying any connection to either linguistic community. For David McGimpsey, there
are two implications for Anglophone writers who decide to make Montreal their writing city.
The first is the possibility to write against the hegemonic forces of Toronto, the literary center of
English Canada. He writes “in Montreal art circles, the gesture can be more strategic: in casting
aside middle-class values of Upper-Canada, the difference of Quebec can be co-opted as a sign
of personal distance from the English Canadian malls (“Hey Brampton, look at me! I’m saying
dépanneur!”) (136). The second implication is an act of resistance against the decline of English
language and culture in Montreal, hence, a refusal of becoming a minority. “For Montreal
Anglophones, to casually declare a primary cultural relationship with the continent around (to
freely swim in the “English sea” that allegedly imperils island Quebec) is almost to admit to a
persistent nationalistic critique of the city’s English, namely that English won’t act as a minority”
(139), or as Jean-Paul Marchand puts it, “[s’] ils pouvaient continuer à vivre comme si le Québec
était une province Anglophone et que le français n’existait pas” (77). McGimpsey later
concludes that deciding to write in English in Quebec is to “affirm a choice, express an opinion
and to take a risk” (145), or as Yves Beauchemin writes, “parler une langue, c’est aussi un geste
politique” (Le Devoir, 9 mars 1999, A7).
David Fennario

David Fennario has always been a controversial persona on the Quebec scene. His linguistic origins and political affiliations have set him as an outsider to both Quebec and English Canada. Indeed, he is a communist in favour of Quebec independence and ran for the UFP (Union des forces progressistes) in the 2003 provincial election, and he writes political drama. For him, theatre is not only entertainment, it is political. In an interview in the Montreal Mirror we can read,

Some of the plays I’ve done, like Joe Beef: A History of Pointe Saint Charles, Banana Boots or more recently, Perimeters, are obviously pieces that were designed to be done by activists as a means of mobilizing people on particular issues. It doesn’t mean they couldn’t be done at the Centaur, but I doubt whether they’d sit comfortably on the stage. Other plays like Balconville or Condoville were designed to have wide appeal. So it’s not a question of one or the other but using theatre as an entertaining way of making people aware of alternatives. (Barratt, Slow Train)

Interestingly, plays such as Balconville have succeeded because their political message seems to have failed, and did not get across to the audience. Fennario himself has said that he considers all of his plays which premiered at Centaur Theatre "political and artistic failures" (Charlebois, David Fennario). In his essay “Voices (off): Deconstructing the Modern English-Canadian Dramatic Canón,” Richard Knowles argues that "the quality of his play derives from Fennario’s
failure to make his political point” (104). As such, although Balconville was a box office success, the audience missed the intended message. In a different perspective, Reid notes how “Fenario’s ‘individualism’ is not at odds with his political objectives; performing his ‘individualism’ is simply the best means of social change at his disposal” (David Fennario Turned Rhapsodist 74).

Fennario’s goal with Balconville was to bring the problems of the working class to public attention not explore the possible relationships between linguistic communities, in this instance Anglo-Montrealers and Franco-Montrealers. Reid observes how

[t]he image of the battle of flags, fleur de lys versus maple leaf, taken from one scene of the play was regularly used in advertisements. Although the play is frequently credited with overcoming the clichéd image of the wealthy Anglo living in Westmount, the flag scene and the “understandings” that it encapsulated were for the most part counterproductive to the author’s intended message of the necessity of working-class solidarity to overcome social and economic oppression. (Is there 79-80)

The playwright even joined the striking ushers of Place des Arts during the run of Balconville, picketing his own play. As a Marxist writer, Fennario writes, or tries to write, about how in times of social and economic disparity linguistic conflicts prevent from focusing on and fighting against the oppressive forces.
In the play, the characters are very critical towards the landlords, the governmental institutions, the politicians, etc, but they never take action. The only time they really fight is between each other. We can see such examples in their opinion about the liberal candidate Gaetan Bolduc,

IRENE: I don’t know what’s worse, Joe Who or René Quoi?

PAQUETTE: Bolduc, he was okay... until he got the power. Then that’s it. He forgets us.

[...]

JOHNY: Yeah, fuck the politics. Nobody has any fun in the Pointe anymore. We should have a party or something. (1.3)

[...]

JOHNY: I’m telling ya, they’re all fucking separatists at the U.I.C. If you’re English, you’re fucked.” (1.3)

The U.I.C. did employ more French-speaking people than English-speaking people; however, the reason was not that they were separatists, but that in that time period more French-speaking people were bilingual. The only character in Balconville who does take political action is Irene. She is part of the Pointe Action Committee which organizes events to increase public awareness of the unemployment problems, “We’re gonna march in front of the U.I.C. building. Let them
know we don’t like the forty percent unemployment down here” (2.3). She also has a job; she is bilingual, and works towards reconciliation between the neighbours.

Finally, the audience has seen Balconville as play that discusses how language(s) can be a source of tension even though the goal of Fennario was to show how prejudices and misunderstandings prevent some people from taking appropriate political action. The criticism around the play mostly agrees that the message of working-class solidarity did not come across. Nonetheless, by focusing so much on what the play has not succeeded in doing, it becomes interesting to note that the critics and reviews themselves promote Fennario’s intended message. Although he has said that he considers all of his plays which premiered at Centaur Theatre “political and artistic failures,” he returned to the Centaur in November 2005 for the premiere of Condonville, which revisits the characters in Balconville 26 years later, when the pressures of an upwardly mobile marketplace in Montreal are threatening to dislodge them from their tenement – now renovated as a condo Co-op. The language difficulties of the past are now replaced by worries about the rising cost of real estate, and conflicts with two new tenants, a gay couple, one of whom is from the Congo. As in the earlier play, the characters speak in colloquial French (joual) and English, and the dialogue is peppered with witty one-liners and expletives.
Vittorio Rossi

Vittorio Rossi is not an author with an avowed interest in politics, nor is he interested in having his plays reviewed under a political or linguistic angle; he tries to stay out of the political aspect related to writing. In an interview with Reid, Rossi affirms this lack of interest in addressing language issues. “I think people waste too much energy on that stuff. Learn the language and get on with it, you know” (Face to Face). However, since everything about language in Quebec is to an extent political, it seems impossible for Rossi to escape the politics involved in writing about Quebec. The Gazette’s theatre critic Pat Donnelly’s comments on Rossi’s body of work exemplify how even if one wants to stand outside of the linguistic and political debate, one can be pulled in by an exterior force. Donnelly points out how in Rossi’s play The Chain “Italian is frequently spoken [...] but there’s not a single syllable in French” (H5); then she complains that Rossi “sidesteps political issues” and that, in the play, “no-one breathes a word about Bill 101 [the Quebec language law]” (H5). Similarly, Paradise by the River was reviewed by The Globe and Mail critic Kate Taylor, among her observations, one was about the way in which Rossi handled language. She writes that the language of the play is “utterly contemporary with an anachronistically liberal use of the f-word” (D6). Reid disagrees and answers to the comment by noting how “the word is used fairly judiciously and almost exclusively in the male-only internment camps” (The Worlds 21). Taylor then goes on and complains that the play is “erratically trilingual” (D6). Again Reid answers the comment by noting how “the dialogue in English, French and Italian has to meet the challenge of allowing a unilingual Anglophone audience to follow the action” (21). Reid also questions Taylor by raising the questions “Is Taylor
really recommending that the play should have been systematically trilingual (a third in French, a third in English and a third in Italian?), or that all dialogue be uniformly translated into the other two languages, or is she really saying that wouldn’t we all be happier if the whole play was in English?” (21). What we find in this layered discussion (Reid/Taylor/Rossi) about both the play and the comment made on the play is that in Quebec language raises questions. So much so that at times the discussion about language(s) shadows the actual discussion of the content or the quality of the play itself.

Rossi believes that his play *Paradise by the River* is different from his other plays because of its political and historical aspects, “it was definitely a departure [from my previous plays]. I could have easily turned it into another family drama in which a husband gets arrested and we see how the family reacts in the kitchen. But that’s not what interested me. I wanted to do something more epic in scope” (Reid, Face). The play explicitly exposes the politics involved in being part of a nation within a nation, in this case Rossi writes about the Italian immigrant community, in Quebec/Canada. In a contemporary Canadian context where multiculturalism can be said to be taken for granted, plays like Rossi’s remind us that minorities remain vulnerable to their social majority.

In the play, the Italian community is mostly composed of naturalized Italian-Canadians; however, their Canadian citizenship can be revoked at any moment, making them simple refugees, as we read in Cenzo’s declaration, “You’re a fool, Ciccio. Mussolini just kissed your citizenship goodbye. As of today, Canada is an enemy of Italy. Today, while we were working,
and heard the news, Pierre and Jacques walked off the job. Now they’re scared of Italians” (1.2).

Later, when the police come to arrest Romano they tell him that he is Italian, not Canadian,

ROMANO: I’m a Canadian citizen!

RCMP OFFICER 1: You’re Italian.

[...]

ROMANO: What have I done?

RCMP OFFICER 1: Under the Defence of Canada Regulations, you are being arrested on suspicion of subversive actions. You are Italian. You are now our enemy. We are at war. [...] (to Hélène) Italians are dangerous people! They are Facists! They’re here to hurt us! Do you understand! Turn them in! It is your only choice! They are not to be trusted! They are now our enemies! (1.2)

Rossi suggests that although the Italian community speaks English and French, has several friends among French and English-speaking communities, and participates in the local economy; it always lives on a political frontier from which they can be excluded by the ruling forces in times of need.
Linda Leith

Linda Leith is a writer whose life has been determined by the politics of different nations. In the second chapter of her book *Writing in Times of Nationalism: From Two Solitudes to Blue Metropolis*, she takes the time to write how her parents were anti-sectarian communists, that they lived in the British Empire (Northern Ireland), and because of the political convictions of her parents they had to move several times before landing in Quebec in 1963. That was the year when the FLQ (Front de liberation du Québec) started their violent campaign, and the War Measure Act was imposed by Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Then, after studying abroad, Leith returned to Quebec in 1974, a period of political renewal where, in 1976, the PQ government was elected first the first time. For Leith, Quebec, because of its history, has the inevitable particularity of associating language and politics; for her, languages are political, “[w]hatever has to do with language is the stuff not only of wry amusement but also political correctness, solemnity, and high seriousness. It also has to do with the survival of a people, dignity, nation, the future of the French language, the vitality of this French-speaking minority. And of that English-speaking one” (Writing 29).

Not surprisingly, her book *Writing in Time of Nationalism* has a very personal approach; this quality returns to Deleuze and Guattari’s claim that in a minor context the personal and the political are intrinsically connected, if not inseparable. We can read these words in the introduction of her book. “This is a literary story, though some of it personal, for I eventually came to play a role in the story would unfold. Since its focus is Montreal, where language and literature are inevitably political, it is also a political story” (19). Although the book is historically
accurate, her perspective on the two national literatures, or nationalisms, seems anchored in the past conception of two solitudes. Leith finds herself in the paradoxical position where she tries to show how English literature participates in the Quebec literary scene (see “Commentaires”, Québec Studies, vol. 26), yet promotes the idea of cultural division. As Reid notes in his review of the book, “Leith’s broad brush strokes along the fault line of two solitudes repeatedly obliterate what might be surprising, different and compelling – not to mention more accurate.” (Ms Leith). Indeed, although Leith does not deny the marginality associated with the English-speaking group, she considers them as very talented and more and more present on the international scale. Leith believes that the Anglophone literary community of Montreal has since 2000 entered a new golden age, similar to the post Second World War period that led to authors like Hugh MacLennan and Leonard Cohen,

the change we now see in our collective literary fortune is more, though, than the sum of the individual successes of a dozen or more writers. That kind of change is the product not only of all those individual successes but also the dramatic improvement some of us writers have made in the practical conditions under which we work. (Writing 27)

However, if there is a revival, it is very different from the past ‘Golden Age.’ Contemporary writers like Leith herself, Rossi, Ackerman and Fennario write about Quebec, live in the province and participate in the artistic scene, while the earlier authors, such as Gallant, Cohen and
Richler all moved out from Quebec and wrote from abroad. The contemporary authors have to face the politics involved in writing in English in Quebec, especially those related to language.

Leith's first novel, *Birds of Passage*, reveals her early desires to investigate and write about the several political aspects relative to inhabiting Quebec as an Anglophone. The novel follows Alice, the semi-autobiographical character, in Budapest Hungary, and her neighbour, Gabor, a romantic, who has mostly escaped reality by living the cloak-and-dagger existence of an underground political activist. Like her book, *Writing in Times of Nationalism*, the novel constructs its narrative around the idea that there is an inevitable rift between the English- and French-speaking communities of Quebec. Although Alice is Irish, thus has a historical background that could suggest that she also has a certain antipathy against 'Englishness', she is quickly categorized as 'English' by the linguistic majority both in Quebec and Hungary. This feeling of exclusion is part of the reason that made her leave the province of Quebec. At first however, when she arrived in Quebec in the early 70s, Alice had quickly developed a sense of belonging; she had active interest in and desire to participate in Quebec's politics which were synonymous with change and revolution,

In Quebec [tribalism] had a different look than in Ireland. So at first, in the early years in Quebec, Alice misread the political signs all around her. She admired René Levesque; she loved the popular anthem, *Gens du pays*; she even considered joining the Parti Québécois. A kind of anti-English feeling was in the air, of course, but Alice had never thought of herself as English. (62)
Rapidly however, she was disenchanted by the majority’s attitude,

Alice tried her best not to care too much about the laws that made English signs illegal and that led English schools to close. Eventually, she decided that language had taken the place of religion in Quebec. English was taboo, the purity of French language was the order of the day, and nationalism was rampant. By the time Alice began teaching physical education at an English elementary school in Montreal West, she was agreeing with her colleagues, who were complaining of feeling unwanted and irrelevant. (62-63)

In this context, we read how Alice has a hard time belonging to any community whether a minority or a majority. In this sense, she participates in the former conception that the English in Quebec are caught in a situation of “double exile”¹: she cannot be part of the Francophone community because they will not let her, and she cannot conceive that she is part of the Anglophone community because of her origins. This makes Alice a liminal character who has difficulty belonging to any group. Similar to her character Leith also sees herself as liminal, in the article “Commentaires,” she says, “Je ne me sens jamais complètement chez moi; je ne suis complètement chez moi nulle part, ni à Montréal, ni à Budapest, ni à Londres, et certainement pas à Belfast. Cependant je me sens beaucoup plus chez moi à Montréal qu’ailleurs” (15).

Hence, while Leith’s actions as an Anglo-culture activist can be seen as a political success, since

¹ In his essay “Double Exile and the Montreal English-Language Poetry,” David Solway writes that poets of Montreal are caught in a situation of ‘double exile.’ They are a minority within a minority; different from both Québécois and ROC poets, English poets from Montreal “form a twofold hostage community” (Director’s Cut 60).
the events she has put up participate in a cultural and linguistic métissage, and thus break apart
the idea that languages and their respective cultures evolve separately, her writing, more
specifically Birds of Passage seems to avoid this truth. The novel is anchored in the past with
novels like MacLennan's Two Solitudes. Birds of Passage reaffirms the traditional way of reading
Québécois literature against Canadian literature, both in their respective languages. Even
though Leith’s novel speaks about Quebec, it escapes the reality that things are changing.

Marianne Ackerman

Marianne Ackerman is well aware of the politics connected to language issues in
Quebec. When she created Theatre 1774, her objective was to present bilingual plays, played by
actors of both the French-speaking and the English-speaking communities. Although both the
French and English theatre companies thrive on the Montreal scene, it seems that neither
audience has showed much interest in the bilingual theatre of Ackerman. In an interview with
Gregory Reid, Ackerman says that one of the main reasons her company could not prosper is
because there was a "huge resistance to the truth of how Quebecers live, English and French,
which is rather well. On any planetary or historical scale, people here get along well and work
together—that’s a fact. That fact cannot be reflected on stage because it flies in the face of two
depth entrenched visions"1. For example, Le Devoir critic Robert Lévesque commented that it
was a pity that Echo Project hired a French-speaking director as well as actors, while the play

1 Marianne Ackerman, entretien inédit, 24 Mai 1997; "Théâtre d'une communauté"
itself was done in English. Similarly, Pat Donnelly said “I went home from Echo thinking seriously about Quebec separation. Maybe it’s not such a bad idea after all. Here is a case of a Francophone great talent crossing over and kind of losing it” (Breaking a Leg). As these comments show, people in Quebec can have difficulty with cross-linguistic projects. Another example can be found in the audience, or the lack of audience, that attended play. The Echo Project played to 30% houses, and the company lost ten thousand dollars; the revised version that played in Toronto attracted a larger audience and received mixed reviews (Breaking a Leg).

Similar to Leith’s, Ackerman’s first novel Jump is semi-autobiographical. The novel follows Myra Grant during the second Quebec referendum (1995). At first, we read how Myra is fervently pro-independence, yet as the novel ends, she cancels her vote, not knowing if it was the right decision, “she took a pencil and marked a question mark beside Oui” (343). Myra’s attachment to Quebec is undeniable; she loves Montreal and she is writing a book about the future of Quebec. Yet, she needs a break from the Montreal, she needs “to get her certainty back” (344), so she leaves for Mexico. She wants to believe that there will be a new referendum when the new political leaders will present an all inclusive project, and not only one for the vieille souche Québécois.

In her novel, Ackerman creates the character Joey who founds a bilingual theatre company in Montreal. Through Joey we can probably read how difficult an enterprise it was for Ackerman to direct a bilingual theatre project, “‘How could I have been so fucking stupid as to found an alternative theatre company? Alternative to what? This city is a backwater.’ ‘For the
English, which is why you wanted to work with French-‘For everybody! Don’t get me started’” (62). For Joey, language is not the issue at hand; being part of a project that tries to make languages work together is. Later in the novel, we read how critics in Quebec can link art and politics. In the criticism of Joey’s adapted version of *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett, we first read an Anglophone critic of *The Gazette* who tries to demolish the play “[the] bicultural existentialism leaves one with the sinking feeling that this larger bicultural experiment on the banks of the St. Lawrence has, finally, outlived its time. [...] These clowns [the actors] don’t talk to each other, they talk to the audience. How Canadian. Ultimately, who cares?” (174). While Joey sees this as an attempt to encourage people not to attend his play, Myra has a more positive perspective. She believes that “[the play made the critic] think. Better still, it made her feel something. Look, she linked the show to a wider political issue” (175). She readily reminds Joey that Joey’s first objective was to make the audience ask themselves questions, which they did. The second review is by a francophone critic of *Le Devoir*, who seemingly enjoyed the play but inevitably links it to the political situation, “*Waiting for Godot* proves Quebec maturity and sophistication of culture. Roughly translated: ‘The interplay of language... natural and potent. Nothing small or simple about this tale.... Metaphor for Quebec.... A country whose time has come’” (175). Joey immediately recognizes the sale’s pitch for independence, and ultimately feels “like [he’s] been mauled by politicians” (176). Indeed, in Quebec arts and politics go hand in hand, we can be reminded of the different artistic rallies in the referendum period, or the criticism made against several Anglophone artist who were accused of being part of a lamb lobby because they refused to criticize the government’s politics when it imposed the linguistic
laws that disadvantaged the Anglophone community. Jump is an interesting voice in the Anglo-Quebec discourse. The novel allows an insider’s look into the complicated relationship between Anglophones and Quebec, even more so when that person is for the independence of Quebec.

Conclusion

In a minor context, the act of writing is a political action because it challenges concepts such as language, linguistic communities, and national affiliations. It can be believed that English writing in Quebec, compared to other English works from Canada for example, discusses politics and language more specifically mainly because it evolves in a context where language is political. The writers who engage in writing about Quebec often write about the ways in which the linguistic situation in Quebec, nationalism, the independence movement, or the actions taken by the provincial government affect them, either on an individual level or on a community level. The four works here studied have done so since they all address in one way or another language and the political issues. Ackerman writes about how some people within the Anglophone community share the idea that Quebec can be an independent country, yet it also shows how the linguistic majority can at times blame the linguistic minorities, in this case the failure of the 1995 referendum. Birds of Passage addresses the linguistic politics of the Quebec government and the different types of relationship between the two linguistic communities which turn around the stereotypical belief that there is an inevitable rift between them. Leith makes a point that politics play a key part in this condition since the government acts on the
behalf of the French-speaking majority and leaves the English-speaking minority in the margin. *Paradise by the River* shows how certain political situations, in this case a war, make linguistic minorities vulnerable to their social majority. Finally, *Balconville* only half succeeds in its Marxists goals. Fennario wanted to show how in times of economic difficulties people can leave their linguistic differences behind and work against the oppressive forces. Instead, the audience only saw the stereotypical linguistic conflict, which nonetheless is a leading political issue in Quebec.
Chapter 3. The Collective Feature of Literature Written in English in Quebec

The third feature of a minor literature, following Deleuze and Guattari’s conception, is that “tout prend une valeur collective [puisque] les conditions ne sont pas données d’une énonciation individuée, qui serait celle de tel ou tel “maître” et pourrait être séparée de l’énonciation collective” (Kafka 31). For the two French philosophers, the only way a minor literature can be built is from a collective enunciation, “il n’y a pas de sujet, il n’y a que des agencements collectives d’énonciation” (33), “bien qu’elle renvoie toujours à des agents singuliers” (Critique 15). A collective enunciation is thus an assemblage of minor voices which once put together constitute a specific language and literature but without creating a unified subject. As Deleuze and Guattari write, the specificity of a minor literature is that it does not have the necessary elements to produce individuated voices which could speak for the minor group since this would return to having master voices, a characteristic belonging to a major literature. Accordingly, a minor literature has an inherent polyphonic and egalitarian quality because it is built on a multiplicity of voices that cannot hold any authority. The writers thus evolve more or less on an equal basis, creating a situation where literature “est l’affaire du peuple” (32), and not governed by a few major writers. Deleuze and Guattari see this situation as “[un élément] bénéfique [qui] permet de concevoir autre chose qu’une littérature de maîtres” (31). Even more so if the writers find themselves in the margins of their own fragile and minor community, “cette situation le met d’autant plus en mesure d’exprimer une autre communauté potentielle, de forger les moyens d’une autre conscience et d’une autre sensibilité” (32). The fact that a writer can create a community within a community raises the
issue that although writing the minor is a collective activity, it is also one that dissolves the very collectivity that the writer is writing about. Ronald Bogue addresses the issue and believes that the reason for such a dissolution of the collectivity is because “minor literature’s various becomings have as their function the decoding of all fixed identities” (109). In fact, the only aspect that can be considered as unifying is that each member speaks and/or writes with a personal language that minorizes the major language in which he/she is functioning.

The English-speaking writers of Quebec are no exception. As Lianne Moyes notes, “les écrivains et écrivaines de langue anglaise du Québec sont un groupe aussi hétérodoxe et contradictoire que n’importe quel autre group” (Écrire 26). Indeed, if there is to be an Anglo-Québécois literature, surely there needs to be a group of Anglo-Québécois writers, yet, there hardly seems to be a sense of community. Reid notes how “English writers in Quebec resist, equivocate upon and disavow a collective identity” (82), and Moyes writes that, “certains et certaines s’identifieraient comme anglo-québécois et aussi comme canadien anglais; d’autres s’identifieraient comme l’un ou l’autre; ou encore comme aucun des deux” (34). Mainly, if we follow the arguments of Linda Leith (Writing in the Time of Nationalism) and Josée Legault (L’invention d’une minorité), there is a sense that a community was created solely in reaction to Quebec’s language laws (50; 57), yet without resulting in the creation of an Anglo-Québécois subjectivity. In his book Time to Say Goodbye: The Case for Getting Quebec out of Canada, Reed Scowen points out how the English speaking people living in Quebec are not ‘Anglo’ enough to conceive themselves as a community; “there is in fact no English-speaking community in
Quebec" (117), because Anglophones lack "a common vision of their English language and culture" (120). As such, it remains nebulous if such a community exists.

Nonetheless, some people argue that an English-speaking community is slowly making its way in the social discourse. Mainly because many people from the community and outside the community speak and write about them as a group. Reid points out that there is no denying that for "many years now, [the English-speaking Quebecers have] been going through a process, both internal and external, of being labelled and defined as a community" (Constructing 70). Examples to support this vision can be found in the foundation of the Quebec Writers' Federation (QWF) which was created because many writers did not feel at home within the Writers' Union of Canada. Francine Bordeleau writes that "[l]a federation [QWF] est née du sentiment général d'être négligé, de la volonté naturelle de tout groupe de s'affirmer localement" (Littérature 17). David Homel believes that the QWF allows writers to believe they exist as a group, "Tiens, nous voilà une communauté. On existe" (Bordeleau, Littérature 17). Similarly, Marc Abley believes that the federation "nous donne un sens de la communauté" (17). However, these testimonies also reveal the locality implicated in creating such groups, some might refute being part of a community only based in Quebec, while others might argue that these federations cannot be applied to a larger sense of a pan-Québec community since their members are mainly part of the Montreal intelligentsia. Indeed, the use of the word ‘community’ is more often than not attributed to an Anglo-Montreal phenomenon, and thus does not seem to have an effect on the collective consciousness of the English-speakers of
Quebec as a whole. Referring to Deleuze and Guattari who believe that the main element which makes a minor literature collective is the absence of a national or collective conscience,

[tout prend une valeur collective] parce que la conscience collective ou nationale est ‘souvent inactive dans la vie extérieure et toujours en voie de désagrégation’, c’est la littérature qui se trouve chargé positivement de ce rôle et de cette fonction d’énonciation collective, et même révolutionnaire: c’est la littérature qui produit une solidarité active, malgré le scepticisme; et si l’écrivain est en marge ou à l’écart de sa communauté fragile, cette situation le met d’autant plus en mesure d’exprimer une autre communauté potentielle. (Kafka 31)

In an interview with Gail Scott, Patrick Poirier suggest that Anglo-Montreal writing exists as a parallel literary institution,

Est-ce qu’il ne faut pas reconnaître que les auteurs anglophones du Québec, et davantage ceux qui habitent Montréal, semblent appartenir à une institution littéraire parallèle, à une institution qui aurait ses propres repères, ses propres lieux? Que l’on pense, par exemple, à la Quebec Writers Federation, aux prix QWF, au Département de Creative Writing de l’Université Concordia, aux lectures publiques organisées dans les cafés du Mile End : toutes ces activités témoignent de la vitalité d’une institution littéraire anglo-montrealaise, mais cela atteste aussi sa marginalité par rapport aux institutions québécoises francophones, voire même par rapport à l’institution littéraire canadienne. (27)
Gail Scott argues that

Montreal is a city-state, d'une certaine façon ; Montréal et ses environs. C'est un lieu très particulier, au Québec et sur le continent. Dans les faits, la littérature anglaise au Québec s'écrit surtout à Montréal, par rapport à sa réalité urbaine, à ses quartiers. Elle se définit, en premier lieu, à partir de Montréal, quels que soient les autres courants qu'elle rencontre. (28)

No wonder that the English-speaking people living outside Montreal might conceive themselves as people who accidently happen to live in a French-speaking province and who have no other ties to Quebec other than inhabiting it, hence “‘québécois’ dans le sens territorial et non culturel du terme” (Legault 58).

Geoff Hancock describes how, for him, the English-writing community of Quebec is dismembered and shows no signs of collectivity. “Montreal has not one single dominant voice. There are groups, each one with distinctive antithetic splinters of the individuals within the group. So regionalism has been replaced with neighbourhoodism and many of these groups are talking only to themselves” (75). Although Hancock’s viewpoint might be refuted by many, it nonetheless reaffirms the marginality that can be associated to writing in English in Quebec. The notion of marginality again pushes this type of literature as being secondary, as on in becoming, and as Bogue notes, “its status as a collective enterprise” (109). Indeed, the body of literary works produced in English in Quebec is done by a very eclectic group of people; among many, we can note different affiliations, some are English-Canadians, others English-Montrealers, or
else English-Italians, English-Irish, English-Asians, etc., and even maybe Franco-Québécois
writing in English. In fact, nowadays, we can only consider English in Quebec as “the glue of a
multitude of ethnicities” (Reid, Is there 85), of which the “Italians turn out to be the single
largest ethnicity” (84). With such a variety of people, it is not possible to conceive a unified
group, nor is it possible to believe in a unified literary subject.

The authors under study confirm the heterodox nature of the English-speaking writers in
Quebec; David Fennario is a Quebec-born Anglophone with Irish origins living in Pointe Saint-
Charles; he is a playwright and a political activist. Jeffrey Moore was born in Montreal, studied
abroad and returned to the city; he is a novelist, a translator and university lecturer. Vittorio
Rossi has Italian origins but was raised in Ville-Émard, Montreal; he is a playwright and actor.
Linda Leith was born in Belfast and Marianne Ackerman in Ontario and both have Irish blood;
Leith is a novelist, founder and co-founder of cultural events; Ackerman is a playwright, a
novelist and co-founder of a theatre company. It is important to note that none of them are
ready to see themselves as a voice for the Anglophone community. Their works each explore a
personal relationship with Quebec’s reality, hence we can speak of an explosion of different
narratives which each have their “visions et auditions” (Deleuze, Critique 9).

**Migrant Motif Throughout the Literary Works**

Similar to the community it is writing, the works under study often present Anglophones
of Quebec as a people who have multiple origins and multiple belongings. To begin with, five of
the works have characters that find themselves in a situation in which they have moved from
the 'original' place called home; they then inhabit a temporary or permanent 'new place', or are
living a situation of in-between homes. The fact that many writers use the motif of migrancy
helps in the deconstruction of the conception that Quebec has a typical Anglo-Saxon
community. Peter van Toorn identifies the English-speaking community of Quebec as “the
Gypsy group of Canadian poets” (49) with a “bohemian ambiance” (62); Robert Majzels
imagines something like a Jewish model where the writer experiences both the inside and the
outside status, part of a “international, a non-national nation” (18), and Linda Leith writes that
“nowhere, can I find myself fully at home” (15). Tarras Grescoe identifies how the English-
speaking community has changed since the early 1970s, a decade when many migrated to other
provinces, mainly Ontario, to flee Franco-Québécois nationalism

The majority of the half-million anglophones who have left Quebec since the
early seventies [...] tended to be unilingual and resistant to the changes sweeping
society. Those who remained [...] are adaptable, multilingual citizens [...]. In the
1996 census, which counted 760,000 people who spoke English at home, it was
found for the first time that Quebec Anglos were more likely to marry somebody
who spoke another language. What’s more, 65 per cent reported they could
speak French (versus only 40 per cent in the early seventies). (76)
For Grescoe the community reveals itself to be less self centered; it has opened to Quebec's major culture and its French language. Correspondingly, English is losing many of its stereotypical cultural signifiers and is becoming more and more filled with foreign markers.

Consequently, there is much movement in the novels as well; people move to Quebec, people move out of Quebec, people move out and then return; people think about moving out; people think about returning, etc. In *Very Heaven* we read how one of the sisters and the father have moved to the United States, and that Stretch went to Alberta and returned after a short time. The three sisters return from different cities to their childhood home in a kind of journey for peace. In *Paradise by the River*, the main characters are mostly of Italian and Sicilian descent. Once established in Montréal, a lot of them are imprisoned and sent for several months to a war camp in Petawawa, Ontario. Their whole lives seem like a pilgrimage for a simple and quiet life, a place they can finally call home. Eventually, some go back to the Canadian city they lived in before the arrests, while others return to Italy. The three other works, *Jump*, *Birds of Passage*, and *Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain* develop characters with a complex sense of belonging anchored in a multiplicity of origins. In *Jump* for example, Myra is of Irish descent, was born in Ontario, but now lives in Montreal; in *Birds of Passage*, Alice is originally from Northern Ireland, has lived in England, Quebec, and is now in Budapest Hungary, but she thinks of returning back to Montreal; Daniel her husband, comes from India, studied in Kenya and England, now lives in Montreal Quebec, and refuses to live in Hungary; in *Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain* Jeremy, who has a forged doctorate degree from South Africa (he has never even been there), was born in
England, moved to Ontario, then to Quebec to finally return to England; and Milena, Jeremy's preordained lover, who is probably the hardest character to decode, says this about her origins,

My mother is from India, my father's Czech. I know it’s confusing. Listen closely 'cause I’m not going to repeat it. My mother emigrated to Canada, my father emigrated—or at least ended up—in Ireland. My mother went to Ireland on a holiday with her Canadian boyfriend, met my father, then dumped her boyfriend. [...] God knows what they had in common—maybe their dialects, which aren’t far apart. [...] Romany and Sanskrit. (133)

Also, both *Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain* and *Birds of Passage* include a Gypsy motif. Interestingly, each novel offers a different perspective on the matter. Milena who is from a Rom lineage, does not question or defend her origins; she lives in Montreal and considers herself part of the multicultural city; Daniel, on the contrary, looks like a Gypsy but he is not, and when he comes to visit Alice in Hungary, he feels the need to defend his non-Gypsy identity. The narrative suggests that Hungarians do not look kindly on the presence of this more or less nomadic community. The inclusion of this type of travelling people inevitably opens up the discussion on convoluted identities, identities in becoming, national affiliations and languages.

Not surprisingly, Majzels recognizes this type of literary moment in Kafka's writing and Kafka's Jewish identity,

aux Juifs. À la fois dedans et dehors, l'idée des Juifs en tant que nation internationale, une nation non-nationale, peut servir de rappel constant de la relativité des limites de intérêts individuels, identitaires et communautaires, de ce que le critère de la nation était censé régler une fois pour toutes... Ils [sont] l'opacité d'un monde qui lutte pour la clarté, l'ambiguïté d'un monde en mal de certitude. (18-19)

The two novels do not try to offer any definite answers to the Rom/Gypsy condition; instead, they describe the condition as a story like any other, a story of the life-time process of finding a home. This home, which is more about a metaphysical feeling than any physical place, seems to arise from inside the individual since the outside world is ever changing, or else in disintegration.

**David Fennario**

Fennario has been acknowledged as the leading dramatic voice of the working class in Canada and the poet warrior of Pointe Saint-Charles and the Montreal Irish (Reid, Monuments 139). Being a Marxist in favour of Quebec's independence, Fennario has as objective to use drama to expose the difficulties of the working-class minority, a minority that includes any linguistic group, hence both French-speaking and English-speaking Québécois. The playwright has never shown any interest in defending a linguistic minority such as the English-speaking minority of Quebec. In an interview with Gregory Reid, David Fennario, claims: "The whole
Terry Goldie points out that in his earlier plays Fennario was “unconsciously pandering to his middle class Anglophone audience” (64). Fennario concedes that this eventually “[pulled] the plays towards entertainment for this particular [bourgeois] audience” (David Fennario: His World on Stage). This depoliticization of his work pushed Fennario to leave the Centaur theatre and create in 1983 the Black Rock Theatre, a community theatre based in Pointe Saint-Charles. Reid notes how the community theatre gave Fennario the chance to produce a more personal body of work outside of “Centaur’s bourgeois enclave,”

[The power of Fennario’s text derives from his commitment to his immediate community and to a corresponding style. Fennario has given up (at least in short term) the global market of “civilized individuals” and the open-endedness, polysemy and indeterminacy of post-modern literature in favour of “his relationship with his social group” and his author-driven and message-driven performance/text. (David Fennario 72)

Since community theatre is a tool to perform the working-class community by the working-class community, it allows the actors to play their own persona, for example a working-class character is played by a worker. Reid notes how
Producing theatre in the community, by, for, and about the community and history of Pointe Saint-Charles would restructure the relationship and dynamics of audience and performance. The use of amateur actors from the Pointe means that the working-class characters are not exploited in the process of being played.

(69)

This type of theatre is much closer to Fennario's political and social beliefs and also more conductive to share a message with the intended audience. Referring to Reid who believes that theatre, with its emphasis on audience and community is a medium conductive to reterritorialization (Is there 86), Fennario's performance(s) has the power to reterritorialize his own convictions and those of the community into the community.

Fennario's Marxist beliefs have pushed him to consider some of his plays, such as Balconville, failures because they were not political enough, and also because the intended message did not get through. Reid notes how

the characters and situations of [...] Balconville were highly unlikely to produce revolutionary ferment in the frankly bourgeois audience of Centaur theatre. In the closed context of [...] the tribal environment of the Pointe, the characters tend to appear as victims of themselves and each other, rather than of hegemonic social structures. (David Fennario 68)

Fennario believed that the revolutionary force of the play resided in its realism, not to say neighbourhoodism, however, its commonplace quality turned it into a comedy. Reid remarks
how the clichés and daily life banalities in the play became a source of comical relief because the audience viewed it from a “distant, wide-ranging perspective that includes the theatre itself and augments the absurdity of a daily life simply by putting it on display for removed but amused viewing” (68). The success was mainly attributed by the Montreal Anglo-bourgeois community of the Centaur, an audience that Fennario would eventually not consider his own. The only character of Balconville that can be seen as conductive to Fennario’s social message is Iren Regan, Johnny’s wife. She is the only character who does not try to escape her situation. She is also the only one who puts some energy into building solidarity between people. She is member of the Point Action Committee, an organization that tries to make life better for the people of the Pointe. However, at the end of the play, when their building is about to be burned down, there is no sense that things are better, only that things will remain the same, unchanged for the working-class community.

Vittorio Rossi

Vittorio Rossi is a precursor in the representation of his community. As an author and an actor, Rossi has succeeded in portraying the Italian community both in theatre and on television. His literature mostly represents the English-speaking Italian community of Montreal. Similar to Fennario, Rossi works with elements that he feels close to. In his case he writes about working-class people with Italian origins in the trans-linguistic vernacular of the Montreal neighbourhood of Ville Émard; the neighbourhood where he grew up. For Rossi, the importance
in the act of writing is to communicate the things you are close to in order to make them real and interesting, "I've got to write what I know about. If my characters aren't coming off as believable, they won't be believable to Italians or non-Italians. So what am I doing; I'm just wasting people's time" (Reid, Face to Face). Rossi's approach to writing is grounded in a personal understanding of his life as an Italian-Canadian living in Montreal. For him, multilingualism is part of his life and thus his artistic creation. When placed within a corpus of English writing in Quebec, these Italian elements become examples of the inevitable cultural and linguistic pluralism emanating from its collective enunciation.

Even though Rossi efficiently portrays the Italian community, he argues that it was not his objective when writing his plays. In an interview with Rossi, Gregory Reid, questions him on the Italianization of his writing, "You write about Italian-Canadian characters, the setting for many of your plays is Ville Émard, an Italian-Canadian neighbourhood. The plays are really steeped in being Italian as well as the Canadian situation. Is that the objective for you, presenting the Italian-Canadian community?" To which Rossi answers' "That wasn't an objective, no. It came from the basic thing of writing what you know about" (Face). At the beginning of his literary career he preferred to stay away from this Italian side, thinking that it would not interest anyone. It took one of his cégep professors to "yank it out of [him]" (Face). The popularity of his 'Italian' plays has made the Centaur theatre produce eight. In his memoirs, Maurice Podbrey writes that Rossi with his play The Chain, has changed the audience at the Centaur Theatre. By producing plays that portray the members of his community, Rossi has added a new Italian dimension to English theatre in Quebec.
Rossi's different affiliations, Italian, Canadian and Québécois, represent well contemporary Quebec and Canada. What Rossi adds to the collective enunciation can be found in the words of Marco Micone, another Quebec citizen of Italian origin,

En ce qui me concerne, mon identité à dominante immigrée n’exclut pas les composantes francophone et anglophone. Mon identité comme celle de chacun des citoyens québécois, est perméable, hétérogène et en constante transformation. Une identité, pour qu’elle soit réussie, doit-être fondée sur de multiples appartenances et allégeances. (Le Québec 22)

This aspect represents well the cultural reality of contemporary Quebec, considering the increasing immigration, cultural blending, not to speak of question of bilingualism (or even multi-linguism) with its incumbent cultural diversification. Interestingly, even though Micone is a popular Italian figure on the French side, and that the French review in La Presse of Paradise by the River, identified Rossi as carrying on the work of Micone in presenting the Italian community to Quebec, Rossi has never met him; nor does Rossi know any Italian-Canadian writers (Face). This exemplifies how in a minor situation, there is an absence of a unified community.
Linda Leith

Linda Leith might be the only person in the writers under study who actively tries to bring Quebec's artistic community together. Leith has co-organized events such as the Blue Metropolis Literary Festival, and Write pour Écrire that have attempted, and succeeded in bringing the French and English-writing literary communities together. In the *Le Devoir.com* article “Write pour Écrire- La fin des solitudes,” we read,

Ann Charney, l'écrivaine et journaliste littéraire Mary Soderstrom ainsi que Linda Leith, fondatrice et actuelle directrice artistique de Metropolis Bleu, décident en 1996 de mettre sur pied un spectacle littéraire qui réunirait les deux solitudes le temps d'une soirée. “Au lieu de lire nos propres oeuvres, poursuit-elle, l'idée était de lire celles de nos collègues francophones traduites en anglais. Et il semble que c'est une idée qui a plu à beaucoup de monde, puisque le premier événement a tout de suite fait salle comble.”

Events like these allow communication, interaction and sharing which eventually pluralize the discourse of one and the other. Similar projects such as Marianne Ackerman's Theatre 1774 have also instilled a discourse of linguistic plurality in Quebec, a possibility for a cross-linguistic theatre, a theatre that exists outside the traditional boundaries of language. Although we cannot claim that Theatre 1774 was a box-office success, it has created something different in Québécois, or even Canadian, drama. It has opened up to a new community, those who wish to
work in two languages, in two cultures, or even created a new artistic culture that integrates
different social and linguistic particularities of Quebec's society.

As opposed to Fennario who is interested in class, Leith's interests are in the cultural and
linguistic features of the English-speaking community. In her study "Quebec Fiction in English
During the 1980s: A Case Study in Marginality," Leith notes that looking into English writer of
Quebec "requires an assessment of a social group linked not along class lines but rather along
linguistic and cultural lines" (95-96). Without using the term minor, she places this group of
writers as one opposed to what is "dominant" both in Canada (English) and Quebec (French)
and suggests that the English writers of Quebec are in both places a "muted" and "invisible"
group (96). Leith herself openly sees herself as an outsider, "je me sens plus à l'aise dans un
endroit où l'anglais est une langue minoritaire. Une certaine tension linguistique m'est devenue
naturelle et même nécessaire, et je trouve étrange, maintenant, de me retrouver en Angleterre,
où à Toronto et de voir les affiches en anglais" (Commentaires 15). Her inspiration seems
dependent on her sense of exclusion, marginality, and being part of a minority. Interestingly,
being part of a minority was also the key to Leith's personal success.

Leith's vision of the community of writers corresponds to the way she builds her
characters, she writes that "[s]ocially, the new generation of [English] writers [of Quebec]is very
varied, including working-class writers, members of visible minority groups, first generation
immigrants, and substantial number of women writers" (Quebec Fiction 99). The characters of
her novel Birds of Passage represent well the diversity she is speaking about; Daniel is an artistic
director, originally from Goa India, but he does not even consider himself Indian; since this province is originally a Portuguese colony, he has lived in Nairobi and London where he suffered the unpopularity of the Asians, and then once he moved to Montreal to the unpopularity on the English-speaking community. There is also Pierrette, a French speaking Québécoise who at times works for English newspapers, but does not consider herself Canadian, so, on the national scale she remains a linguistic minority. We can also speak of Rudi, Daniel’s former Hungarian partner in his theatre company who has lived and worked in Montreal but eventually returns to Hungary.

Conclusion

A collective enunciation is not a homogeneous body, but rather a collection of discourses that can be regrouped as a heterogeneous body which characterizes a minor situation. English writing in Quebec is partly a reflection on a plural and complex sense of belonging. Authors like Rossi, Fennario and Leith are people with a deep awareness of their plural and complex identities; consequently, the characters of their literature reveal this aspect. Their characters’ identities are not only based on the author’s experience, but also on members of the space they share; these people often seem to be marginalized English-speaking people or immigrants either from another country or another Canadian province. Bogue writes that there is an “unavoidable collective dimension of any individuated effort by members of a marginalized
group” (105). Similarly, Gerard Dessons writes, there is no contradiction in the fact that the work of a sole writer becomes an emblem for a community,

la littérature, l’art du langage, consiste précisément à ce que cette collectivité créatrice se fasse dans l’œuvre d’un seul – qu’il soit ou non lui-même un collectif; et là, nulle contradiction, puisqu’on se situe sur le plan de l’individualisme opérateur, de la fabrication et non sur celui de l’individuation intersubjective, l’œuvre, alors, ayant cette vertu de prendre le social dans l’individuel et l’individuel dans le social. (218-219)

The works under study are very personal writings which reveal the various belongings and origins of the authors. The collective enunciation that springs from the works picked from a corpus of English writing in Quebec demonstrates a polyphonic nature in its narratives and discourses; and when put together, it seems impossible to find a unified subject.
Conclusion

English writing in Quebec raises many questions because it presents ontological questions related to how a specific literature can be read and understood in a bi-linguistic society. In such a linguistic context it can be treated as both a minority and a majority literature depending on the perspective and the motifs of the individuals reading or analyzing the body of literature. Some will describe the body of English literature as part of a major movement that fits in a Canadian, North-American, and even world-wide English-written literature. These people will also argue that the English novels and plays written in English in Quebec are simply a continuance of everything that has been done in English Quebec (MacLennan, Cohen, Richler). Others will consider English writing in Quebec as part of a minority phenomenon influenced by a French-speaking society. They will also argue that this shift began in the late 60s, and had as climax the election of the first PQ government in 1976. The result of a minor literature in Quebec would be that it reveals elements of the French-Quebec society in which it is living. The influences can be multiple, considering that a language shapes the way in which an individual speaks and thinks. Moyes, for instances, believes that an influence of French on English in Quebec literature allows us to conceive “[d]es méthodes alternatives pour travailler la langue anglaise, dans les façons de laisser le contexte québécois travailler lui-même la langue anglaise” (Moyes 27). Gail Scott proposes that the style could be “avant tout [un] rapport de la voix au texte qu’on pourrait reconnaître comme étant québécois de par son rythme, son humour, ses préoccupations, c’est-à-dire qu’on ne retrouve pas antérieurement en anglais” (Mirroirs 23). For Scott, English writers in Québec must write “porous texts” (24), which breathe the environment
in which one is living, resulting "en un movement qui s’accorde parfaitement à son époque. Ce ne sont pas toutes les conjonctures personnelles, politiques et sociales qui favorisent le style. Le style est un privilege inoui" (24). Starnino believes that "notre anglais n’est plus à fait le même, en raison de la cohabitation avec le français. C’est déjà une première différence. Et notre poésie comporte une tension qu’on ne retrouve pas chez des poètes canadiens" (qtd in Bordeleau, Littérature 16). Linda Leith writes that the "cross-cultural effect [has given] some English Quebec writers a distinct voice" (Quebec Fiction 100). Francine Bordeleau believes that, other than the language itself, the sense of belonging to the Quebec territory is one of the important features of Anglo-Québécois literature (Littérature 16). Similarly, Marie-Eve Lapointe writes that — other than the prerequisite of language — Anglo-Québécois literature can be defined by "le lieu de naissance, le lieu de résidence, et l’inscription du lieu dans l’oeuvre" often favouring the last (qtd in Bordeleau, Littérature 16).

In order to verify if English writing in Quebec, or Anglo-Québécois literature, presents specific elements that cannot be found elsewhere, as the previous authors suggest, I have analyzed six literary works written in English by authors of different origins but who all live or have lived in Quebec. The study has been guided by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s theory of minor literature which suggests that a minor literature is written in major language evolving in a minority context. The theory is defined by three main features, the first is that the language reveals signs of deterritorialization and reterritorialization process; second, the language and the literature are inflected by politics or else politicized; and last, the literature’s narratives are polyphonic because the literature is built upon a collective enunciation resulting in an absence
of major voices. Overall, the works have each showed, in different degrees, elements of Deleuze and Guattari's theory.

**Feature 1**

Raoul Boudreau believes that “le meilleur indice du sentiment de déterritorialisation de la langue [...] est sans doute le va-et-vient constant entre les différentes langues et différents niveaux de langue” (82). For Peter van Toorn, English in Quebec comes as a textured language which reveals a specific locality, a vernacular quality only found in Quebec literature or works by English speaking authors who want to write about English speaking people living in Quebec. He writes,

> it seems inevitable that a poet from an area such as Québec, containing several dozen peoples attempting mutual translation, should adopt a more densely textured vernacular than has been common for a poetic medium. Such a philosophic and linguistic strain seems implicit in the practice of a poet working the grain of his native speech against the rhythms and perspectives of two kinds of English, two kinds of French, and the *mélange* of sonorities provided by dozens of European, Asian, and Eastern tongues. (63)

When we look into the English found in the six works here studied, we can observe three important elements that are attributed to the deterritorialization-reterritorialization process: a
restructuration of language associated to territorial landmarks, an inter-linguistic playfulness, and an intense use of code switching. Although we find words about food and art, as well as swearwords, the most significant shift concerns how the writers write their territory and society. Indeed, landmarks are greatly given in French. We might propose that contemporary writers have accepted the Gallicization of the province, and have therefore adapted their language to their new reality. This aspect may also reveal a need and a desire to affirm themselves locally. This restructuration of language reaches Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of a minor language, “la littérature présente déjà deux aspects, dans la mesure où elle opère une décomposition ou une destruction de la langue maternelle, mais aussi l’invention d’une nouvelle langue dans la langue, par la création de syntaxe” (Critique 15-16). The playfulness involved in the novels and plays I have studied is mostly done around the translatative process involved in writing in English in Quebec. Quebec can be seen as a literary territory where authors and readers need to travel from one language to another to find meaning. We can understand this translatative process as a negotiation of meaning, of a creation of a dialogue between languages creating new roads in the linguistic relationships; we can also propose that they open to a dialogue between languages, and create a communal language. Finally, code-switching cannot be seen as an element of the minor, Deleuze and Guattari write that a minor language is not a “mélange de deux langues” (Critique 138), nonetheless, this element reveals the heterodox nature of the writer’s community; and even more, it represents a situation that is conductive to a transformation of language like the two previous aspects. Finally, even though I have recognized a deterritorialization-reterritorialization process in the works, the coefficient
between each work is very inconsistent. As Leith notes, many can argue that “[t]he mingling between these languages and literatures has increased in recent years but, in some ways, they still live their separate legends, side by side” (Writing 15).

**Feature 2**

When we study the six novels and plays under the second feature of Deleuze and Guattari’s theory, we realize that each work touches in one way or another the political and linguistic transformation that has occurred since the 60s. Mostly the works address the post-Bill 101 effects which in 1974 made French the official language of Quebec, hence the work place was Gallicized, public postings needed to be written predominantly in French; and immigrants (even from other provinces) had to attend French school. In Quebec, language, whatever the angle, remains political. The writers have had a personal need to position themselves towards these new measures, as the Haitian writer Emile Ollivier notes, “les conflits traités dans l’oeuvre, même s’ils émanent d’un cas individuel, demeurent essentiellement politique” (54). The writer being a painter for his society, he/she necessarily portrays the different elements to reveal how his/her language and community has been transformed by the political force.

The literature written in English in Quebec also has a political power because it disturbs the belief that each nation writes itself in its own language, Québec in French and Canada in English. As such English writing in Quebec reaches other secondary literatures “whether within a single national literature or within an international world system of literatures, [...]
deviates from dominant regimes of signs or falls within the parameters of unprestigious patterns of variation” (Bogue 108). Affirming one’s existence to the world, even if it is only to present “unprestigious patterns of variation,” is a political action since it is done in relation to a major movement. What can be pulled out of these two political instances is that English writing in Quebec acts as a force of resistance and has an historical narrative that deals with the politics that have marginalized a group of people. The language in the works is thus a testimony to a reterritorialization of belonging. Similar to the French-speaking Quebecers who used a political route to make Quebec their country, the English-speaking community is using literature to make Quebec their country; this gesture of appropriation is unavoidably a political gesture. Lianne Moyes reminds that there is an expected tension involved in making one’s country, “le va-et-vient entre faire de l’écriture son pays et faire du Québec son pays est que cette tension soit maintenue; qu’elle ne disparaîsse pas dans une retraite dans l’écriture ou dans une simplification grossière de la relation entre littéraire et socio-politique” (Écrire 32). Hence, even though filled with obstacles, the six writers seem to walk this road.

Feature 3

In his article “Le théâtre Anglo-Québécois : Le théâtre imaginé d’une communauté manquée,” Reid reveals how in a situation where the idea of community is unclear or absent literature has the power to create it “pour que la communauté anglo-québécoise existe, dans le sens traditionnel d’une identité partagée, elle nécessite la promulgation créative et imaginaire
de formes d’art tel un théâtre anglo-québécois” (17). The six literary works, as well as their authors, suggest that there is no real sense of an English-speaking community in Quebec. The main reason that pushes to this conclusion is that their affiliations and discourse are too heterodox and too multi-ethnic in nature. For a majority of the English-speakers, English is no longer a cultural heritage; it is only a means of communication. We have seen that some writers are Italian, others Irish, and some prefer distancing themselves from a linguistic belonging and prefer to build class solidarity. What we can thus propose is that in a situation where there is a lack of solidarity, or union between the people, a writer writes himself, for the people close to him; a writer also eventually “writes for this people who are lacking” (Deleuze, Critique, 15).

Finally, after analyzing *Jump* by Marianne Ackerman, *Prisoner in a Red-Rose Chain* by Jeffrey Moore, *Birds of Passage* by Linda Leith, *Balconville* by David Fennario, *Paradise by the River* by Vittorio Rossi, and *Very Heaven* by Ann Lambert, and also a body of literary articles on the subject of English writing in Quebec, we can conclude that there are many hints that suggest that English in Quebec shows signs of what Deleuze and Guattari define as a minor literature. Yet, at the same time, it remains uncertain that we can definitively categorize English writing in Quebec as a minor literature, since there is a strong narrative that suggests that its language is not Gallicized enough to consider it as a minor phenomenon. Even though English writing in Quebec seems to be in a terminological deadlock, “a catégorie floue” (Écrire 27) writes Lianne Moyes, it remains that “[é]crire en anglais au Québec est une réalité” (27). When we distance ourselves from the naming process, we realize that English writing in Quebec offers a bricolage of languages and cultures. Indeed, it is not a simple literature, since it questions the concepts of
language, territory, home, belonging, affiliations, and personal and communal values. What English writing in Quebec does is to give us the possibility to imagine a different literature, a local literature that uses a local language, a political literature which asserts its place in Quebec, and even if there is no clear community, each writer creates his own community and once all put together, this literature allows a creation that is at the service of its people. A literature, as Lianne Moyes suggests, that is in the process of becoming (see Écrire en anglais). Becoming what however is not an answer that I can provide at this moment in time.
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