

QUEBEC COUNTERCULTURE THROUGH METHOD: GROUNDS FOR DISTINCTION
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Counterculture, even when only the American component of the movement is analyzed, yields numerous methodological issues. One must, on the one hand, remember that it is indeed a culture, that is to say a structured aggregate enriched by its traditions, rituals, language, geography and identity, and should hence be considered as a whole. On the other hand, it is necessary to recall that counterculture is first and foremost a culture of protest, which binds itself to the society from which it proceeds, and which can not be separated from the context of its emergence. However, in the case of peripheral countercultures, the culture/counterculture dyad is multiplied. Of the Quebec component of the international movement, for instance, four aspects stand out after a rigorous analysis: Quebec culture, its local opposition, American counterculture and, ultimately, the rereading of American counterculture by local opposition. These four constituents of Quebec's countercultural *ethos* consequently establish a multi-strata system, which integrates the American patterns while trying to distinguish itself from it.

Dating

The first implication of that construct is the arbitrariness of dating. Since it is defined as a quest for dissonance with the cultural facts of previous generations, counterculture can not be dated with precision if detached from its context. However, Quebec counterculture was not meant to be a hiatus. The outbursts of the Yippies, as well as the symbolically and physically violent gestures occasioned by the American youth, did not take place with the same dynamism in Quebec, although several poets, Denis Vanier¹ for instance, pushed the American vivacity to its breaking point, thus biasing the

¹ Denis Vanier (1949-2000) is believed to be one of the most influential poets of Quebec counterculture. His works of the early 70s, including *Lesbiennes d'acid* (1972. Montreal: Parti pris) and *Le Clitoris de la fée des étoiles* (1974. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges.), show a deep investment in American counterculture. He fuses provocative imagery, including pictures extracted from the pornographic magazine *Evo* (1981 [1974]. *Oeuvres poétiques complètes*, t. 1 (1965-1979). Montreal: VLB/Parti pris, p. 245; the same image was used by another poet, Louis Geoffroy, one year later (1973. *Un verre de bière mon minou (let's go get stoned)*. LMNOGH – Tome ZÉRO. Montreal: Éditions du Jour, p. 79)), with references to contemporary American events, including the Vietnam War and the incarceration of John Sinclair. He hence dedicated a text to Ed Sanders and wrote a poem in honor of the leader of the White Panthers Party: "John Sinclair, ministre obscène des White Panthers, / a été condamné à 10 ans de prisons / pour avoir donné 2 joints de marijuana / à un arriéré sale de l'escouade des narcotiques" (1980. *op. cit.*, p. 195). Contrary to what is found in the American literature, imperialism is an instrument of revolution in the poetry of Denis Vanier, who uses provocation and art sacralization, both grasped at their paroxysm, to distinguish himself from his peers. As a result of being known as a Rimbaldian figure, the editor of *Hobo-Québec* and the lover of Josée Yvon, another quite seditious author, his work was long minimized to mere

picture in early research². In Quebec, the transformation was rather realized through a series of alterations, in order to recreate a state of harmony between man and his environment, to naturalize modernity and merge it into new forms of religiosity³. Following that thread, the Quebec neo-avant-garde did not publicly surface like the American group did. While many agree upon the fact that the *beat generation* and, more generally, the San Francisco Renaissance, originated from Allen Ginsberg's reading of *Howl* in 1955 and the subsequent trial⁴, Quebec has known a more subtle evolution. As a result, researchers have mistakenly attempted to find a significant milestone to anchor the movement in a precise chronological slot. The most frequently cited events are the *Nuit de la poésie* of March 1970⁵, at the Gésu theater in Montreal, which for certain scholars is comparable to the reading of *Howl*, the first issue of *Mainmise*⁶, the premiere of the

attempts to subversion, until a recent thematic issue of *Voix et Image* ("Denis Vanier," Jonathan Lamy and Simon Harel (eds), vol. 32, no. 1) uncovering part of the poet's originality.

² A representative example is the depiction of Quebec counterculture in *Intérieurs du Nouveau-Monde*, where the essayist uses the terms "vertige," "jeu," and "énergie folle dégagee par les grandes avenue de New York" (Pierre Nepveu. 1991. *Intérieurs du Nouveau-Monde*, Montreal: Boréal, p. 191) to give a sense of that era. The stereotype held for a significant amount of time, although recent literature tends to discredit it.

³ Luc Racine and Guy Sarrazin. 1973. *Pour changer la vie*. Montreal: Éditions du Jour. This evolution can easily be traced through the articles of *Mainmise*, where contributors interweaved Eastern religions, science and nature. New Eastern religiosities, focusing on the subject – or "self" – and presenting themselves a science, established a mold based on personal experiences to allow the practitioner to reinterpret the values of dominant classes without dismissing them entirely (Roland Chagnon. 1986. "Les nouvelles religions d'inspiration orientale a Québec." In Yvon Desrosiers (ed.). *Religion et culture au Québec. Figures contemporaines du sacré*. Montreal: Fides, p. 179), hence its interest for a population that attempted to turn its back on Catholicism while nursing a growing territorial pride.

⁴ Christiane Saint-Jean Paulin. 1997. *La contre-culture. Etats-Unis, années 60 : la naissance de nouvelles utopies*. Paris: Éditions Autrement, p. 53.

⁵ Guildo Rousseau. 1984. "Les Relations littéraires Québec/États-Unis au XIX^e siècle." In Claude Savary (ed.). *Les Rapports culturels entre le Québec et les États-Unis*. Québec: Institut Québécois de recherche sur la culture, p. 74-75. The *Nuit de la poésie 1970* featured Denis Vanier, Paul Chamberland, L'Infonie (an orchestra directed by Raoul Duguay), Claude Péloquin, Raoul Duguay, Louis Geoffroy and Nicole Brossat. The *Nuit de la poésie* (Jean-Claude Labrecque and Jean-Pierre Masse (prod.). 1970. *La Nuit de la poésie 1970*. Québec: Office National du Film, documentary, 111 minutes; Jean-Nicolas Orhon (prod.). 2011. *Les Nuits de la poésie, 40 ans après*. Québec: Maison de la poésie de Montréal, documentary, 70 minutes), contrarily to the *Howl* reading, the *Nuit de la poésie* was not a rupture, but the embodiment of a generational passing.

⁶ Marie-France Moore. 1973. "*Mainmise* : version québécoise de la contre-culture," *Recherches sociographiques*, vol. 14, no. 3, p. 364-365.

*Osstidcho*⁷, or the distinction threshold between American- and Quebec-related themes⁸. Instead of pointlessly categorizing the movement, one should rather account for the sociohistorical timeline sustaining counterculture, and accept the potential existence of a continuum.

The fact is, as outlined by Peter Gossage and Jack Little⁹, that Quebec society did not undergo radical value changes on a period of ten years, which is nevertheless what the advocates of the “Révolution tranquille” try to defend. For several decades before the so-called “revolution,” immigration increased bi-directionally: more French speakers leaving for the United States or Ontario and more incoming individuals, of different linguistic and religious backgrounds¹⁰. In parallel, Canada was subject to the most vigorous baby-boom in Western society¹¹. From 1946 to 1962, the population almost doubled, providing the ascending generation with an unprecedented influence. Moreover, the youth were raised in the aftermath of *Refus Global*, published in 1948, and had a gathering symbol, the flag of Quebec – the Canadian flag was adopted in 1965, that is to say 17 years after its Quebec counterpart. All of these factors contributed to the societal shift described by the term “Révolution tranquille.” Even though they did not take place during the 60s, they are normally bundled together both to impart to the myth and because they contributed to the change through the chronological contingency of their realization. Of course, they mostly had an indirect effect, since the inflated number of students, novel legislation forcing school attendance until 14 years old, and greater school accessibility led to the institution of new schools, and constrained the government to hiring teachers outside the Catholic network to palliate their needs. The laic schoolmasters, on their part, added to the reconsideration of social values and the social blending. The phenomenon also had direct outcomes, considering the increase in the number of readers incremented the number of writers, a fertile turmoil for the creation of a Ministry of Culture, which institutionalized an activity previously delegated to the Ministry of Agriculture. Hence the number of autodidacts diminished¹², beliefs changed and the local identity – paradoxically – developed. Consequently, several writers of Quebec counterculture, among which Raoul Duguay, Paul Chamberland, Claude Beausoleil et Lucien Francoeur, completed graduate studies, and two of them, Paul

⁷ Michel Biron, François Dumont and Élisabeth Nardout-Lafarge. 2010. *Histoire de la littérature québécoise*. Montreal: Boréal, p. 486.

⁸ Yvan Lamonde. 1996. *Ni avec eux, ni sans eux. Le Québec et les États-Unis*. Quebec: Nuit Blanche Éditeur, p. 77.

⁹ Peter Gossage and Jack Little. 2012. *An Illustrated History of Quebec: tradition and Modernity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

¹⁰ Michael D. Behiels. 1991. *Le Québec et la question de l'immigration: de l'ethnocentrisme au pluralisme ethnique, 1900-1985*. Ottawa: Société historique du Canada, p. 5-6.

¹¹ Margaret Mead. 1978. *Culture and commitment: the new relationships between generations in the 1970s*. New York: Columbia University Press.

¹² Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert and François Ricard. 1989. *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, t. II (Le Québec depuis 1930). Montreal: Éditions du Boréal, p. 774.

Chamberland and Raoul Duguay, migrated from classical religious education (College) to laic graduate work in philosophy.

Just as in the United States, but probably in a more patent manner due to the modifications undergone by the educational system, the arising generation differentiates itself from the generation of their parents by knowledge availability. Newfound opportunities translated into the emergence of an unprecedented journalistic apparel, one of which was crucial for Quebec counterculture: *Parti pris* (1963-1968)¹³. While some publications, including *Cité Libre* for the Marxist circles and *Liberté* for those preaching for independence, were already established and fairly stable, *Parti pris* stood out by “refusing, from the very beginning and constantly, any reformism, any patient and reasonable progressivism and [by] demanding a brutal and integral transformation of the québécois reality¹⁴.” André Brochu, Paul Chamberland, Pierre Maheu, André Major and Jean-Marc Pottie thus superposed rebellious socialism to identity-related matters, such that colonialism theoreticians, such as Memmi and Fanon, were quoted alongside socialist thinkers Goldmann (whom Chamberland personally knew), Marx, Engels, McLuhan and Marcuse, in order to diversify the cultural field¹⁵.

Moreover, the academic backgrounds of the agents, combined with text availability, brought the magazine slightly closer to the 1960s-early 1970s French avant-garde movements. Some protagonists, like Patrick Straram, imported knowledge from the International Situationist and *Utopie*, most importantly from Henri Lefebvre¹⁶, whose theories evidently tinged the title of the chronicle the poet held in *Parti pris*: “Interprétation de la vie quotidienne” (“Interpretation of Everyday Life,” in homage *Critique of Everyday Life*). This introduction to French left-wing ideology additionally

¹³ For a more elaborated description of *Parti pris*, the reader may consult Lise Gauvin. 1975. *Parti pris littéraire*. Montréal: Presses de l’Université de Montréal.

¹⁴ Robert Major. 1979. *Parti pris : idéologies et littérature*. LaSalle: Éditions Hurtubise HMH, 1979, p. 20. The author translates.

¹⁵ The event unfolded before the “Marcuse wave” of 1968, and the only text available in French then was *Le Marxisme soviétique (Soviet Marxism)* (Malcolm Reid. 2009. *Notre parti est pris. Un jeune reporter chez les écrivains révolutionnaires du Québec*. Quebec: Presses de l’Université Laval, p. 121). When one attempts to appreciate Quebec counterculture, he must consider translation availability as one of the decisive criteria. Wilhelm Reich’s *La Psychologie de masse du fascisme (Mass Psychology of Fascism)*, for instance, was only acquirable in French in 1972, that is to say when the American branch of counterculture was breathless and was on its way to institutionalization. The linguistic difference explains the fluctuating influence of some sources, the chronological gap between Quebec and the United States, and the creation, in Quebec, of a peripheral and autonomous paratextual network mainly based upon common quotes and references from one poet to another.

¹⁶ Grégory Busquet. 2004. “Henry Lefebvre, l’Internationale situationniste et la revue *Utopie*.” *Urbanisme*, no. 336, « *Utopie* », p. 55-58 and “Henri Lefebvre, les situationnistes et la dialectique monumentale : du monument social au monument spectacle.” *L’Homme et la société*, no. 146, p. 41-60.

avored the tacit rapprochement of *Tel Quel* and *Parti pris*¹⁷, along with the fact that both magazines were mainly composed of literature-oriented professionals and theoreticians. In the Quebec avant-garde group, however, contributors tried to reduce the space devoted to literature to a minimum, and questioned the role the author played in society as well as the requirements of social transformation¹⁸. As a consequence, they remained in touch with the community, leading to linkage with the Front de Libération du Québec (Quebec Liberation Front), an extremist revolutionary group militating for the economic and political independence of the province. Although no *Parti pris* author took physical action in the conflict, their writings multiply references and expressions of sympathy for the FLQ “martyrs.” Hence *Parti pris* exhibited, starting from its second delivery, the epithet: “Revue politique et culturelle” (Political and cultural magazine).

The traces *Parti pris* left in the path their contributors (Patrick Straram, Raoul Duguay and Paul Chamberland) engaged in towards counterculture, after the disappearance of the magazine, made it impossible to intellectually connect *Parti pris* and the French avant-garde *Tel Quel* but on a superficial level, despite the presence of Paul Chamberland in France from 1966 to 1968. The similarities can only be defined as a common epistemological ground, which then diverges in terms of philosophical inference.

By intertwining language (as a publisher, the *Parti pris* group produced the first vernacular French novel, *Le Cassé* (The Poor)), politics, identity (robustly anti-imperialists, they bitterly criticized the Americanization of Quebec)¹⁹ and revolution, *Parti pris* seems to have prepared the cultural field for counterculture. However, counterculture only became popular after the first few issues of *Mainmise*, in 1970, which translated some of the root documents of the American movement and attempted to reproduce underground American newspapers such as *Village Voice*, *Los Angeles Free Press* (May 1964-April 1978) and *Berkeley Barb* (August 1965-July 1980). It thus seems like Quebec counterculture can not be dated with certainty. 1968, year of publication of *Pornographic Delicatessen*, disappearance of *Parti pris*, and radicalization of *Logos*’ (1967-1973) activities, nonetheless appears to be an interesting starting point. As for the progressive obliteration of Quebec counterculture, a close reading of the journals and magazines repertoire produced by Lise Gauvin²⁰ reveals that *Mainmise* (October 1970-

¹⁷ Pierre Milot. 1986. “Le développement institutionnel du marxisme universitaire dans les années 1970.” In Jacques Pelletier (ed.). *L’Avant-garde culturelle et littéraire des années 1970 au Québec*. Montreal: Université du Québec à Montréal, p. 184-185.

¹⁸ Stéphanie Angers and Gérard Fabre. 2004. *Échanges intellectuels entre la France et le Québec, 1930-2000 : les réseaux de la revue Esprit avec La Relève, Cité libre, Parti pris, et Possibles*. Quebec: Presses de l’Université Laval.

¹⁹ Richard A. Jones. 1984. “Le Spectre de l’américanisation.” In Claude Savary (ed.) *op. cit.*, p. 157-158 et Luc Bernier. 1999. “Les États-Unis : à la fois trop près et trop loin.” *Politique et Sociétés*, vol. 18, no. 1, p. 115. One of the numerous paradoxes of Quebec counterculture is to use American thought, including counterculture thinkers, to criticize the Americanization of the province.

²⁰ Lise Gauvin. 1975. “Les revues littéraires québécoises de l’université à la contre-culture.” *Études françaises*, vol. 11, no. 2, p. 161-183.

June 1978), *Hobo-Québec* (1972-1981)²¹, and *Cul-Q* (1973-1983) vanished in the late 1970s and 1980s. The works of art, mostly poetry books, were on their part produced between 1972 and 1976²². Hence if one wanted to date the movement in order to include

²¹ Jean-Pascal Baillie. 1999. "Apologie de l'analogique. À propos d'*Hobo-Québec* : *Journal d'écritures et d'images*." *ETC*, no. 46, p. 30-31.

²² The main books published during or surrounding that period are:

- Claude Beausoleil. 1983. *Ahuntsic Dream suivi de Now*. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges
- . 1983. *D'autres sourires de stars*. Talence: Castor Astral.
- Paul Chamberland. 1974. *Demain les dieux naîtront*. Montreal: L'Hexagone.
- . 1974 [1962]. *Genèses*. Montreal: L'Aurore.
- . 1976. *Le Prince de Sexamour*. Montreal: L'Hexagone.
- . 1978. *Extrême survivance, extrême poésie*. Montreal: Parti Pris.
- . 1981. *Émergence de l'adultenfant: poésie et essais*. Montreal: Éditions Jean Basile.
- Raoul Duguay. 1970. *Manifeste de l'Infonie*. Trois-Pistoles: Éditions du Jour.
- Lucien Francoeur. 1972. *5 10 15*. Montreal: D. Laliberté.
- . 1972. *Minibrixes réactés*. Montreal: L'Hexagone.
- . 1973. *Snack bar*. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges.
- . 1976. *Drive-in*. Montreal: L'Hexagone.
- . 1978. *Les Néons las*. Montreal: L'Hexagone.
- Louis Geoffroy. 1971. *Empire State Coca Blues : triptyque 1963-1966*. Montreal: Éditions du Jour.
- . 1973. *Un verre de bière, mon minous : let's go get stoned : LMNOGH*, tome 0: Chronique. Montreal: Éditions du Jour.
- . 1973. *Totem poing fermé*. Montreal: L'Hexagone.
- . 1974. *LSD : voyage*. Montreal: Éditions québécois.
- . 1983. *Femme, objet*. Montreal: Parti pris.
- Claude Péloquin. 1976. *Le premier tiers : œuvres complètes, 1942 à 1975*. Montreal: Beauchemin.
- . 1977. *Inoxydables*, Montreal: Beauchemin.
- . 1979. *L'autopsie merveilleuse*. Montreal: Beauchemin.
- Patrick Straram. 1971. *One + one cinémarx & Rolling Stones*. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges.
- . 1972. *Irish coffee au No Name Bar 7 vin rouge volla of the moon : graffiti, folk-rocks*. Montreal: L'Hexagone/L'Obscène nyctalope.
- . 1974. *4 x 4 / 4 x 4*. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges.
- . 1983. *Blues clair; Tea for one; No more tea*. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges.
- Denis Vanier. 1976. *Comme la peau d'un rosaire*. Montreal: Éditions Parti pris.
- . 1978. *Koréphilie* [with Josée Yvon]. Trois-Rivières: Écrits des forges.
- . 1981. *Œuvres complètes*, t. 1 [contains 1974 [1965]. *Je*. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges; 1968. *Pornographic delicatessen*. Montreal: Éditions l'Estérel; 1972. *Lesbiennes d'acid*. Montreal: Parti pris; 1974. *Le Clitoris de la fée des étoiles*. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges; 1979. *L'Odeur d'un athlète*. Montreal: Éditions Cul Q); *La Route de la soie*]. Montreal: Éditions Parti pris/VLB Éditeur.
- Josée Yvon. 1980. *Travesties-kamikazes*. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges.

most of the production and leave aside the sediments, the years would most likely be 1968-1981, although this article argues for a more scattered timeline, punctuated by blanks and disturbances.

Structure

The second main area of interest is the societal organization of counterculture. Although some try to analyze it from the angle of subcultures²³ or underground cultures²⁴, the movement distinguishes itself by its agglutinative properties. In fact, in Canada, as in the United States, counterculture aimed toward unification. To confront the institution, it solicited all those discarded by mainstream culture, that is to say the marginal²⁵. This pattern implies a number of paradoxes, since the federation of fringy groupings to turn them into a majority – a *sociodemographic* reality allowed by the baby-boom – invalidates the feature upon which the idea is based, because the margin becomes the norm.

In fact, the youth affiliated to counterculture, cultivated heterodoxy to oppose themselves to their parents, a very important factor considering they gathered with other outcasts and hence sought the preservation of their own marginality. Moreover, it is possible to classify the distinctive signs in two categories: language and clothing²⁶. For the latter, it is noteworthy that two fundamental figures, and their corresponding myth, intersect: the cowboy and the Indian. The first explains only the appearance of the blue jean, while the second accounts for headbands, jackets with fringes, moccasins, pearls and other accessories²⁷. Regarding language, three phenomena are of particular interest: the drug lexicon, frequently used in the poetry of Vanier and Yvon²⁸; the establishment of a “metadiscursive chain²⁹,” in other words a dense interreferential network based on

–. 1982. *Danseuses-mamelouk* [contains 1977. *La Chienne de l'Hôtel Tropicana*. Montreal: Cul Q; *Androgynes noires*; 1976. *Filles-commandos bandées*. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges]. Montreal: VLB Éditeur.

²³ Dick Hebdige. 1979. *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. New York: Routledge.

²⁴ Michael Break. 1985. *Comparative Youth Culture: The Sociology of Youth Culture and Youth Subcultures in America, Britain and Canada*. New York: Routledge.

²⁵ Jules Duchastel. 1980. “La contre-culture, une idéologie de l'apolitisme.” In Nadia Assimopoulos (ed.) *La transformation du pouvoir au Québec. Actes du colloque de l'ACSALF*. Montreal: Albert Saint-Martin, p. 262.

²⁶ Simon-Pier Labelle-Hogue and Véronique Cyr. In press. “Le rire de Sisyphe.” In Jonathan Lamy and Catherine Mavrikakis (eds). *Josée Yvon*. Montreal: Les Herbes rouges, 11 p.

²⁷ Rex Weiner and Deanna Stillman. 1979. *Woodstock Census: The Nationwide Survey of the Sixties Generation*. New York: Viking Press.

²⁸ Simon-Pier Labelle-Hogue. In press. “Ginsberg à Montréal : l'American Dream chez les contre-culturels.” In Lélia Young (ed.) *Langages poétiques et poésie francophone en Amérique du Nord*. Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 14 p.

²⁹ Thierry Bissonnette. 2006. “Une Pentecôte pour Judas : Blasphème et baptême dans la poétique de Denis Vanier.” *Voix et Images*, vol. 32, no. 1, p. 50. Note that prefaces and quotations, of either other poets or theoretical work, either local or international, tends not only to provide the text with a gloss, but also to contribute to a parallel reference

quotes or other paratextual devices; and pseudonyms, for instance Raoul “Luard Yaugud” Dugay, Paul “Georges Sand” Chamberland, Josée Yvon “la Fée des étoiles,” Denis “Langue de Feu” Vanier, Lucien “Billy the Kid” Francoeur and Patrick Straram “Le Bison ravi³⁰,” which seek to pull the members toward a stereotypical Native American heritage. In Quebec counterculture, the Native American was significantly more present than in its American counterpart. If, as Jean Morency puts it, the *beatnik* is the anti-hero of the 1960s-1970s³¹, the Indian is indeed, in Quebec, a more wholesome figure of anti-heroism, because it is territory-bound. For youths leaving an environment felt as oppressive and discovering an unsuspected society, the Native American represented the colonized overthrowing the imperialist. Nevertheless, Indianity, as already expressed in *Parti pris*, is a combination of “floating signs³²,” and the only reason why the archetypal image dominated in Quebec is the lack of competition with the African-American, due to the lack of an Civil Rights Movement in the province³³.

As a result of this quest for originality, counterculture does not strike as a tightly-knit community, but rather as a proliferating subjectivity. Each poet – Quebec counterculture has produced very few painters and novelists – hence became the sum of the marginal personae he integrated. Unable to remain unique, due to his belonging to counterculture, artists blended different branches or tendencies, in which they extracted elements of their choosing, in order to create a set of distinct combinations. For these artists, it is nonetheless impossible to openly distinguish themselves from the group, which legitimizes their sociological trajectory and provides them with a public. Hence, they either add numerous epithets to their names, in the form of a pseudonym, or diversify their activity, so that they can be more visible. In Quebec, that attitude leads to the creation of small allegedly autarkic groups, as the “Francoeur-Vanier-Straram³⁴” fraternity mentioned by Lucien Francoeur in an interview. Noteworthy is the fact that in Quebec these groups were almost solely composed of poets, contrarily to the United

system, so that the authors would no longer depend on the approbation of their non-countercultural peers.

³⁰ An anagram for Boris Vian.

³¹ Jean Morency. 1994. *Le Mythe américain dans les fictions d'Amérique. De Washington Irving à Jacques Poulin*. Quebec: Nuit Blanche Éditeur, p. 146

³² Pierre Nepveu. 1991. *op. cit.*, p. 214.

³³ The most salient uses of the lexical item “nègre” (*negro*) can often be linked to a form of *pastiche*. For instance, Paul Chamberland’s: “je suis cubain yankee non je suis nègre je lave les planchers dans un bordel du Texas je suis québécois je me fais manger la laine sur le dos” (*Terre Québec*, p. 142) is found in a poem reemploying numerous strategies already present in *Howl*, hence allowing for a comparative study of: “Dans la ruelle Saint-Christophe meurt un peuple jamais né” (2003 [1964]. *Terre Québec, suivi de L’Afficheur hurle et de L’Inavouable*. Montreal: Typo, p. 134) and: “I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness.” (Allen Ginsberg. 2006 [1956]. *Howl*. In *Collected Poems, 1947-1997*. New York-London-Toronto-Sydney: Harper Perennial, 134.) Moreover, contextualizations like that of Chamberland serve to draw both a parallel between the Québécois and the Negro, and to distinguish them from the White imperialist.

³⁴ Jean-Sébastien Ménard. 2005. Meeting with Lucien Francoeur. Montreal.

States where many non-poetic works were produced. Furthermore, Quebec counterculture was, due to its lack of cohesion, apolitical³⁵. As a result, some of the themes that were vital to the American branch were never employed in Quebec. One of the most interesting example is the use of the word “technocracy.” Used by Roszak in a chapter title of his groundbreaking study³⁶, it is almost absent from the Québécois speech, where the State, although present in the background³⁷, was less overtly criticized. The reason is that most Québécois and Canadian institutions were created to accommodate the rising elements demographic shift, so counterculture was immediately involved in several domains, such as literary awards and creation bursaries, consequently buffering any form of subversion by assimilating it.

Heterodoxy is also the main cause for the proliferation of utopias. Each individual, by preferring a religiosity based on experience, was more likely to formulate his own utopia. However, they all need to be somewhat affiliated, so that the movement can be perceived as a unified ensemble. Authors then use different sources, pertaining to their personal education and interests, to explain the nuances between different sets. To focus on one particular manifestation of such an utopia, that is to say drugs and sexuality, it is possible to state that, for Denis Vanier, these two elements aim to negate society by refuting Judeo-Christian values. This attitude bends him toward the White Panthers Party manifesto, to which he explicitly refers³⁸. To Louis Geoffroy, however, drugs and sexuality are an expediency for gathering, to cleanse oneself from a deceiving reality and reach and abstract “absolute” through disruption of social norms, in a *carnavalesque* posture which he explains using George Bataille’s work and the concept of “mixage sensoriel³⁹” (sensorial blending). Finally, Patrick Straram employs drugs and sexuality as means of distinction and detachment. His sexuality seeks for his pleasure, and the initiation of others with drugs, a frequent motif of both American and Quebec counterculture, instantiates him as an initiator, an omniscient observer⁴⁰. Three etiologies,

³⁵ Jules Duchastel. 1980. *loc. cit.*

³⁶ Theodore Roszak. 1995 [1969]. *The Making of a Counter Culture. Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its youthful Opposition*. Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, p. 1-42.

³⁷ Jules Duchastel. 1981. “Culture et contre-culture : idéologie et contre-idéologie.” In Frenaud Dumond, Jean Hamelin and Jean-Paul Montminy (ed.) *Idéologies au Canada français, 1940-1976*, t. 2: Les Mouvements sociaux – Les Syndicats). Quebec: Presses de l’Université Laval, p. 173-216.

³⁸ While the manifesto written by Sinclair claims: “rock and roll, dope, and fucking in the streets” (Peter Doggett. 2007. *There’s a Riot Going On. Revolutionaries, rock stars and the rise and fall of ‘60s counter-culture*. Edinburgh/New York/Melbourne: Canongate, p. 226), Vanier answers in “allo police,” a tribute to John Sinclair: « la sexualité / les crises de nerfs tendres au toucher du corps / doivent se vivre dans la rue en plein jour / devant ceux qui travaillent / fourrés par le fascisme de leurs préjugés / avec de la magie vulgaire, du rock’n roll et de la dope » (1981. *op. cit.* p. 196).

³⁹ Marie-France Moore. *loc. cit.* p. 387.

⁴⁰ Simon-Pier Labelle-Hogue. May 13-14, 2010. “‘We Want the World and We Want It Now’ : la sacralisation du corps dans la contre-culture québécoise.” International

three vectors, but only one phenomenon: the overinvestment in drugs and sexuality, show the variation in a seemingly unified movement

The different paths defined here show the difficulties underlying the definition processes of peripheral countercultures and the peculiarities of its Quebec faction. It is in fact impossible to locate the movement, and authors such as Josée Yvon, who have been affiliated to the group in this study, could just as well be excluded based on the use they make of otherwise shared themes. Others, such as Patrice Desbiens, produced some books that fit the countercultural pattern, *L'Espace qui reste*⁴¹ for instance, but have been excluded for geographical reasons. For that purpose, it would indeed have been necessary to include authors born outside Quebec and grew up in the Rest-of-Canada, or have taken part in the Coopérative des artistes du Nouvel Ontario (Artist Cooperative of New Ontario). The main idea is many authors were wrongly assimilated to counterculture for the prestige associate with their names and, inversely, many have misused the word “counterculture” to legitimate their own artistic career through a symbolically loaded memory cluster. The analyst’s task, from now on, is to slowly move forward, identify the ligaments, and strip the bones of an frequently improperly covered skeleton.

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⁴¹ Patrice Desbiens. 1979. *L'espace qui reste*. Sudbury: Prise de Parole and 2008 [1981]. “Biobibliographie.” In Patrice Desbiens. *L'Homme invisible/The Invisible Man, suivi de Les cascadeurs de l'amour*. Sudbury: Prise de parole, p. 191-199.