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The Writer's Quest for Clarity: Morley Callaghan's *The Loved and the Lost*

Set in twentieth-century Montreal where discrimination and prejudice against Black Canadians were obstacles to cultural exchange, Morley Callaghan's *The Loved and the Lost* (1951) continues to illustrate the artist's desire to see beyond ethnic barriers and question social propriety. Even though Callaghan was influenced by Western codes and Modernism, his novel foregrounds the importance of cityscape to investigate notions of Canadian culture and authenticity.

In Morley Callaghan's *The Loved and the Lost*, the city is an opaque place where social, moral and language barriers prevent social classes as well as ethnic and linguistic groups from communicating with one another. Callaghan describes Montreal as a fragmented city where each social and ethnic group is enclosed within the borders of the geographical space it occupies and determined by specific languages and attitudes. *The Loved and the Lost* remains one of his major novels and is often seen as a turning point in his work in that he remained faithful to a realist tradition while accepting influences from the Modernist writers of the beginning of the twentieth century. The story is set in the cosmopolitan and multi-ethnic city of Montreal where Black and White Canadians live together but avoid contact. In his analysis of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's essays, Jean Starobinski writes that understanding the world and interpreting signs consist in unveiling, that is to say seeing through the disturbingly intermediate surface of things and attaining the truth beneath (187). This essay will study the various narrative techniques which lead the protagonist, Jim McAlpine, to explore a city of appearances and seek clarity of vision. In his preface to *Pierre et Jean* (1888), Guy de Maupassant, wrote that events had a deep, hidden meaning, and that it was the realist's role to reveal it to the reader.¹ Callaghan's novel precisely foregrounds the character's quest to find this hidden meaning in a world of obstacles and polished surfaces that blur the border between self and other. To begin with, Montreal is not depicted as a city of contrasts, but as a city where various walls and barriers mirror those of social convention and reputation. The protagonist becomes an explorer whose wanderings take him from the elite of Montreal society to the bars and clubs of lower Montreal where ethnic tensions often result in fights and public outbreaks of violence. Secondly, this paper discusses the protagonist's quest for meaning and his love for Peggy Sanderson, a female character whose attempts to resist conventions and challenge barriers finally cause her demise. The relationship between the narrator and the narratee is based on the importance of clarity, and intertextual references to Greek mythology and Christian parables guide the readers through the text, helping them foresee the outcome of the story. Such a quest in the novel becomes extremely difficult insofar as the cacophony of Montreal society grows into an obstacle to the transparency that is central to the quest of the protagonist and to the reader's interpretation of the text. In *Anatomy of Criticism*, Northrop

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1. In his preface entitled "Le roman," Maupassant stresses the importance of plausibility for the reader of the realistic novel (8-9). He acknowledged that realism consisted in creating an illusion of reality which aimed at tricking the readers into believing that the story was real.

Frye extensively discusses the tendency of realism “to throw the emphasis on content and representation rather than on the shape of the story,” (140) that is to say a tendency that encourages the readers to see through the written word and maintain their illusions concerning the reality or plausibility of the fictional world the novel seeks to represent. Finally, the very act of writing is a highly problematic question as the author gradually moves away from the transparent reading that is entailed by realism in order to acknowledge Modernist forms, explore language, and question the very notion of transparency. The writer considered Modernism as a new trend² that expressed epistemological doubt and questioned the relationship between word and fact, signifier and signified.

The Loved and the Lost is a quest narrative. Its protagonist, Jim McAlpine, attempts to see not only through the barriers of social convention but also beneath the surface of the character he falls in love with, Peggy Sanderson. The novel is made up of twenty-nine chapters, most of which are narrated by a third-person omniscient narrator. Before settling in Montreal to write a column in the Montreal *Sun*, Jim McAlpine is described as a man in his early thirties who had formerly worked as an Associate Professor of History at the University of Toronto. The wealthy owner of the *Sun*, Joseph Carver, invites Jim to Montreal and offers him a job. When entering the Carver house for the first time, Jim meets Joseph Carver’s daughter Catherine, who secretly falls in love with him and hopes to become his wife. The third-person narrator and the elements of romance which clearly characterize the beginning of the novel introduce the reader to a familiar world of tradition and heritage. The quest itself, which is a defining element of the mode of romance according to Northrop Frye (*Anatomy* 187), is triggered by Jim’s meeting Peggy Sanderson. She is an obstacle to Jim’s ambitions to become a well-known columnist, marry into a wealthy family, and make his way into the Montreal elite. As the incipit suggests, obstacles are inscribed in a topography that mirrors the social structure of the city:

Joseph Carver, the publisher of the Montreal *Sun*, lived on the mountain. Nearly all the rich families in Montreal lived on the mountain. It was always there to make them feel secure. At night it rose against the sky like a dark protective barrier behind a shimmering curtain of lights surmounted by a gleaming cross. (1)

The mountain in the background that works as a “protective barrier” is an illustration of the garrison mentality that dated back to nineteenth-century Canadian literature and consisted in seeking protection from a hostile landscape.³ Unlike Hugh MacLennan who, in his first novel *Barometer Rising* (1941), aestheticized the relationship between character and landscape so as to construct a cosmological correspondence between the country and its settlers, Callaghan shows to what extent the upper classes have artifi-

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2. In her chapter on fiction in *The Cambridge Companion to Canadian Literature*, Marta Dvorak notes that Modernism came much later to Canada and that the belatedness of Canadian Modernism was mainly due to the importance of literary realism in early twentieth-century Canada. Even though Hugh MacLennan, for instance, experimented with Modernist forms in the 1930s, he became a successful novelist only when publishing his first realistic novel, *Barometer Rising*, in 1941.

3. According to Northrop Frye, John Richardson’s *Wacousta; or, The Prophecy: A Tale of the Canadas* (1832) is an early illustration of the inception of a garrison mentality in pre-Confederation Canada, a sentiment that relied on binary oppositions between civilisation and a hostile wilderness. In his conclusion to the second volume of Carl F. Klinck’s *Literary History of Canada*, Frye also shows how the garrison mentality evolved with the growth of metropolitan society. This evolution seems to characterize the literatures of former white settler colonies and Diana Brydon’s study of Canadian and Australian literature extensively discusses the garrison mentality which encouraged settlers to reproduce a safer, English-inspired environment in the wilderness: “Canadians and Australians tried to make their homes into little Englands, shutting out the alien landscape around them” (Brydon 279).

cially superimposed topography and social barriers. In this respect, the city is depicted as a fragmented whole with each part representing a social class. Such a representation of the city is in keeping with Olivier Chadoin's view that the city is the "symbolic expression" of a social system that includes and excludes at the same time.⁴ The social position of the Carvers, who live on the mountain, is best illustrated by the verticality of the city with the upper classes literally towering over and seeking protection from the lower classes of downtown Montreal. It is thus not surprising to notice that Callaghan chose an outsider from Toronto as his protagonist to offer the reader an external viewpoint on the city. His very name, McAlpine, suggests a quest to reach the summit of social hierarchy and subsequent resistance against social obstacles disseminated by the Carvers who have shaped Montreal society.

The third-person narrator recounts Jim's whereabouts in the city, namely the various bars and cafés he goes to. After having met Peggy Sanderson, Jim decides to go to the Café St Antoine where White and Black Canadians gather to listen to jazz music. The seventh chapter dwells on Jim's desire to enter the café, a desire that remains unfulfilled in that his ethnic prejudices, most of which are endorsed by the Carvers who wish to include him in the family, prevent him from going through with the experience. Instead, the narrator portrays a hesitant protagonist who at first remains on thresholds. However, the narrator describes what Jim sees when he finally decides to enter, in the following chapter:

The foyer was done in pink, and a wide door opened into a crowded tavern. The ticket booth was there by the stairs which led up to the night club. Two well-dressed white men were ahead of him; he got a ticket and followed them up the narrow stairs. At the top, a hard-faced headwaiter, a mulatto, asked him to show his ticket, then pointed to one of the little tables with the metallic chairs around the small dance floor. A six-piece Negro band was playing. McAlpine declined the table. At the rear of the club was a bar, all nickel and pink leather, and he knew he would not be conspicuous there. (60-1)

This passage highlights the importance of the threshold in the novel, as Jim is often located in an in-between or liminal space between two places and two cultures. The Café St Antoine, with its mixture of White, Mulatto and Black Canadians, is made to contrast with the ethnic uniformity of Westmount, the residential area of Montreal where only the wealthiest live. In fact, thanks to Jim's perspective and his wanderings from one neighbourhood to another, the reader acknowledges the dialogism that characterizes the cosmopolitanism of the city and assesses the dominance of a monological, centralizing and garrisoned upper-class Montreal. This tends to exclude the wilderness insofar as it is more generally defined as the opposite of landscape. Jonathan Bordo, for instance, argues that "[l]andscape is typically understood in terms of the investments human beings make about the nature and the physical world to make somewhere their own. The wilderness negates [...] such investments" (Bordo 152). The previous passage from *The Loved and the Lost* highlights what Bakhtin termed the "heteroglossia" of extraliterary languages which is thwarted by the dominant languages spoken within the confines of the garrison (Bakhtin 67). One of the social spaces of the novel where dominant and extraliterary languages interact is the Chalet Restaurant where Jim regularly meets with his white friends. The reader discovers that "[o]n the walls were pictures of

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4. Olivier Chadoin has written much about the interaction between individuals, society and space in *La ville des individus: Sociologie, urbanisme et architecture, propos croisés*.

fighters and mocking caricatures of distinguished Montreal citizens” (51). In this case, the narrator draws the reader’s attention to the places where the centralizing discourses of the upper classes are constantly challenged by caricature and parody. The result is the representation of an ethnically and culturally fragmented city where social classes are deeply rooted in separate locales.

The various analeptic passages regarding Jim’s childhood introduce the reader to the character’s ambitions to challenge social boundaries and become a member of the upper class. After playing croquet with his neighbours’ children all day, he runs off to retrieve a lost ball, but he is forgotten by the children at the gate. Even after waiting for several minutes, he realizes that they simply forgot he was ever there. Years later, when he is admitted into the Carver family and invited to a formal reception, the sight of Ernest Havelock, the children’s father, reawakens these painful memories and triggers the character’s critique of social divides: “But his father and mother had once stood outside this man’s gate. How could he now seem so unimpressive? he asked himself. As a gesture to his boyhood he wanted to speak to Havelock, but again someone touched him on the arm” (120). Once more, McAlpine is associated with in-betweenness and a threshold which is “the chronotope of *crisis* and *break* in a life” (Bakhtin 248). In the novel, thresholds function not only as spaces of hesitation and indeterminacy, but also as spaces which force the character to make choices. As a result, the character learns to overlook the barriers that keep communities separate and tend to trap individuals inside enclosures. Jim’s position on the threshold and his desire to transcend borders allow him to challenge pre-determined behaviours or what Bourdieu calls *habitus*, that is to say a set of learned attitudes which encourage individuals belonging to a given social class to act and react in a specific manner. Ultimately, he will break with the Carvers who represent social betterment and reconnect with Peggy and the Café St Antoine which Jim MacAlpine will gradually associate with authenticity.

Progressively, the narrator portrays the character’s attempt to free himself from the social conventions of Montreal society. This explains why the writer resorted to a third-person narrator so as to transcend diegetic space and time as well as expose the theatricality of social conventions. In chapter 20, the character goes to a hockey game with Catherine Carver and, at the sight of a fight, Jim McAlpine realizes that each individual is asked to abide by socially-determined patterns:

The florid man with the bag of peanuts sitting beside McAlpine, leaping to his feet, emptied the bag on McAlpine’s coat, then slapped him on the back and hugged him, and the French Canadian priest, both hands raised in rapture, burst into eloquent French. Everybody was filled with a fine laughing happiness. But McAlpine, staring at the ice in a dream, thought: “Yes, Catherine’s right. A beautiful pattern. Anything that breaks the pattern is bad. And Peggy breaks up the pattern.” (179)

The crowd or mob emphasizes the power of social conventions over those who desire to resist them. Even though the crowd is defined by its ethnic diversity (there are French, English and Jewish faces), the hockey game remains accessible to the wealthy people who can afford tickets. The plot itself concentrates on the fate of those who resist such homogenizing forces and Peggy Sanderson is the woman whose demise is clearly announced at the outcome of the hockey game.

Even though Peggy’s love is the purpose of McAlpine’s quest, it is McAlpine’s viewpoint that remains central to the story. Even though the narrator is omniscient, shifts

in focalization are recurrent to mirror the phenomenological operations of perception and consciousness. The third-person narrator self-consciously dwells on acts of questioning as hermeneutic processes which call for resolutions and revelations. Paul Ricoeur defines the purpose of hermeneutics as a way to grasp the meaning of a text by exploring the connections between the unfolding of the plot and the diegetic world of the novel (153). In chapter 10, for instance, Jim tries to convince himself that his infatuation with Peggy is due to the fact that she appears as a mere problem to solve: "But this girl, Peggy. Well,' he frowned, 'she presents a problem, a problem in understanding'" (78). The narrator wrestles with the process that will lead the character to find solutions to the problem by first interpreting signs. When they take a walk around Montreal, Peggy takes him to see a church that is historically located between the Romanesque and the Gothic:

The church hung there in the snow; it could sail away lightly like a ship in the snow. Then he turned and looked at Peggy's lifted face, on which the snowflakes glistened and melted, making her blink her eyes. He looked again at the church and then at her face. (36)

In this example, the narrator stages hermeneutic processes by focusing less on the female character than on how she is perceived by Jim McAlpine. Starobinski argues that the act of interpreting signs is an obstacle to the ideal, immediate relationship between an object and how one perceives it (187). In this case, clear perception is thwarted by the necessity to interpret signs, and unanswered questions force Jim to come to terms with the impossibility of achieving a complete transparency. Much like the character, the reader is involved in the hermeneutic processes and is asked to interpret signs and reflect upon the validity of the character's quest.

The reader is gradually guided through the plot by means of a series of intertextual references which foreshadow the ending of the novel. In his *Orpheus in Winter*, John Orange shows to what extent Greek mythology plays an important part in the interpretation of the novel. Not only is the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice explicitly referred to in the text, but the recurrent images of stairs recall the vertical separation between the two mythical characters that lose each other at the end. The references to the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea evoke the narcissistic passion that links the sculptor and his statue. Likewise, Jim desperately tries to change Peggy and make her fit into the requirements of Montreal society. For instance, dreams, considered in Freudian terms as manifestations in one's consciousness, reveal Jim's desire to remould Peggy and have her accept the social conventions of the upper class: "In his scheming dream of breaking her resistance and remolding [*sic*] her, he failed to see that he was putting himself against her; that he was justifying her instinctive resistance. He went on dreaming of her as she would be when she had yielded to him" (161). Not only does the narrator give the reader access to Jim's dreams of harmonious solutions, but he also interferes and comments on what Jim "fails to see." In fact, it is this failure, this obstructed transparency that will announce Peggy's death in chapter 25. Unlike Galatea who was unveiled to embrace a life of love and marriage with Pygmalion, the attempted unveiling of Peggy is made impossible given her resistance to enclosed spaces and social conventions.

In addition to Greek myths, Callaghan resorts to Christian imagery to associate Peggy with what Barbara Pell terms the "sinner-saint" in her theological approach to MacLennan's and Callaghan's works. In Pell's words, Peggy is presented "through McAlpine's confused quest, as a dangerous and ambiguous sinner-saint" (95). The writer's

friendship with the French philosopher Jacques Maritain⁵ had undoubtedly influenced his humanistic view of the world and his belief in a harmonious coexistence of the sacred and the profane. In keeping with the various Christian symbols in the novel, Jim McAlpine follows her, tries to save her soul by wanting to make her adhere to a more acceptable, upper-class society and he even goes as far as to deny knowing her three times before her death. When the landlady, Mrs Agnew, enters her room, Peggy's dead body takes on a saintly, Christ-like appearance:

Peggy's wide-open eyes stared horribly at the ceiling and her mouth gaped. Around her throat were big bluish welts, and on her left breast was a heavy dark bruise. Her head was twisted a little to one side, her arms straight at her sides, the palms open and twisted back. She looked small, round, and white. Only her hair had any life in it, for the ceiling light touched the side of her head and there were gleams of gold in the fair hair. (227)

The shift to internal focalization in this passage aims at expressing how Peggy's death is perceived and interpreted from a subjective viewpoint. As reason fails to provide an explanation for her death, Christian imagery takes over to present her as a sacrificial victim whose fate was sealed by society. As an effect of the "ceiling light," Peggy's transfigurative glow gives her an aura which is underpinned by the plot itself insofar as the identity of the murderer is not disclosed to the reader.

Just like the hockey game that starts in an orderly fashion and ends in chaos, the many voices of Montreal join in Jim's mind only to become cacophonous and fill the character's mind with doubt. The social structure of Montreal society progressively dissolves and turns into an indistinct chaos of voices echoed in Jim's interior monologues. For instance, during Jim's last conversation with Peggy, the narrator shows to what extent public opinion has taken over Jim's thoughts to judge Peggy: "It's a touch. Some have it with a woman. Yes, you knew he had it," he said softly. He had gotten her to admit something. But he had hardly heard what she said. The others were all in his mind yelling" (220). In this case, Callaghan scrutinizes the borders between individual consciousness and the collective unconscious exemplified by the mob. It is this final hesitation between the subject and the impersonal, collective voice that Jim will eventually regret when he discovers that Peggy was raped and murdered later that same night. As a result, the writer's quest for clarity depends on the ability of the subject to make sense of the heterogeneity of the world. The novel concludes with Jim blaming society and himself for her death, suggesting that Callaghan's work was not only inspired by religious concerns, but also by certain historicist assumptions that events are caused by impersonal forces, forces which are an additional obstacle to the individual quest for meaning.

The need to see clearly beyond the obstacles of reality was one of the preoccupations of the Modernists at the beginning of the twentieth century. In his article "Modernism, Postmodernism, Fascism and Historicism," Leon Surette asserts that Modernism partly originated from the inability of the individual to make sense of a world that had gone through significant epistemological changes when the Victorian period came to an end:

Modernism – like most ideologies (if it is an ideology) – was not a force or entity that invaded men and women in the first half of this century (or in Periclean Athens!), but

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5. Jacques Maritain (1882-1973) was a French philosopher and humanist who believed that the sacred and the profane were complementary. In *Christianisme et démocratie*, he argued in favour of a clear understanding between Christian beliefs and democratic principles.

a set of ideas, attitudes, procedures, and forms cobbled together in an effort to think through the cataclysmic philosophical, scientific, political, military and social changes among which these men and women lived. (Surette 488)

Callaghan's intellectual struggle with what Starobinski calls the opacity of the sign shows that he was familiar with the works of Modernist writers who tried to make sense of their time. His friendship with Jacques Maritain was not the only one to have influenced his intellectual development, as his friendship with Hemingway was also an important connection that inspired his work.

As a novelist and journalist, Morley Callaghan was well aware of the intellectual debates that were stirring opinions at the time. His work for Toronto's *Star Weekly* and *The Toronto Daily Star* in the 1920s was remembered for its unbiased style. Callaghan's journalistic work influenced his writing; his novels of the 1930s, *Such Is My Beloved* and *They Shall Inherit the Earth*, illustrate the writer's preference for a realistic mode which stressed the predominance of the subject matter over focalized viewpoint and novelistic experimentation. From a journalist's perspective, a style which encouraged transparent reading, with a preference for content over form, was the best choice insofar as it aimed at placing the event above its perception and lessening the distance between word and fact.

Callaghan's encounter with Hemingway in 1923 was an opportunity for the Canadian author to discover works by Modernist writers such as Ezra Pound and Ford Maddox Ford. These connections led him to question the very act of writing and the misleading transparency of the written word. Just like Rousseau who deplored the opacity of modern languages, which depend on signs and conventions, Callaghan reflected upon language and its ability to appropriately represent human experience.⁶ He was also inspired by Pound's Imagist movement of the early 1920s which aimed at challenging conventions that dated back to the Victorian period and its predominantly realistic forms. *The Loved and the Lost* is definitely one of the novels that best illustrate the influence of Modernism on the writer. Even though language remains referential in the novel, Callaghan foregrounds epistemological doubt and raises the question of the ability of the word to define a particular object. The writer's quest for clarity leads him to look for alternatives to the written word and one of these alternatives in the novel is the drawing that Jim makes of Peggy:

He watched while she picked up the drawing and studied it closely, then went to the mirror and looked at herself. "You're pretty good, Jim," she admitted. "It's me all right. Me in overalls."

"Here. Give it to me. You need to be named, since we know at last what you are," he said ironically, and he wrote under the drawing, "Peggy, the Crimper." (89-90)

Jim's ironic statement about the title of the drawing highlights Callaghan's concern with representation. The drawing is presented as an alternative to the text, even though the drawing also fails to attain its goal: the capture of the model. The drawing has a narrative function as well in that it allows Catherine Carver to discover Jim's secret relationship with Peggy after her murder. Here again, Callaghan uses the drawing as a way to shift the reader's attention away from the model and to how it is perceived by

6. In Starobinski's analysis of Rousseau's texts, modern languages are described as having a tendency to maintain a certain distance between the object represented by the conventional word and the immediacy of emotion (178).

Catherine. In other words, Peggy serves as a polished surface which foregrounds the perspective of the beholder. The image unveils the distress of the characters and enhances the representation of subjectivity in the novel.

In addition to the drawing, the narrator underlines the importance of impressionistic paintings which also dwell on the perception of reality and the effects of light. For the writer, the painting serves two functions depending on the observer. In chapter 11, the Carvers contemplate their most recent purchase, a painting by Renoir:

After lunch they went into the drawing room, where Jacques, the plump little French Canadian who was Mr Carver's man, had adjusted the Renoir on the chesterfield at the right angle to catch the light from the window. They contemplated the painting learnedly. It was a study of a girl at a piano. They drew back a little, they moved closer, they cupped their chins in their hands and nodded. (81)

The discourse of the narrator in this passage discloses an elitist approach to art that is presented as typical of the upper class that considers art as a sign of social status. Renoir's painting, "a study of a girl at a piano,"⁷ is a tribute to the bourgeois values of education and, at the same time, it remains loyal to an impressionistic representation of a scene by focusing on the effects of light on the models. Impressionism also had a tremendous impact on Modernist writers such as Katherine Mansfield since it emphasized the importance of light in the acts of seeing and observing. It is therefore not surprising to notice that the novel takes place in winter, a season where snow is presented as a soft surface that is best suited to reflect light. Chapter 25 begins with a description of Montreal before Mrs Agnew's discovery of Peggy's body:

In the bright morning the whole city steamed and sparkled in the thawing sunlight. Ice-coated trees on the mountain made glittering, lacy patterns with their sunlit branches, and the banked, melting snow on the hills turned a thousand sidewalks into rivulets that twinkled and twisted in the sunlight on their way down the slopes. (224)

The impressionistic representation of the city is rendered by the effects of the "sunlight" and the "ice-coated trees" on the cityscape. The narrator insists on the different variations of light which shape subjective perception; the light ceaselessly "sparkles," "glitters" and "twinkles." Montreal is portrayed here at a moment between two seasons, an in-between period of the year when the entire city hesitates between the solid and the liquid. Just like Peggy who is punished for transgressing ethnic boundaries and being ahead of her time, Callaghan represents the city as a place of constant change and transition towards a society that is more open to social and ethnic diversity.

Peggy is therefore a transitional character whose strong desire to break social conventions and ill-intentioned hearsay is reflected in references to impressionism. Henri Matisse's work and the Fauvist movement of the beginning of the twentieth century are used by the writer to show that even though Fauvism helps to define a character, it also aims at illustrating Peggy's intangibility or evanescence. In chapter 5, Peggy takes Jim to see a three-foot long wood carving of a leopard in a glass case:

She studied the leopard, and he watched her grave face and steady eyes and wondered why it had such importance for her. The light overhead shone on her wet fair hair, and it was like standing with a child whom he had brought to the toy department.

7. In fact, the painting is *Two Young Girls at the Piano* and was submitted to the French government in 1892 to be exhibited at the Musée du Luxembourg in Paris. For a view of the painting, see <<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1975.1.201>>

"It looks unbelievably fierce and powerful, doesn't it?" she asked.

"It's really very good," he agreed. "Quite a suggestion of power, of lurking violence. How did you know it was here, Peggy?"

"Oh, I heard about it. Does it make you feel uncertain and watchful, too?" she asked in a whisper. (35-6)

The leopard recalls the Fauvist painters who were known for their violent brush strokes and highly expressive uses of colour. Like many impressionists of the beginning of the twentieth century, the Fauvist painters, led by Henri Matisse, downplayed the representational purposes of the painting by emphasizing the importance of shapes, colours and internal composition. The leopard functions here as an objective correlative (a term that was first used by T. S. Eliot in 1920 to refer to a technique that would facilitate the reader's direct access to emotion by means of an object rather than by resorting to language) which conveys a specific emotion and which, in this passage, expresses the awe and uncertainty one feels in front of the violence of the natural world, as opposed to the conventionality of human society. However, this does not necessarily mean that Callaghan's work is Modernist as many critics have already argued. Linda Hutcheon has worked extensively on Postmodernism and its relations with Modernism and has reflected on texts by critics such as Kermode and Lyotard. In *Poetics of Postmodernism*, she writes that:

Many critics have pointed out the glaring contradictions of Modernism: its elitist, classical need for order and its revolutionary formal innovations [...]; its "Janus-faced" anarchistic urge to destroy existing systems combined with a reactionary political vision of ideal order [...]; its compulsion to write with a realization of the meaninglessness of writing (in the work of Beckett or Kafka); its melancholy regret for the loss of presence and its experimental energy and power of conception. (43)

It is therefore difficult to assert that Callaghan fully partook in such a movement insofar as he did not seek to destroy existing systems but rather tried to see through them for what they were. Modernism, indeed, offered new ways of seeing as well as new ways of writing about the opaque, superficial nature of the world the writer attempted to understand. The very title of the novel, which was first inspired by Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, alludes to the original simplicity of childhood. Starobinski asserts that childhood is characterized by transparency and trust, while suggesting that the transitional moment from childhood to adulthood has much to do with losing one's innocence and coming to terms with the opacity of the world. Whether it is Jim McAlpine who discovers the unfairness of social divides with the Havelock family at the age of fourteen, or Peggy who is forced to come to terms with the effects of ethnic segregation and the hypocritical stance of the church at the age of twelve, Callaghan chose to write about characters whose childhood memories were rooted in an innocent world where such borders did not exist. The unveiling of social spaces through the critique of limits and interstices, along with the struggle against individual or collective obstacles, account for the novel's reception as a major work of fiction in contemporary Canadian literature. When *The Loved and the Lost* was first published, it was read by many critics as an exclusively realistic novel and deemed to have failed to portray the female protagonist as a credible heroine.

It was only later that the novel was praised as a major work of fiction that represented a transition to the more Modernist features of Gallant's and Richler's novels.⁸

Many debates have arisen around Morley Callaghan's intellectual influences and his ties with Modernism. Indeed, Modernist writers offered a new way of dealing with the fragmented perception of the world and *The Loved and the Lost* can therefore be read as a transitional novel which combines elements from both realism and Modernism. In *Morley Callaghan and His Works*, Gary Boire discusses Callaghan's relationship with the Modernists and the Imagists and their desire to distance themselves from the readers so as to avoid influence from a public with specific expectations. Callaghan was definitely not a writer who tried to do so in that most of his early and later novels remain overtly didactic. As mentioned earlier in this essay, the writer investigates the hermeneutics of reading, and gradually guides the reader towards the outcome of the plot. The realist and Modernist form of *The Loved and the Lost* did not prevent the writer from discussing the major themes that he was preoccupied with, such as the loss of innocence, the possibility of redemption and questions of tradition and authority. Furthermore, even though Modernism had certainly made its way into Canada with poets such as Arthur Stringer, it did not find the public response it did in Britain or the United States. Like one of his contemporaries, Hugh MacLennan, who turned to a realist mode after trying Modernist techniques in the 1930s,⁹ Callaghan was well aware of European and American Modernist experimentations after having read novels by such eminent figures as James Joyce and Ernest Hemingway, but such awareness did not impinge on his choice to write about a Canadian locale and experience.

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8. John Orange devotes an entire chapter to the critical reception of Callaghan's novel in *Orpheus in Winter*. He quotes a reviewer for *The Globe and Mail* who wrote that Peggy Sanderson was "too confused to have heroic qualities" (17).

9. Before publishing *Barometer Rising* in 1941, Hugh MacLennan had experimented with Modernist techniques in his first two attempts at novel writing: *So All their Praises* in 1933 and *A Man should Rejoice* in 1937. Even though the critical reception of MacLennan's unpublished work seems to confirm Robert Kroetsch's assumption that Canadian literature evolved from Victorian to postmodern literature, Modernism definitely played an important role in shaping the Canadian novel.

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