

**THE PRISMATIC REALITY
OF CANADA'S COLD WAR NOVELS**

by

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ABSTRACT

Several important novels were published in Canada in 1954. They include Mordecai Richler's first book, *The Acrobats*, Fred Bodsworth's *The Last of the Curlews*, Charles Bruce's *The Channel Shore*, Robertson Davies' expertly crafted, *Leaven of Malice*, and what proved to be Ethel Wilson's masterwork, *Swamp Angel*. It was a bonanza year in fiction and these titles are still in print. Yet the Governor General's Award for 1954 went to a novel that has been forgotten, Igor Gouzenko's *The Fall of a Titan*. Why was this anti-Communist spy novel, written by a Soviet defector and translated into English, so highly regarded by the arbiters of Canadian culture in the 1950s? What does it say about Canadian literature and social values in the 1950s that this novel, which has earned only a brief mention in *The Literary History of Canada*, was so highly prized at that time? I see this curious aberration in literary judgement as symptomatic of something larger in Canadian society and use it to conduct an analysis of class and political ideology in selected Canadian fiction of the 1950s.

As part of North America, Canada has followed the United States and made anti-Communism part of Canadian government policy. This political background and the events that ensued in the 1950s inevitably affected and decided the ideology of Canadian writers and are reflected in their works. The chief difference among the writers as they mirror the perceived social and political reality is that some became the speakers for the ruling class in art and literature while others, despite their desire to reflect the ideology and needs of those from the lower order -- the left-wing and the working class --, still could not escape the bonds of the prevailing ideology around them. The primary purpose of this essay, through analyzing works by Morley Callaghan, Ethel Wilson, Hugh MacLennan, and Mordecai Richler, is to study the range of literary responses to the Cold War politics of the 1950s and to measure the degree to which the dominant conservatism and concomitant fear of Communism shaped the literature of Canada in this period.

Keywords: Canada's Cold War novels; Marxism and literature; Ideology and literature; Reception theory; Cold War and anti-Communism; Norman Bethune

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INTRODUCTION

Section One:

Reception Theory: My Approach to Canada's Cold War Novels

What does the title of *The Loved and the Lost* signify? To whom is Ethel Wilson's love extended in *The Equations of Love*? Why did Jerome Martell marry Catherine and then desert her in *The Watch That Ends the Night*? What is the author's intention in creating a character like Mr. MacPherson in *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*? The reading and understanding of these novels has revolved around questions of textual indeterminacy. Such questions strike at the heart of the reader's reception, and this in turn questions the production of meaning -- who or what is responsible for it and to what extent it is limited. There are two extreme positions on these questions, but identified simply as objectivism and subjectivism. The former holds that there is only one correct and determinate meaning for each work, usually identified with the author's intention, while the latter maintains that the meaning is totally the product of the mind of the individual reader. The reception theorist Wolfgang Iser tries to take a middle position on this matter. He claims that the text allows for different meanings, while at the same time restricting the possibilities.

If the literary work is neither completely the text nor completely the subjectivity of the reader, but a combination of the two, in reading sample Cold War novels by Morley Callaghan, Ethel Wilson, Hugh MacLennan, and Mordecai Richler, there are three domains for exploration. The first involves the works in their potential to allow and manipulate the production of meaning. Iser takes the text as a skeleton of "schematized aspects" that must be actualized or concretized by the reader. The second is about the processing of the works in reading. Of central importance here are the mental images formed when the reader is attempting to construct a consistent and cohesive aesthetic object. Finally, attention also needs to be focused on the conditions that give rise to and govern the text-reader interaction.

According to reception theorists, there is no regulative context between the text and the reader to establish intent (Holub 92); therefore, the intent of the four writers examined in this study must be constructed by the reader from textual clues or signals. The reader takes a productive role in the reading process instead of passively accepting the allegedly inherent

messages of the works. Roman Ingarden observes that the literary work of art presents him with the perfect case of

an object whose pure intentionality was beyond any doubt and on the basis of which one could study the essential structures of the mode of existence of the purely intentional object without being subjected to suggestions stemming from considerations of real objectives. (*Cognition*, xiii)

Reception theorists have tended to call this text-reader relationship the controlling force of the reader. The reader has become, in Hans Robert Jauss' words, the "arbiter of a new history of literature." Only the perceiver is able to imbue the work of art with the semantic unity that is then identified with intentionality (whatever the reader perceives would become, in his/her perception, the author's intention). "It is not the originator's attitude toward the work but the perceiver's which is fundamental, or 'unmarked' for understanding its intrinsic artistic intent" (*Structure*, 97). In a certain sense then it is the perceiver who determines the artistic quality of the four writers' works. An object can be "created as prosaic and perceived as poetic, or conversely, created as poetic and perceived as prosaic" (Holub 17). For example, some readers perceive the success of Lilly in 'Lilly's Story' as artificial whereas Wilson may have intended her as a legitimate example of how to climb the social ladder.

Secondly, the four writers' novels consist of indeterminacies and require resolutions. However solid it may seem, any work for reception theory is actually made up of "gaps" where the reader must supply a missing connection, and these gaps can be interpreted in a number of different, perhaps mutually conflicting, ways. According to Ingarden's theory of cognition of the literary work, there are layers and dimensions from a skeleton or "schematized structure" to be completed by the reader. There are no places in which represented objects would be in themselves totally determined. They exhibit "spots" or "points" or "places of indeterminacy" (*Cognition*, 50).

This is especially true with reading these four writers. Because of certain ambiguities in writing styles, the meanings in some parts of their novels are difficult to define, and there are accordingly many "points" or "places of indeterminacy." Therefore, the reader must look for the essential intentions in their books and whatever the reader finds becomes the authors' intention. But what the reader finds is really no more than a series of "clues", subtle and elusive, open to any kind of examination and interpretation. As we read on, we encounter many problems, which can be solved only by making assumptions. Consequently, reading the four writers' novels involves us in a surprising amount of complex, largely unconscious labor: although we rarely notice it, we are all the time engaged in constructing hypotheses about the meaning of the text.

The reader makes implicit connections, fills in gaps, draws inferences and tests hunches. Sometimes, when there are not enough textual clues, some readers have to resort to psychoanalysis to work out indeterminacies and create semantic unity. In a word, facing the ambiguous intentions of three out of the four writers, the reader has to figure out “spots of indeterminacy” and “gaps” and to transform pieces of language into meanings to work out the author's unstated or non-implied intentions.

A “spot of indeterminacy” is referred to by Iser as a “blank,” as the “no-man's-land of indeterminacy” between schematized views. The blank is still initially concerned with connecting various segments of the text. What this entails is perhaps most readily understood in considering the level of plot. In some of the narratives to be examined, the story line will suddenly break off and continue from another perspective or in an unexpected direction, such as in the case of Richler's opening to *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* with the focus on the conflict between Duddy Kravitz and Mr. MacPherson, and then suddenly the story is shifted from the high school to Duddy's social experience. The result is a blank or structural break – a site of conspicuous indeterminacy. In order to complete the blank, or bridge the structural break, the reader must assemble materials (or segments) from various points in the plot. Such an assembly thus dissolves the original plot. My reassembled segments in the novels, in turn, constitute a “field of vision.” Some segments become dominant, while others recede temporarily in importance. For example, my reading of *The Watch That Ends the Night* will highlight Martell's devotion to Communism throughout the novel, so that what he says towards the end of the novel about his regret regarding his past public and political activities assumes a more marginal position. When I have determined the structure of the novel in this way, questions about Martell's true nature and religious mask appear on the level of theme and horizon. Whenever a segment becomes a theme, according to Iser, “the previous one must lose its thematic relevance and be turned into a marginal, thematically vacant position, which can be and usually is occupied by the reader, so that he may focus on the new thematic segment” (*Reading*, 198).

To some critics, such new thematic segments might appear simply as “bias” or “prejudice.” But Ingarden stresses the concretization of these newly schematized aspects of the text. He insists that the structure of the entire work takes on a new character when the circumstances involving the reader's time and place, and personal or social conditions are altered (Holub 35). Since concretizations of indeterminacies in the four writers' books are considered the activity of individual readers, they can be subject to vast variation, for what is at issue is that none of the varieties of reception theory can do without grounding in a reader's historical background. Reading and understanding a literary text, like its production, are also considered

social actions, because, according to Prague structuralist Jan Mukarovsky, the artwork is a social sign and its viewer a “social creature, a member of a collective.” The social interaction and shifting of norms are of primary importance. Social classes and extra-aesthetic social relations play an important role in establishing and altering norms. In Holub’s opinion, the effect of a literary work belongs to its very being: what it is is determined essentially by the way it is experienced. My own experience is itself largely preconditioned, and for this reason my analysis and reception of the four writers’ novels involve an understanding of the “life process” of the society I come from.

To a reader like myself from China, the four writers’ Cold War novels will automatically bring out my socialist reading habits. In my reading process, I am inevitably influenced by the norms of the social system in which I used to live and its norms of literary criticism. Before I immigrated to Canada in 1988, the core of the education and ideology I had received was Marxism and Leninism and Mao Tse-Tung’s development of those ideas. In analyzing literary works, I accordingly used to pay attention to the following:

A. **Ideology:** To a Chinese in Mao’s China, literature, of whatever kind, was absolutely a vehicle of ideology. Therefore, we Chinese critics always focused on determining a writer’s intention according to the means of a text’s production and its relationship to the particular period of history in which the writer lived.

B. **Class struggle:** The relationship among classes, a main factor in the production of culture, was a sharp weapon in analyzing literary works. Mao said, “To distinguish real friends from real enemies, we must make a general analysis of the economic status of the various classes in Chinese society and of their respective attitudes towards the revolution. The leading force in our revolution is the industrial proletariat...we must be constantly on our guard and not let [our enemies] create confusion within our ranks” (13). Chinese critics used the class struggle to define characters, drawing a clear line of demarcation between “bad” or “good” ones, “positive or negative” characters according to their class stand.

C. **Historical materialism:** We regarded what literature reflects as being historical phenomena, so Marxist historical materialism has been a guideline in analyzing literary works. In our opinion, the historical truth is that the real driving forces to push history forward were the workers in the production relationship and those “minor or small” characters. Literary creation and criticism reflected what Mao said in 1942: “Our literary and art workers must accomplish this task and shift their stand; they must gradually move their feet over to the side of the workers, peasants and soldiers, to the side of the proletariat, through the process of going into their very midst and into the thick of practical struggles and through the process of studying Marxism and

society. Only in this way can we have a literature and art that are truly for the workers, peasants and soldiers, a truly proletarian literature and art” (300). After the Chinese Communist party took power in China, we were educated to hate the rich and feel glorious to be poor. In our criticism, sympathy always went to the poor, weak, and exploited while the rich were mostly perceived negatively.

D. Nationalism and Anti- (U.S.) Imperialism and Capitalism: Mao wrote in 1958, “If the U.S. monopoly capitalist groups persist in pushing their policies of aggression and war, the day is bound to come when they will be hanged by the people of the whole world. The same awaits the accomplices of the United States” (79). I grew up amidst such teachings, anti-U.S. imperialism slogans, parades, and gatherings. hating U.S. imperialists and loving Doctor Bethune, about whom, Mao wrote an article for the whole country to read every day.

After having lived in Canada for eighteen years and been exposed to all kinds of opinions, I have realized that there were both positive and negative aspects in what I experienced in literature criticism in China. Many of the negative sides, what the Chinese Communist culture had imprinted in me, have melted, and my world outlook has changed a lot. Besides, China is no longer a Communist country in deed and its literature and criticism have gone through a lot of changes. However, I still stick to the positive aspects of Chinese criticism, using Marxist dialectical materialism and historical materialism as the key in analyzing literary works. As a result, some of the above-mentioned norms still situate my perception within an ideological base, with a view of art and human relations determined by a socialist political and economic system. This is a kind of taste, which, as Levin Schucking says, “designates a general receptiveness for art, a relationship to art in which a man's entire philosophy of life is mirrored or at any rate one where the inmost being of himself is involved” (Holub 50).

My reading process is then the image-making activity. Striving to construct a coherent sense from the text, I select and organize its elements into consistent wholes, excluding some and foregrounding others, concretizing certain items in certain ways, trying to hold “different perspectives within the work together.” I have to rely, in other words, upon certain social codes and contexts to form properly the images of my expectation. In effect, the images I form are a combination of perception and ideation. “The former occurs only when an object is present to be perceived, while the latter presupposes the absence or non-existence of an object” (Holub 91). My reading entails ideation, because aside from the marks on the page, I bring forth or ideate the “object” (such will be the case of my reception of the little church as a symbol of Communism in *The Loved and the Lost*).

Though this aesthetic object of ideation in my reading of the four writers is something that may be taken as “bias” or “prejudice”, it is within my “horizon”, a term Gadamer uses to refer to “the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point” (59). For example, some critics might find my reception of the four novels radical and totally unacceptable. But according to Heidegger, it is precisely our being-in-the-world with its prejudices and presuppositions that makes understanding possible. As he writes in *Being and Time*: “Whenever something is interpreted as something, the interpretation will be found essentially upon fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception” (191-2). Therefore, my interpretation is never to me a presuppositionless apprehending of some essential segments.

According to Gadamer, prejudice, because it belongs to historical reality itself, is not a hindrance to understanding, but rather a condition of the possibility of understanding. “What is necessary is a fundamental rehabilitation of the concept of prejudice and a recognition of the fact that there are legitimate prejudices, if we want to do justice to man's finite, historical mode of being” (Holub 41). Gadamer's reliance on “prejudice” as a positive value holds true in my understanding of the four writers. One's “prejudices” and preconceptions are a fundamental part of any hermeneutic situation. Thus, in contrast to previous hermeneutical theory, “the historicity of the interpreter is not a barrier to understanding. A truly hermeneutical thinking must take account of its own historicity” (Holub 41).

Therefore, in my reception, “horizon” is an essential part. It thus describes my situatedness in the world: what I can see according to Marxism and its concept of class struggle. It may also be defined with reference to the prejudices that I bring with me while reading the four writers, since they represent a “horizon” over which I cannot see. In accordance with my “historical consciousness” and particular “horizon of expectation”, in this thesis I present a close reading of the four novels (*The Loved and the Lost*, *The Equations of Love*, *The Watch That Ends the Night*, and *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*), which highlights in many cases features of the texts that other critics and readers have not given emphasis to before. The purpose of my study, assuming the recognized method of reception theory, is to imbue the novels with the semantic unity that will make their structures take on a new character. But before the analysis of texts begins, there should be some commentary on Marxism and Communism which are at the centre of my critical assumption.

Section Two: Marxism and Literature

What is the function of literature? Can it truly be a mirror of the social life of a certain era or does it more simply reflect our common human nature in such experience as love, kindness, ambition, jealousy, etc.? Can we credit art for art's sake? Obviously, the key to such questions lies in the creators of literary works - authors, poets, playwrights, etc. - and how their own individual thoughts function in relation to perceived reality. The thinking of an author may be said to reflect reality but, as contemporary theory has shown, literature always resembles a prism in which reality is distorted or altered by the thoughts and the language of the creators of literary works. Therefore, instead of saying that literature is a mirror of reality, it is safer to say that literature is a mirror of a created reality. Then, we might ask are there certain basic characteristics in the thinking of literary creators? It would mean the discovery of the refracted angles in the literary prism if one could find these characteristics. This is very important to literary criticism and literary comprehension.

Mao Tse-Tung wrote, "In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics" (299). In modern society, the thinking of literary creators is bound to reflect the thinking of the ruling class or a particular dominant social group. This is a well-known Marxist viewpoint, according to which, thinking, as social ideology, is finally determined by the economic relationships of a society. In a society where classes exist, the ideology of the productively dominant classes is inevitably the dominant ideology (Marx and Engels, *German Ideology*). In a traditional capitalist society, the bourgeoisie or the upper class plays a dominant role in capitalist productive relationships, so its ideology becomes the ideology of its society.

Terry Eagleton explains it this way: according to Marxism, our social structure "is built on a series of ongoing conflicts between social classes" because of "the varying ways members of society work and utilize their economic resources" (120). The various methods of economic production and the social relationships they engender form the economic structure of society, called the base. According to Marxist thought, in capitalist countries, the capitalists exploit the working classes, determining for them their salaries and their working conditions, among a host of other elements in their lives. From this base, maintains Marx, "arises the superstructure - a multitude of social and

legal institutions, political and educational systems, religious beliefs, values, and a body of art and literature that one social class uses to keep members of the working class in check” (Eagleton 119-120). In other words, the capitalists, not the working classes, control society’s superstructure, its ideology, and the direct expression of this society’s superstructure. As a result, “a culture’s ideology is more frequently than not synonymous with ‘false consciousness,’ for such an ideology has been defined and established by the bourgeoisie and therefore represents a set of false assumptions or illusions used by the elite to dominate the working classes and to maintain social stability” (Eagleton 120).

As history and therefore our understanding of people and their actions and beliefs are determined by economic conditions, Marx maintains that the “upper class” necessarily controls literature, for literature is one of many elements contained in the superstructure itself. From this perspective, literature, like any other element of the superstructure, becomes involved in the social process by means of which the bourgeoisie indoctrinate the working class with their elite ideology. What is deemed natural and acceptable behavior in a capitalist society is depicted as a norm in its literature. This ideology will also have a dominant role in the thinking of writers and creators of literature, no matter how they themselves describe their own political thought; they might identify themselves as socialists, but literary creators belong chiefly to the middle and upper classes. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that the ideology and values of the middle and upper classes prevail in modern western literature.

Canadian literature is a component part of western literature, and middle and upper class ideology has a deep impact on it as demonstrated by the background of its culture and knowledge. In Canada, an often deplored fact is that “many Canadian cultural phenomena are not peculiarly Canadian at all, but are typical of their wider ... Western contexts” (Frye, *Structure*, 279). As Robin Mathews points out, “The spokesmen for literature in Canada have been trained in the literary genius of the English language, which means they have read deeply and widely in the classics, the comments upon the classics, and the literature peripheral to the classics of Britain and the United States” (61). Many early Canadians, whether they had been born in Britain or not, claimed English history and literature as their own. Canadian literature was seen as a ‘stem’ planted in a new country, or as an ‘offshoot’ of English literature, but with its roots in England.

From the time Canadian literature first appeared until now, the majority of its writers, whether immigrants or Canadians, have been solidly middle class and represented the upper levels of the middle class - the professionals, merchants and civil servants -, and their literature testifies to the presence of bourgeois and aristocratic assumptions, fundamental and normative to an upper and middle class ideology. From their writings, we need to determine the implicit ideology, however masked, that governs relations in a text.

Although Marxism came into being in the mid nineteenth century, it did not spread widely in the West until the 1930s during which time many North American intellectuals were attracted to left-wing and Communist movements because Marxist theories helped to explain the Depression: Communism is the doctrine of the conditions of the liberation of the proletariat, that class in society which lives entirely from the sale of its labor and does not draw profit from any kind of capital (Eagles, *Communist Manifesto*, 1848). As a political movement, Communism seeks to overthrow, through a workers' revolution, the capitalist system controlled by a few wealthy businessmen, who, were in almost exclusive possession of all the means of subsistence and of the instruments (machines, factories) and materials necessary for the production of the means of subsistence, and to establish a system in which property is owned by the community as a whole rather than by individuals. In theory, communism would create a classless society of abundance and freedom, in which all people enjoy equal social and economic status. In the mid-thirties, with Italy and Germany posing more and more threat to the whole world, the left, with its Marxist affiliation and firm fighting slogans against Fascism, held increasing appeal among the people, especially among the intellectuals.

During and immediately after World War II, Canadians in general and Canadian writers in particular had a sense of common purpose: they were virtually at one in their desire to defeat Hitler and to ensure a just and stable peace. Shortly after the cessation of hostilities, however, the Cold War between Russia and the West destroyed or at least vitiated this unity. The outbreak of local wars, especially the war of Korea, of racial and tribal tension in many parts of Africa and the Far East, and of such crises as those in Berlin, Hungary, Suez, Laos and then Congo, made the hopes of a peaceful world seem remote and futile, so the decade of the fifties was one of vacillation and disillusionment in many ways.

As part of North America, Canada has been a faithful follower of its neighbor, the United States. The American government's anti-Communism has been part of the Canadian government's policy. As early as 1936, when Bethune went to Spain with his

blood transfusion team, the Canadian Government refused to “grant the transfusion service the status of a humanitarian agency. Their failure to do so forced [Bethune] to pay duty on the station wagon at the French border” (Stewart, *Mind* 74); the simple reason is that the team was sent by the Canadian Communist Party. Then the Canadian Communist Party was banned in June 1940 (Penner 183) and many communists were either put into jail or lived in hiding. “By the end of September all communists had been released from internment or jail after signing two documents,” one of which was promising not to “belong to or support the Communist Party of Canada as long as it is an illegal organization, according to the Defense of Canada Regulations” (Penner 186). In 1946, came the “Cold War,” during which some Canadian communists were charged with espionage or conspiracy to commit espionage and other crimes for the Soviet Union. According to Tim Buck, “Mackenzie King’s Canadian spy scare was carefully planned and elaborately staged to stir up prejudice and hostility against the Soviet Union” (Penner 219). Certainly Canada was also affected by McCarthyism, an expression of totalitarianism, irrationalism, and frustration in American society in the early fifties, during which many innocent people were persecuted, the American Communist Party’s national leaders were sent to prison, and the Communist Party remained in quasi-legal existence (Steinberg 290). In Canada, the communists made considerable headway in the trade union movement from 1936 onwards, except for the period from 1939 to 1941 when the party was illegal. A concerted drive to dislodge the communists from these positions began with the outbreak of the Cold War and continued until McCarthyism was over. According to Norman Penner,

It involved at different times the U.S. and Canadian governments, collusion between CCF and Liberal union leaders, and between the international offices of the major American unions and their Canadian affiliates. No holds were barred: laws were set aside or broken, the anti-Communists union officers launched massive, raids on the Communists-led unions, congress conventions and trades council meetings became scene of fierce propaganda battles. Finally, by 1951 ...the main objects of the anti-Communist onslaught were achieved. The defeat of the Communists did not take place as a result of demands by the rank and file. In fact, there were no trade union objectives at stake. The Communists were good militant trade union leaders and activists. They were pursued by the U.S. and Canadian governments for Cold War objectives. The anti-Communist coalition made full use of the international structure of most Canadian unions to help destroy the Communist strongholds in American and Canadian unions. (224)

The files of the Canadian government, particularly of the Departments of Immigration, Justice, and Mines from October, 27, 1947, to May 10, 1948, reveal their compliance with U.S. demands that “subversive” or “un-American” leaders of Communist-led unions be prevented from crossing the border on union business. The Taft-Hartley Act, an American law that prohibited communists or “subversives” from holding union office, was extended to Canadian branches and used to expel Canadians who did not fulfill the provisions of this American Act” (Penner 224). In 1948, in the House of Commons Mackenzie King congratulated those for the good work and progress they were making in their fight against Communism:

Ours was the first government in the world to expose the activities of communists in the public service...I agree that Canada owes a great measure of thanks to the leaders of labor organizations in our country for the part they actively taking in seeking to suppress any development of Communism. (Penner 224)

This political and social background and the events that ensued inevitably affected Canadian writers and are reflected in their works. This thesis will examine representative works that reflect varying responses to the politics of the 1950s. Ethel Wilson did not see herself as a political writer - she felt it would only lead to narrow didacticism - and so there are no overt political statements in her writing. But when a wealthy woman with servants writes about the poor, as Wilson did in *The Equations of Love*, the meaning of the text will inevitably be a complicated one and require more than an analysis of irony and humour. Mordecai Richler, on the other hand, openly and intentionally expresses his pro-capitalist and anti-Communist attitudes and these have to be part of any study of his work, especially *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*. Morley Callaghan and Hugh MacLennan are different in that they were at some point consciously influenced by and interested in Marxism and were even involved in left-wing activities. Their works, with some pro-Communist plot arrangements, reflect the positive side of left-wing trends in Canada. They even allegorize “sick capitalism” and “dynamic Communism” in the characters of their novels.

However, the prevailing bourgeois ideology still insistently influenced Callaghan and MacLennan’s writing and ideology, as can be seen in the plot of their fictions and in their personal lives. In Marxist literary criticism, such a phenomenon is referred to as “the ideological limit” of the left-wing writers in capitalist countries. Despite their positive descriptions of Communism and negative descriptions of

capitalism, eventually, they would still return to the traditional and prevailing ideology. They rarely take anti-imperialism to effective lengths; and their disapproval of capitalism is never presented as a fundamental analysis. They never imply the overthrow of capitalism and a redistribution of wealth and power. Their ambiguous attitude often causes contradictions in the writing itself, as is reflected in Hugh MacLennan's ambiguous treatment of his main character Jerome Martell. This is similar to the larger vision of Callaghan's Catholic socialism in novels like *They Shall Inherit the Earth*.

The second reason for the ambiguous writings by some of these writers is political and financial pressure. Although McCarthyism was over by 1954, Communism remained unpopular in Canada, as is reflected in the fact that Igor Gouzenko won the Governor General's Award for that year because his anti-Communist novel, *The Fall of a Titan*, translated from Russian into English, accommodated the ideology of the power establishment. Consequently, although there were many who had serious doubts about American foreign policy and Canada's support of it, and Canadian nationalism defined itself in opposition to the economic and cultural domination of the United States, much of this anti-Americanism was superficial, and not many people, especially writers, dared to express their sympathy for Communists or challenge the authority openly. So far as literature is concerned, there is a limit to what the reading public will accept. Being familiar with the political and social atmosphere of Canada and the tastes and judgement of the reading public in the fifties, the writers certainly had no choice but to cater to Canadian society and to make their products pleasant to the taste of the reading public by necessitating some kinds of selection, omission, emphasis, and rearrangement, thus producing politically safe material for public consumption. MacLennan accordingly cuts Bethune down to size and lets Jerome Martell put on a beautiful religious mask to cover his real self and blurs MacLennan's real personal values, norms, and viewpoints. As a result, despite the contempt shown for MacLennan by the critics colonized by U.S. culture, he was found pleasing by the reading public. Such a central indication of conservative conformism in Canada shows that the ideology of the dominant class was successfully imposed either consciously or unconsciously upon all its people in general and its writers in particular. The primary purpose of this essay, through analyzing some works by four writers and studying the range of literary responses to the political crisis of the Cold War in the 1950s, is to show the dominant

middle and upper class trend in their creative ideology and the concomitant fear of Communism, and to examine the relationship between this reality and literature.

CHAPTER ONE: DECIPHERING POLITICS IN *THE LOVED AND THE LOST*

In his essay on Morley Callaghan, Edmund Wilson made the following appraisal: “Mr. Callaghan is not writing about Canada at all from the point of view of exploiting its regional characteristics... Still less is Mr. Callaghan occupied with specifically Canadian problems. The new and militant Canadian nationalism - in these novels, at least - does not touch him; he is not here concerned with the question of ‘what it means to be a Canadian’ (*O Canada!* 26). This is particularly true with Callaghan’s *The Loved and the Lost* published in 1951. This novel transcends the nationalistic urge in its content because of Callaghan’s concern to represent not the Canadian scene but the international theme of the Cold War period brought about by his precocious grasp and expression of certain forms and ideas about conflicts between capitalism and Communism and the human conditions of the time.

Callaghan began to write the novel in 1948, a time when McCarthyism came into being, and accordingly he captures the mood and spirit of the late forties and early fifties related to the Cold War. Callaghan reflected the tragedy of the Cold War period and sought to describe this ordeal of both the human and the political dimensions. *The Loved and the Lost* adapts essentials of form and theme that prevailed in fiction in the 1930s and is unquestionably an example of what John Gardner calls “moral fiction” (Staines, *Symposium* 67) because the author uses didactic strategies to present his moral intention in condemning capitalism and advocating Communism. However, Callaghan’s intention is prismatically and parabolically reflected through narrative action which serves as “an embodiment of meaning” (*Symposium* 67). In this chapter, I would like to borrow one of Barry Cameron’s views on Callaghan’s writing. According to Cameron, *The Loved and the Lost* is, “strictly speaking, neither ‘realistic’ nor ‘allegorical.’ It is rather ‘parabolic’ fiction in which our immediate interest is in narrative events and the behaviour of characters, yet our ultimate interest is in the application of the moral truth generated by the fiction” (*Symposium* 67).

According to Cameron, parable, a Greek term, involves a comparison, an analogical mode of rhetoric. Parable was used by the rabbis as a pedagogical technique in the belief that the student's interest was heightened and his interpretive skill sharpened by compelling him to penetrate through the often deliberate ambiguity of the parable to the core of the meaning; the parable was not intended to conceal, but to stir the listener to intense thought (*Symposium*, 69). In the Old Testament the purpose of parables is to "whet the curiosity and attract attention" (Cameron, *Symposium*, 70-71). In other words, Jesus' parables are designed, as Callaghan himself has suggested, to invoke through their mysterious nature the "intuitions of imagination." On receiving the Royal Bank Award on June 15, 1970, Callaghan said in his acceptance speech: "A long time ago Jesus of Nazareth told stories, baffling parables that go on haunting men. But I'm sure there was some business-like Pharisee in the listening crowd who muttered, 'Why doesn't he give us the facts? Why the mystery? Why doesn't he give us some real information?'" (*Commentary*, 20). According to Cameron, those "who possess faith would not ask such questions, and we too are meant to respond intuitively to the baffling parables of Callaghan himself...*The Loved and the Lost* is an extended parable on the text of the nature of innocence and of faith as an intuitive moral vision" (*Symposium*, 72-73). However, unlike Mr. Cameron's religious interpretation of innocence and faith, my interpretation of Callaghan's parable is that the author likens the innocence of the main character, Peggy Sanderson, to Communism and to people's faith in it. *The Loved and The Lost* presents the dilemma of how humankind cannot reconcile its idealistic vision with its real pursuits - what the capitalist system imposes. It also illustrates that under the capitalist system, the attempt to live for one's ideals (Communism) and to go against social conventions (capitalism) can end only in frustration and tragedy, even though those pursuits are based on the spiritual values by which some people have chosen to live. Yet in the novel somehow one's ideal pursuit, namely, what is loved, also triumphs although all may seem lost.

According to critic Victor Hoar, "Callaghan faced the facts of his generation during the Cold War period and probed through and beyond them to find a secure ground for action and belief... and concluded that the temporal [capitalist] world cannot be self-redeemed." Further he "had to discover a means of revealing dramatically the nature of [his generation's] quest for significance in the terrifying flux of the modern world" (108). He turned to Communism. However, under the pressure of the capitalist system, he never explicitly advocated his views, but expressed them through a

commercially and strategically prismatic means through which all the radical and provocative terms such as ‘capitalism’, ‘Communism’ and ‘revolutionary struggles’ were filtered out, and his messages conveyed through the form and style of a parable. But it is the reader or listener who theoretically draws the application of the point to his own life, and in Callaghan’s parable what happens to the two main characters Peggy Sanderson, a copy writer, and James McAlpine, an associate professor of history at the University of Toronto, has little point without the moral which is implicitly expressed. As a result, the novel is very effective not because of Peggy’s life and death or McAlpine’s experience but because of the truth illustrated.

Section One: The Prismatic Reflection of Common Themes Related to the International Cold War

1. Pro-Communist attitude towards class struggle

The Loved and the Lost presents the fierce tension between the values of the poor and the rich, and the white and the black. The “dark” mountain and the “white” lower town, in their contrasting descriptive details, serve to underline the dichotomy of good and evil and to initiate the conflicts characteristic of racial and class distinction. In the novel, the mountain symbolizes the ruling class, capitalism. “Nearly all the rich families in Montreal lived on the mountain” (1). Even though the rich people feel secure there on the mountain, it is “behind a shimmering curtain of lights surmounted by a gleaming cross” (1). The mountain is isolated because it is “on the island,” surrounded by the river, which symbolizes the flow of communal life and the possibility of Communism. The river, the opposite force of capitalism, “is always there too, and the boat whistles echo all night long against the mountain” (1). The author’s symbol about the two opposing forces goes further: “Those who wanted things to remain as they were liked the mountain. Those who wanted a change preferred the boat flowing river” (1). For the time being, “no one could forget either of them” (1): each of them poses a threat to the other. The ruling class cannot ignore the possibility of being taken over by the Communist forces.

The capitalist system benefits only a handful of rich while the majority of the poor suffer. The mountain is like “a rock of riches with poverty sprawling around the rock” (151). However, the capitalist system is still as hard as the rock. The description

of the setting is suggestive of struggle: “The clouds overhead were breaking up. Behind the tower of the Windsor Station and the lighted tower of the Sun Life Building the moon was trying to shine through, but it was only a pale flicker. The gaps in the clouds closed again” (51). Here the author compares the “Sun” (Sun Life Building and later the pro-establishment newspaper *Sun*) to the dominating force, capitalism, the legal ruling class in the open, a day time force, with a capital ‘S,’ and compares the moon to Communism, an illegal existence, a night time force, with a small ‘m’.

On the top of the mountain, the newspaper man, “Mr. Carver lived in the Chateau apartment near the Ritz, high above the roofs of the houses sloping down to the railroad”: this stronghold of capitalism “looked like a massive stone fortress” (1). Mr. Carver, with his gray head “like a silver bullet on his big shoulder”, defends the capitalist fortress. He is a strong-willed fighter, insisting that “if he had to he could operate the presses himself, even run the typesetting machine himself” and “get out on the street and sell the papers,” because his “newspaper the *Sun* [the propaganda machine of the capitalist system] was his life.” Following what was going on in the United States politically, namely, propagandizing against Communism in the Soviet Union, China and other countries, “the international scene was [the *Sun*’s] special field; it carried the *New York Times* correspondence” (26), namely, echoing whatever the United States was advocating. The Canadian government’s policy in fighting against Communism is reflected in the cabinet minister’s speech in the United Nations: “Let’s all be hardheaded” (110).

2. Justification of a Communist slogan: Smash the old capitalist system

McCarthyism started in the United States, but its main purpose was to stop Communism from spreading all over the world. Right after World War Two, one country after another in eastern Europe turned to the Communist rank led by the Soviet Union, followed by China, North Korea and some other countries in Asia. With the Communist force getting bigger and stronger, the United States and other western countries felt threatened. They tried one means after another to stop the spread of this political system. Besides getting involved physically in the civil wars to fight against Communism in countries such as China, Korea and Vietnam, one important step of these anti-Communist countries was launching propaganda to negate the new systems in the Communist countries and try to prove that it was wrong to overturn the capitalist systems in those countries. However, Callaghan tries to show the opposite.

In *The Loved and the Lost*, businessman Wolgast's childhood experience is used to show the injustice of the capitalist system and the exploitation of the farmers by the landlords. Wolgast was born in Poland, in "a forlorn village...where everything and everybody belonged to the landowner who had a fine big house. The village houses [where the poor lived] were windswept and bare. They had old barns and lean-tos, and in the winter the village was bleak and lonely...It was the kind of life her people had known for five hundred years. They were little better than serfs. Everything they got out of life, the money, the suffering, the poverty and a few hopes, they got from the landlord and the big house" (152). This shows that the capitalist system, symbolized by the white horse, which deprived the poor of a decent life and the fruit of their hard work, and put them under the control of the rich, brought the people nothing but suffering and had lasted for too long.

The poor are so exploited and oppressed by the rich that finally they stand up to fight for their own future. Callaghan describes the plight of Wolgast's father: once, "he was carrying stones from a stone pile to the masons, working on the walls. All day, like a beast of a burden he carried these big stones, two at a time, one under each arm, from the stone pile to the scaffolding...Then his knees wobbled, he dropped one of the stones and looked surprised; then the other big stone fell from his hands... 'Try hard and own a white horse of your own some day, son. Try hard.' And he died" (155). This is the dying cry of a life-long exploited and crushed man. Having tolerated the vicious system his whole life, he cannot tolerate it any more and wants his children to have a better life. He wants his son to liberate himself, to have a white horse of his own. echoing what Mao said in 1939, "The ruthless economic exploitation and political oppression of the peasants by the landlord class forced them into numerous uprisings against its rule" (9). Wolgast's story serves to justify the Communist cause in the world: it is the man-eating capitalist system that has left the poor no choice but to fight to overthrow it. What happens to Wolgast's family is portrayed in Marxist terms, and the author's delineation of the workings of Polish society owes much to the diffused theories of Marx. The author's account is class conscious and extremely concerned to lay out the connections between the suffering of the poor and the subsequent downfall of the capitalist system in Poland so as to negate implicitly the justice of the anti-Communist movement of McCarthyism.

3. Sympathy with the blacks

In *The Loved and the Lost*, Callaghan's consuming interest in the life of black people and his compassion for their suffering have given the novel a unique character. Like the blacks in the United States, those in Canada had no social status and lived in a very small space. The blacks do things "in their own small neighborhood...but they couldn't live in the good hotels or go into the select bars and knew it" (37). For example, in front of a café, one of its owners is blocking the entrance, whispering: "We don't go for jerks around here...anybody but jerks in the bar...get what I mean?" He asks "with the indulgent air of a man who was so securely established in his own city that he could accept or reject anyone who came to his place for a drink" (46). His place "obviously wasn't a poor man's bar, for the clients at the tables were all well dressed" (46). One of the bar owners is an Irishman and the other is a Jew from Poland, Wolgast, who has wholeheartedly adopted capitalist values on coming to Canada, where both owners have become symbols of the wealthy and those against the Communist system. Wolgast even says, "Okay, who isn't an Irishman?" (47) Both bar owners are ready to show racial discrimination.

As a result, the blacks and black "musicians were held in their strange rapture, and there was nothing in the world for them but the lonely little theme and that one room in the cold night and their own intensity" (52). The blacks are blocked from decent employment. Sophie Johnson is "a smart, clean, straightforward girl" (84), but she is rejected for nurse training because she is not "a light mulatto but coal-black!" (84) Callaghan uses what Peggy says to reflect the blacks' plight and social injustice:

If a white man, even a bad one, is getting kicked around, he knows he can call a policeman. It's a feeling deep inside him. From the time he was a kid the authorities have pounded it into him. *His* authorities! Justice will always have one eye open for him. But when a Negro has a crazy, angry moment he wants to close his eyes, he wants to go blind; he does not want to see the face of justice. It'll be a white face, so he's alone with nothing to fall back on but his own blind anger and he has to make a crazy violent protest before he opens his eyes. He knows he'll hate what he sees when he opens his eyes, and so he likes the angry darkness. Then, of course, he comes to himself, and he's frightened and on the run, which is no news for him because all his life in one way or another he's been on the run in a white world. (122-23)

4. The vicious and abnormal life of the rich versus the decent and natural life of the talented and beautiful blacks

The author's negative description of the upper class reveals the hypocritical, incapable and weak nature of the rich and the capitalist system. Throughout the novel the reader can see Callaghan's satire of business, academic life, social prejudice, mob hysteria and hypocritical religion in the upper class. For example, Mrs. Havelock appears very cold to James McAlpine as soon as she learns that "he lives down at the end of the beach" (8), not an affluent area. The cabinet minister cannot pronounce McAlpine's name correctly (109). The rich help and rely on each other for personal benefits: bar-owner Wolgast "had always had the cooperation of some French Canadian politician when he needed to get his license renewed" (148). Many rich people are liars. Wolgast claims that he "was gassed in the First World War," but his partner Derle, on the other hand, insists Wolgast never saw the war. He talks in his special way, just "whispers like that so people will have to listen attentively" (47). The author implies that the rich impose their opinions onto others by making others listen to them attentively. Brandon Conron points out that "Beneath the surface veneer of civilization there are always lurking the jungle fury and demoniac frenzy of mob hysteria, which can break out suddenly in a hockey scuffle or a café riot"(134). In the Chalet restaurant, where the black and the poor cannot visit, the faces of all the customers "shone with sweat, and they all broke into unpredictable bursts of laughter. They took turns laughing at one another" (47). Here, there is no harmony, and the rich and the arrogant people do not listen to each other, making the place unbearably noisy. The restaurant owner "is drunk as an owl...and punched the cash register with an angry disdain (46-47). The rich are greedy and have no manners: when McAlpine ordered "a round of drinks, the grinning approving faces came closer...The ashes of [Dole's] cigar wavered over McAlpine's glass" (48). The author tries to show through what McAlpine's friend Foley says about "Humanity on its last legs, and Carver here with his dignity down" (49), that Mr. Carver represents only a hypocritical surface of the pattern while the drunkards and their like in the restaurant represent its true inside nature.

The poor and blacks behave better than the rich and white. At St. Antoine, a Negroes' gathering place, "Nobody was really drunk. Nobody was as hilarious as Foley's friends had been at the Earbenders club" (55). Here, McAlpine "felt good; he felt spry and gay... It was like watching people who were sure of one another visiting in their own neighborhood" (55).

According to Callaghan, although the system benefits the rich all the time and in every aspect, they do not have a normal life but are restricted by social norms. The rich are the slaves of their valuable things, “important furniture and nice clothes...clean white shiny faces” (42). They have artificial fun while the poor and the blacks have natural fun as shown by Peggy’s experience: “I had never been to a party where I really had fun...In the tumble-down old rough-cast house [of the Johnsons, a black family], there was no important furniture and nothing valuable that could be damaged, and we just chased one another around the house screaming happily, and we sang” (41). Unlike Mrs. Havelock, who treats young McAlpine very coldly, Mrs. Johnson is very friendly to Peggy (41).

In addition, the poor and the blacks are talented. The Johnsons, the rejected family, are envied for their ability to be happy without material wealth. Peggy remembers a birthday party at the Johnsons, “We had an orchestra; not that there were any instruments, but each kid could imitate some instrument with his voice and his hands. I was the only one who couldn’t do anything. I felt ashamed...they... were sorry for me” (41). “All that year I went to parties at the Johnson house, and I think I was happier than I had ever been in my life” (41).

In addition, the poor and blacks are presented as beautiful. Peggy says, recalling the time she saw a black boy lying in the sunshine, “I had never seen anything so beautiful as the boy’s brown body lying there in the sunlight...I was aware for the first time that beauty could be painful in a strange way” (40). When walking with him, Peggy felt that “It was like walking along the road with my own brother except that he seemed more wonderful and more important” (40). The black trumpet player, Wilson, is well built, about five feet ten, with good even features, but, different from the tall white men blocking the entrance to the Café, “he did not look very powerful because he was so well proportioned; he was neither fat nor slim. His skin was coffee-colored, contrasting well with his light brown double-breasted suit” (56). Peggy believes that “there was more gentleness in [Wagstaffe, the band leader] than [she] had ever felt in anyone” (56.). Wilson and Wagstaffe are described as the best in their line in the country” (58). All these details point to one important point: it is unjust that talented, beautiful and gentle people who are poor and black be kept at the bottom of society while the vicious, crazy, vulgar and greedy rich rule the whole of society from the top.

I believe, what Callaghan presents is but the prismatic reflection of the reality. Under his pen, there is a lack of objectivity, a stereotyping. The mountainside – the

capitalist stronghold - is always dark and static while the riverside – the Communist movement – is always full of energy and moving. The poor and the black are always the brightest and most decent while the white rich are always indecent and selfish. Above all, he fails to show that a large majority of the social problems and crime are caused by the poor and black due to their poverty and lack of social security, and many of the vanguards of the Communist movements, like many bandits throughout history, were not the hard-working people like Wolgast's father, but idle and daring hooligans who were willing to take risks to profit.

Section Two: The Symbolic Meaning of McAlpine's Love

On the surface, *The Loved and the Lost* is about McAlpine's love for Peggy Sanderson. At a deeper level, what dominates the novel is the conflict between his true love for Communism and his passive desire to ascend to society's upper ranks. The author has realized the profound and disturbing conflict between the two ranks, the old, self-assertive capitalism and the fresh and revolutionary left embodied in the persons respectively of Catherine Carver and Peggy Sanderson.

1. Catherine: the symbol of declining capitalism

(A) Callaghan's negative portrait of capitalism

First of all, in this novel's scheme, Capitalism is unattractive and the system is old. Catherine Carver, newspaperman Carver's daughter, "was twenty-seven and lonely after her divorce" (3). Although "[s]he had a fine walk," it is "a slow stride as if her shoulders were suspended from a clothesline, her legs swinging effortlessly" (3). The Capitalist system itself is not sure of its own existence, as reflected in Catherine's 'lack of confidence: "Yet her friends had noticed that she had the air of not quite believing in her own loveliness, of not being sure she was really wanted, and they were sometimes touched by her eagerness" (3). Catherine's doubt and eagerness about herself show that capitalism is not popular and is anxious to keep itself needed and wanted. When the story starts, James McAlpine seems on the point of realizing the financial security and social status that have been his life long ambition. Before he meets Peggy, his only pursuit in life is to achieve professional success. As a result, he finds Catherine very attractive and feels close to her. To go up the social ladder, McAlpine needs to cling to

the capitalist stronghold for support. This shows that capitalism is respected and needed by only those “French or English... who looked most prosperous and distinguished [and who] bowed to Catherine” (103) and those like McAlpine who has not been exposed to something fresh and advanced like Communism before he meets Peggy Sanderson.

(B) The capitalist system is split due to its domineering controls

In the process of courting Catherine, who represents capitalism, McAlpine finds her very domineering. In capitalist society, the rulers are in control of everybody and everything. Catherine says, “You know what I’m like! If I am in somebody’s house and I see a rug on the floor at the wrong angle I have to straighten it, and if I see a picture on a wall a little askew there I am straightening it too. I suppose I feel the same way about people.” (74). McAlpine “felt uncomfortable that she could acknowledge with such innocent good will the flaw in her nature that made her want to tamper with other people’s lives...if he mentioned Peggy, she would see her simply as a picture on a wall that had to be straightened; she would want to straighten him out too, in his attitude toward the girl. By rejecting and pitying Catherine’s possessiveness he could believe he was free from the same trait himself” (74).

The power struggle in the capitalist system is symbolized by Catherine’s divorce from a man in leather manufacturing. When McAlpine asks someone about her divorce, he is told that “Maybe Miss Catherine was a dragon. Maybe the poor guy got married and woke up and wondered why...Just another pleasant drunk ... Maybe...got tired handling leather” (13). Catherine’s ex-husband might have been attracted to capitalism but finds it as powerful and treacherous as a dragon, and leaves: Catherine is “reminded painfully of moments she had known with her husband. She could not bear to turn and look at Jim and feel him guarding himself, and see that expression she had seen in her husband’s eyes” (22). She is actually deserted by her husband as shown by her fear that “if she revealed [her ardor] she would suffer again the bewildering ache of her husband’s resentful withdrawal” (3). When Catherine feels that McAlpine is not really in love with her, she finds it unbearable that McAlpine “should persist in having a place in his life where she could not enter...She longed to feel his arm around her” (169) to be loved and needed. Like her ex-husband, once McAlpine sees through the nature of capitalism, he retreats from it.

In Callaghan's view in the novel, growth and change are not the common experience of what is inside the capitalist system. Embodiments of capitalism, such as Catherine, remain static and fixed. Alone in her room, she

would be reminded of one lost thing after another. She remembered how, when she was a little girl, her mother had wanted her to study ballet [pursue something beautiful and to make the pattern attractive] and she refused, and ten years later when she had wanted to be a ballet dancer [to make some remedy for the system's problems] they had told her she had lost her opportunity; she was a little too old. One lost triumph after another, all trivial and irrelevant, would float in her mind; the time when she had bought a brown suit for a tea party and three other girls at the party had won brown suits and so, of course, no one could notice hers, and the boys she had once quarreled with, whose affections she had lost; and her mother, who had died young. (169)

The capitalist system has nothing new and challenging to attract people, and the death of Catherine's mother might represent the loss of the foundation of the capitalist system. The author puts forward a greater fact: the need for social reconstruction and a recognition of the urge for something new.

2. Peggy: The symbol of Communism: young, fresh and attractive

In Callaghan's parable, McAlpine, the representative of humankind, unhappy with what he has found in Catherine, the symbol of capitalism, is searching for an object of belief, which he finds in Peggy, the symbol of Communism. The story, then, is Jim McAlpine's romance with Peggy - his desire to apprehend and finally to share with her what she possesses, namely, his falling in love with Communism. It is essentially through McAlpine's perspective that we are made to realize his free will to stand with Communism and that we are directly invited to identify with him throughout the novel.

(A) Attractive

Peggy Sanderson is very attractive. She is "some one fresh as a daisy," (14) and meeting her will make people end up "believing the dew is still on the grass" (14). "She looked like an exquisite little figurine done with a delicate grace and belonging in some china cabinet" (125). She was so impressive that McAlpine and Foley "both coaxed her to stay when she had to leave" (17). Foley says, Peggy "hasn't much style, and yet she's completely feminine. It does not matter what she wears. I think we're all glad to have her in the office. When she's around we smile at each other. You know what we're really like - a bunch of gimlet-eyed hucksters...It's nice to feel young again"

(18). The beauty of Communism itself is self-evident, as shown by Peggy's character: "she didn't say a damn thing. What does it matter? Another girl would have made a self-conscious effort to say a dozen things. Peggy doesn't have to try" (18).

In the character of Peggy Sanderson, the author shows that the freshness of Communism catches people's attention right away. McAlpine is quickly attracted and drifts away from Catherine, the embodiment of the old order. When they are talking, McAlpine's "tone, so quiet and withholding, startled [Catherine], and made her afraid of her own assertiveness. She felt him guarding himself against her" (21). "They had to become aware of each other in a new way and know how much of each other they could count on" (21). When they kissed good-bye, "McAlpine was afraid to hold [Catherine] against him, afraid she would know his heart was not beating against hers, and know, too, that his mind was somewhere else, enchanted by a glimpse of something else" (23); McAlpine's attention is drawn to Communism because Peggy "has a voluptuous, suggestive appeal...He wanted to kiss her and hold her against him" (38); he does not have a similar desire to kiss Catherine. With Peggy, "that loneliness which had been mixed up with his resentment of Carver left him" (31). After hearing Peggy talk about her experience with the Johnsons, there is "light" in "McAlpine's eyes. Even after he is asked to leave her room, "even at the door, he talked on monotonously. He wanted to defend the room", the Communist shelter, and he "walked reluctantly down the street" (43). McAlpine compares Peggy's initial impact on him to a wartime experience in Paris shortly after its liberation. To him, Communism is something that "had come in out of the darkness" and the rain, like the impression brought about by the exciting circus: "All this going down there under a brilliant white light! Everything was so white and clean and fantastically surprising and so wonderfully innocent and happy," just like "that oasis of happiness" (70). This symbolizes how Communism is different from Capitalism. Communism's serene innocence and freshness challenge McAlpine's worldly values as reflected in his initial courting of capitalism to ascend the social ladder and he is left enriched and excited by the new vision of himself and of the world around him. He is eventually distracted and lured down towards the river, the Communist side.

(B) Communists are not after material things

Communists aim at benefiting the public and are not after materialistic things and artificial manners. Used by the author as a symbolic representative of the

proletariat, Peggy Sanderson lives a simple life. She is never seen to “wear a hat” (15). “She had none of Catherine’s style and obviously did not care, and probably wore the [plain] belted coat in the spring, fall, and winter.” She does not have any material desire; she “lived in one of the shabbier buildings” in the basement. Her small room was plain, “like a jail cell” (35). But Peggy “couldn’t help smiling broadly” when McAlpine looked shocked (35). Does she live like this on purpose? McAlpine tries to find “evidence to prove that her carelessness with her clothes was part of her defiant resistance...All the untidiness, the overalls, the disorder, was her gesture of contempt for those who were passionately concerned with these things, for she knew she could emerge effortlessly with her own kind of superior elegance” (145). “Even [her] poverty became attractive” (39).

(C) Aiming at helping and liberating all the blacks, the poor and the weak

The specially advocated goal of Communism is to free and assist the poor, those discriminated against (the blacks), and the weak. The author attributes such purpose and virtue to Peggy Sanderson. The title given to the sketch which McAlpine makes of Peggy, “Peggy, the Crimper,” a shoe factory worker who crimps the cans that have been filled with fluid, symbolizes that she represents the working class, those united in their efforts to overthrow the existing system.

The author uses Peggy’s childhood experience that has had a profound effect on shaping her individual temperament to justify her Communist pursuits. At the age of thirteen, when her father ordered her to stop having anything to do with the Johnsons, she made up her mind: “No matter how long I live...I think I’ll always remember the way that old roughcast house leaned against the sky at night” (43). Peggy’s feelings about the upper class are further hardened by Sophie Johnson’s rejection by the white society. Peggy tells Sophie, “ ‘You are just too black [to be a nurse].’ It was a cruel thing to say, but I felt cruel, and I was sure it was the way Sophie wanted me to feel’...There was a curious hardness in her voice... ‘It was raining, and I stayed out and caught a chill, and I got a fever that lasted three days’” (85). The racial discrimination and injustice in the capitalist world forced Peggy to leave the upper class by leaving her father, saying, “ ‘While I was hating his respectable world for what it had done for him, I felt this lightness of spirit; I felt myself whirling away from things he had wanted, whirling in an entirely different direction. I left him. It was right. I’ve always trusted that feeling, and I’ve got it now that I’m down in that factory’” (85). To people like

McAlpine, “it’s like riding third class,” but Peggy finds that more interesting usually than riding first class” (81). As a matter of fact, many Communists who turned to fight against the capitalist system chose to do so after witnessing social injustice as Peggy does.

Ever since she left her father, Peggy has devoted herself to the blacks and their culture. Peggy is reading “a digest of Negro writing” (17). She begins to like McAlpine because he “didn’t say ‘nigger’ [but] ‘Negro’” (36). The little black section in Montreal “had become for her the happy and fabulous Johnson family” (86). Peggy has a warm tie with those in St. Antoine: a black boy, a pretty mulatto views some pictures together with Peggy, and an older man talks with her happily. Another old man, “at least sixty, [with] a battered face and staring and stupid eyes,” (75) brought Peggy a parcel of newspapers he had picked up in some lunchroom for some tips. We are told that “[n]ot only Negro men but Negro women liked and trusted her” (144): one black woman asked her to take care of her child.

Peggy has a warm affection for the poor and the outcast. “She hangs around with Henry Jackson” (17), who, we are told, is “not much of success as a commercial artist” (128). His particular attraction for Peggy could not have been his splendid appearance because “he hadn’t cleaned his shoes in seven years...Never came in looking dressed up.” Henry “had been a sickly child... On his left foot he wore a special shoe with a built-up heel...he is lame” (128). All this explains Peggy’s sympathy for Jackson: he is a handicapped. According to Peggy, he is always in flight and always on the run (140). “It was possible they got such excitement out of their spiritual emancipation that a warm embrace would be too vulgar for them.” Besides, Henry shares Peggy’s “interest in primitive African art and Negro musicians” (128). All this demonstrates Peggy’s easy affection for one and all, men and women, black and white, the poor and the weak.

Many Communists, in their pursuits of the revolutionary cause, cut their ties with their upper class social status and devote themselves wholeheartedly to the poor, even though this means sacrificing their comfortable life. Peggy left her comfortable home and high social status. She is interested in the poor and the blacks, not interested in those from the upper class or white-collar workers. Status or fame is not what she is after. She resents Malone, a so-called prominent photographer, and pushes him away even at the cost of her life. She even wants to get rid of McAlpine, a man of high status, even though he is very considerate and interested in her pursuit and her black friends

and “wanted to make her laugh like a happy child” (43). Peggy “was annoyed” when McAlpine appears in front of her at St. Antoine because, as Peggy says to him impatiently, ‘you don’t belong in my life’” (56). She chooses not to marry McAlpine, even though she knows that to live with him she would have a comfortable life. Peggy is so devoted to the blacks that they have accepted her as one of them. When Malone tries to bully her and causes a riot, not only do Wilson and a black waiter defend her; but other blacks fight for her, too.

The author has successfully suggested a far more profound symbol in his account of Peggy’s love for the blacks and the poor. For there is in the love and in the hate which her love provokes the conflict between the upper and lower classes, and thereby the pure and noble pursuit of Communists to embrace the poor and black and to liberate them.

(D) Innocent and dignified

Ever since modern forms of Communism came into being, there have been all kinds of negative and slanderous descriptions from its opponents. One often-used slander is that Communists are bandits. Another one is that communists share all their properties, even their wives, implying that sexually Communists are immoral and insincere. Similarly, rumors and slanders are piled against Peggy’s reputation in the novel. The author creates an innocent image to rebut such slanders.

First of all, she is well educated – a graduate of McGill University. She has a highly developed social consciousness, saying, “we are all historians...we each make up our mind about what we see going on” (16). Second, Peggy is not a slut. “Everything [about her] revealed a charming innocence” (16). To keep her chastity, she resists the temptation of making love with some one. Callaghan creates the following scene as proof: once, McAlpine

held her and kissed her. His right hand slid down boldly under her nightgown and cupped her breast, and when she squirmed they were both lost in a pulling, tearing ecstasy, trying to hold each other in some embrace which eluded them. He whispered, and she answered him in a savage whisper, neither hearing what the other said. Then her soft little body was convulsed. He could not hold on to it, and she slid away from him and off the bed where she stood facing him, trembling, ‘No! I say, no! Don’t, Jim,’ she said doggedly (138). “She had to resist and struggle not only against him, but against herself. (139)

In an earlier part of the novel, McAlpine reflects on Peggy’s relation with men:

He told himself that the hour or so she had spent with Wagstaffe in her room had been friendly and innocent and not a sensually corrupt first stirring of a novel lust. It was possible she had touched the bandleader with her simplicity and candor as she had touched Foley and him too. He wanted to believe completely in her own pure feeling. This faith in her was the illumination he had been seeking since he had met her; it offered him a glimpse of the way she wanted to live, of the kind of relationship she wanted to have with all people, no matter what kind of sacrifice might be required of her. (59)

What McAlpine tells Foley also clarifies Peggy's name, "She is not lying around waiting for them to make love to her. I know it for a fact.' His voice became patient and gentle" (68). "You could call a saint a blue jay" (68). In McAlpine's "heart came one pathetic cry, Why could not she be a virgin? Virginity would be so becoming to her" (139).

Callaghan uses McAlpine's innocent perception to justify Peggy's reputation. When McAlpine "merely thought [the mulatto singer] sang very well," others think he desires the girl. "Even this quiet Negro band leader could not believe a man would be interested only in being friendly with a pretty mulatto - he would want to sleep with her. The normal supposition, McAlpine supposed, just as everyone assumed that Peggy wanted to sleep with her Negro friends" (89). In addition, her reputation as a bad woman comes from those who desire her but cannot have her. One man calls her "a nigger lover;" and says "she likes dark meat." But he is cynically exposed by Foley: "All you mean is that she brushed you off" (133).

The way Peggy dies, resisting someone who thought she was a slut, shows that she resists evil and keeps her chastity. Her end is Christ-like. Mrs. Agnew, Peggy's landlady, "spoke well of her. This Mrs. Agnew said it didn't matter to her whom Peggy had brought to the house; she had always been quiet and ladylike and asked nothing from anyone" (212). What she says indirectly rejects the slanderers calling her a slut, thereby indicating that even though Communists are called immoral bandits, ordinary people like McAlpine and Mrs. Agnew do not believe it is so.

(E) Sacrificing herself for her belief

As a symbol of Communism, Peggy represents two aspects: love for peace and willingness to face violence. Her peace-loving aspect is symbolized by the little church she takes McAlpine to see: "A little old church, half Gothic and half Romanesque, but light and simple in balance" (33) framed against a white background of gently falling

snow. It represents the peaceful and pure world the Communists are after, a world of brotherhood whose bells are heard from far and whose message is reflected in the pursuit and conduct of Peggy. Snow symbolizes innocence and purity.

On the other hand, Peggy is ready for violence. A firmly held concept of Communism is its belief in taking over the power from capitalism in an armed struggle to free the poor and the discriminated, namely, through violent revolution: “Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun” (Mao, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p.224). Moreover, as a threat to capitalism, Communism has faced all kinds of opposition, including violence from its enemies. Peggy has her social vision in protest against the system that oppresses the black and the poor and she adheres to her vision even though it gets her into trouble. McAlpine warns her, “You’re lucky you didn’t get beaten up...I could see it coming” (121). But whatever happens or whatever others say about her, Peggy is firm and faces them bravely. She lives in terms of her own belief as shown in a conversation between her and McAlpine:

‘Peggy – all this stuff – What are you going to do with yourself?’
 ‘With myself?’
 ‘Yes. What are you up to?’
 ‘Look, Jim, who’s being inhuman? The supercilious people who have charge of this world, or me? In one way or another there are a lot of people on the run from what’s inhuman. If they rap on my door-well-’ (123)

An inhuman white man does rap on her door, and Peggy stands firm against the challenge. When told that Wolgast will bar her and her black friends from visiting his bar, Peggy does not care at all but openly challenges racial discrimination, saying, “He has a public license in that joint of his. Any time I go around there and behave quietly and the people with me also know how to behave, he has to serve me...I’ll make it clear to him myself” (159).

Peggy’s willingness to sacrifice herself for what she believes is symbolized by her taking McAlpine to see, on the same day, the counterpart of that magical church of peace, the symbol of violence, the wood carving of “a leopard about three feet long in a glass case, crouching, ready to spring...Quite a suggestion of power, of lurking violence” (32). Even though the leopard makes her “feel uncertain and watchful,” in her contemplation of the carved animal’s fighting for power, she “had been held in the spell of all the fierce jungle wildness the cat suggested. She had waited, rapt and still, for the beast to spring at her and devour her” (101). To McAlpine, Peggy’s contact with

violent friends “would mean, of course, that she had a taste for violence” (101). The author uses the two sides of Peggy’s loving peace but being willing to be involved in violence to imply the two sides of Communism: smash the old system by facing violence to build a peaceful world.

Peggy’s first sacrifice is the loss of her job as a copywriter; she then works in “a shoe polish and lighter fluid factory...on the shift from four till midnight” (78) as a crimper. “That place stinks of the cheap perfume they put in the fluid” (79). Even though the “people around town are starting to treat [her] as an outcast” (79), she is firm and “began to talk gaily.” McAlpine almost said, “Maybe you can’t get another job.” Her second and ultimate sacrifice is the loss of her life when she resists being dragged away from what she is fighting for and back to the white and rich dominion. In some ways, Peggy is Christ-like in her image, sacrificing herself in her efforts to save the world. Thus, Peggy is compared to Saint Joan and is destroyed by a violent society.

Section Three: The Capitalist System Smashes Communism by Vicious and Evil Means to Maintain Its Pattern

To the author, Peggy Sanderson represents those heroes who provide us with the first measure of the effect on society of selfless individuals who are committed to a public struggle against its material conditions and institutionalized values. Their effect is negligible, and the novel suggests that such attempts to change the social environment are predestined to fail because of the evil and vicious established forces. The irony of Peggy’s death is directed primarily at the pattern of the capitalist society. The communist cause has been smashed by the capitalist system, just as the detective Bouchard’s remark implies in the last chapter that it is the whole system that has destroyed Peggy. In addition to his appraisal of the hypocrisy that afflicts clergymen, politicians and merchants, as well as ordinary citizens, the author, first of all, puts the nature of the ruling class in the spotlight.

1. The system brainwashes and controls its citizens

Joseph Carver is a stereotype of the power elite, the symbol of the ruling class. On the surface he advocates independence but ironically crushes it when his own employees maintain it. But out of his hypocritical nature, Carver knows how to use others to mask his own doubts; he “is weighing [McAlpine]...as he had [his assistant]

Horton weigh young Walters” (28), one of his staff. His ruling machine maintains that all the people within the system do things according to the will of those in power, just as he suggested to young Walters to go on a tomato diet. The fat young man might get his dismissal notice that night for challenging Mr. Carver with his sullen face. The humiliation the fat boy suffers shows how normal human beings are humiliated in order to keep their employment. Foley says, “I know all about Beautiful Joe... He’ll get hold of you by the short hair. He has hold of all his employees by the short hair, and some poor dopes think it’s a noble grip; but he reaches right into their lives till he owns them. Hell, his office is a family” (18).

Similarly, McAlpine has to conform to the ruling class if he wants to take his place in the *Sun* and get inside the high dark hedges of the wealthy. Mr. Carver will not allow a man who has an unshakable socialist belief to do “a column on the paper [for fear the man] might some day embarrass” him and he “wont be left holding a tiger by the tail” (11). The author also exposes the hypocritical nature of the system and its self-claimed democracy as reflected in a conversation between Catherine and McAlpine: “‘Don’t be too outspoken.’ ‘I’m an outspoken man,’ he said grandly. Isn’t that why your father wants me to work for him?’ ‘But you haven’t got the job yet, Jim. Don’t boot it out the window’” (112).

Callaghan makes it clear that it is Carver who will use and control McAlpine and “the context in which his views are presented.” Mr. Carver gives McAlpine a lecture when the latter is given the job. Its purpose to brainwash him is evident in these phrases from his speech: “Life...a long series of crushing losses, the impermanence of everything beautiful and dear to us...the compact we enter to protect our way of living...the economic and aesthetic barbarians always at the gates trying to hasten the end of things” (113-114). The term *barbarians* clearly refers to the Communists who want to smash the material and spiritual pattern that rulers like Mr. Carver, together with those brainwashed or controlled by them, would fight in order to maintain everything beautiful and dear within the pattern.

2. Those sheltered by the system sing the same anti-Communist tune

Through McAlpine’s observation, the author comes to the conclusion that, in these rich people’s eyes, “anything that breaks the pattern is bad. And Peggy breaks up the pattern,” (163) the capitalist pattern, so she will certainly be regarded as bad and become an anarchist in her quest for a new pattern. Her behavior arouses anger because

she has blatantly violated society's laws and become an outlaw. Peggy "would shatter all the people who lived on the mountain and the people who prayed on the mountain" (130-131), just as Communists want to shatter the whole system that protects the rich. Communism cannot prevail because its great and noble pursuit will make the rich resort to all kinds of means to get rid of the threat. As Peggy says,

'If people cannot destroy you one way they try another.' Her cheek reddened and her eyes were angry... 'Try having your own integrity, and see what happens. Everybody takes a turn cracking at you. They'll break their backs trying to bring you in line again, and if you won't see things the way everybody else does, you're crazy or perverse or pig-headed or stupid. Everybody is willing to give you a hand if you'll only string along and quit. And if you won't quit—... All that's the matter with me is that I'm what I choose to be ...Everybody wants to put a hole in my head.' (122)

When a possible intruder appears near Peggy's room, in McAlpine's excited imagination, "all the whitened figures crossing the street there loomed up like ghosts wandering in the world of the dead into which [Peggy] had vanished"(182). With so many ghost-like enemies, Communism is doomed. Woodcock comments, "The sinister unresponsiveness of society, and the moral insensitiveness of its symbolic figures...suggests that Callaghan is posing the classic opposition between moral man and immoral society" (Woodcock, in Conron, 98).

(A) Malone fights for the white's hypocritical dignity and supremacy

The last fatal shot at Peggy is fired by Walter Malone, a "big gray man." The newspaper calls him "a prominent newspaperman" (213). The author uses him to symbolize the old superiority of the upper class white. Malone is regarded by those in his class as a "prominent" man for two reasons; first, he belongs to the upper class; secondly, he is a white. Since Communism came into being, the supremacy of the rich and white has been vigorously challenged by some thinkers and more cautiously by novelists like Morley Callaghan. Peggy's friendly relationship with the poor and black is a rebelling against traditional values and the capitalist system, and Malone's harassment and subsequent attack represent the rich and white's desperate efforts to retain its false supremacy and domination.

First, the dominating class tries to scare those in sympathy with Communism out of what they are after and scare the poor and the black away from what belongs to the upper-class, in this case, property symbolized by women. Malone once scares away

Willie whom Peggy is walking with: “He overawed him with his grey hair and his expensive overcoat, and he took [Peggy] by the arm to walk [her] the rest of the way” (119). Through Peggy’s description of Malone, “[his] grey face, ugly and contorted...the vicious hardness in his eyes...the smug complacent fool. That phony understanding...That stupid vanity...His wretched arrogance” (118-119), the author shows that capitalism represented by the upper class has nothing left but a fake appearance of dignity that it has to maintain by all means, even violence.

And so the ideological struggle plays itself out in the drama of Peggy’s death. What “really terrified her, [Peggy said], was her belief for the moment that she was being overwhelmed by vindictiveness from everyone Malone had ever known or admired. ‘I think that was what was so horrible’” (121). All those in the capitalist rank will join hands to wipe out the threat – Communism. This moment has come when Malone walks to Peggy’s table in the Café and sits close to her. “He grinned and whispered, and his hand went to her shoulder. She slapped it away...He put his arm around her shoulder” (189). This causes the riot during which Malone “put up his own hands. He posed like an old-time fighter, his left out and his back stiff” (189). The riot started by this old, vicious capitalist fighter destroys Peggy, a woman representing something truly superior to capitalism.

(B) Wolgast is desperate in defending his possession - the white horse

Wolgast is a representative of the propertied class. However innocent he might have been as a boy, he is now a corrupt man, a cynic of monumental proportions. “In his own way Wolgast now was a big success. He had got established” (232): “I like [Montreal the way it is for me. I want everything to stay just the way it is...I’d get sore if some one spoiled it for me” (156). Again he is one of those protected by the existing system, the pattern which the Communists want to smash. When his empire is threatened, he goes to Peggy’s place, “a big clumsy man in ill-fitting clothes who now had an extraordinary air of dignity” (149). “I’m a little sore right now” at Peggy, who “came into my spot with a [black man] this afternoon” (256). McAlpine’s observation is meant as a sharp indictment of capitalism: “[Peggy] went into your place with this Negro because she knows and likes and thinks you have no prejudices. Maybe it was her tribute to you as a human being...But what may have been a tribute to you has to be taken inevitably- oh, the whole of history compels you to take it - as an insult...If she only had a little prudence -...this lack of prudence of hers brings out the worst instincts

in us, the stuff we try and hide, the stuff that's inhuman'" (157). The capitalist system represented by the propertied class is inhuman in its treatment of Communism.

The author shows that morality and ethics do not appeal to the property class: Wolgast says, "'If little Peggy walks on me again with a jig...I'll hit your friend over the head with a gin bottle. Better still, I'll break the bottle and cut her with the jagged edge, and not even a jig will ever go for her again'" (157). This demonstrates the cruelty of the property class in defending its inhuman system. When violence occurs in the bar, "Wolgast [comes] from behind the bar with a slow calm step, his face impassive, an impressive solid man above the little tumult, a man on a horse. 'She's a troublemaker,' he called out, 'a first-class troublemaker,' and it sounded like a calm impersonal judgement as he stood there with his hands on his hips" (192). This is the critical moment in the war between Communism and capitalism. Now Wolgast is putting oil on fire to terminate Communism once and for all so that his white horse can be secured. The person who kills Peggy might be either Wolgast or Malone. "Mrs. Agnew had declared that she had heard someone moving around the girl's apartment shortly before that time, and later had heard someone with a slow heavy step going along the hall. She had looked out of the window; a heavy-set man had gone down the street. He didn't look like a Negro. As far as she was concerned he certainly wasn't a Negro" (213). When the detective comes to arrest McAlpine, McAlpine says that "in a sense [this arrest] is about Wolgast's white horse" (222). That is, the system, (or those on the white horse), has killed Peggy and is after McAlpine, who stands with Communism now, to protect the white horse, the symbol of private property, from being taken away and being shared.

Despite the fact that Wolgast might have killed Peggy, the system protects him. "Wolgast has an alibi anyway" and "Everybody has an alibi." "'Maybe we'll never find out who did it... You know why?' Bouchard asked, insisting on getting his attention. 'What if we all did it? The human condition. That had truth, don't you think?'" (231) According to the logic of Callaghan's story, these characters such as Peggy represent a complete negation of the capitalist system's values, and the system cannot tolerate such negation. What Peggy is to shake is not one Wolgast, but the whole capitalist system. As a result, "Wolgast was not the only one who had a grudge against Peggy. All the best people could get behind Wolgast on his proud white horse" (232). McAlpine

has a swift wild fancy: the streets on the slopes of the mountain were echoing to the pounding of horse hoofs. All the proud men on their white horses came storming down the slope of the mountain in ruthless cavalry charge...And Peggy was on foot in the snow. She didn't own a white horse. She didn't want to. She didn't care... the terrifying hoofs rode over her" (233).

With the world full of people like Wolgast and Malone, Peggy's brave and wonderful ambition is ultimately destructive. The fate of Callaghan's purified protagonist demonstrates the impossibility, in his view, of changing the status quo through direct engagement with it.

(C) The Carvers guard the capitalist stronghold at all cost

The story goes further to show the vicious and corrupted nature of capitalism as symbolized by the Carvers. In order to expand and strengthen its stronghold, the existing system uses all kinds of means, including offering good jobs and benefits to lure important people such as McAlpine to its ranks. However, once one is found out to have sided with its opponent, this person will face destruction. After finding out that McAlpine is involved with Peggy, Catherine tells her father, "[McAlpine] hadn't asked me to marry him. I doubt if he wanted me to...' Her tone aroused [Mr. Carver], and he sat up, catching a glimpse of her suffering in her averted eyes. He understood her deep humiliation and he hated McAlpine. So they sat there rigidly, very close together in their wounded pride" (218). They feel wounded because McAlpine has no real intention of becoming a capitalist (marrying Catherine). Mr. Carver, whose neck becomes burning-red, says, "'We have to have a sense of responsibility about this, however painful it may be.' 'Yes, a sense of responsibility,' [Catherine] agreed, knowing all her training was at stake and everything they stood for would be tested by their action at this moment" (219).

What "they stood for" is capitalism that has failed to drag McAlpine into it. So they will do whatever possible to punish those who are not willing to be part of it. "'Women [capitalism symbolized by Catherine] have odd impulsive resentments,' Bouchard said philosophically [to McAlpine]. 'I don't think you quite lived up to her expectation'" (229). Contrary to Catherine's expectation, McAlpine sides with Peggy, aiming at taking away all the private white horses from the rich. To protect the capitalist system, the Carvers treat the fates of those like Peggy and McAlpine lightly, as reflected by what Catherine says "lightly, 'that's why they used to shoot horse thieves'" (170). After fatally shooting Peggy, the system turns its aim on McAlpine.

Catherine and Mr. Carver have now come to seek him and push him out of the capitalist shelter by taking back the job once offered and putting him in prison as a potential horse thief. The vicious capitalist system and those benefited by it smash communism and those in sympathy with it.

Section Four: The Negative and Life-Denying Effects of the Pressure of the Social Environment on the Consciousness of the Individual

1. No one could survive without succumbing to the existing system

Through McAlpine's being pushed out off the dark mountain (the upper class) by the Carvers as represented by his arrest as a potential horse thief, the author demonstrates that the capitalist system does not tolerate any different opinions or any slight disloyalty. To survive in such a society, one has to give up one's belief. Foley is such an example. Even though he still has "a grudge against his own class" (21), he has to stay away from the Communist movement. After "he had become an account executive in a Montreal agency he had stopped writing poetry, rarely saw his old "college friends" (12) who might have been interested in Communism. As a matter of fact, Foley likes Communist ideas and finds what Peggy represents very fresh and attractive. "That's the dreamy look in [Peggy's] eyes that got me," he says to McAlpine. "It's what you have noticed in her too" (67). But to survive in this corrupt world and keep his account executive position, he cannot be involved in Communism. When asked if he is in love with Peggy himself, Foley says, "Don't be silly. I've had enough of that stuff. I like to feel good. That's all" (18). When Peggy and McAlpine touch the topic of Negro writing, Foley's "manner changed; it was just a slight stiffening. 'Don't we all like them?' he asked, brushing the Negroes aside" (17). When McAlpine tells Foley that Peggy "has Negro friends...and she likes being with Negroes," Foley feels disturbed and refuses to go to St. Antoine with McAlpine. "'Not down there,' Foley said irritably. 'That stuff belongs to my salad days in the early thirties. Now it's for high school boys and debutantes'" (50).

Because of the iron rule of the capitalist system, those working for the system have to give up their principles or they either have no future or will be kicked out of the system. "Bouchard had been Chief of Detectives but he had made himself too difficult; he was unforgivably impartial in his arrests. He was on the way down the department

and knew it” (223). As a result, even a delivery boy on the street knows that Bouchard is “one who lost his job...the one who got kicked around” (208). Callaghan reveals that there is no justice in the capitalist system. “Justice is simply the working out of a pattern” (Callaghan, *Inherit*, 259).

2. Religion caters to the existing system

The Church was once a source of energy and guidance. In the times of suffering, humankind turned to religion for comfort. Although identifying himself as a Catholic writer, Callaghan appears skeptical of the Church as a potential source of spiritual energy and guidance. Instead, it too suffers from materialism and no longer has its original attraction to and enthusiasm for Christ and humankind. Peggy’s father has lost his faith as a Methodist minister under worldly pressures and cannot support his daughter in her attempt to practice unreservedly the doctrine of love, even though he knows that “[the blacks] are God’s children just like you and me” (41). For the security of his status, he has to give up his real love for God. When Peggy wanted to invite all the Johnsons to her party, he grabbed Peggy by the shoulder and “shook and said loudly that all the factors had to be considered; his usefulness to his flock as a whole had to be considered” (42). “It’s a very complicated thing and hard to explain.” To protect his own position, he does not want Peggy to go to the Johnsons’ house any more. “No more parties with the Johnsons, or I’ll whip you” (43). To keep his post and well being, Peggy’s father “learned how to get along with important people; and you have to do it if you’re going to be an important preacher” (83). As a result, he “was called from one church to another, and now he’s pretty highly regarded in Hamilton. Influential people go to his church” and a broker who “was the chairman of the city hospital board...made some investments for him” (83). Peggy’s father is another victim of the capitalist system because he is not without guilt: “Sitting with his eyes closed and his head bowed...he looked haggard and miserable, and he started to cry...‘I can’t’ pray...I haven’t believed in God for years.’...He knew what he was and knew how he had been corrupted” (85).

As religion has become a tool of the ruling class, people have nowhere else to turn for comfort and support. Callaghan implies that Communism has replaced the function of religion as symbolized by the little church which Peggy takes McAlpine to see and which he searches for after her death. This view of Callaghan’s is further revealed in one of his earlier novels, *Such Is My Beloved*, in which Father Dowling

exclaims: “What a great pity Marx was not a Christian. There is no reason why a Christian should not thirst after social justice” (92). In the author’s view, Christians cannot solve social problems, but Marxists can bring about social justice by destroying the capitalist system. Larry McDonald points out,

This approach to Callaghan is firmly rooted in his beginnings. The fiction of the late twenties and early thirties reflects Callaghan’s immersion in the North American fascination with the theories of Darwin, Marx and Freud. These new ‘men of science’ tempted the young Torontonion with a comprehensive paradigm for the total understanding of man and society...The study of human nature is for Callaghan the study of the workings of human consciousness...The transcendent in Callaghan’s fiction is always experienced as the full realization of human potential, and is always consistent with a secular moral vision that is erected on a foundation of scientific skepticism. There is a strong allegorical impulse in his fiction, but its subject is human consciousness, not Christian redemption (Staines, *Symposium*, 78)

But this conscious man found neither capitalism nor religion could quench his spiritual thirst. It seems that, after witnessing the corruption of Catholicism, Callaghan had lost hope in the church when writing *The Loved and the Lost*. As a result, he turned to Communism for a solution because at this point he likely perceived a significant difference between Christianity and Communism. As shown by Callaghan, the church has not been true to its social mission on the question of racial justice. In this area it has failed Christ’s teachings miserably. This failure is due, not only to the fact that the church has been appallingly silent and disastrously indifferent in the realm of race relations, but even more to the fact that it has often been an active participant in shaping and crystallizing the patterns of the race-caste system.

In spite of the noble affirmations of Christianity, the church has often lagged in its concern for social justice. On the one side, it seeks to change the souls of men and thereby unite them with God; on the other, it seeks to change the environmental conditions of men so that the soul will have a chance after it is changed. Any religion that professes to be concerned with the souls of men and yet is not concerned with the economic and social conditions that strangle them and the social conditions that cripple them is the kind the Marxist describes as “an opiate of the people.” Maybe that is why Callaghan has Father Dowling in *Such Is My Beloved* exclaim: “There is no reason why a Christian should not thirst after social justice” (92)

It is often claimed that the early Christians were the first communists. Evidence from the Bible suggests that the first Christians, including the Apostles, created their own small communist society in the years following Jesus' death and resurrection as mentioned in the book of Acts:

“Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need” (Acts 2:44–45). Note, however, that this was a voluntary giving and sharing on the part of the participants, probably to take care of an immediate and extraordinary need or to meet a belief current at the time. Christian communism is not an independent, self-motivated goal to which Christianity might strive. No one says, “Give us what is yours; it belongs to us.” Early Christians were urged to share their wealth with those who were in need, but they were not compelled to do so.

The communalism of property advocated by communism is a self-motivated goal which must be attained no matter what the consequences and regardless of any considerations. The builders of this type of communism are attaining it by purely violent means, not balking at any measure, even the slaughter of all those who do not agree.

Communism is based on a materialistic and humanistic view of life and history. According to Communist theory, matter, not mind or spirit, speaks the last word in the universe. Such a philosophy is avowedly secularistic and atheistic. Under it, God is merely a figment of the imagination, religion is a product of fear and ignorance, and the church is an invention of the rulers to control the masses. Moreover, Communism, like humanism, thrives on the belief that man, unaided by any divine power, can save himself and usher in a new society.

At the center of the Christian faith is the affirmation that there is a God in the universe who is the ground and essence of all reality. A Being of infinite love and boundless power, God is the creator, sustainer, and conserver of values. In opposition to Communism's atheistic materialism, Christianity posits a theistic idealism. Reality cannot be explained by matter in motion or the push and pull of economic forces. Christianity affirms that at the heart of reality is a Heart, a loving Father who works through history for the salvation of his children. Man cannot save himself, for man is not the measure of all things and humanity is not God. Bound by the chains of his own sin and finiteness, man needs a Saviour.

Being a Roman Catholic himself might be mainly what drew Callaghan over to the left wing since he might have believed in kindness as opposed to exploitation and selfishness. His experience had made him see that Capitalism, on the other hand, definitely contradicts his beliefs but religion cannot help get rid of the evils of capitalism and solve the social problems. His Father Dowling tried to help to solve social problems in vain, proving that man does not need a Savior but must rely on his own efforts to carry out social and economical reforms advocated by Communism. Accordingly, Christian images in *The Loved and the Lost*, such as the little church or the white horse, carry ambivalent messages as they shift between the religious and the political.

3. Social tragedy: Poverty breaks up the unity of the blacks

In the novel, Callaghan rejects a common viewpoint held among those of the upper class that the blacks' problem is simply an economic problem because they are not hard working and therefore cannot get good jobs. This view is aired by Milton Rogers, a so-called black helper, who says, "A person should have some scientific understanding of the Negro's lot in America. It's economics or nothing. It's a matter of jobs. Only certain kinds of jobs are available to Negroes...They are in an economic ghetto, which of course forces them to live in some cheap section" (88). However, Marxism-Leninism attributes all social problems to class or political struggle. Mao Tse-Tong writes: "In the final analysis, racial struggle is a matter of class struggle" (*Quotations*, 10). According to Mao, the blacks, as an oppressed race, are oppressed by the white exploiting class that possesses the means of material production. They not only oppress the blacks but also oppress the working class in their own race. It is not the best jobs that the blacks need but fundamental change that will alter the whole relationship of production and change the status of the oppressed. Without equal social status, blacks will never get good education and employment

The author tries to expose the true nature of a few self-assertive white helpers who want to help the blacks only in name but keep the capitalist pattern unchanged in deed. It is very ironic that Milton Rogers, a hypocritical black supporter, "acted as a one-man reception committee for distinguished Negro musicians who came to Montreal" (87). Rogers is one of those who pretends to help the blacks so that they will not rise to smash the capitalist system. His true feelings are revealed when he says, "I despise this kissing the leper stuff. It messes up the whole situation. Fundamentally, it's harmful. What good is it going to do the Negroes to have this Peggy come along and say, 'Everything I have is yours?'"(88) What Rogers is really opposing is sharing property with the poor and blacks.

However, the so-called help from a very hypocritical white breaks the unity of the blacks and makes them rely on the pity of the white. Peggy's beautiful spirit, though appreciated by some, is yet the source of bitter feeling for she disrupts the patterns, for both blacks and whites. Those blacks who have got good jobs through the one-man reception committee do not dare to be in contact with Communism for fear of losing them. So they defend the system as well. For example, the black band leader, Elton Wagstaffe, puts it bluntly with reference to Peggy: "Yeah, she's maybe against

everything in the rule book...but maybe that's not so good. Everything busts wide open when there're no rule books" (94). The fundamental reason that Milton Rogers and Wagstaffe dislike Peggy is that she is against the system under which they make money. Wagstaffe, though warmed by her affection, distrusts her motivation and feels that she can only bring trouble to his business. "I like this town...and this spot here is a good one, not a hell of a lot of money in it...but the band's a cooperative set-up and it's a living, and so I wouldn't want any trouble" (96). It is implied that in a capitalist country, moral independence is assured by social economic security; it will never be possible without such security. What the bandleader Wagstaffe says and does have been caused by selfish economic considerations. He is not detached from the life around him. The Negroes cannot exercise their free will if they cannot make a living. They cannot make a living if they are treated as second class citizens.

Wagstaffe's resentment of Peggy is also caused by the tragic fact that poverty has kept most of the blacks at the bottom of society and the very few who have struggled out of it do not like to see all blacks with status as high as theirs. For example, Wagstaffe dislikes Peggy's way of treating all blacks equally: "You think she just offers it for you, and then you see it's no more for you than the next guy. A bum is a bum in my race as well as yours... So you see her standing on the street giving some no-good lavatory attendant the same glow she gave you" (94). This shows Wagstaffe's discrimination against those lower than he is in social status in his own race and Peggy's lack of discrimination and her enormous capacity for love, as innocent as "kids in the sun" (94). So out of his selfish human nature, Wagstaffe says a lot of negative things about Peggy. His attitude shows how privileged blacks have degraded their own moral vision and dignity. They bow before the superior white and have become their mouthpiece. The very people who are helped by noble people like Peggy are prejudiced against her and slander her so as to protect their own interest and security. This is an illustration of a large issue in the whole of society. As a result, McAlpine fails when he "turned and sought for one face among all the black and white faces in that smoke-filled room that would express kindness and generosity and concern for a girl like Peggy. But by this time many of the patrons were drunk and noisy...all these people who disliked her circling around her in a primitive dance, hemming her in, making it impossible for her to draw back while they tried to destroy her" (98-99). Peggy is finally rejected in scorn by those she would befriend; she is denied, betrayed and forsaken by those she loves to suffer alone a humiliating death. Because of the poverty caused by their low

status in society, it is hard for Communism to unite blacks to form a strong front to fight for their own rights.

4. Deprived of free will

The Loved and the Lost is concerned with the movement of a young man from the self-interest and egotism of capitalism to the love and compassion for humankind fostered by Communism. Callaghan uses the Marxist view to create an environment negative to all people except a very privileged few, who maintain power in their hands. According to McDonald, Callaghan “wants to pursue the question of how social environment affects the consciousness of the individual. In Callaghan’s scheme of things the question of how the individual’s potential or “energy” realizes itself as matter (becomes a phenomenon of thought, action or emotion that we can contemplate and evaluate) depends on the social environment it encounters - the not-self” (Staines, *Symposium*, 86). In McDonald’s view, depending on the economic class we are born into, the education we receive, the organization of the society we are part of, and in general the values of the culture that nourishes us, our individual potential will be encouraged or discouraged, shaped in this way or that, channeled in positive or negative directions. Thus, Callaghan places a tremendous burden on the social environment. What is presented in the novel points to the conclusion that the pressure of the social environment on the consciousness of the individual is at every point negative and life denying. Unless the environment is changed, one’s potential is doomed to realize itself in self-destructive ways.

(A) The conflict between obtaining a private white horse and a collective one

McAlpine is, according to McDonald, Callaghan’s “first fully developed type of highly civilized, highly self-conscious, modern man. He is a man of reason, a man who is cut off from his instincts and trapped in his ego” (Staines, *Symposium*, 88). He is one of those attracted to Communism unconsciously. But, at a conscious level, he bows to the social system. His exclusion, at the age of fourteen, from a summer party given by the wealthy Havelocks has seeded in him a desire to climb into the upper class. He “found himself staring up at the mountain’s dark shadow. Everything he really wanted was up there on the mountain among those who had prestige, power, and influence” (52). Ironically, in the social circle of the Carvers, although McAlpine joins the upper class temporarily, he does so still as an outsider because his subconsciousness tells him

that capitalism is not what he desires. He is looking for something different and falls in love with Peggy at first sight. The more McAlpine gets to know Catherine and Peggy respectively, the more he is attracted to the human embodiment of Communism. His devotion to it is shown in his concern over Peggy's well-being; even when he is with Catherine, he worries about Peggy: "A girl with light pumps would get her feet soaking-wet just crossing the road, wouldn't she?" (21). For fear that Peggy might catch pneumonia, McAlpine "paid twelve dollars for the brown leather snow shoes" for her even though he "owed his bill at the Ritz; he was running short of money" (63). McAlpine fights bravely to defend Peggy. When the riot bursts out and Peggy is in danger, instinctively he "[crashed] through the wall of bodies, swinging around him... roared like a bull, swinging and clawing and crushing, trying to get to Peggy... In the little clearing where the table had fallen he stood all alone, looking so big and threatening that the Negro waiters backed away, thinking he was crazy-drunk... He knocked over a little white man" (192). "He could not remember being hit" (194).

At this point, with McAlpine embarking onto Peggy's boat, the author uses the symbolic phrase 'But not really' (64) repeatedly to show that McAlpine's reason and ego will prevail again amidst the reactions of the most important people in his life to his decision. They look alarmed, all saying, "Oh, no, not really." Living in the capitalist world, one cannot be totally isolated from its pressure. One is reminded of one's well being all the time. Foley advises McAlpine, "I thought you came to town to ride a high [white] horse. Don't you think you'd better get on your horse, Jim... An ambitious man can't have a set of feelings at odds with his will to advance on the target. Pin that in your hat, Jim. You can have it for nothing" (71). Such remarks have made McAlpine realize that if he follows Peggy into those dives where she stirs up jealousy, suspicion, lust, and old racial hatreds, he might find himself involved. "If he went on... he would be forgetting that he had come to Montreal to take a job on the *Sun* and if he got himself involved in a scandal Mr. Carver certainly couldn't afford to take him on. The job on the *Sun* was the kind of job he had always dreamed of" (102). As a result, he "turned to Catherine, seeking the tranquility and peace he found in her presence" (107).

This pattern is repeated when McAlpine betrays his personal bond with Peggy Sanderson by doing what is socially acceptable. His interest in Communism is crippled for the time being by his false consciousness which is the foundation for his survival within the pattern and which has been poisoned by the deadly social air; as a result, he "lacked the confidence to climb the stairs of the Negro café" (p.54) because consciously

he has desired to get into the upper class to possess his own white horse – private property. Taking Peggy’s side means sacrificing his own ‘horse’ and fighting for a ‘horse’ to be shared by all the people. McAlpine’s condition is given general application to all of society when Callaghan has him say that everybody rides a white horse of some kind or another: it “had just struck me that there is a white horse for everybody. Call it possessions- security- a dream” (170). McAlpine is a man with reason, which, according to McDonald “is a product of the ego, and the ego in our times is thoroughly given over to narcissism, to the rationalization of self-interest” (Staines, *Symposium*, 88). The temptation of capitalism has prevented many from following their free will because of the pressure it imposes on their legal existence. As a result, everyone has been warped by a system of material relations that maintains itself through infecting all egos with feelings of greed, envy and insecurity.

(B) Following the free will unconsciously

According to Larry McDonald, “Callaghan makes much of the proposition that the psychic forces which are fundamental attributes of our human nature reside in the subconscious realm of man’s being. There, apparently beyond the reach of the conscious intellect, they exist as a kind of energy demanding expression. As such, Callaghan’s model consistently argues, they are a potential that may be realized in many ways” (Staines, *Symposium*, 84). The true consciousness of McAlpine is revealed when he is drunk; he says about himself, “I don’t open up, Catherine. I think I have always been hiding something of myself, waiting until the one I could be sure of would come along” (106). McAlpine has found something much greater and fresher than capitalism, but under social pressure, he has been hiding his real love inside himself consciously until the wine has “a peculiar effect on him...as he glanced around, none of the blurring faces [from the upper class] looked attractive; yet they were the faces of important people who could be valuable to him. He [found] their familiar conversation ...sounded incredibly pompous and dull. He had determinedly reached a pitch of nervous expectation, but these voices did not belong to the expectation or the secret excitement of his soul; he felt let down, then on edge, then reckless as he had never felt reckless before” (108).

McAlpine begins to question the capitalist goals he has been pursuing: “[H]is father and mother had once stood outside [the Havelocks’] gate. How could [Havelock] now seem so unimpressive? he asked himself” (109). “Had he been

frantically trying to achieve some stupid self-deception all evening?" (109) The capitalist system looks impressive only to those who deceive themselves by hiding their true consciousness deep within. Without that veil of self-deception, it is not impressive at all.

Physically, McAlpine is at a party of the wealthy, but mentally, "his thoughts went hurrying out of the Murdock house down to that bare room on Crescent Street and sat beside the iron bedstead and talked to Peggy" (110). His true belief and feelings surface. Without any mask he insults important people at the party such as a cabinet minister by calling him by his last name, "McNab." He openly condemns the United Nations [a tool used by the United States to counterattack Communism], calling it "a cynical structure really." He openly talks about what he really loves: "an intelligent girl, a charming creature" (110). The feeling behind his words astonishes both the cabinet minister and Carver. McAlpine even refers to "The white man's burden" (112) attacking the government's policy on education and racial issues.

McAlpine is so obsessed with Peggy while at the party that he leaves Mr. Carver in a hurry to see Professor Fielding simply to mention Peggy to him and uses beautiful words to describe her: "Small and fair and delicate. An air of innocence. Like a little flower girl at a wedding" (115). When the hostess Angela, in whom the name of Peggy Sanderson has aroused a personal resentment against Communism, asks if McAlpine is talking about Peggy, for fear of gossip, he denies it. However, his "denial of Peggy had left him stricken with remorse" because "with the denial he had yielded up his respect for his own insight which had always been his greatest strength" (116). His own "insight" implies his true and positive perception of communism for which "last night and all day and all evening he had tried to abandon his faith... Yet he hadn't been able to do it, either last night or here at the party" (116). That's why Catherine says to him, "one minute you seem close to me- with me - happy, and I love it, Jim. We seem to be soaring along. But the next moment you're worried" (104). All evening at the party, "he had been wanting to watch over [Peggy] and to be always with her...He whispered, 'Where are you tonight, Peggy?...Go back to your room and be there by yourself tonight...I'll see you in the morning, and we'll go out our own way together.' He cried out in his heart because he understood at last he loved her" (116). Imagining that Peggy is in danger, (because "he saw it with a brilliant clarity: the carved leopard... sprang at her), McAlpine cried, 'Look out!'" surprising some other people at the party.

When he is told that he has got the job, he “felt only a grim satisfaction. The expected elation was absent” (113).

The way McAlpine behaves at the party shows that when one’s subconsciousness, not one’s reason, controls one’s action, one might reveal one’s true love and feelings which are covered up when reason is functioning. What is implied is that people have no freedom of speech under the system and have suppressed their true feelings. With the effect of wine, McAlpine openly takes his side, showing his true love for Communism. At this point, Callaghan deliberately invites us through our firm identification with McAlpine to draw rational conclusions about what to support, Communism or capitalism.

After McAlpine has realized his love for Peggy, he lets Catherine know that what is between them is not love but “friendship,” and they are “Comrades, always good comrades” and makes Catherine feel “frightened by his apologetic tone” (116) and try to hide her pain. “He had made his own decision; he knew now with whom he belonged. He could conceal his vast relief. At last he felt elation” (117). Later on, he purposely avoids Catherine: He “would be so business like [with Mr. Carver] that Catherine hesitated to interrupt them” (145). His lies to Catherine about where he was that afternoon “shocked him and made him realize how false his relationship with her had become” (160). McAlpine is determined to face any possible consequence: “If word [about his relationship with Peggy] did get around to the Carvers and they rejected him and he lost his job, well, he could take it. If it had to happen - to hell with them - let it happen. He had made his choice. It would be all right if he had Peggy” (160-61).

McAlpine’s final decision to join the Communist side is symbolized by his being permitted to use Peggy’s room. “Instead of working in such a dump he could have been in his comfortable hotel room, or he could have used Foley’s apartment; yet he had let himself be chained in this musty-smelling basement with the odor of stale food seeping in through the cracks in the door” (143). He has given up his desire to own a private white horse, giving up the capitalist life symbolized by the comfortable hotel room to join the life of thousands of the poor symbolized by Peggy’s musty-smelling basement room.

(C) Cutting the feet to fit the shoes: Trying in vain to create a peaceful co-existence environment by transforming Peggy

Although attracted to Communist ideas, McAlpine, a representative of the bourgeois, like almost all of those in his class, is actually not used to the disordered life of Communism symbolized by Peggy's room. While he is lingering there, he loathes its shabbiness and disarray, his "sense of order" pushes him to tidy up the room. In addition, "The fact that the men had only needed to beckon to her offended McAlpine" (14), making him realize that she was interested in all men. His reason and ego come back again: he does not want to share something wonderful and fresh with others but keep it to himself, so he is still after a 'private horse'. However, Peggy represents a Communist ideal, sharing the world with the whole of humankind. McAlpine is split between two desires: spiritually he wants to join something fresh, positive and noble, but physically he tries to avoid losing the physical comfort that his present life ensures and encountering death that might be brought about by violent revolution. Through McAlpine, Hugo McPherson reveals Callaghan's vision of life:

At length...he has wrought out a fictional form in which the surface events function simultaneously as realistic action and symbolic action, revealing both the empirical and the spiritual conflicts of his protagonists. This duality, moreover, is never merely a tricky fictional device calculated to entertain both the naïve and the knowing; it is fundamental to Callaghan's perception of the interdependence of the spiritual and empirical realms. Man's career occurs in the imperfect world of time, but its meaning (man's dignity or 'place') depends finally on large reality out of time. To escape the first world is physical death: to ignore the second is to embrace the condition of the Wasteland life-in-death. This tension, to which Callaghan's best fiction gives dramatic form, is the fundamental tension of life. (352)

McAlpine is still a bourgeois university professor and doesn't seem too willing to start rebuilding society at the grass roots at the cost of a comfortable life. He is determined to choose a middle road by transforming Peggy so that he can avoid both physical death and wasteland-life-in-death. As a result, order and security personified in McAlpine wage a desperate battle against self-reliance and independence signified in Peggy Sanderson. The whole effort of McAlpine is focused on the merging of the two by imposing order on the life and temperament of a young woman. "Now he saw how he could open her mind again to harmonies and rhythms that were in her own tradition and foreign to St. Antoine and keep her moving further and further away in her imagination from St. Antoine, in the true direction for her nature, toward what was light

and gay and bold” (175). In her room, McAlpine has worked out “a scheme for the subtle punctuation of her imagination” (114). He even “bought four Matisse prints for twenty-six dollars - which he couldn’t afford,” and which “could be like strands in a web he would cunningly weave around her. She would be living in a room he would change a little every day. What gripped her imagination would change as the tone of the room changed” (175-76). In re-arranging her room, getting her out of the places that she frequents and taking her to places out of his choice, he tries to create a new pattern for her. He naively dreams that with her yielding to him, he will take her to meet “his friend Sol Bloom, the Jewish gynecologist...a doctor...he would take her to the theatre, to His Majesty’s if a play from New York were there...and then to meet Angela Murdock, to see his father” (147). McAlpine’s real intention is still to make Peggy acceptable to the upper class, to reconcile the two sides and create a co-existing environment between capitalism and Communism.

But failing to transform Peggy, and in his confusion of values under the social pressure of his professional life, McAlpine deserts her:

In an agony of doubt he hesitated...his head was filled with the mocking laughter of everyone he knew in the city; they rushed into the room, they shouted out their coarse accusations... his thoughts were whirling wildly. It was the others who clamored for his attention, insisting he listen: they had got into the room and were dancing around his mind; Foley, his best friend, and Gagnon and Jackson and Wolgast - and they all twisted and tortured his thoughts, digging out of the depths of his mind the suspicions he had so resolutely suppressed. (200)

Finally McAlpine gives in to social pressure upon realizing that he can never be left alone and have a peaceful life if involved with Peggy. “The loneliness in her steady eyes and the strange calmness revealed that she knew he had betrayed himself and her, and that at last she was left alone” (203). McDonald points out,

Callaghan’s exploitation of his essentially psychological models [Peggy and McAlpine] for the comprehension of human nature may be summarized as follows. The individual may consciously revolt against the superstructure of his culture’s values, but he is doomed to remain an unconscious prisoner of its psychic substructure. The real problem that confronts the revolutionary, the rebel, or simply the honest citizen, is that society has almost total control over the means by which individual psychic drives are allowed to seek their ends...The rare individuals who manage to transcend this determinism are destroyed if their opposition takes on public dimensions. (Staines, *Symposium*, 91)

It is also implied that many communists wanted to give up the communist cause and turn back to a peaceful life, but during McCarthyism they were not given any room for co-existence. Many were discriminated against, arrested, put into jail and even killed. Peggy tells McAlpine that she has made up her mind to go away with him, anywhere. Although she has been beaten up during the riot and is willing to give up, under the pressure of the social environment, nobody dares to be close to her and someone sneaks into her room and kills her. McCarthyism did not tolerate different political parties or opinions. It is the darkest moment of Communism: “the light glittered on the ridge [of the mountain] against the sky... and it had never been so dark and so high” (203).

As Callaghan himself has said about McAlpine, “He made a mistake: I think he should have stayed with the girl. There should have been something in his heart that would override any attitude. When you are really good, you don’t have to think. The trouble is he *thought*” (Donald Cameron, *Conversation*, 25). As a moralist Callaghan advocates having faith in human goodness, in this case, what Communism represents; he illustrates what man ought to be efficaciously and effectively through our own moral involvement. Through this propagandistic strategy, the author’s criticism of McAlpine’s deserting Communism stands out clearly by the selective control of information to favor a particular point of view - namely that Peggy is genuinely innocent and should not be deserted and persecuted and human beings should follow their feelings and free will instead of reason in choosing a side. Callaghan’s ultimate intention is to inspire a renewed moral vision toward the world. “McAlpine fails because he puts his faith in reason, for reason is the child of ego, and society holds the ego in its poisoned grip. His thinking is not free because he was psychologically scarred by the incident in which he was made to feel worthless by the rich and powerful parents of a childhood friend. His reason is thus perverted at every step by the effects of this trauma on his consciousness” (“Conversations,” 25).

Later, McAlpine confesses his real intention in trying to transform Peggy: “When I knew I had her and could keep her, maybe I remembered that I too had come to Montreal to ride a white horse. Maybe that was why I was always trying to change her. That was the sin. I couldn’t accept her as she was” (232). Through the conflict between McAlpine’s unconscious appreciation of Communism and conscious desire to climb the social ladder, the author shows that there is no co-existence between the two ideals and there is no way out for those who are courting Communist ideas to survive in the

capitalist world, even though they are willing to sacrifice something, namely, cut the feet to fit capitalist shoes. McAlpine naively thinks that he can maintain the integrity of his character and get Peggy transformed and accepted while living under the capitalist system. That is his “innocence.” That is the innocence of all Callaghan’s innocents, ‘the lack of awareness,’ as Callaghan describes Harry Lane in *The Many Colored Coat*. The power of society will either manipulate human nature to its own degraded, material ends, or simply crush it. McAlpine finally becomes “aware” of this: after being released from prison, he “could not bear to go out; he didn’t want to be back among his friends who might learn his story and look at him as that girl had done, wanting to scratch his eyes. The darkness, the dizzying, stupefying darkness after the alcohol and the exhaustion was all he wanted...In the corridor, he hesitated, as if expecting to be called back or find the way barred” (232). In capitalist society, there is no room or way-out for the people who are either sympathetic with or stand by Communism.

Section Five:
The Ending of the Novel:
The Author and McAlpine Take a Stand Together

The ending of the novel shows Callaghan’s pro-Communist stand as reflected in McAlpine’s totally giving up his reason and ego and openly and consciously standing with Communism. Upon learning of Peggy Sanderson’s death, McAlpine feels like it is the end of his world. “He was trembling; there was no strength in his arms or legs... he was only turning around slowly with no words, no thoughts, just the physical tremor he could not control” (208). “It was a pain like the physical wrenching away of a part of his body. ‘Oh, my God!’ he groaned” (209). And later, he “wandered around, but he was always on a street or corner where he had been with Peggy” (210). It is not until McAlpine accepts his responsibility for Peggy’s death that he and the reader know what his position is.

The central crisis in the novel has to do with identity. McAlpine is made to discover, test and confirm moral courage in himself. Passing through it, McAlpine has to sacrifice much: security, status, company, and in the future, possibly, even life. It is an ordeal which has made him give up the desire of possessing any white horse by going inside the hedge of the upper class. So when he meets Catherine and Carver at the police-station, their “presence didn’t embarrass him. He only hoped they would understand his anguished protest. He wanted to get it all straight for them” (227).

McAlpine's experience before and after Peggy's death has made him stand firm with Communism out of his free will. "Stopping, he watched the morning light brightening the snow on the slopes until the whole rich mountain glistened" (233). In the novel, the rich glistening mountain symbolizes not only the victory of capitalism but also its temptation. But this time, McAlpine is both hostile and defiant toward it. In his grief and awakening, he has renounced forever the values of the black mountains. He "regarded the sloping city with fierce defiance. Yes, what they say is unimportant, forever unimportant to me, he thought.... She has vanished off the earth.... Yet he would keep her with him.... He had a plan in mind, and everything quickened... he began to climb the long slope... believing he has found a way to hold on to Peggy forever... He wanted to find the antique church she had taken him to" (233).

At the end of the novel, there is still the conflict between capitalism and Communism, with the latter diminishing gradually, symbolizing how McCarthyism was wiping out different political parties and opinions: "It was between the dark and the dawn. The grey limestone buildings in that light looked cold and bleak... All night the snow had been melting. Parts of the city were still shadowed by the heavy mountain darkness against the sky" (232). The flow of water in the city symbolizes Communism; the snow, however, is melting, but it is not gone completely: "In the dawn silence voices sounded loud and important. Noises came from the harbor, which hadn't been touched yet by the sunlight. A yawping ship's whistle was answered by a foghorn, like a moan, from another ship. But the noises were isolated" (232). The Communist forces have been scattered and isolated. "The small trickling sound of running water from the melting snow was still a night sound in the morning" (232). Although Communism is disappearing, it still makes itself heard, in "the small trickling sound." All "the morning noises blended into a low rumble, getting louder until the night sound of the trickling in the gutters was lost in the sounds of the morning" (233). Amidst the rumbling sounds of capitalism, the Communist sound has gone underground and dies out during the daytime. It is still an illegal and hidden force, still trying to get its foothold under the cover of the night, and there is no room for it to do anything openly in the broad daylight.

Although Communism is "melting" under the attack of capitalism, it is still something attractive and sacred as symbolized by the little church and still has its alluring effect on those such as McAlpine. He is looking for Communism towards the end of the novel:

Then he heard the [bell], coming from the west and only a little way off, quick light chiming bells calling, softly calling, and he hurried in that direction; but the ringing faded away. He stopped and waited; again he heard the light silver chiming. He followed where it beckoned back to the east now and tantalizing close; then it was gone. Another bell chimed from the mountain, monastery bells called from St Catherine, and he wandered around confused, not knowing which way to turn, tormented by the soft calling bells... (234)

Even though there are some people who are still enthusiastic about Communism, though influenced by capitalism as symbolized by the bell from the mountain (monastery bells called from St. Catherine), they do not know where to turn to find it. This is indicated by McAlpine's fruitless quest: "But he went on with his tireless search. He wandered around in the neighborhood between Philips Square and St. Patrick's. He wandered in the strong morning sunlight. It was warm and brilliant. It melted snow. But he couldn't find the little church" (234).

To many readers, the ending is ambiguous, which shows Callaghan's prismatic reflection of reality through a parable. Despite Callaghan's pro-Communist attitude, he was neither regarded as a proletarian writer nor did he suffer any kind of prosecution during McCarthyism and the Cold War. Then, is he a proletarian writer? According to Victor Hoar, "Callaghan is anything but a proletarian writer during these years" even though he is fully cognizant of the debilitating effects economic destitution can exert" (78). Besides, Callaghan himself told an interviewer, "It was never his practice 'to carry out a theme. Rather, he saw the writer's problem as somehow or other to catch the tempo, the stream, the way people live, think, and matter" (Robert Weaver, "Talk," 21). However, "Callaghan's non-doctrinaire account of conditions during the thirties and his detachment from the 'Art-Is-A-Weapon' school by no means signify that he had no 'views' or that he merely 'observed' the consequences of the Depression" (Staines, *Symposium*, 26). It was not his way to make explicit pronouncements, but the authorial voice can be heard all the time in his descriptions of seedy landscapes, in conversations, or in the unspoken thoughts of his characters as they find themselves caught in what Henry James called 'morally interesting situations.' Even though we cannot regard Callaghan as a proletarian writer, his writing does fit the definition made by Michael Gold, a prominent American left-wing author and editor who described Proletarian Realism in 1930: "Every poem, every novel and drama, must have a social theme, or it is merely confectionery...Proletarian literature could become the new poetry of materials of the so-called common man, the Worker molding his real world" (Hoar,

78). All of Callaghan's works have a political theme, especially *The Loved and the Lost*, which sounds like political propaganda full of comments implicitly attacking the capitalist system and those protected by it and confirming Communism as what is truly loved but is lost.

Callaghan's pro-Communist attitude is not only reflected in *The Loved and the Lost*. Daniel Aaron comments, "In 1934, the nadir of the Great Depression, long before the Cold War, Callaghan was opting, or so it would seem, for what Father Dowling called 'an emphatic spiritual declaration' (*Such Is My Beloved*, 149). It was not his way to make explicit statements, but had he done so, they would have been directed, in my opinion, against the 'spiritual inertia' of the North American Wasteland" (Staines, *Symposium* 34). In the first issue of a Canadian Marxist magazine called *New Frontier*, published between 1936 and 1937, Morley Callaghan was asked to comment on three short stories included in that number. Callaghan's critique closed with the following judgement:

It is odd that these three pieces should have been on the one theme - the man out of work. The editors tell me that this was not a deliberate selection, but that nearly all the stories they received were about men who were out of work. If this keeps on, it will appear that either all the young writers of the country are out of work, or that they all feel a little frustrated, a little cynical, or even defeated, and that living in this country doesn't leave one with a strong feeling. That may well be. But soon we ought to be hearing a lustier crowing, soon someone ought to tell us that there is some passion in the land. (Hoar, 79)

The 'passion' in the land" certainly refers to something fresh to replace the capitalist system, namely, Communism.

Although Callaghan did not write about men who are out of work and become martyrs or throw themselves upon barricades, his characters, even far removed from the union struggles and the street clashes, in their quiet, frustrated lives, face the predicament which "was just as real, just as agonizing, as if they had" (Hoar, 79). His attitude is symbolically expressed and his writing, as George Woodcock notes, "presents a realistic picture of the social landscape' without explicit condemnation or social analysis" (ed. Brandon Conron, 'Lost Eurydice' 76). Prismatically and implicitly, Callaghan makes us identify with McAlpine through the overwhelming range and force of the "logical" and "ethical" proof that the author has deliberately lined up against the existing system. What he presents appeals to our reason and moral sense by virtue of the "character" of the speaker, respectively: the range of characters, opinions and

judgements from all social and intellectual levels of the world of the novel. In this respect *The Loved and the Lost* is full of, in Cameron's words, "rhetorical discourses specifically designed to influence men, to persuade or to move them" (68), to the side of Communism. The novel is like a parable with greater tendency to leave the obvious 'argument,' the moral, or the point of the story to the reader to discover. The detective remarks that it is 'the human condition' that has destroyed Peggy. But it is the reader or listener who theoretically draws the application of the point to his own life that 'the human condition certainly refers to the capitalist system which kills Peggy. The novel's parabolic technique is effective because of the truth illustrated, especially in the end of the novel: Communism is what humans are really after and corrupt capitalism should be replaced. *The Loved and the Lost* is an extended parable on the nature of innocence in Communism and of faith in it as an intuitive moral vision. The novel seriously puts forward a question of belief and of faith. But, as Cameron observes, it is Callaghan's parabolic style, "a figural, synecdochic, or metonymic type [and his] consistent exploitation of the analogical nature of parable [that] calls for such a view" (Staines, *Symposium* 72) implicitly.

CHAPTER TWO: PRIDE AND PREJUDICE IN ETHEL WILSON'S *THE EQUATIONS OF LOVE*

Ethel Wilson is a humorous and subtle writer, and she did not express herself politically in any direct fashion. In a television interview she gave in 1955, she said that politics was best left to men like Bertrand Russell and others who would think most clearly about the issues that beset the world in her time. But there are two things to note about Ethel Wilson's writing career. In the early 1950s Wilson changed from writing about upper-middle class life, as she had done in *The Innocent Traveller* (1949), to writing about the lives of the poor in *The Equations of Love*. She chose also to introduce her authorial voice into her narratives at this point, and given the plot arrangement of these novellas I see her as arrogantly and prejudicially suggesting in "Tuesday and Wednesday" and "Lilly's Story" that climbing the social ladder is the only solution to the problems of the poor. Her rags to riches plot in "Lilly's Story" is in fact a paradigm for the narrative at the centre of capitalism.

Against Marx's advocacy for a classless society where wealth, opportunity, and education are actually accessible for all people, Wilson stands opposed to the reordering of the system. Hence for the poor in her fiction it is only sensible to aspire towards becoming one of the legitimators and to acquiesce to the condition of bourgeois society and capitulate to its dominant market values instead of being involved in political struggles. In this way the logical positivism in the philosophy of national political endeavor finds legitimization in the capitalist system. The situation is so engineered that not to follow means to be a social outcast, to be peering in from the margins, to be hunted and pursued by the police, and to be looked down upon and neglected by the main stream of society.

Having read my account of Wilson's two novellas so far, some readers might say, "Wait a minute. Wasn't Wilson sympathetic with the poor and did she not try to help them within her own means?" That is true, but *The Equations of Love* marks a turning point in Wilson's writing. According to David Stouck,

Reviewers of *The Equations of Love* were surprised by Ethel Wilson's shift in subject matter. By this time, she...was known as a member of a socially prominent Vancouver family. Her creation of characters from the city's east end seemed incongruous with her personal background and the subjects of her earlier fictions, and to some of her readers she appeared to be 'slumming,' writing for fun about a world of which she knew little. But biographical knowledge reveals some close connection between author and subject in these short novels and helps the reader to appreciate the complexity of some of the themes in her writing. (153)

According to Marxist criticism, we must place a work in its historical setting, paying attention to the author's life, the time in which the work is written, and the cultural milieu of both the text and the author; all of these concerns are related to sociological issues and necessitate an understanding of the social forces at work at the time Wilson's novellas were written and being interpreted.

Section One: Who Was Ethel Wilson?

Ethel Bryant Wilson was born in 1888 in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, where her father was a Methodist missionary, a typical middle class position in society. She became an orphan at an early age, when her mother died in childbirth, and her father died when she was nine. But as Stouck writes, Ethel Wilson "did not grow up an abandoned, impoverished orphan. On the contrary, her mother's family, the Malkins, were prosperous earthenware manufacturers in Staffordshire, England, and Ethel was brought at age ten to live with a branch of the family, including her loving grandmother, that had set up business in the young city of Vancouver. Here she enjoyed all the advantages, material and cultural, that accrued to a well-run Victorian household: there were social functions to attend related to both the family business and the church; there was Crofton House, a private girls school" (Wilson, *Stories, Essays, and Letters*, xii). In addition, like other members of middle and upper class families, when she was young she enjoyed swimming, horseback riding, and taking painting lessons. At the age of fourteen, Wilson went back to England to attend a boarding school, and on returning to Canada four years later attended Vancouver Normal School and then worked in the city's public schools for thirteen years as a teacher, again a typical middle class position. Later she married a prominent and popular Vancouver doctor, Wallace Wilson. She was a full-time housewife, enjoying the prestige of not having to work and having a lot of leisure time, and probably that was partially why she got "a whimsical

notion to write” and enjoyed “working in the car while her husband attended meetings and called on the sick” (Wilson, *Stories, Essays, and Letters*, 8). The Wilsons owned their own home in Shaughnessy and were able to spend time travelling, which included several trips to Europe and the Middle East. As Stouck has written, “Her life was circumscribed by privilege and comfort...Never during her life did she live without people hired to do menial work for her – housekeepers, cooks, gardeners, typists, seamstresses, and, in old age, nursing staff” (Stouck 81-82, 154).

Wilson’s middle and upper class background helps explain her tastes and values in *The Equations of Love*, because, according to Marxism, “the ultimate reality is material, not spiritual. What we know beyond any doubt is that human beings exist and live in social groups” (*Marxism*, 18). It is true that Wilson “was always sensitive to and affected by the hardships and humiliations suffered by humble people...As a housewife, she would answer the door and be a bit friendly and say ‘yes’ the cellar needed cleaning or the grass cutting, even though the grass was short and the cellar was very small” (Stouck 81). It is very common and fashionable for the rich to donate to, and be sympathetic with, the poor (that is why Boxing Day came into being), but such sympathy never or rarely goes beyond sacrificing the rich’s own comfort, saying nothing of sharing all the properties with the poor as Communists advocated. All of our responses to Ethel Wilson’s privileged activities are related in some way to her culture and society which determine who she was, what she believed in, what she valued, and in many ways what she thought, especially during the Cold War period when the middle and upper class stood by the ruling class to maintain their privileged life and the social order which Communists and the poor tried to smash. It was at this time that Wilson changed her subject to focus on the poor.

The Equations of Love typically reflects Wilson’s pro-establishment stand as can be seen from the skillful arrangements of the plots in the two novellas: she first negates the poor in *Tuesday and Thursday* and thereby their just demand for social change. Under her pen, the poor are, like the Communists described in other books, impossible people: they “are viewed as lazy, deceitful, self-indulgent, and self-vindicating” (Stouck 156). What she advocates is that genuine happiness is impossible for the people of the lower orders and there is no need to better the poor’s conditions by reordering the social system. Second, Wilson offers a social solution. In “Lilly’s Story,” the author advocates the hero’s development, but such advocacy is based totally on the negation of Lilly’s original character and behavior. To be happy and respected,

one has to get out of the lower class and climb into the middle or upper classes by getting rid of one's original identity and acquiring middle and upper class experiences and consciousness instead of resorting to ideology. The primary purpose of this chapter is, through analyzing the two novellas, to show the dominant middle and upper class trend in Wilson's creative ideology at the peak time of McCarthyism and the Cold War.

The Equations of Love especially reflects Ethel Wilson's middle and upper class values and tastes for two reasons. First, Wilson's prejudice against the poor stands out in *The Equations of Love*, especially the novella "Tuesday and Wednesday," which deals with a fairly large cast of lower class inhabitants of Vancouver's east side. As a saying goes, "One can distinguish through comparison," because comparison can reveal a thing's true nature. When Wilson came to such a subject as "Tuesday and Wednesday," telling the story of the characters whose class was different from hers, she would, whether she was aware of it or not, naturally assume a way of comparison and contrast; as a result, the living style, ideology, tastes and preferences of her own class would conflict with those of the characters of the class she wanted to portray, thereby revealing some inner and hidden aspects such as value concepts which she consciously wanted to expose. Second, Wilson herself valued *The Equations of Love* highly, especially "Tuesday and Wednesday," saying, "My own choice of a favorite work is a nouvelle, or a novella, named 'Tuesday and Wednesday'" (*Stories, Essays, and Letters*, 88). She admits that in this work "I chose and introduced my own voice [so] much into the proceedings" that some think, "It is a flaw in writing" (88). However, such a "flaw" offers us the best opportunity to deconstruct the text and observe the author's real attitudes and "her voice" as reflected in her perception of different characters.

While reading *The Equations of Love*, one has the following three kinds of responses: first, unlike most other literary works in the 20th century where the plots and characters unfold and develop naturally before the reader without authorial intervention, in *The Equations of Love*, the reader feels strongly the presence of the author, who sometimes reminds the reader of her presence and sometimes uses special comments inside brackets. This echoes what Stouck says, "Wilson had always insisted that 'the story is nothing much. All depends on the way of telling', and for her the 'way' was rooted in the voice of the narrator" (157). Second, the reader can see the author's intention which she conveys to the reader through repeated description of certain features (such as Myrtle's eyelids). The reader can feel that the author is dissecting her characters and studying the personalities of some characters. Third, the reader can

experience the author's ideological bent. Because the author openly expresses her intentions and ideology through "her voice", what she likes and dislikes and what she negates and confirms is clearly exposed.

Section Two: Negative Portraits of the Poor

1. The author's creative intention: Perceiving the poor as liars

On July 19, 1950, Wilson wrote to John Gray, "It is curious, but both 'Tuesday and Wednesday' and 'Lilly's Story' are really studies in self-deception and lies. I became much interested in this, having observed how influential deceptions (self and otherwise) are in personal, group, and national relations. Personal relations, however, came within the scope of my own story. Truth is sometimes absolute, but very often a relative matter, as we know, yet frightfully unethical (because the lies win) but so is life, very often" (*Stories, Essays, and Letters*, 157). Here Wilson expresses clearly that her focus in this book is "really" on the study of deception and lies, but the key point for me is what kind of characters the author creates to reflect her focus.

Let us have a look at the class and employment structure of the two stories. Because almost all the characters in the two novellas belong either to the middle class or the lower class, it is necessary to define the middle class and its values and tastes. In terms of academic definition, middle class, with its general meaning and unclear boundary, is a vague concept, and there are more than five theoretical interpretations. The definition of the middle class in this essay is based on the following aspects: 1. Specific theory study on this concept. 2. The Canadian social background of the fifties, the time when the four writers wrote the novels examined here. 3. The ideological trend reflected in the novels. 4. The Marxist view. Based on all of these aspects, the middle class here refers to the petty bourgeoisie and all kinds of knowledge controlling white-collar employees, including managers, supervisors, office workers, salaried professionals, civic clerks, salespeople, small business owners, independent professionals, etc, namely, according to Marx, the intermediaries between capitalists and the proletariat. Since they are paid a wage, technically they are workers, but they represent a privileged stratum of the proletariat, typically serving the capitalists' interest.

Obviously, because of the similar social status of the above-mentioned wage earners, the values and tastes they hold should be very similar in many aspects. Besides, the value concept of the Canadian middle class, especially during the fifties, like the whole Canadian ideology, tended

to be conservative, similar to English social ideology, with strong opposition to any possible Communist take over of the whole system and individual possessions; therefore, the middle-class values which are defined here are the values traditionally associated with the middle classes in the earlier, entrepreneurial stage of English capitalist development - self-reliance, work as vocation, industry, thrift, earnestness, perseverance, patience, duty, etc. By the mid-Victorian period many of these had been perverted within the middle class itself into a blind desire for wealth and property for their own sake. Duty had become secularized into an obsession with business success, and work, industry, thrift into worship of money, etc.

In "Tuesday and Wednesday," the main character is Mortimer Johnson, a manual labourer who has no steady job at all; he takes whatever work he can find, but most of the time he is unemployed. The second main character is his wife Myrtle, who is a part-time housekeeper. The third character is May Tritt, who "had her small job in the little notions shop." In "Lilly's Story," the eponymous hero has been a waitress, a housekeeper, a hospital's cleaning lady and finally a hotel chambermaid. From the composition of these characters, we can see that in the two novellas the focus of deception and lies is on manual labourers, namely denizens from the lower class. Repeatedly we are shown that they either tell no truth or tell lies at will for any kind of purpose. For example, when Myrtle comes to Mrs. H.X. Lemoyne's house, upon learning that there will be a potluck meal for her to prepare, she at once makes up a story: "I'm not feeling so good this morning... I don't know how long I'll be able to stay. Mr. Johnson...doesn't like me going out, and him getting good money. He thinks it reflects" (11). But when Myrtle says this she "forgot that last time Mort had figured in her conversation with Mrs. Lemoyne, he was lazy and you just couldn't depend on him, and she, Myrtle, was the sole provider for the two of them, and what her parents (who had brought her up in affluence [another lie]) would ever have said, she didn't know" (12). Mort tells the same lie when he is late for the new job on the first day. "Sowry I'm late...The fact is, the wife was sick this morning..." (14). The omniscient author exposes this lie at once: "This was a lie and Mort's angel gave an uneasy turn hardly noticed by Mort who could believe himself any minute that he wanted to"(14). When his wife accuses him of having been drinking instead of coming home on time, Mort, while still smelling of alcohol, denies it, "I never..." (46). Wilson belittles Mort in the scene when he "walked into the store, but people did not see that he was a little boy [namely his true self], and one or two women in their hurry felt the pleasant feminine glow that the large masculinity of Mort often evoked from women quite unreasonably" (31). This contributes to the portrait of Mort's lying nature: "People are very deceiving and you never can tell" (31), says the all-knowing narrator.

Wilson uses Lilly in the second novella as another example to expose the lying habit of the poor. Even at the age of eight, Lilly “told her own kind of lies whenever they seemed advisable and told them very well” (148). She lies “naturally, with experience, and without effort” (149). According to Wilson, this lying habit might be inherited, because Lilly’s mother lied when she wanted to get rid of her own daughter: “My mother in Winnipeg’s real sick and I gotta go right away and I gotta leave Lilly here...”(150). Lilly knew that “her mother lied” (151). Probably Lilly learned from her mother the way of “protecting herself by lies or by truth” (156). While living with Ranny, “Lilly was tricky. She would lie about her wages (her brown eyes soft and childish)” (164). After the baby was born, “of course, Lily would lie if need be (as she had lied her own way along her Life)”(174).

Wilson’s special intention of portraying the poor as liars can be shown by comparison with characters from other classes in the book, such as businessman H. Y. Dunkerly, or Myrtle’s aunt Mrs. Emblem, a widow with a certain amount of wealth, and with an opportunity of “becoming an investigator in one of the large department stores” (52). In “Lilly’s Story,” there are Major Butler, who used to be an army officer and government official, and his wife Mrs. Butler, and Mr. Meakins, the Chairman of the Hospital’s Board, and finally there is Lilly’s future husband, businessman Mr. Sprockett. None of these characters from the middle and upper classes has been shown to tell a single lie, but have been cheated and used by the poor and their lies. Actually, deception and lies exist in all classes and are negated by all the classes as well, and many classic and modern masterpieces focus on exposing the deception and lies of the powerful and noble figures in political, commercial and other fields and praising the honesty and hard-work of those from the lower order. Comparatively, Wilson’s creative intention inevitably makes the reader link her special preference of exposing the poor’s deception and lies with her own upper middle class status, values and tastes. As mentioned earlier, Wilson has specifically observed how “influential deceptions are in personal, group, and national relations,” and it is possible that she was hinting that the Communist countries, the Communists themselves and the poor, whose fate the Communists wanted to change, were liars and were not worth sympathizing with.

2. Perceiving the poor as selfish, vicious, and dirty

Another aspect of *The Equations of Love* is the negation of the poor in general. In “Tuesday and Wednesday,” almost all the characters from the lower order are

negatively portrayed. They are selfish, uncivilized, and dirty. They love nobody but themselves. For example, “Of all the people, Myrtle loved herself in whatever guise she saw herself...” (8). After Mort’s death, she only takes herself as the focus, reacting to his death according to her own willful interests. Mort is selfish too: the two things Mort really loves are his wife Myrtle and himself – the first inconstantly and the second with a varying intensity”(4). There is no love between Lilly and her mother either and the latter simply deserts her little daughter in order to run away with another man (156). Lily, while growing up, “feared only for herself” (157) and takes advantage of others, such as Ranny, “who was only a kennel” (164) to her. In contrast, the upper class couple, Mr. and Mrs. H.Y. Dunkerley love each other. He “put his arms around her and kissed her affectionately and asked how she was...He was very fond of his wife and forgave her most of her silly little fluttery ways. She loved him too, and nothing pleased her better than to see him at home again sitting on the verandah in a long chair, and to bring drinks for both of them, and to question, and interrupt, and tell him every single thing that she had not already told him in letters and a good deal that she had” (16). Here Wilson positively presents the love between an upper class couple, without any ironic undertone, which forms a sharp contrast to her description of the love between Mort and Myrtle.

Besides, Mort and Myrtle are portrayed as savages in their behavior towards the tenants (two old men) living below them (59), and they look like two jungle animals fighting against other animals until those below become quiet and Myrtle sees herself “superior” to them. To reflect her bad moral behavior, Myrtle is even described in negative physical terms: “Myrtle was no beauty. Now she stretched herself like a thin cat in the bed. Her hair was both straight and frizzy. Her nose was thin and would some day be very thin” (6).

Furthermore, both Mort and Myrtle are presented as untidy and dirty people. In “the house off Powell Street, [Myrtle] did not see that the room was dingy and needed cleaning; that it was not carpeted except by one small bed-side mat.” They “made “no attempt at cheer or colour in the room” (15). There are “unwashed breakfast dishes, the uncleared sink, the faded curtains and the whole drab appearance of the room” (22). In short, the author comments, “everything was uniformly dingy and need not be so” (8).

But if we look at their case from a different aspect, we can see that their place is physically in such a bad shape that there is no room for “cheer or color.” The place is so small that they put everything on the floor. The fact that the whole apartment is not

carpeted and there are mice is not caused by their laziness but by the landlord who fails to provide the tenants with proper facilities. Not only is Mort and Myrtle's room unkempt, but so is that of May, who is a clean and tidy person. Even her bedroom light, "which has no shade, hangs small and naked in the middle of her room" (59). In a word, these characters have no money to rent a better place, so they have to tolerate whatever condition the landlord imposes on them.

As a matter of fact, both Mort and Myrtle are anxious to be out of their present dwelling place and to move into a better place with fresh air. Even the old collapsing cottage on a Surrey farm seems very attractive to them. As soon as Mort sees Mr. Mottle's cottage, he begins to dream about his own future: "In a natty small home of their own...and in the sunshine that always surrounds one's most indulgent dreams" (105). Mort's dream of living in a decent place clings to him until the time of his death. "Myrtle kitchen me Myrtle bedroom I mighta been there now little white house what white house..." (114). These details would argue the poor's desire to have a decent home and a good environment to live in.

However, Wilson portrays positively those from the middle and upper classes as being kind, decent, beneficent, and warm-hearted. For example, in "Lilly's Story," even though Yow has behaved badly and stolen a lot of things from the Hastings family, old Mrs. Hastings, who is described as a "saint" (133), still prays for his safety and good luck. Mrs. Emblem "likes Myrtle as little as anyone she knows. But she keeps in touch with her because Myrtle is of her family, child of her sister. She is more kind to Myrtle than Myrtle knows, and is ready to befriend her" (52). Because of her good personality, even her movement and gestures are positively described: Mrs. Emblem is "moving ponderously, gracefully" (52), and "She is so nice; she is perhaps too fat, now, to be beautiful; but she is – to Mr. Thorsteinsen, to Maybelle, to Mortimer Johnson and to *me* – alluring..."(51). The author has never described anyone from the lower order so approvingly in order to show that the rich are "superior beings" and the gap between the poor and the rich "was unbridgeable. It was intrinsic in [the poor's] life and [the rich's] that they were different beings"(165). Therefore, one can get the impression that no revolution or different system can change the poor's fate, nature or condition.

In addition, Wilson also presents a positive portrait of the tools of the ruling class – the police and the Church. The police "are young and handsome in their leggings" (70), and turn out law-breakers, "but not unkindly" (70). They carry out their duty properly. When informing Myrtle of Mort's death, "they had gone there prepared -

as human beings - to feel solicitude for anyone who was about to receive shocking news. And now they walked away reflectively, in their swinging dignity... They remained reflective fellow-husbands in silence to the end of the block although still looking like policemen” (113). However, from their conversation after seeing Myrtle, we can see that they have no sympathy for the victims at all but have to do their job in a perfunctory way: “...my gosh, when you see some women...”(113). They irresponsibly misinformed Myrtle about Mort’s death: “ Well, yes, they seem to have been drinking” (114), but the fact is that Mort did not drink at all. Such misinformation causes misunderstanding and shows that the police, as one part of the system, act like mechanical cogs within a greater indifferent and inhuman machine that represents the interest of the upper class and have no interest in serving the poor at all.

Another positively described tool of the ruling class is the Church which operates as a social microcosm of the ruling class. Under Wilson’s pen, St. James Church is “a noble grey building” (91), whose airy cross rises above all ... and serves the people of the city” (92). “The church, although barren of ornament, is not barren of beauty. It is cool, with a lovely austerity” (93). “The music accords ... in pure and sweet enunciation. The services are ceremonial and also informal; man speaks to man; man listens; God speaks to man through easy words...”(94). As a matter of fact, the church is not serving the people, but numbing the people. For example, Father Cooper says to the gathering, “‘Blessed are the meek,’ and then he went on to talk about the real meaning of rare meekness, and why his Lord had said ‘Blessed are the meek’” (93). The church, through its so-called “easy words,” is trying, in cooperation with the ruling class, to make the poor tolerate the present condition and be happy with the social system instead of smashing it. Wilson beautifies Father Cooper with a benign appearance, “standing there kindly.” His role is so successfully played that “Vicky liked to see Father Cooper standing kindly there among all sorts of people, talking to them” (93). The image of the church makes Vicky feel so humble that even a handshake with Father Cooper can make her feel extremely satisfied. The scene seems like a social ritual linking the church and the pub, but to me, it is an unconscious demonstration of a lack of solidarity by the laboring class and their being thoroughly assimilated into the concept and the will of the bourgeois hegemony, with the dominant class and its accompanying ideology being imposed unconsciously upon the poor so as to entrap the working classes and control them in every area of their lives. Such

functions of the Church (and police as well) reveal not merely the fake and hypocritical nature of religion but the essential condition of society as a whole.

3. Exposing the poor's lazy and non-productive nature

In "Tuesday and Wednesday," Wilson suggests clearly that poverty is caused by laziness and non-economical habits, while those enjoying riches have gained their status through hard work and economy. Almost all the characters from the lower order are presented negatively as lazy and thriftless. Mort "was darn lazy," the narrator insists (9). Ever since Christmas, he has changed jobs many times and succeeded at none of them - he is late on the first day of a new job. Myrtle only works three part days a week; their home needs to be improved in many ways. The poor, moreover, have no plans, and we are shown that they do not practice economy and are careless with their belongings. After Mort gets some dirt for the kitten with a cooking spoon, he "left" the spoon in Baxter's garden (62). Wilson uses an incident between Mort and Mr. H. Y. Dunkerley to show that the really hard-working people are those from the middle and upper classes and the poor have no right to call themselves working men. When they meet in Eaton's Store, Mort calls himself "a working man." Mr. H. Y. Dunkerley "looked full at Mort with great dislike" (32), because, under Wilson's pen, Mr. Dunkerley "was a woodsman from the age of ten, and by the time he was sixteen he was doing a man's work daily...By the time he was thirty, through continued industry, he had come to own" one small shingle mill after another. "He was now a lumber man in a big way," but with "a violent phobia" against the simple phrase 'working man,' "unless it was applied to anyone who knew what 'work' was in the sense that he, Horace Dunkerly, knew what 'work' was and had known all his life" (32-33). Such details about Mr. Dunkerley show that the title of "the working men" belongs to the middle and upper classes who have built up their wealth through hard work while people like Mort and Myrtle are lying "drunken loafers" who are "not accustomed to plans"(160).

What Wilson is saying about the relationship between the poor and the rich is contrary to a common Marxist view, according to which, the capitalists or the upper classes exploit the poor. But in "Tuesday and Wednesday" the rich are presented as exploited by the poor in the relationship between Myrtle and Mrs. Lemoyne. Myrtle "'gave' Mrs. H. X. Lemoyne three part days a week, and Mrs. Lemoyne, who was not very strong, cossetted Myrtle and apologized to her in a way that annoyed Mr. H. X. Lemoyne whose money Myrtle received" (9). For example, on one particular day,

“Mrs. H.X. Lemoyne had worked herself up considerably before Myrtle came, because she ...arranged a small pot luck for [an] old school friend ...She had sent the children off to school with sandwiches and...her husband was not coming home to lunch... but Myrtle had not bargained for lunch parties, even pot luck. She patted the back of her hair and used her eyelids while avoiding looking at Mrs. Lemoyne who felt guilty” (11). She has to listen to Myrtle’s lies about how bad she feels. We are told that after Myrtle “had done her bit of drama,” she became fairly co-operative and ‘did’ the house while Mrs Lemoyne prepared lunch”(12). From the way Wilson put “did” inside quotation marks, one gets the feeling that Myrtle almost does nothing for the money she “received”, thereby exploiting the Lemoynes.

But according to common sense, how could one tolerate and keep hiring such a housekeeper like Myrtle if she did not do her work? Are there such people like Mrs. Lemoyne who pay someone only to get irritated and angered and still have to do most of the housework themselves? Is this realistic? Besides, are Mort and Myrtle really idle lying drunken loafers as described by the author and some critics? Not exactly so. Reading these characters with reference to class, we can see them as deprived of the chance to have a decent home, job, and life and longing for these very earnestly. When Mort gets a so-called “big” new job, Myrtle is in a good temper (15). She tells everyone she meets this exciting news. Such a job has made Mort somebody special and Myrtle “got round steak instead of the pinkish grayish ready minced meat because this was Mort’s first day on his big job”(18). This so-called big contracting job is to work in a private garden for a few days, but their excitement does show their strong desire to get a decent and steady job.

But in a capitalist society, the poor are always oppressed, looked down upon, and taken advantage of. Mort has tried his best to work well to get his employer “to like [him] and that’s half the battle! Was she not deluded!” (21) He works so hard that his female employer “was very pleased with this gardener: ‘What a find!’ she murmured” (21). But she has her own “selfish thoughts” to get her garden “done before the weather breaks,” so she puts on a very sweet face. However, her husband, with his strong contempt for the poor, says, “I see you’re spoiling him at once, the way you always do”(22).

Behind Mrs. Dunkerley’s smiling face lies her contempt for the poor and the rich’s arrogance. Mort realizes that “This nice woman had not even introduced [him] to her husband - a backward, jerking finger had sufficed - and the husband had not seen fit

to honor him at all, even with a nod” (23). The contempt of the rich for the poor makes Mort feel himself “reduced in size” (23) and turns him “to a working man insulted and snubbed by a rich man who no doubt had made his money by graft” (23). So, present in the treatment of working-class characters as second class citizens is an implicitly patronizing element. Such a social environment constrains and suffocates personal will and individuality.

Mort and Mr. Dunkerley’s encounter mentioned above also shows that the contempt of the rich for the poor has driven the latter into the corner. When Mort is enjoying the “self-satisfied frame of mind of a man who is buying nylons, even one pair” (37), his encounter with Mr. H.Y. Dunkerley, who has not any interest in talking to another human being from the lower order, spoils Mort’s humble enjoyment. Even though Mort recognizes that Mr. Dunkerley was his playmate many years ago, now the gap between the two classes has driven them apart, with one disgusting the other. Mr. Dunkerley’s indifference to Mort makes Mort realize that the rich are selfish and he even speculates that Mr. Dunkerley “never went to the last war. Just stayed at home and made money” (40). Wilson describes Mort as talking to Mr. Dunkerley “with a simple-sounding nobility which had no basis in fact”(37). The implication is that if one is not from a noble family, one has no right to talk that way.

Placing himself at the top of the economic chain, Mr. Dunkerley perceives himself, others, and the world around him in relation to his own social and economical position. His indifference to the poor does show that within the middle and upper classes there existed a class or sub-group within its own. This class was the professional middle class, which had a separate, if sometimes subconscious, social ideal. Their ideal society was a functional one based on expertise and selection by merit. To such people, to whom both the author and Mr. Dunkerley belong, poor people like Mort have no merit at all and, therefore, should be ignored.

But the other side of the story is that Wilson and the characters from the upper class in the story fail to understand that:

When ideology dominates social reproduction, the process becomes indeed much better for the dominant class: subordinate-class subjects will tend to resign themselves to their social weakness, trying to get what they can for themselves in any way possible, and to express dissatisfaction through relatively easy-to-control individual forms of ambition, violence, and self-destruction (including crime); meanwhile, dominant-class subjects themselves are freer to believe that their wealth and power are after all justified, that it really is the best of all possible worlds they manage, and they can comfortably dismiss all those

inconvenient and fanciful notions of how society and the social production of wealth might be organized differently, schemes that would only take away their power and wealth without actually helping anybody else. (Kavanagh, 309)

From their experience with the rich like the Dunkerleys, the poor come to a conclusion that society people “were always trying to fool [them]; but they could not succeed” (80) because the poor have no choice but to be self-protective and maintain their own dignity. Even though Myrtle has been very excited about Mort’s “big contract” job and the family depends on it for a living, she asks Mort to give it up. To them, dignity is more important than money. But because of such factors, their life and career cannot always be planned with confidence. It is not that “Myrtle and Mort became, for the purpose of argument, working people, as opposed to people wearing alligator shoes” (17), and it is not that she is needy of feeling “solidarity with Mort against people in general” or “Myrt and Mort have united themselves as a family of two against the world” (Broomhall-Wilks, 45), but that their surviving instinct in the capitalist society has made them stand firm in front of any possible contempt. Otherwise, one has to be a yesman to survive in such a society, which can be seen in the case of Mr. Mottle who bows “yes” to his boss all the time and who does not get any negative or ironic comments from Wilson.

4. Presenting the poor as incapable and hopeless people

In Wilson’s description of the characters from the lower order, besides those who are mean, nasty, lazy, non-economical and uncivilized, there is another kind of poor, such as Vicky Tritt, who is kind and loyal, but virtually a simpleton, on an intellectual par with a helpless child. A point Wilson makes in “Tuesday and Wednesday” is that the poor have no purpose or any motivation in their lives and have no desire to better themselves. Vicky is just such a purposeless person leading a meaningless life: “Insipid, or unimportant, or anonymous you are, your humanity imposes upon you certain conditions which insist that you spend twenty four hours a day somewhere, and that you spend, somehow, twenty-four hours a day”(65). The lack of the basic ability to communicate cuts her off from meaningful intercourse with others, so she lives in her own solitary universe and exists almost on the verge of non-being. She “stayed there for lack of any motive power to do anything else” (64). She is so incapable that if her employer “Mrs. Ravoli had died, [her] plight would indeed have been desperate, as her timidity would have prevented her from finding a new place

without making efforts which would have been painful to her”(65). Except to her landlady for reasons of rent and “to her employer Mrs. Ravoli for purposes of wages and instructions, she is Miss Tritt; to other people she is nothing, anonymous” (66). But we would like to ask Wilson, “How could Vicky Tritt have found and be doing her current job if she were so incapable as described by her creator?

This fate of the lower classes is also reflected in the lonely life of Old Wolfenden. His life or death as a human being means nothing to others: ““Old Wolfenden? Where is he now? Is he dead?’ No, he is not dead” (72). The police will not care about his well being unless they have to take him away as a law-breaker for sleeping in the hollow tree, his “home,” which might symbolize the social emptiness of his existence.

In the lives of Vicky and old Wolfenden, we can see the image of the prison, which conveys the spiritually impoverishing effects on the individual of the alienation characteristic of capitalist society. The effects of living in a crowded world, but cut off from others and defensively turning inwards to embrace reassuring isolation can be seen in the novel as the equivalent of being in solitary confinement in prison. Vicky is “safe from [others] and alone in her timorous world” and “reminds me of some poor dogs that nobody wants” (76). The reader can perceive her what it is like to live in a social environment that is generally imprisoning and to know that it is impossible for an individual to escape its taint and achieve authentic and fulfilling social relationships. Marxist critic Raymond Williams writes of human relationships:

It is above all necessary to avoid postulating society once more as an abstraction confronting the individual. The individual is a social being. The manifestation of his life - even when it does not appear directly in the form of a social manifestation, accomplished in association with other men - is therefore a manifestation of social life...Though man is a unique individual - and it is just his particularity which makes him an individual, a really individual social being - he is equally the whole, the ideal whole, the subjective existence of society as thought and experienced. (Williams 194)

But in the cases of Vicky and Wolfenden, it seems they are not social beings, as their lives are not accomplished in association with others - therefore, it is not a manifestation of social life.

Furthermore, a sense of isolation within a crowded city takes many forms in the novel and is present even in the scenes before and during the time Mort and Eddie Hansen drown. Eddie, a poor man wearing a second hand overcoat, is invisible even in

his drunken state. “He addressed the passers-by, but they, silent as fishes, swam noiselessly past and vanished” (89). Nobody cares about him in this world; “They did not care and continued to swim past him” (89). “They saw and heard him all right, but found it more convenient to appear blind and deaf to Eddie Hansen” (89). So Eddie, in his separate world of waking dreams, even among the crowded people on the street, walks unconsciously in an unreal existence. Lonely in his unexpressed desire for companions, he resigns himself to failure and is obsessed with his desire to find his only friend, poor Mort.

The scene in which both Mort and Eddie are struggling to get out of the water shows further that the poor are invisible, alone, helpless, and neglected. When Eddie is in the water, struggling for life, and rises “for a moment above the indifferent moving water” (109), it is the same as the indifferent passers-by, swimming past him indifferently and noiselessly. Not a single person watching on the land attempts to save the two men, but instead watch them “fight there, choking, grappling, the two good friends, in the dark water...[sinking] uselessly down through the dark water”(110). Wilson explains the watchers’ reaction this way: “Because death was so near in time and space, the crowd lost interest and melted away” (112), so the two poor men, “Mort sober and the logger drunk” (112), both drown, dying an “unnecessary and graceless” death as arranged by Wilson, who seems to suggest that the public is not interested in and does not want to save such poor, incapable and burdensome people. Instead, they should be ignored and got rid of.

The key point in perceiving the lonely characters such as Vicky, old Wolfenden, Mort and Eddie in “Tuesday and Wednesday” lies in the framework of capitalist social relations. In this connection Marx says that by its nature the perfected political state is human species-life in opposition to one’s material life where the political state has achieved its full development; one leads a double life, a heavenly and earthly life, not only in thought or consciousness but also in actuality. In the political community one regards oneself as a communal being; but in civil society one is active as a private individual, treats other people as means, reduces oneself to a means, and becomes the plaything of alien powers.

The situation described is one in which people associate with one another in antagonistic ways, so they do not have any positive, concrete community with one another. The forms of association of antagonistic individuals result in a real concrete negation of community. Each individual regards him/herself as having community with

the others, because they all live in the same community. But at the same time each individual, such as in the case of Vicky, views the essential bond connecting him/her with other people as something inessential so that the separation from other people appears as one's true existence. As an isolated being, Vicky would feel very awkward and out of place if she communicated with someone living in the same apartment. Such community is as little genuine community as there would be if some people are in danger or trouble, or feel lonely or desperate, others around them feel indifferent, as in the case of Eddie and Mort's drowning scene. The class division in the abstract community of antagonistic individuals serves the practical function of preventing real community from developing; thus it is very hard to change the fate of the poor who live in such a social community.

Of all Wilson's stories, "Tuesday and Wednesday" is the one in which an individual's control of destiny is most minimal. The story does not offer the hope that change for the better in the near future is possible, as is reflected in the death of Mort and Eddie. As society presents itself as an alienating and imprisoning environment, the poor dream of a better life in the other world, as symbolized by Mort's visit to the funeral home. Seeing "Majestic and inescapable [coffins]...waiting all together" (45), Mort "began to enjoy himself...to choose his pick" (45) because these coffins look so attractive and decent compared with his wretched apartment. He "[chooses] a coffin prettily lined with shining blue" (46). However, he does not realize that none of those coffins belongs to him. They would be all purchased by the rich, not the poor. So Mort's wishful thinking about revenge on Dunkerley - "I'd sure like to pick one for little Horse Dunkerley with splinters in" (46) - cannot be realized either, because the rich Dunkerleys would choose their own coffins at will and they are the real future owners of these coffins. Poor Mort, who is admitted into the funeral home by his friend after business hours, cannot even get into it during its business hours. But here we can see the author's real intention: while the poor don't work hard for a decent living, they satisfy their desires by dreaming and self-deception.

Section Three: Advocating the Social Ladder as a Way-out for the Poor

In "Tuesday and Wednesday," despite the description of many aspects of life in the lower order, it is the air and breath of middle-class respectability that fills the story. Wilson advocates that genuine happiness is impossible for the people of the lower

orders. The social environment is presented as completely deterministic. Opposite to the Communist advocating of change to the social system, the story suggests that there is no need for the redemption of the system, and there is, in a qualified but important sense, no hope for the individual life in the lower orders, where the reader finds nothing positive but laziness, indecency, and immorality and eventually death. In "Lilly's Story," however, Wilson does something different in showing the power exerted by a kind of patronage from the upper class. To be happy and respected, one has to get out of the lower class and climb into the middle or upper classes either with the help of some kind middle or upper class people or by marrying up into their class. But the so-called social ladder climbing is based on deception and is devoid of morality and decency.

1. Stirring unhappiness among the poor

Ethel Wilson, through her portrait of Lilly, tries to show that Lilly's efforts to climb into the upper classes are worth praising and advocating. But, in fact, Lilly's investment with Yow and her later efforts at climbing into the middle class are out of the same desire - to have money, comfort, and to be respected - and through the same means - lies and cheating. As Lilly "had an inordinate desire for things" (130) and "simple vanity"(144), and "liked comfort" (143), to realize her purpose, she will resort to any means - cheat, steal, deceive, take advantage of others, and betray.

As early as childhood, Lilly helped some drug dealers for a small tip and cheated, and ran away from, the police. She lied to, and cheated her guardian, Mrs. Case. She is the same Lilly after she has grown up. When Yow asks her to go out with him, she at first refuses, "Say, what do you think I am? I don't go out with Chinks" (130). But when Yow "took from his pocket all his wages," became the only Chinaman in Chinatown to 'own' a bicycle" (133) and ravished Lilly with "the trousseau which became hers bit by bit" (135), "the lure was working...She smiled a smile of pure happiness" (134). She walked along with Yow, ...she swung her hips as she walked, just to show that she did not care at all about being seen with this man" (135), but "Lilly's passion was for the bicycle" (135). However, when Yow's "infatuated pose of rich man was ended" (135) and the police were after them, Lilly deserted him. "She feared only for herself. She gave Yow no thought at all" (148). Yow becomes a victim not of Lilly's racism but her pursuit of money and material things.

Up to this point “Lilly had never in her young animal life looked below the surface of things as they occurred “ (151). It is at this moment that Wilson introduces the scene in which Lilly witnesses how “two superior beings” are treated and guides Lilly into a so-called “right course” to get out of her class. The two girls are in a store, “as if the world with all time and perfection belonged to them, as they truly thought it did” (155). The grocer drew upon all “his flattering attention and displayed it to two young girls” (155). Lilly realizes that between her and these two assured young girls, “there was a remove as of continents and centuries. It was unbridgeable. It was intrinsic in her life and theirs that they were different beings” (156), namely, they were from different classes. Wilson asserts again in a matter of fact way that they are “two superior beings” (155) and they “accepted this without vainglory but as their due” (156). Lilly “was conscious of something bright and sure which these girls had and which she had not...and suddenly felt cheap and dusty.” The storeowner, Mr. Soal, “bestowed his affable benedictions upon them,” but treated “the hitherto invisible Lilly in a modified manner, ‘What can I do for you?’ he asked” (157). It seems that Mr. Soal is not talking to a girl made of the same flesh as Eleanor or to another human being: he is talking to somebody from a lower order.

Wilson’s specially arranged scene has made Lilly realize that the poor are invisible and are second class citizens. Living among the poor, one either has to face poverty, contempt, discrimination, and disrespect, or when trying to get comfort, one has to be involved in illegal dealings and will be wanted and pursued by the police. But “nothing ... can touch or hurt” the upper class people. “No trouble can come near them” (157) because belonging to the middle or upper classes itself can protect one from many troubles. In Wilson’s story, the structural demarcations of the social world come into existence through the dominant roles played by her upper class protagonists. As Itwaru puts it, “[t]his shaping of the society by them is considered a matter of fact, and they create and perpetuate the state of affairs generally conducive to their welfare” (58-59). Lilly is now “cognizant of and dissatisfied with herself as a person” (155). She does not want to get money or comfort in the old way any more. There is a change in Lilly “induced by this spiritual chemistry acting mysteriously” (155). “She watched for” the rich. “In a fumbling way she wanted to become not so different from those bright and sure ones...”(187). This does not mean that Lilly wants to be a totally different person. She is still her old self. She still expects to “lie,” “cheat,” “steal,” and take advantage of others, but she wants to adopt a new way of doing so, that is, to “lie,” “steal,” and

“cheat” without being discovered, without being pursued or wanted by the police, and above all, to “lie,” “steal,” and “cheat” while being respected by others. The only way for her to maintain such status is to climb into the upper classes. This status can cover many kinds of evils, which is shown in what Lilly achieves throughout the rest of novel.

Lilly’s first victim is Ranny. “She did not want a husband but she longed passionately for respectability” (157), which Ranny cannot bring her, but she “steals” one dollar after another from Ranny to pave her way upward (155) while planning with care. “As soon as she was able she would take the baby away from Nanaimo.... She would take a position of complete respectability. She would become a new person” (158), a person who belongs to a higher class both in name and in deed. Wilson makes it clear that Lilly makes use of others: “Ranny was only a kennel into which a homeless worthless bitch crawls away from the rain, and goes away leaving the kennel empty and forgotten” (155). The author appears to accept that all these deceiving efforts are necessary.

“Lilly’s Story” shows clearly the author’s advocacy of the social ladder as a solution to solving social problems. However, instead of maintaining the efficient running of the machinery of society, Wilson’s solution to the problems in the lower order can be seen as having a socially divisive potential, spreading unhappiness and social frustration throughout the lower orders.

2. Assuming a false identity

Lilly’s decision to climb the social ladder shows that social control depends upon the subordination of the working class, and on extracting at a personalized level one’s consent to the meaning-system of the dominant class; each individual has, therefore, to negotiate with the dominant class’ values to such an extent that the reality negotiated becomes his/her experience and consciousness. In order to get into the upper classes, Lilly has to give up her old self and create a new person that has nothing to do with her real identity. She finally chose “Mrs. Walter Hughes” as her new identity and began to live “the important life of Mrs. Walter Hughes who had by this time become the widow of Walter Hughes, as yet a shadowy figure” (158). Eventually,

Mrs. Walter Hughes has become Lilly’s real identity. And as Lilly Waller - so trivial, so worthless - recedes [in the author’s eye, the poor are so trivial and worthless and have to recede]... there emerges another being, shadowy yet, whose memory is now evoked by Mrs. Walter Hughes. In the shadow is the

respectable man whose widow she is; there is the supporting shade of Mr. Walter Hughes... He belongs somewhere midway between her world and the world of Mr. Soal's best customers. He is respectable. The dead but newly created Mr. Hughes is now Lilly's protector. (159)

Wilson purposely creates such a middle class ghost as Lilly's stepping stone to the upper echelons of society. Gradually Lilly has lost her old identity and acquired the new one: "She had no one to help her except Mrs. Walter Hughes, widow of Walter Hughes" (158). In a word, she has to give up all her old acquaintances who are as poor and "trivial and worthless" as she is, in order to let the reality negotiated become her experience and consciousness.

After Lilly's daughter Eleanor begins to know things, Lilly starts to instill in her the same experience and consciousness, telling Eleanor "about her father, tall and fine, who had been killed long ago by a kick from a horse" (172), so in the mind of Eleanor, Walter Hughes has been established firmly as almost a memory, a respected man who was not poor (he had a lot of horses). What is ironic is that an artificially created middle class ghost weighs much more importantly than a real living person from the lower order does.

3. Lying and cheating to enter the upper class

An important aspect of Lilly's climbing into the upper society is that it is based on cheating and lying instead of decency and honesty. First of all, we have to remember that Lilly is a person "who told her own kind of lies whenever they seemed advisable and told them very well" (139). As soon as she sees the high status of the Butlers, she makes up her mind: "Yes, I want to be here. I want Baby to be near her... Safe... I'll fight for this job" (169) by telling lies: " 'Mr. Hughes... he was kicked... he died...a couple months before Baby was born...and I couldn't stick it there...and I come west' Lilly blinked wet lashes" (169). Her tears work: "How like a child she is... How true...how sad, thought Mrs. Butler, looking with compassions at the girl" (169). "How incredibly naive the girl is...How simple" (170). Besides, one has to be dramatic to get accepted: Lilly begins to cry, and wiping back her tears "she looked earnestly over the back of her hand at Mrs. Butler, like any child, and the thing was done" (170). She would not have been hired if she had not made up the story about a well-educated ghost husband. However, her personal dilemma does not justify her action in these circumstances. Lilly lies in the same way to Mrs. Butler as she did to others – the

police, Mrs. Case, Yow, and Ranny—she has “lied her own way” (163) into the upper class environment. However, these lies and false behaviors are all applaudable to the author and critics because Lilly’s end justifies her means: she wants to climb into the upper class.

4. Arming the poor with upper class customs and manners

To ensure Lilly’s permanent stay in an upper class environment, Wilson makes Lilly and her daughter give up their natural and original ways of behavior and cloak themselves with those of the middle and upper classes; for example, the name of one of the two upper class girls whom Lilly meets in the shop is Eleanor. To Lilly, the name itself symbolizes high status because it belongs to a girl from the upper class. So Lilly names her daughter Eleanor. “Lilly heard with disapproval that Paul [Eleanor’s boy friend then] called her daughter Nora. This she resented as a descent from the Eleanor which had always seemed to her the highest honor that it had been in her slight power to bestow” (217). It seems to Lilly that it reduces the dignity of the name Eleanor (the name of an important queen of England) to an ordinary working-class Nora.

Lilly’s plan has been well carried out. Under her close watch, Eleanor has grown up into a Lady. Even Lilly herself cannot believe such a result: “Can this be my baby? She’s a lady... She’s not common... she’s like... she was Mr. Butler’s kid. I’m not so common neither as I was” (175). The author shows that upper class status is more important than blood tie. “By the time Eleanor was six years old she had three gods and her mother. Her mother was not a god, she was simply an extension of herself” (173). What is ironic here is that “Eleanor’s gods were Major and Mrs. Butler and Leo, the big dog” (173). Mr. Butler’s dog is more important than a human being, Lilly, because the dog belongs to the Butlers and shares its owners’ upper class status while Lilly does not have such status. This Lilly soon realizes when “Mr. Meeker gave detailed information to the strangers in a voice that carried very well, ‘she’s not Butler’s child...yes, the maid’s child’” (181). Upon Lilly’s hearing this, “Something was set violently in motion in her mind” (182). Because Eleanor “was growing to be a big girl now, and soon she would be forever just the maid’s child, and never a home of her own, and never a life of her own,” (182) Lilly decided instantly: “We re going” (182). She wants to cover up Eleanor’s false life and make it real. Now that the seven years of living together with the Butlers has made Eleanor a “well mannered and nicely spoken child” (183), Lilly can leave the environment to set up Eleanor’s own identity as Mr.

Walter Hughes' daughter. After leaving the Butlers, Lilly is no longer a "maid" in status. "She was Mrs. Hughes, housekeeper at the Valley Hospital, who had her own house" and Eleanor is no longer the maid's child at Butler's place. "She was Eleanor Hughes, daughter of Mrs. Walter Hughes who lived in this little house" (193). Society contains a class hierarchy within which snobbery and patronage operate. Wherever Lilly is, there is concern for social definition.

To make up for the upper class environment which Eleanor has lost, Lilly watches closely that Eleanor will not lose what she has learned from the Butlers. Whenever Eleanor talks loudly, Lilly would say sharply 'Is that the way you'd speak to Her ... You know... *Her*...Madam... You don't sound to me like you did when you was talking to *Her*' (195). Here, Wilson uses Italics and a capital letter for *Her*, perhaps suggesting that, to the poor, a Madam from the upper class is as high as a queen, *Her Majesty*. To add more gloss to their false status, Lilly adopts another practice especially fashionable among those of the upper class -- going to church. Finally, Eleanor's status is established, and Lilly, too, "looks very... ladylike" (197). Their acting is so effective and successful that even Mr. Meakins, the Chairman of the Hospitable Board, falls in love with Lilly.

However, what people see in Lilly and her daughter is just their appearance, not their real face. For example, in church, Mr. Meakins "looked at the straight back of Lilly Waller who was Mrs. Walter Hughes" (197). "He had fallen in love with a green tweed back" (197), namely, the false Mrs. Walter Hughes, whose true face, namely her true up front nature, he never knows. As a matter of fact, Lilly is still the same woman who "cheats" and "steals" whenever necessary and possible. For instance, when Mr. Butler's "old familiar devil stirred in him, [he] tested her, to see if she would play" (176); if "it had not been for Eleanor she would have accepted his understood invitation, she would have played, she would not have spared Mrs. Butler - human relations were not Lilly's concern" (177) even though Mrs. Butler has been kind to her and her daughter. Just as the author says, "on a second look, she was still the young Mrs. Hughes who had been driven down the dusty Comox road clasping her baby, and she was still Lilly Waller who had waited on white men and Chinamen at Lam Sing's cafe" (201). Although Lilly goes to church, she does not have faith in God at all. She does not have faith in anybody or anything. This is symbolized in her practical use of her so-called ghost husband. After having made full use of the artificial Mr. Hughes, practical Lilly discards him as she discarded Yow and Ranny many years ago: "He remained

established in the past but the past was over. Lilly lived only in the long peaceful present and in her child's future. Walter Hughes' work was done and he might go. Lilly did not exactly discard him, but because she had never known faith in the living or the dead, Mr. Walter Hughes, no longer of any particular use, faded out, out, out, until he might some day be needed again" (172). However, as to the behavior of such a liar and cheater, Alice Munro says that what Lilly has achieved comes from a "delightful resolution, everything worked out with elegance and economy." If Alice Munro is with Lilly "all the way," that means Alice Munro also takes one's lying and cheating for granted so long as one's destination is the upper class.

5. Imposing an abnormal life upon the social ladder climbers

Wilson's special plot arrangement has turned Lilly's life into a false one because she has to cover up her real self and control her normal feelings in order to climb the social ladder. As a result, ever since Lilly made up her mind to change her real identity, she has been leading an abnormal life. This echoes a Marxist view: "Consciously and unconsciously, the social elite inevitably forces its ideas upon the working classes... Indeed, their system of values and meanings by which they live, work, and play, their hegemony, is dictated by the bourgeoisie ... they will only recognize that they are presently not free agents but individuals controlled by an intricate social web dominated by a self-declared, self-empowered, and self-perpetuating social elite" (Eagleton 121).

As Lilly is determined to get into the upper class, she cannot have and purposely avoids having love affairs with those from the lower order. Once she falls in love with Wilkes. He is called "a janitor," so certainly he does not fit with Lilly's desired class. But "he was a tall fellow with a well-shaped well-brushed head, strong arms, a harmless roving eye for all women... Lilly had worked near him year after year; he had mended Lilly's taps, built her shelves, made all the small repairs that her quick eyes saw were needed" (203). So Lilly "looked for him, she needed him" (204). "She knew that what she felt for him she had never yet felt for any man. To Lilly it passed for love" (204). She loves him so much that "She suffered at the sight of the woman who walked beside him, and slept beside him, and had borne him those two tall girls" (206). Once, when they are alone, "She yielded herself so immediately that he was astonished. He looked at her and her eyes were closed. Her body seemed to melt and flow to him ... and for an endless moment she lay in his arms where she had so much

longed to be” (208). This reveals how much she longs for normal love, but “A word that was not a word nor a thought but a stab of pain and mortal fear went through Lilly, and the word that was the pain that stabbed her was Eleanor [the symbol of the upper class]. The word seemed to destroy her, and yet she could not deny it. She had to obey it” (208). So she “pulled his arms roughly away, and as he tried to take her again she struck him across the face in a frenzy of fear of herself and sprang out of the truck” (208). To have normal love would be the “finish” of her (209). As a result, “Lilly’s poor love affair, like a sickness, passed, and was over” (210). “If it had not been for Eleanor and for the life that Lilly had arranged for her she would have set herself to seduce Paddy if she could” (204) although he is a married man. Lilly is still the immoral woman who used and deserted Yow and Ranny many years ago. But to maintain her present status, she cannot love anyone from the lower order even though she loves Paddy very much.

On the other hand, Lilly does not dare to love anyone from the upper class either. When the Chairman of the Board, Mr. Meakins, falls in love with her, she declines, because she “couldn’t talk good or mix up with his friends, it would not be good for [her] and it could not be good for Eleanor” (200). Lilly knows clearly that her marriage with Mr. Meakins will not last once her true nature is exposed after the marriage. Besides, she might expose herself to the world, especially to such people as Yow. Lilly, an old hand at scheming and planning, “disposing her forces like a general,” decides to stay away from any trouble that might pull her and her daughter back to the lower class. Wilson says that Lilly has become a woman “who contained herself and was in charge of her feelings” (217). Actually, she is suppressing her feelings. Once again, Lilly gives up another chance of being loved and getting married simply because of the awkward situation of her false identity. Consequently, she is caught in the middle of nowhere. It is also symbolically a disconnection between herself and the social realities of her existence.

In addition, Lilly cannot enjoy loving her daughter and grandchildren normally for fear that some day she might be recognized by the people who know her, especially Yow. As a result, while she is in Vancouver visiting her daughter’s family, “In the night she would wake and smell this fear, and the sweat would break out upon her as she thought, not of herself, but of Eleanor, and Paul, and their secret life, and the children that they would some day have. She would not come again” (222). Although “her faked past had almost become her reality” (224), “often, now, Lilly cried out in her

sleep. One night she called, “ Police, police!” as she had cried out so long ago” (209). Even though her daughter has married a lawyer from the upper class, and Lilly has established herself firmly as a “lady-like” widow of “well-educated” Mr. Walter Hughes, her present life is as dangerous and abnormal as it was many years ago when she was entangled with Yow.

Throughout Lilly’s sojourn in genteel society, prison imagery surrounds her and her daughter. She has imprisoned, and run away from, her real self. What Marx says about the alienation of workers in capitalist countries can be applied to Lilly’s situation:

Marx perceived that true human wealth resides in the universal unfolding of the personality. ‘The rich human being is simultaneously the human being in need of a totality of human manifestation of life.’ Man affirms himself as an essentially human being. The more universally he unfolds his personality, the more rich and varied the realms in which he exercises his faculties. Human richness lies in one’s relations with oneself, with others, and with reality. In order to affirm himself as a free, conscious, and creative being, man must transcend the limitation implicit in the channeling of his energies into a unique and exclusive task, no matter how important it might be. His freedom is inseparable from the universality of his personality. Speaking of Man who would realize his true human potential, Marx stated: ‘Man appropriates his total essence in a total manner, that is to say, as a whole man. (Vasquez 281)

This total unfolding of one’s personality is denied in Lilly. Unable to develop universally in her limited sphere of action, she clings to her particularity and restricts and mutilates her being. As a result, a concrete and real woman is divided along with the division of classes, a process of depersonalization. This we can call, to borrow from Marx, in his Manuscripts of 1844, “the estranged and alienated form of human activity’ (Vasquez 281-282).

6. Assuming a false physical identity

Lilly’s tragedy of climbing the social ladder not only ends with changing her mental identity but also ends in changing her physical identity. When Yow appears again, Lilly has to cover herself up completely. “Get me a pair of dark glasses, the bigger the better” (226). Homeless as well as helpless in her return to her former job, she comes to the alienating environs of Toronto, where she has to change herself completely. When Lilly changed her identity many years ago, she adopted the middle or upper class concept only mentally. This time, she enters the upper class physically under Miss Larue’s guidance, “That maroon coat...and that hat too. Give ‘em away.

Don't keep that dress nor any other.... If you keep those clothes you keep some of your old-fashion self" (233). Wilson is quite sympathetic and in support of Lilly's physical entrance into the upper class as she presents "Miss Larue, [who] on a fine creative spree, was assisting at the rebirth of a free woman" (234). Apparently, only by entering the upper class mentally and physically can one be a "free" person. Lilly's "rebirth" into the upper class can protect her from the troubles she used to have when she was Lilly Waller. Besides, her new hairstyle has always been intensely desired by her daughter because it is the dominant image of a successful person of the upper classes. However, this hairstyle is a wig – physically and socially false - a mask to cover up the old Lilly Waller. Her new appearance speaks only of the facades, the vestiges of supposed success in the domestication of falsehood. In reality, Lilly has become a tormented and disfigured woman.

7. Cheating and lies work

In "Lilly's Story," telling lies is a protective shield. The illusions of Paul Lowry and Mr. Sprockett about Lilly and Eleanor's background have seduced them into marriage. Before Paul Lowry meets Lilly, he "heard, little by little, about Eleanor's handsome young father, who married a poor girl, broke with his family, went ranching, and was killed by a stallion before Eleanor was born. He heard of her mother's courage and how, as a country girl, she had withdrawn farther and farther into herself. She could have married again, but she had been too devoted to the memory of Eleanor's father. She could hardly bring herself to speak his name" (216). Perhaps this false romantic and heart-touching story has drawn Paul to Eleanor. In the light of his social background, it would have been impossible for Paul to be engaged to Eleanor if Lilly had not made up the story about her so called dead husband and if Eleanor had not further romanticized it.

However, when Paul goes to see "this consecrated woman," he is surprised when he meets "the colorless dowdy" Lilly. The picture, which has been imposed in his mind, does not fit with what he really sees - how could he know that he has been cheated? "His picture dissolved" (217), but it "assembled itself again" because "Lilly was undecipherable" to him and the story has taken a root in him; the lie that has been told thousands of times can become truth. So "Paul dismissed quickly his first disappointment in the mother of the incomparable Eleanor" (217). Lilly's lies and cheating are rewarded: she thinks, "Eleanor'll have class married to him, Mrs. Paul

Lowry!” (217) Lilly “nearly burst with pride” (218) because she has become the mother-in-law of “a very distinguished” (218) young lawyer from the upper classes. But Wilson’s description of Paul with his tilted eyerows and unwilling smile shows that he is questioning something. As a young lawyer, he is certainly attractive to Lilly and Eleanor, but he might be somewhat unwilling to be the son-in-law of such a dowdy woman if she were not enhanced by a story of legitimacy and sacrifice.

Eleanor’s marriage with Paul also helps Lilly to get engaged to Mr. Sprockett. After Lilly has given up her old appearance and adopted the one suitable for a higher class, she catches Mr. Sprockett’s attention. But before he proposes to her, he makes sure that she is from a proper family:

‘You may be a family woman yourself, Mrs. Hughes?’

‘I gotta married daughter.’

‘Her husband in business?’ asked Mr. Sprockett who always liked to know these things.

‘He’s a lawyer.’ (243)

Mr. Sprockett was both pleased and amazed. The fact that Mrs. Walter Hughes had a daughter married to a lawyer seemed to make the suggestion that he was about to offer both right and reasonable. (244)

To dismiss Mr. Sprockett’s doubt why Mrs. Walter Hughes, a good-looking woman and stylish in appearance, with a daughter married to a lawyer in Vancouver, should be working as a chambermaid, Lilly again resorts to lies. Her made-up story about a “sick sister” and devotion touch Mr. Sprockett: ”You’re a very very fine woman” he says (247). Again, the author is sympathetic with Lilly’s lies and their power to change the course of her life: “How clear it all became to Mr. Sprockett, listening as he watched Lilly, with her worn and pretty face with its agreeable snub nose, sitting there and telling her simple lies” (247).

When it comes to the point for her to cheat Mr. Sprockett again concerning her hair, she uses her tears which “rose to her eyes at the thought ...of Mr. Sprockett not wanting her” (256). “She did not wipe them away. She looked piteous and quite childish” (257) while saying “I wouldn’t have like to deceive you” and “I wouldn’t want to have anything to hide” (257). As a result, Lilly, an old hand at lies and deception, is a “perfect” woman in the eyes of Mr. Sprockett, who decides in a hurry to marry Lilly whom he did not even know a few days before. So “she would be without fear; nothing, surely, could touch her now. There would be security and a life of her very own in the house of Mr. and Mrs. Sprockett” (255). Associating herself with Mr. Sprockett’s

unimpeachable social qualifications is an equivalent strategy to Lilly's marriage and takes the vulgar gloss off her former status. But success on society's terms is incompatible with moral goodness. The author appropriates certain features of the bourgeois ideology and creates in Lilly a model of self-help and social mobility, but the point is that Wilson has produced a new Lilly selectively. In other words, for the dominant meanings of the upper class to become the natural, logical, and normal reality of society as a whole, they have to be reproduced thoroughly, and not selectively, in the experience of each individual in all his/her lived relations. So Wilson's solution to social problems among the poor during the communist threat was not a sound one.

8. Changing status in name but not in reality: Lilly is chosen as a housekeeper

Although Lilly has climbed into the upper class through lies and cheating, has she really achieved the upper class status? As a matter of fact, Lilly is not chosen by Mr. Sprockett as a wife of equal status but as a housekeeper.

Since Mr. Sprockett lost his wife, his life has been out of order, and he is old and incapable of facing such a reality: "It's not fair to have trouble when you're getting older and can't stand it the way maybe when you were young and had your way to make" (235). When he is in a bad mood and incapable of dealing with his disorderly life, Lilly, the chambermaid in the hotel where he stays, brings order to his room. "The chambermaid had come in, bringing fresh linen and cleaning utensils.... neatly unfolding and spreading a sheet. Mr. Sprockett watched her moodily instead of watching the smoke blowing" (240). Lilly's neat movements impress Mr. Sprockett because she symbolizes order, which his life lacks. "The chambermaid moved well and neatly. It seemed as if order flowed her fingertips, and sheets, pillowslips, blankets, bedcover fell obediently into place instead of standing up to her and wrestling with her and intentionally crumbling themselves and falling out of line as they do in less gifted hands" (241). What is significant is that Lilly's real attraction for Mr. Sprockett lies in her skill as a worker, as a member of the serving class.

Mr. Sprockett and Lilly are not married as equal human beings. Mr. Sprockett still holds himself as a superior being: He "waved a slightly lordly hand that said 'Come in and don't mind me,' gave a perfunctory smile" (243). Then, "He said almost austere 'May I have a few words with you?' and his tone was rather that of polite command than of question" (243). Even though Mr. Sprockett is about to propose to

Lilly, his air and tone show that he is still treating her as a housekeeper. Mr. Sprockett decides to marry Lilly instead of one of “the Aldridge girls” (252) because Lilly, who knows how to keep a house in good order, can make him “very comfortable” (254).

Although Mr. Sprockett has decided to marry Lilly, he does not want to get married in his hometown because Lilly’s status as a chambermaid could embarrass him. He suggests that they get married in Toronto (252) so that Lilly could go back with him as Mrs. Sprockett, and her former status as a chambermaid will be obliterated in name, but not in deed, because she will be a maid again in his house. Even so, Lilly “was happy too... Perhaps what she chiefly felt was gratitude” (255). How could they be on equal terms when she feels gratitude to him and he regards himself superior to her? To Wilson, to succeed is to follow the functionalist mode of performance in which the socioeconomic ordering of the society is not questioned. Although the inequalities are seen as removable through the emulation of those who seem to have succeeded, the fact is that Lilly is still a housekeeper subordinate to her husband. She can only cling to him as a capital object of decorative value, for ostentatious display of her social status. In other words, she is a living contradiction, a person in whom we see the working of negation stemming from an ideology of self-denial as being self-rewarding.

Can Lilly have a happy life after she marries Mr. Sprockett?

Ever since Lilly decided to change her identity, she has never felt comfortable with those from the upper class. Her relationship with her daughter’s family has always been uneasy mainly because her son-in-law is from the upper class. “Out of her shyness and inexperience she saw him as in another place with which she was not familiar” (217). She feels “certainly glad his folks don’t live too handy” so that she does not have to contact them too often. Her son-in-law, “Paul, rather than Eleanor, divined some uneasiness in this silent woman his mother-in-law in spite of the welcome she received” (219). Lilly does not “feel easy with folks” (193) as she does not know how to live among high-class people. When she leaves her daughter’s family for home, “it was with a sense of relief” (221). Mr. Sprockett, though his language identifies him not far from that of the working class, definitely belongs to the middle or upper class: he has his own house and a maid comes to clean it regularly.

Now, as new Mrs. Sprockett, Lilly cannot reflect credit on Mr. Sprockett. Compared with his former wife, Bessy, who “had been a great laugh, like a great big girl, buxom, a bright dresser” (239), Lilly is really like a shy countrywoman who has never seen the world. Among his circle of friends, Lilly cannot be at ease and enjoy

herself because she never knows how to make “conversation for conversation’s sake” (219). Therefore, Mr. Sprockett, like Paul, will soon be disappointed by his new wife’s inability to handle social life.

In addition, Lilly’s manners in conversation, for lack of education, are poor. She often pronounces and uses words incorrectly. For instance, she says, “tempory job,” “I don’t take licker” (258), and “Mr. Hughes’ family was edjicated and a bit high steppers “ (248). She will soon expose herself among Mr. Sprockett’s friends and embarrass him too.

Furthermore, she is controlling what she does and says in front of Mr. Sprockett. For instance, when Mr. Sprockett asks her which church they should choose to get married in, “She was just going to say ‘whichever’s handy’ but she checked herself... ‘United,’ she said almost inaudibly” (258). But one cannot check oneself all the time. Sooner or later, her real self will be exposed.

At the end of the story, Lilly has not achieved integration within her new society. Her mask like her wig cannot cover her up or protect her forever; she might still have to run away from people like the Chinese cook. Lilly and her husband have not achieved a real and authentic level of happiness as this type of fulfilling, qualitative relationship is only possible in opposition to the dominant morality of the society, and her relationship with Mr. Sprockett is given no general or representative social significance. Although the fusion of lower class birth and so-called capitalist efforts produces a blurred social grouping, it is aristocratic or upper class values which are ascendant in this alliance. The uniqueness of their bond, its vulnerability, and the difficulties of the path which lies ahead are all suggested at the end of the novel. Therefore, the conflict between the individual and the social structure has not been artificially resolved.

CHAPTER THREE: THEY ESCAPED JUDGEMENT TOGETHER

It is commonly accepted that *The Watch That Ends the Night* is Hugh MacLennan's best novel; moreover, ever since the book was first published during the Cold War in 1959, critics seem to have agreed with each other as to why. In their opinion, the main character Jerome Martell is misled by the political god of the thirties. "Only after his second journeying and his second brush with death, does he renew his belief in the spiritual as the way of salvation" (Lucas 22-23). By the end of the novel, according to this reading, Martell has become a man of transcendent faith. Having achieved that state, he realizes that all "his public and political activities have been in error. His devotion to the surgical unit in Spain, his work in the French Underground, and all the rest - he sees in retrospect as madness" (Donald Cameron 72). According to Alec Lucas and W.J. Keith, *The Watch That Ends the Night* is at once MacLennan's most religious and most ambitious novel.

Ambiguities arise, however, when we consider the novel's relation to the real world in which the figure who lays claim to heroic status must necessarily prove himself. The contradiction is that the critics have taken Jerome Martell as a heroic character, but at the same time they all belittle the nobility of his choice and all praise highly his regret over his past experience after he comes back from China. Therefore, according to Western critics, Jerome Martell is "a legendary hero" (Woodcock 107) whose choice is belittled. But, we should ask, how could he be "a legendary hero" if what he has gone through is in error? The critics to date offer no explanation of how this flaw arose in such a prudent writer as Hugh MacLennan.

The answer to the question involves a contradiction in the novel itself, chiefly in Hugh MacLennan's ambiguous treatment of his main character: Martell is both a hero and not a hero; he looks like a communist, but he is not one; he is quite similar to Dr. Norman Bethune, but he is also different from Bethune; he is a sacrificing husband, but he deserts his family; he is absolutely right, but he is also absolutely wrong. This point is clearly expressed by Arthur Lazenby in the novel: Jerome "was absolutely right in what he told me. He was absolutely right about everything then. But because he was

absolutely right, he was absolutely wrong so far as the politics of the time were concerned” (98); he has heroically taken a long journey to the sites of action, to the trenches of Spain, then to France and the Soviet Union, and finally to Red China, but he comes back and “emerges transfigured” (Woodcock 107).

This ambiguous portrait of Jerome Martell results in part from the writing “technique” and “style” which was new to the author himself and which he adopted for writing the novel during the Cold War period. *The Watch That Ends the Night* was MacLannan’s first novel to be narrated in the first person. According to narrative theorist, Wallace Martin, “In many cases, a story would be altered beyond recognition or simply disappear if the point of view were changed” (Martin 130-31). In third-person narration, by entering the minds of characters, the author can “reveal the secret springs of actions...He can be concise, or diffuse...as the different parts of his story require it. Knowing everything, he can reveal things not known to any of the characters and comment on the action” (Martin 131). Therefore, “the fictional world created in third-person narration is simply posited, beyond any questions concerning reliability” (Martin 141). However, in the first-person novel, as in life, “we do not know what goes on in other minds” (Martin 133), because the first-person narration eliminates the author’s comment and “assumes access to only one mind and often uses the visual perspective of that character” (Martin 133-34). According to William Riggan,

The very fact that an individualized, dramatized narrator distinct from the author or implied author of a particular work stands before us and narrates in his own voice and in a fictionalized facsimile of a real-life narrative situation always carries with it the very real possibility of irony and divergence of understanding and hence the possibility of unreliable narration in a fuller sense than mere inconstancy: being a distinct individual, the narrator may well represent values not in accord with those of the implied author, and his values may not be shared or understood or accepted by the individual reader. (Riggan 22)

As Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg note:

In any example of narrative art there are, broadly speaking, the points of view - those of the characters, the narrator, and the audience. As narrative becomes more sophisticated, a fourth point of view is added by the development of a clear distinction between the narrator and author. Narrative irony is a function of disparity among these three or four viewpoints. And narrative artists have always been ready to employ this disparity to make effects of various kinds. (240)

Certainly, MacLennan is one of those artists. The first-person narration of *Watch That Ends the Night* blurs MacLennan's real personal values, norms, and viewpoints, and hence justifies the disparity in the portrait of Jerome Martell. By using a passive narrator, MacLennan portrays Martell as a great man and confirms what Martell has gone through: his devotion to medicine, his marriage to a sick woman, his affair with Norah Blackwell, his going to Spain, and his long stay in the Soviet Union and China. By presenting him as a convert at the end of the novel, MacLennan allows Jerome to put on a beautiful religious mask and look pleasant to both the other characters in the novel and the reading public that were strongly influenced by McCarthyism. I argue, however, that the evasive treatment of Jerome covers MacLennan's real intention in the novel: in my view Jerome Martell is a saviour and hero, a great figure like Norman Bethune, a Communist in deed. What the story reveals by the end probably is not the originally intended and endlessly reasserted life of a hero, but Jerome's false outwardness in diametrical opposition to the original hero whose genuine unchanging inner reality is masked. The discrepancy between Jerome's outer and inner selves shows that he must lie to be accepted in his country again, and this constitutes perhaps MacLennan's central indictment of conservative conformism in Canada, especially during the Cold War.

Section One: A Betrayer Versus a Sacrificing Husband

According to most critics, Martell is a betrayer to his family, especially to his wife. He deserts his sick wife and young daughter to devote himself to the revolutionary cause in Spain. However, numerous details in the novel point to the fact that the relationship between him and Catherine is the relationship between a doctor and patient and that Martell is not a betrayer but a sacrificing husband.

First of all, although Catherine is a charming and beautiful woman, Martell is not attracted to her until he learns about her heart condition. Catherine admits, "In the past six months I'd met him a few times...He never even saw me...We'd been introduced before but I knew he'd forgotten all about that" (152) because once he says to Catherine, "Why haven't we met before?" (153) When Catherine reminds him, "You had six chances to meet me and you didn't take them," Martell "didn't even hear what [Catherine] said, for while [she] was waiting for him to answer he said: 'I suppose you're worried about that heart of yours?...I have been taking your pulse'" (153). As a

matter of fact “it was a new line with [Doctor Martell] to diagnose a girl’s ailments the first time [he] met her”(153). In the middle of their dinner at Chez Stien, Martell “left to call up the hospital and came back to say he’d got another doctor to take an operation which was “just a simple appendectomy” while with Catherine he was facing a more serious heart disease patient, and he could not leave this patient before he had diagnosed her fully. When they reach the upper streets of town, Martell has not finished the task, so he “kept the car ambling along through the traffic” while continuing his diagnosis (153).

Besides, different from many other doctors, Martell always aims at not only saving life but also letting patients make the best use of their life. Catherine recalls, “Later when we were driving back down the slope of the mountain, he began talking about my heart again. ‘I suppose you’ve been told usual things?’ he said. ‘I suppose some bright member of my profession has put on his best bedside manner and shaken his head in the solidest way and said it’s too bad, Miss Carey, but it’s my duty to inform you that with a heart condition like yours you must never contemplate child-bearing? Well...to hell with him whoever he was! He said it to protect himself, not you...I’m not pretending that heart of yours won’t bear watching. I’m going to see a cardiogram of it in a day or two. But I think you’re going to be all right” (154).

In addition, Martell decides to help Catherine to have a child and to fulfill her life by marrying this sick woman. He asks Catherine, ““You want children very much, don’t you?” (154) “Jerome suddenly stopped the car and turned to me and said, ‘Catherine, you’re going to marry me and I’m going to make you pregnant and you’re going to have at least one child and you’re not going to die for a long time. At least you’re not going to die till you’ve had a chance to use a lot of that life of yours’” (155). As a famous and ambitious doctor in Montreal, Martell can choose one of the most beautiful and healthiest women as his wife, but he gives up his chance of marrying a normal woman and makes himself obligated to a sick one: Martell “said ‘yes’ to Kate when it was her marrying time. If [he] hadn’t, she’d have disintegrated” (273). “So that night they became lovers and three weeks afterwards they got married, ...[their daughter] Sally’s birth came close to killing Catherine, but her vast will to live combined with Jerome’s force pulled her through” (155). Jerome has picked her up from her sick kingdom and “whirled her as though she had never been sick in her life” (155). Martell summarizes his treatment of her this way: ““I took an awful chance of making old Kate pregnant. Why do I take chances like that? It’s almost impossible for

a woman with a genuine rheumatic to have a child, and nobody knew it better than I. But something told me she could have one and live. I think it's saved her as a woman" (169).

On the other hand, without Martell, Catherine might never have married or fulfilled her dreams of having a child because no man would have ever proposed to her due to her heart condition. Bourgeois figure George "remembered how I had feared to take her when she had offered herself, and I knew I could never have accepted the kind of responsibility Jerome had accepted" (154). George is "not a man who can do about a dozen things and wants to do them all," (291) but Martell can and wants to do all of them, including treating a patient like Catherine outside the hospital and sacrificing himself to give her confidence to live on.

As a result, there is basically the doctor-and-patient relationship between Martell and Catherine. Catherine says, "I don't have to ask anyone what Jerome means to his patients...because twice I've been his patient myself. I'd never believed it possible for a doctor to take away a patient's fear as he does" (155). Moreover, there is no real love between Martell and Catherine: "No matter how much Catherine might love Jerome, she was lonely with him: nor was the loneliness caused entirely by the fact that his practice absorbed so much of his time...the little codlings a woman likes to bestow on a man was wasted on Jerome" (155). When George tells Jack, "I know [Jerome] loved [Catherine]"', Jack says, "'Oh, for God's sake, George, what do I know? I'm getting to the place where all I know is my own plumber's work'" (291), implying that there is no love between Martell and Catherine.

Because Jerome does not treat Catherine as his wife but as a patient, he does not know how she feels. He asks her former lover George, "'Is Kate happy?' 'Don't you know she is?' He shook his head and looked away, 'I'm not sure. I am not easy...You know her better than I do'" (161). George's "position with the Martells was at once peculiar and simple." Martell "was unconscious of jealousy and he liked [him]" even though George "desired Catherine in addition to loving her (156). Jerome is so busy with his practice that he is glad to have George around their house to take care of Catherine. He tells George: "I'm glad Kate's found you again. Believe me" (160).

When "the depression struck, suddenly the sun went down for [Martell]; he remembered his childhood and the war, he closed the book on fun and good times, he began working twelve and sometimes eighteen hours a day, and Catherine saw less and less of him" (156) because Jerome "could never belong to any particular group of

humanity itself' (157) as he says, "a man must belong to something larger than himself. He must surrender to it" (270). When there is no war, Martell surrenders himself to patients such as Catherine. When wars wound a lot of soldiers, he will surrender himself to his new mission, moving to more patients; he says, "No civilization has a chance unless it has civilized men in it who can and will fight when they have to" (270).

On the night before Jerome leaves for Spain, George is asked to stay the night with the Martells. George says, "I don't belong here tonight, Jerome.' 'Yes you do. You'll always belong here'" (272). This shows that unconsciously Martell still regards George as Catherine's true lover.

When accused of deserting his wife, Martell defends his action, saying "I married her knowing what her heart is. You [George] didn't marry her. You didn't take – what's life and death anyway?" (272) As a doctor, Martell cannot be tied to one patient forever; he says, "When I operate on a serious case I don't think of saving a life. I think of saving a few years. But in a lot of cases I bargain for five, or three, or even for one...The only immortality is mankind" (272), implying that he is not forever responsible for one patient Catherine but for something "as big as" humankind. In Martell's opinion, everyone takes somebody else and gives what he's taken to another for he says to George: "What Kate took from you years ago she gave to me. What she took from me all these years – she'll give to some other man" (273). She has taken enough from Martell and now it is time for him to move on to other patients. So he says, "Do I betray her?" A shrug. 'I'm honest, George, and honestly I don't know'" (270). But Martell still asks George to "look after Kate when [he is] gone" (272-73).

When Sally asks George if her father is responsible for her mother's last heart attack, George says, "Let's blame it on God, for he fixed that heart for her long before you were born" (338), implying that Martell saved her many years ago. After fulfilling her as a woman by giving her a child and a few more years of life, he wants to be where he is needed most. He does not desert his wife; he simply moves from one patient to another; as George says, Jerome "didn't just walk out ...He went to the war" (21) to treat wounded soldiers. Therefore, to Catherine, Jerome is not a betrayer, but a saviour.

Section Two: A Lover Versus a Saviour

Another contradictory portrait of Jerome Martell is reflected in his love affair with Norah Blackwell. On the surface, Jerome becomes Norah's lover and neglects his own family, and Norah ends up killing herself. But below the surface, again, we see a sexual relationship that is medicalized.

First of all, probably to Jerome, he, as a doctor, is not only responsible for Catherine, one of his patients, but also for any other human being he can help. Innocent Jerome subliminally turns his attention to Norah as his doctor's eyes have found out that she is "a suicidal type" and "an unbalanced personality" (254). We are told by George, "her slim figure was classically formed but so fragile-looking, so innocently sensuous in its movements, that it made you feel you wanted to hold that body in your arms in order to shelter it" (122). According to Catherine, Norah "could be very attractive and appealing ... especially to a man like Jerome who always wants to help people" (255). Martell himself honestly denies it when asked if he is in love with Norah Blackwell: "'in love?' He shrugged. 'It all started with my trying to help her. She was confused. She's never had much of a chance'" (243). According to Norah's close friend Caroline, Norah is just one of those people "who are sick" (306). Jerome Martell, as a humanitarian doctor, certainly could not avoid his duty to shelter such a "sick," fragile, and weak figure.

What makes Norah's case worse is that she seems unhappily married. Her husband, who is unemployed during the Depression, is said to be a "moron." While turning away from him, she "hero-worships" Jerome and thinks of him as a kind of god, and has more or less engineered him into having an affair with her" (Buitenhuis, 61). Jerome is attracted to her out of pity. He says, "Norah had this moronic husband and she thought she was going crazy. I said 'yes' to her and perhaps I gave her some respect as a woman" (273), because she's "had a hard time."

Even Martell's wife, Catherine, knows that there is no love between Martell and Norah, saying that Martell does not understand women. "The way some of them scheme and rationalize, the way some of them play on a man's better nature and make him feel responsible for situations they've engineered themselves. Jerome didn't grow up with girls, and he's worked so hard he's never had time to find out what some of us are like. Even if he did understand them, I am not sure he would understand Norah Blackwell"

(240). This suggests that Norah has engineered the situation and made Martell responsible for it. As a matter of fact, what is between Martell and Norah does not mean Martell is not responsible for his family, and even Catherine admits this: “I know he’ll never be able to love her for long. I don’t think he ever did, really. I don’t think he does now” (240). At last Harry Blackwell himself realizes too that it is not Martell but Norah who is responsible for the tragedy. Blackwell discovers that after all these years he really hates Norah instead of Martell (357) and calls her a “tramp.” This means that Harry knows clearly that Norah has taken advantage of, and played on, Martell’s better nature.

Through Harry’s admission that he hates Norah, not Martell, MacLennan once again shows the reader indirectly the positive side of the affair between the two which sustains Norah for a few more years. Because Martell has “an awful conscience” (241) to help others, he tries his best to make Norah survive her hardship brought about by the Depression as he knows that she is a suicidal type. What he feels for Norah Blackwell “is pity and not love” (255). The end of the novel proves once again Martell’s involvement with Norah is something positive because she commits suicide while away from his “care.” As a fragile and suicidal type, she throws herself under a car while in Paris. Martell’s affair with Norah, like his marriage with Catherine echoes the motto of his life: “[my idea] is to help people get the most out of what life they have” (154). It might be argued that love affairs, often taken as a romantic subject of literature, have become, for MacLennan, a means of exploring a humanitarian’s care of the weak, sick and the neglected. The novel explores the fluid boundaries of a love affair in a new kind of direction to show why Martell “falls” in love and “falls” out of love.

Section Three: Advocating Bourgeois Middle Class Family Values Versus Negating the Bourgeoisie

The social vision in *The Watch That Ends the Night* can be seen as criticism of the bourgeois world. But on the surface, the whole novel seems to advocate bourgeois middle-class family values: one should, first of all, be responsible for one’s family. For example, almost every character in the novel says that Martell, as Catherine’s husband and breadwinner of the family, should not have left his family behind for Spain. However, while seemingly blaming Martell’s irresponsibility towards his family, the

novel is presenting a positive image of Martell while all the main and minor characters from the middle class are either weak, incapable or selfish.

First, the novel seems to suggest that those of proletarian origin, though neglecting their own families, take the responsibility of fighting for a better world and protecting civilization. There is a sharp contrast between Martell's proletarian background and other characters of middle-class background. Jerome Martell is from a proletarian family: he is a "waif, conceived by an illiterate peasant woman heaving in the embrace of some man whose name she possibly didn't even know" (214), and he grew up in the kitchen of a logging camp, sometimes sleeping with a dog under the same blanket. After his mother's death, Jerome becomes an orphan, fleeing down the river without a single cent in his pocket, wandering alone and exposed to a relentlessly unwelcoming world. Such a family origin, almost that of a mythic hero, has formed his fighting spirit - against injustice, against Fascism, against evil, and for a better life and a better social system. On the contrary, those who were born in the warm bed of a bourgeois family take what they have for granted. To Martell, it is always "an incredible privilege to belong to civilization" (244). The author uses the city as a metaphor of civilization to show that Martell is born with a pure and sincere instinct to protect the civilization and to be part of it:

When I grew up in Halifax ...I used to dream of a city on top of a hill -- Athens perhaps. It was white and it was beautiful, and it was a great privilege to enter it. I used to dream that if I worked hard all my life, and tried hard all my life, maybe some day I'd be allowed within its gates. And I see the fascists besieging that city and a handful of Spanish peasants holding out inside. They are dying for lack of medical care. So what is my duty? Tell me that - What is my duty?" (245)

To Martell, "no civilization has a chance unless it has civilized men in it who can and will fight when they have to" (270). This is further shown when Jerome says, "The old countries which gave us our civilization are tired of being civilized. But people like me, people born on the fringes, we really care" (244). It seems that civilization is enjoyed by civilized men -- the bourgeois middle-class - but defended by those of proletarian family origin who take the responsibility of fighting for a better world.

Those from the middle-class, while unwilling to give up their personal interest and to be physically involved in a just cause, belittle those who are. As Jerome says, "Oh sure. If I went along with the current I'd be safe and rich and they'd all say I was

grand. Nearly all the medical people do that” (162). Jack, who is a typical representative of the selfish bourgeoisie, says, “What’s Spain to a man like Jerome? He’s never been there. That country’s always been an impossible country. What’s Spain to any of these people except an excuse for them to give free play to their neuroticism?” (230) MacLennan’s letter to his publisher on March 3, 1958 sums up exactly the situation at the time: “Not a single person I ever knew or read about had a genuinely pure motive. Wars don’t just come, as well you know. Not one in a hundred is caused by economic circumstances. Wars are the direct results of pent-up aggressions and guilds, and the Spanish war was a prime example, because it was essentially a revolution” (Elsbeth Cameron 291).

Though Martell cannot be taken as a typical representative of the proletariat as his efforts to heal and save lives have made him become a doctor of the middle-class and enter “civilization,” he can give up bourgeois comfort to defend civilization because of his consciousness of his family origin when duty calls. This shows that his ultimate motive is to defend civilization instead of achieving bourgeois comfort.

The sharp contrast between Jerome and George also shows the differences between two class origins. Woodcock points out, “Some critics have attacked MacLennan for creating so platitudinous a figure, but I suspect this aspect of George was deliberately done to provide a humble foil for the heroic Jerome” (Woodcock 109) to show the immature, weak, and incapable nature of those from the bourgeois class. First, George has always been guided by Jerome. Before he meets Jerome, his life has been a sort of chaos. His child-like father cannot guide him in any way. George says, “I have never seemed mature to myself” (4). Ever since he meets Jerome, George relies more and more on the latter’s guidance. Consequently, “Already without my knowing it, I had come to think of Jerome as a protector, almost as a substitute for the father I never had expected in the biological sense” (151). Martell also guides George professionally. Before meeting Martell, George teaches at an elementary school called Waterloo School (a symbol of failure), a job he hates but he cannot give up. It is Martell who realizes that George has a beautiful voice and guides him to work with the CBC. Without Martell, George could not have become a successful radio commentator and a university professor. Such details make the reader see George’s confession as evidence of the weaknesses of his class: immaturity, failure, fears and anxieties.

Bourgeois figures like George are helpless at critical moments. Towards the very end of the novel, when Catherine’s latest illness threatens to destroy his fragile

self-confidence, George “became more and more frightened, more and more angry and desperate” (345). With Catherine’s life in danger, George faces a kind of “darkness and inner chaos” (345). He is acutely aware of his own inability to help her: “My love for her was ... helpless to help her” (345). Again, it is Martell who guides George to survive the crisis, saves Catherine from the embolism, and once again gives her another few more years of life. George “continued to feel this strange mysterious power of [Martell’s], and the light growing inside of [him]” (361): “Suddenly he seemed to be inside me, to be me” (364). Through George’s remark, the novel implies once again that the “sick capitalism” symbolized by bourgeois figures like Catherine and George is dependent on those of proletarian origin.

The physical, moral, and spiritual inferiority of the bourgeois characters is immediately apparent in any direct comparison with the heroic figure of Jerome. As Elspeth Cameron points out, “In Jerome, consequently, are combined all the qualities associated with the man of action. He is at once MacLennan’s doctor husband, doctor father and all fathers - powerful, larger than life, courageous, intelligent, primitive...Jerome is all the men of *action* MacLennan had admired and envied” (254), while George, of bourgeois origin, remains all his life a man of *words*, symbolized by his profession as a radio commentator, a talker. In Jerome Martell, MacLennan, through George, projects his heroic fantasies. “He seemed ... more like a force of nature than a man - abler, and he had under him what [George] and all [his] other friends lacked, a real career” (150).

Catherine is another typical example of the middle-class. Talking about Catherine, who seems like an angel outwardly, Jerome says, “She’s a fighter, too. But against her fate...she’s a woman all the way through, and that means she’s a private person” (270). “She wants above all to protect her home” (161) and live “a private life” (163). To Martell, a personal life “doesn’t matter in a time when millions are going to be killed,” while Catherine says personal life is all I can understand” (254). This hints that Catherine, who is from a middle class family, fights for her own benefit while Martell fights for the benefits of others. The novel tries to show that the middle-class, the people like Jack and Catherine, seek self-interest and the ivory tower; Catherine says: “If only the world would leave us alone...our days would be a paradise (219). Those from the middle class are cocooned in their tiny world, ignorant of or indifferent toward others. They are bourgeois at heart, as Adam Blore says to George: “You’re middle class to the bone. You’re a nice guy. All you want is a nice little wife and a

nice little apartment and a nice little job, and yet you hang around with these-hot- shots that hang around me” (132); namely, the bourgeoisie maintain a politically fashionable and up-to-date appearance while being extremely self-centered and conservative inside.

However, fundamentally, Jerome’s mission is not fighting, but healing. “I killed eleven men with the bayonet...” (165) “I never really got over that last bayonet murder I committed” (167). “I decided to become a doctor then and there” (168). Here lies another obvious difference between Jerome and the other characters from the middle class, such as Catherine and George; that is, Jerome is a healer while Catherine, and sometimes George too, is always being healed. So MacLennan’s positive portrait of Jerome as a hero is reflected in his medical profession and his sympathy for the poor and weak. MacLulich observes: “In his quest for an alternate faith, Jerome becomes a doctor and tries to serve humanity” (9). He “has a social conscience and acts upon it, like Dr. Norman Bethune; and he has the intangible healing quality” (7).

Martell remains a healer all his life while Catherine, a typical representative of the needy middle class, has been healed by him from the beginning to the end. Even George has to admit: “From now on let’s call her [Catherine] Kate [the every day name Martell gives her]. When she was Kate she was never sick. She was wonderfully well when she was Kate” (339), namely, when she is under Jerome’s care. Norah’s remark that Catherine is “sick capitalism,” “obviously in need of a strong dose of Communism (a remedy the book disclaims)” (Lucas 22) does invite a reading of *The Watch That Ends the Night* as a negation of the bourgeois middle-class.

MacLennan also touches indirectly on the fragile family structure of the bourgeois middle class. It is true that there is no real love between Jerome and Catherine and Jerome deserts his wife and child, but there is no real love between some of the other couples from the middle class either. For example, Catherine’s mother, a “resentful” woman, never really loves her husband and daughter. Her lonely husband dies not long after his retirement, and Catherine can never take her parents’ home as her own, even at the most difficult time in her life-- after Jerome leaves her-- because all her mother has always wanted “is to be free from responsibilities.” Similarly, George’s parents are never responsible for him. His father is another immature and mocked figure from the bourgeois middle class. All his life, he has been engaged in game-playing like a child, and his sister has had to take care of everything for him. Finally he has either wasted or lost what he inherited from his ancestors and ended up living in a small apartment, which George has never taken as his home, as he has no real ties with

his parents or his only sister. By showing the family problems which are related to the social and cultural environment of the middle class, where love is neither a composite part nor the prerequisite element of traditional bourgeois marriage, the novel shows that the members of the middle class themselves are not taking responsibility for their own families. Accordingly, they have no right to blame Jerome for leaving his wife and daughter to pursue a noble cause because their family values are not worth protecting.

Section Four: A Bethune Figure in Deed, a Non-Bethune Figure in Word

According to some critics and MacLennan himself, Martell is not modeled after Norman Bethune, the Canadian doctor who gave his life for the Chinese revolution. But many related facts in the novel show that there are amazing similarities between the two, so far as their deeds are concerned, while the differences are mainly in what they say.

1. Both Jerome Martell and Dr. Norman Bethune are dissatisfied with the Canadian social system

Bethune always complained of the unequal division of wealth in Canada brought about by the Canadian social system and was sympathetic with the poor. He pointed out at a medical assembly in 1936 that the poor “are living on the edge of the subsistence level. These people in the lower income class are receiving only one-third of the home office and clinic services from physicians that a fundamental standard of health requires” (Stewart, *The Mind* 41). Therefore, Bethune advocated socialized medicine, namely a planned medical service for all the people and health protection which should become public property (Stewart, *The Mind*.41). In the novel, Martell also complains of the Canadian system which he finds a block to personal development. Talking of a Spanish tank officer from Spain, he says, “When the war began he was a garage mechanic and now he’s a full colonel. How’s that for proof of what a man can do in a good system?” (233)

Both Bethune and Martell find Russia an example for Canada to follow. In the summer of 1935, Bethune went to the Soviet Union to attend the sessions of the International Physiological Congress. “He returned deeply impressed with Soviet medical organization...Back in Montreal he made no attempt to conceal his admiration for a system that provided treatment for all patients without regard for their ability to

pay” (Stewart, *Mind* 34). Later he became a chairman of an organization called “The Friends of the Soviet Union.” In his speech at a banquet in the St. Charles Hotel in Winnipeg, Bethune said, “I didn’t care then what the system was called, but I knew what we wanted was the thing those Russians had got” (Stewart, *Mind* 75). Martell sees eye to eye with Bethune so far as the Soviet Union is concerned: “In Russia our generation is deliberately sacrificing itself for the future of their children. That’s why the Russians are alive. That’s why they’re happy. They are not trying to live on dead myths” (252-53).

2. Both are sympathetic with the poor and the weak

Because of his experience of working as a newspaper boy, a waiter, a fireman on a Great Lakes steamer and then a lumberjack to pay his way through university, Norman Bethune came to understand working people and became “a compassionate man, with compassion for the poor and sick who were dying from remediable diseases when scientific advances made it possible to prevent and cure those diseases, and when the medical profession could not afford to make its knowledge and services available at prices people could pay” (Macleod 9). The Bethune Health Group (the Montreal Group for the Security of the People’s Health) was organized in December 1935 by Bethune, soon after his return from Russia (Shephard, 143). Bethune was determined to do what he could to change the situation in which “dollarless doctors face penniless patients,” and he invited a few young and interested doctors to become the nucleus of what he saw as an expanding group of doctors, nurses, social workers and dentists that would work out a proposal for medical and health care in Quebec” (Shephard 133).

Martell himself suffered a lot in his childhood, so he has deep sympathy for the poor and helps those in trouble. He says “I did like people, and I thought of them all with pity” (163); “he spent two hours every day in a free clinic he has established for the unemployed” (150). When a poor widow whose life is in danger is neglected by the irresponsible doctors in charge of her case, Martell leaves in the middle of a party to save her though this will invite other doctors’ resentment against his interference. The positive portrait of Martell might trace back to the influence of MacLennan’s father, Dr Sam MacLennan, who, to “the working men who could not afford his fees, often kindly extended his services free of charge or for greatly reduced payment” (Elspeth Cameron 16). In tribute to the help he had given, often without payment, about two hundred men

and women put aside their chaos for the day to follow him to his grave” (Elspeth Cameron 121).

3. Both are involved in left-wing activities

Both Bethune and Martell are involved in left-wing movements. Talking about those left-wing meetings held in a left-wing circle in Montreal, Macleod says, “We rarely met without [Bethune]. His personality was the dynamic that made the meetings lively” (107). Like Bethune, Martell often goes to left-wing meetings, at some of which he makes speeches. “He was the center of rapid discussions” (12) and had a “singular capacity to set a room on fire” (146)

Because of their involvement in left-wing activities, both Bethune and Martell are called “Red.” And both of them, almost in the same way, argue in defense of themselves. Martell: “These people think I’m a Red because I want to help the Spanish Loyalists” (245). Bethune: “They call me a Red. Then if Christianity is Red, I am also a Red. They call me a red because I have saved 500 lives” (Stewart, *Bethune* 75).

4. Both are deeply involved in the Spanish Civil War

Many people in North America in different ways uttered their support for the elected government of Spain against a fascist uprising. However, when duty called, not many answered. Both Bethune and Martell, exhausted by months of debate, were angry: they did not want to be talkers; they wanted action, to do something tangible that could demonstrate that they were willing to act against the hostile forces that were ruthlessly crushing civilized society.

Both Bethune and Jerome could sacrifice their personal interests, though they “wanted a home and children as much as any man” (49). They even have the same moral grounds for their decision. Jerome sees the way in Spain “as the first round in a world-wide conflict against fascism. He believes that the future of mankind is involved in that war, and that it would be a kind of traitorousness to stay home while it is being fought. Knowing that governments will not act, he determines that individuals must” (Buitenhuis 61).

Bethune was unequivocally committed to the belief that civilization was on trial. He said at a meeting in 1936: “It is in Spain that the real issues of our time are going to be fought out. It is there that democracy will either die or survive” (Stewart,

The Mind 49). He believed that “he had joined an international crusade that would ultimately obliterate the savage and malign force of Fascism” (Stewart, *The Mind* 63).

Jerome, as a consistent-fighter for a better world, fights to the very end in Spain. Although he is already disillusioned about the war and refers to it as “this whole miserable tragic business,” he goes back to Spain to save and heal after an unsuccessful fund-raising campaign, while “the other rats run out,” because “he felt it was his duty” (297) though he knows that the “tragic business will be over in two months.” He goes back not as a “divine fool,” but as a true believer in the cause against fascism.

5. Both practice medicine in China

Early in 1938, after his fund-raising campaign, instead of returning to Spain, Bethune left for China. The reason was given in a letter to his former wife:

Spain and China are part of the same battle. I am going to China because I feel that is where the need is greatest; that is where I can be most useful. (Shephard 132)

Similarly, as a disciplined participant in a cause, even after the end of the Second World War, Martell does not return to Canada (his wife’s forecast is correct) but battles on in Russia and China until the Chinese communists take over China towards the end of 1949.

The similarities listed above show that both Martell and Bethune cling to the Marxist view that the proletariat cannot liberate itself unless the whole of humankind is liberated. This might be proven by what Martell says: “What does a single marriage count in a balance like that?” (269) He maintains that his responsibility is not only to western civilization, but also to Catherine and their young daughter, but he is convinced there will be no world for them if the Fascists are not stopped somewhere. As committed fighters, both Bethune and Martell see the issues facing mankind and act on them: as consistent anti-Fascists, anti-imperialists, as Canadian democrats and internationalists. They understood and put the understanding into practice at the cost of Bethune’s life and Martell’s personal life. They go to work to save lives on the Loyalist side in the Spanish Civil War and later on the Communist side in the Chinese struggle against the Japanese and Chinese National Party (MacLeod, 166). They both behave as communists do and stay with the Communist movements. In his article In “Memory of Norman Bethune,” Mao said, “What kind of spirit is this that makes a foreigner

selflessly adopt the cause of the Chinese people's liberation as his own? It is the spirit of internationalism, the spirit of Communism, from which every Chinese Communist must learn" (337).

Besides the similarities listed above, there are, between Bethune and Martell, some differences, which, however, are not of significance so far as their political involvement is concerned. Martell is different from Bethune only in these ways. First, Norman Bethune admitted that he was a communist; "he defiantly announced to an audience in Winnipeg that he was a communist" (Stewart, *Bethune* 74). Furthermore, he died a communist. Martell, on the other hand, never admits that he is a communist; MacLennan even has Martell declare that he is "not a revolutionary." But no one knows if he joins the Communist Party while away from Canada because both Russia after World War I and China during its Civil War period were isolated worlds. Dr. Bethune could not even get his personal letters out of China because of the Japanese army and Chinese National Party's blockade, and no one knows what was going on within the Eighth Route Army and what changes Martell might have gone through.

Second, Norman Bethune never became disillusioned. "He seems to have had no scruples about working and dying for Mao's 8th Route Army" (Goetsch 133). But Jerome Martell is totally disillusioned with Communism right after he comes back from Spain to raise funds, and later he says once that his political engagement is wrong.

Third, Bethune never reverted to religion or declared a spiritual quest, whereas Martell, according to his own profession and other characters' judgement, has become a man of transcendent faith.

These differences in words point to one essential point about the portrait of Jerome Martell: the political, or ideological side of Bethune, to a great extent, is ignored in what Martell says. Here again, we see the effect of MacLennan's first-person narration. As William Riggan observes,

In the case of the dramatized chronicler...the narrator's human fallibility in terms of memory and interpretation and the subjective disparity between the narrator and the effaced implied author - are very much at work. Such a narrator can only report to the best of his ability and recollection the overt words and actions in his protagonist's life and draw from these his inferences and interpretations concerning the inner nature of that protagonist. He is incapable of penetrating directly into the psyche of the protagonist or of any other character within the chronicle. His judgement is still humanly fallible, his intellect may well not be up to the task of treating a particularly unusual or complex character, and his own psychic makeup may well contain preconceptions and prejudices - both in general and concerning his protagonist

in particular - which inform his portrayal of the protagonist and thereby lead either to distorted or even outright false interpretations of the subject. (22)

As George is an unreliable first-person narrator, the differences he presents between Bethune and Martell should not be allowed to obscure the essential similarities. As the proverb says, “Actions speak louder than words,” and we should realize that Martell’s true nature is not reflected in what he says but what he does. In fact, George’s unreliable presentation of Martell’s difference from Bethune is what MacLennan intends through his use of first-person narration. To justify this argument, we have to look at MacLennan’s personal and writing experience. The similarities between Jerome Martell and Norman Bethune are not accidental; they present a Marxist reading of MacLennan’s picture of his world.

Section Five: MacLennan’s Real Pro-Communist Face

MacLennan’s pro-Marxist view traces back to his years at Oxford, when he began to explore and to be influenced by one of the main intellectual movements of the thirties: Marxism. In 1929, “By his third year at Oxford...he had begun to take socialism more seriously” (Elspeth Cameron 78). In his first year at Princeton in 1932, he “was exposed further to left-wing ideas....[he] read some of the works of Karl Marx and became interested in Communism” (Elspeth Cameron, 79).

During the thirties, many North American intellectuals were attracted to the left-wing movement because Marxist theories helped to explain the Depression. In the mid-thirties, with Italy and Germany posing more and more threat to the whole world, the Left, with its firm fighting slogans against Fascism, held more appeal among the people, especially the intellectuals. According to Elspeth Cameron, MacLennan at this time was ready and willing to open his mind to left-wing views:

Given the conservative outlook inherited from his father, his political ‘conversion’ constituted a significant part of his current rebellion against many things in his past. The discussions of Marx and his theories with his roommate Geoffrey Bing also provided him with an intellectual challenge at a time when he found such stimulation lacking in his academic courses at Princeton. (79)

MacLennan’s pro-Marxist attitude even helped to shape the conclusions of his doctoral dissertation in which he argued,

The rapacity of the early Roman capitalists had led to the capture of more provinces than the empire could control without a top-heavy military establishment...The civil wars produced by the troops steadily destroyed the confidence on which a commercial civilization depends. So, Oxyrhynchus, once a thriving town ... decayed to the ghost capital of a country where nearly everyone was a serf to a family of absentee landlords. (Elspeth Cameron 90)

Regarding the Depression, MacLennan commented that Marxism was “just the sort of thing that might have turned a promising young man into a communist” (Elspeth Cameron 90). MacLennan even outdid some economists in applying capitalism to ancient Rome in determining the quality of life in Oxyrhynchus.

In a related article “Roman History and Today” published in *The Dalhousie Review* (1936), MacLennan again openly presents his Marxist view. He refers to the Roman Empire as “a society founded on the principle of private enterprise,” and argues that “the intrinsic weakness of capitalism” brought about the decline of the Empire. He points out: “The history of this town (Oxyrhynchus) is the history of the Decline and Fall seen through the large end of the telescope, and it shows conclusively that although private enterprise was responsible for the greatness of Rome, it was also responsible for the reduction of democratic communities to a quasi-feudal serfdom” (“Oxyrhynchus” 315).

MacLennan applied his research to the modern world. His introduction begins like this, “The growth and collapse of the Roman Empire...presents us now, as it has presented to all generations since the Renaissance, a series of questions which somehow must be solved if our culture is to survive” (“Oxyrhynchus” 316). According to Elspeth Cameron, “Roman History and Today” shows that MacLennan’s “sympathies on graduating from Princeton were much closer to the leftism of the intelligentsia of the day than to the principles of rigorous scholarship in the Classics. The dawning awareness of socialism that had characterized his last year at Oxford had, after three years at Princeton, developed into a strong belief in the potential of the left to remedy the economic crisis that gripped the Western world during the ‘hungry thirties’” (93). To MacLennan, as to his character Jerome, something needed to be done to solve the unemployment of the poor “through some kind of revolutionary change in the political system” (Elspeth Cameron 93).

MacLennan’s pro-Marxist view is also reflected in his first two unpublished books. As T.D. MacLulich observes, “His desire to reconcile the political realities of the thirties with the aspirations he still cherished for the individual provided a central

theme for his two unpublished novels” (17). His first book “So All Their Praise” is a “tough-minded proletarian” novel showing how two young men have been afflicted by the Depression. As Elspeth Cameron points out, “Their story enacts MacLennan’s conviction that the Depression has unfairly thwarted the careers of many individuals” (22). MacLennan’s second book “A Man Should Rejoice” further exposes both his “new literary theories” and his “developing political views.” It is a story about a young American artist David Culver. Because of social and economic upheaval, he becomes a communist, rebels against his capitalist father and joins an armed revolution of the left in Austria, but the story ends in tragedy. Elspeth Cameron states, “In keeping with the mode of ‘social realism,’ MacLennan had deliberately assigned to his characters the specific roles that would reveal this ‘pattern of our time.’ As David describes them on one occasion: I consider people as though they were physical forces, I thought. I see the wood but apparently I am never able to see the trees. Nicholas? He is the positive force, the force of Communism, of the future” (110).

Both “A Man Should Rejoice” and “So All Their Praise” openly reflect MacLennan’s pro-Communist attitude and his consistent sympathy with the suffering of the artist due to the social system. As a result, as MacLulich comments, the “artists end in isolation, cut off from all human warmth... against their will. They are the involuntary victims of impersonal social forces” (29). What is reflected in the two novels can be seen as MacLennan’s simultaneous antagonism toward society and sympathy with the Left.

MacLennan’s personal experience also brought him nearer to Communist ideas. He and Dorothy Duncan had planned to get married, but they could not afford marriage in the near future as he could not find a job or get his works published. Up to 1937, MacLennan “continued to be interested in Communism. Although never a party member, he did attend meetings of the United Front and even, on one occasion, delivered an anti-Fascist speech with his friend George Barrett at one of their meetings in the chemistry theater of Dalhousie University. Later he met Stanley Ryerson, the Marxist historian and activist, after hearing him lecture in Montreal on ‘The Radical Tradition in Canada’ for the League against Fascism” (Elspeth Cameron 114).

However, all of a sudden, in late 1937, MacLennan changed his attitude about Communism, and much later he said that his interest in Marxism in the thirties “was naive” (Elspeth Cameron 115). What accounts for the sudden change in his outlook about Communism?

Cameron attributes the change to MacLennan's visit to Russia. After he came back from Russia, he wrote to Barrett, "There is no Communism in Russia, and if people say there is, they are liars" (116). But what this statement shows is that at least he knew what Communism should be and that he could not find it in Russia; instead of losing his faith in Communism, that is, he probably could not find Communist principles, as he understood them, in action. Even many years later, in an interview with Donald Cameron in 1972, MacLennan once again identified himself with Marxism:

Cameron:

I get the impression that you have both strong areas of agreement and strong areas of disagreement with Marx

MacLennan:

I have emotional agreement with Marx's Manifesto, who couldn't? It's emotional agreement with motherhood...Marx interested me, because Marx surely got most of his historical stuff from the Roman Empire. Marx is a very good guide for a lot of that. I was nearly kicked out of Princeton on account of my thesis because they thought I was a Marxist. (45)

MacLennan's last sentence may account for his sudden change of attitude towards Marxism in late 1937: he did not want to be "identified" as a Marxist and kicked out of society; he had to be a practical writer in order to survive in this world. To be successful, MacLennan could not "eat his cake and have it too," that is, he could not keep a consistent view of the world. MacLulich sums it up this way: "MacLennan is not a systematic thinker; his conservative perspective on politics, education, and literature is emotionally rather than intellectually motivated...His discussions of politics and society are frequently reflections of private concerns, and his literary theories are usually defenses of his own kind of art" (2).

MacLennan's inconsistent and pragmatic practice can be found over the two decades of his career which saw changes in his writing style and content to cater to the public's taste. During this period, MacLennan might have realized something essential to his survival.

First, MacLennan realized that as a left-wing writer, he could not even find a publisher. According to Elspeth Cameron, during 1938, "MacLennan's main concern was to get his second novel published...Longmans, Green and Company had as good as made a commitment to publish, after extensive revisions directed by the editor Whit

Burnett; finally, however, he wrote to say that the novel too closely resembled two others they had published. MacLennan, unconvinced by this explanation, suggested to Barrett that they were really more worried about associating themselves with left-wing politics. 'My agent,' he wrote, 'seems to think they were afraid of getting a leftist label. This may be true; I'm inclined to think it is'" (119). Again, while referring to his novel, MacLennan tried to cover up its real theme in order to get it published: "Its real meaning was misunderstood even by publishers. Its main view of life, understood intuitively by me during those hectic years in oxford, has now been corroborated by the things which have happened" (MacLulich 14).

MacLennan's practical view of life traces back to his father. Dr. Sam, while trying to look into the source of a gas leak, went downstairs with a lighted match; the resulting explosion was heard a mile away. When Dr. [Sam] was able to talk, MacLennan recalled in "An Orange from Portugal" (1947), "he denied the story about the match," but MacLennan distinctly saw him "with the match in his hand" (MacLulich 5). Doctor Sam denied the fact for fear that his careless behavior would interfere with his medical practice. Like father, like son. MacLennan did the same many years later: he denies his real intention in his first two books in order to get them published.

Second, MacLennan might have realized that a serious Marxist writer could not find a market. One failure after another made MacLennan more and more pragmatic. In the winter of 1941-2 he was off to New York to discuss the possibility of turning *Barometer Rising* into a movie (Elspeth Cameron 149). He was told by the American publisher that the deal was off:

'It's tough, but that's how it is. All you got to do is next time set the scene in the United States and then we'll be really interested...I protested (I was very naive in those days) that my books tended to be serious, what you might call social novels. 'That's exactly what I've been trying to say,' he explained. 'The way you write, if you want a big market down here, you just haven't got much of a choice.' (Elspeth Cameron 150)

MacLennan was also told that the book did not have enough sex scenes.

So in his next novel, *Two Solitudes* (1945), MacLennan put in numerous sex scenes. As a matter of fact, MacLennan himself did not like this novel, but he had to find an excuse to cover his pragmatic intention, saying that "his treatment of sex was not merely sensational, as [Kathleen] Windsor's had been [in *Forever Amber*], but strongly framed by a moral code" (Elspeth Cameron 187). But the reaction from the reviewer for *Saturday Night* was different: "In subjection to a modern slant of reader-

fashion, he has the habit of stripping his women characters to the skin, one after another, and seating them to contemplate, not without approval, their ripening charms” (Elspeth Cameron 137). In spite of the critics’ reaction, *Two Solitudes* brought MacLennan tremendous public success.

What should MacLennan do after this success? Elspeth Cameron explains as follows:

[It] is made very clear by his statement in letters, articles, and speeches: he wished to maintain himself financially as a writer...To fulfill these ambitions he engaged in a struggle to understand the forces at work in his surroundings. Attempting to gauge market trends, public tastes, Canada’s probable cultural future, the combination of factors that had spelled success for other writers, and to assess publishers’ agreements along with their financial implications, he applied the full force of his mind towards the consolidation of his career. *Barometer Rising* had been a promising and successful novel; *Two Solitudes* had widened considerably his reputation well beyond national borders. What should he write about now to make the most of this momentum? (199)

He gave the answer himself by saying, “At the present it is not practical for any writer, in Canada or anywhere else, to leave out of his work the effect of his own society on his characters” (Elspeth Cameron 210). By “not practical” he meant that a writer could not hope to make money enough to live on if he did not follow the route then currently in fashion. Though he admitted that he would prefer to write more ‘heroic’ and more ‘universal’ novels ...he did not choose to follow his own instincts as an artist” (Elspeth Cameron 210), namely, he could not follow his instincts as a Marxist artist, but had to face the cold fact that, under present conditions, he had to make a living and extra money to cover his wife’s hospital expenses and to pay his debts. As a result, MacLennan “had continued to write as many articles for journals as he could commission” and “accepted the job without protesting a salary so low that even his publishers were horrified” (Elspeth Cameron, 247-8).

Probably because of his practical need, Elspeth Cameron observes, “MacLennan had always seemed to have a foot in two distinct camps: literature and society ... Over a lifetime, MacLennan has supported different political parties. He has consistently attacked the excesses of bureaucracy and technology as dehumanizing; he has criticized capitalism as self-seeking” (99).

Elspeth Cameron describes the pragmatic philosophy MacLennan seemed to practice at this period of his life by explaining the lack of a clear focus in his public image:

Photographs for the promotion campaign [(for *Each Man's Son*)] reveal that MacLennan's public image had not yet jelled into a single impression...Pictures taken at his home projected an entirely different image. These pictures show him sporting a moustache for the first time since he had been an Oxford undergraduate in Germany; complete with pipe and tweed jacket, he looked for all the world like an aristocratic English gentleman. Other pictures in the same magazine showed him at the typewriter in glasses, his shirt sleeves rolled up, his cigarette in a holder, looking like a dynamic and serious American journalist. Meanwhile, *Vogue* magazine on 15 May also ran an illustrated article with photographs taken at North Hatley by Mary McAlpine. These pictures show Dorothy and Hugh in working clothes in their garden; in one photograph he leans on a well-used hoe, wiping the sweat from his brow, his hair disheveled by the wind, looking like the down-to-earth proletarian he had written about in the novel he never published, 'A Man Should Rejoice.' Where was the real MacLennan? (242)

The real MacLennan was hiding behind different masks out of his pragmatic need to cater to the reading public. This was particularly the case when he was writing *The Watch That Ends the Night*. Although he was closely tied to Marxism, he clearly distanced himself from Communism since his knowledge of Canadian society and his personal experience with publishers and the reading public made him realize very clearly how Canadians had reacted and would react to a Communist hero. Take Norman Bethune's case for example. Bethune has become a true internationalist in the minds of so many in the world, but here in Canada, according to Macleod, Norman Bethune "was to be treated oddly by posterity, at least, during the first half-century following his death; and this in totally contradictory ways" (164).

Roderick Stewart, the author of *Bethune*, says, "I talked to a distinguished Canadian historian to find out why there was such a dearth of detailed material available to the public about Bethune...it had become evident that the only answer to my question was that Bethune had been a Communist, a renegade from the western world turned hero in Mao Tse-Tong's China" (xii). Because of his Communist status, Bethune is more of a Chinese than a Canadian hero. Stewart observes, "In Canada Bethune's name remained virtually unknown for a generation after he died'... Except for eulogies in the Communist press and brief obituaries in medical journals, his passing was noticed by few of his countrymen...*The Scalpel, The Sword* translated into many foreign languages, brought the story of Bethune's life to more readers abroad than in his native country" (Stewart, *Bethune* 165).

In September, 1964, when the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation presented a radio documentary, followed by an excellent film biography, *Bethune*, produced by the National Film Board of Canada, there was severe criticism “directed against the federal government for publishing a Communist.” Accordingly, in response to “a request of the American Government, the Canadian Government stopped distribution of the film to N.F.B. offices in the United States during the late 1960’s” (Stewart, *Bethune* 165).

In the next few years, Canadians who went to China began to bring back information on Bethune’s reputation in that country. Stewart writes, “Most were surprised at being greeted as ‘countrymen of Dr. Bethune’ because they had never heard of him. But in spite of this as late as 1971 the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board, a federally-appointed body with the responsibility of selecting Canadians of “national historic significance,” reviewed the qualifications of Norman Bethune and decided that he did not meet the standards” (*Bethune* 166). Once again, probably his Communist background was in the way.

However, after Canada and China established diplomatic relations in 1971, there was a sudden change: the Government of Canada “decided that the time had come. Recognition of China demanded recognition of Bethune” (Stewart, *Bethune* 166). Norman Bethune was finally given the honor of a Canadian “of national historic significance,” many years after his death. Though this “belated tribute had been unpardonably delayed,” some Canadians took this as a deviation from traditional Canadian values of anti-Communism. So for some, the question was not the fact of paying tribute to Bethune, but the motive. Did the Canadian government truly regard Bethune as a great historic figure or were there more devious reasons? A political cartoon seemed to summarize the public opinion; Mitchell Sharp is depicted passing through a Chinese gate carrying a load in a wheelbarrow marked ‘long-term wheat deal.’ Outside the wall, an Australian businessman remarks to an American, “‘The password sounds like Bethune’” (Stewart, *Bethune* 167). It seems very clear that the Canadian government did not change its anti-communism policy but pragmatically used Bethune to promote commercial relations with China.

The case of Bethune shows clearly that the central issue in the controversy is his politics. Generally speaking, Communism has been and still is unpopular in Canada. So far as literature is concerned, there is a limit to what the reading public will accept. Being familiar with the political and social atmosphere of Montreal and the tastes and judgements of the reading public in the fifties, MacLennan certainly knew how to cater

to Canadian society while he was writing *The Watch That Ends the Night*. According to Kelichi Hirano, “Jerome Martell ... is a product made pleasant to the taste of the reading public” (Goetsch 135). MacLennan “accordingly cuts Bethune down to size” by necessitating some kinds of selection, omission, emphasis, and rearrangement. “The inscrutable course followed by Bethune is transformed into the more understandable and more forgivable course followed by Martell - from political involvement to disillusion, and from disillusion to the final discovery of God. To the Jerome Martell type of wandering, the readers can respond easily. The wild oats he sowed, the agonies he went through, the joy he must have felt at discovering Jesus - these are all understandable. With tears in eyes and heaving heavy sighs of relief, the readers can follow the story to its happy end” (Goetsch 133). Therefore, Jerome Martell becomes a pleasing figure to the taste of the general readers and politically “safe food for the public” (Goetsch 135).

But MacLennan’s intention does not end here. He is somehow torn between the demands of popular taste and his beliefs. On the surface of the novel, it is true that, as Kelichi Hirano goes on to say, “with Jerome Martell everything seems to be clear. Between Jerome and Catherine, no one would hesitate to lay the blame on the former” (Goetsch 130). But, as is suggested in the earlier part of this paper, throughout the novel MacLennan has indirectly justified Martell’s going to Spain by exposing Catherine and George’s weak, sick, and selfish bourgeois nature. Towards the end of the novel, there is another contradiction: as reported by George, the reader only knows what Jerome says instead of what he has been really involved in during all those years while away from Canada. Here lies MacLennan’s real intention which is achieved by using his new writing technique that he struggled with for several years:

In order to write an accurate fictional form for this concept of life...I wrote millions of words and postponed publication of *The Watch That Ends the Night* for some eight years. Or rather I spent more than six years learning how to shape a new bottle for a new kind of wine...I refined my style and discovered new techniques I had obviously known nothing about. (Buitenhuis 55)

MacLennan’s first person narration - his “new technique” and “style” which critics have not discussed regarding *The Watch That Ends the Night* - was one of the new directions he was taking. According to Martin, “Any first person narrative...may prove unreliable because it issues from a speaking or writing self addressing someone. This is the condition of discourse, in which, as we know, the possibility of speaking the truth creates the possibility of misunderstanding, misperceiving, and lying” (143). As

first-person narration is always at least potentially unreliable, George, with his human limitations of perception and memory and assessment, may easily have missed, forgotten, or misconstrued certain incidents, words, or motives. Besides, George perceives, describes, and even accepts what is on the surface. Therefore, his narrative about Martell's experience in Russia and China cannot be accepted as absolute truth. But to further account for Martell's true nature and the author's "new technique," I will argue that MacLennan's first-person narration indirectly invites the reader to go beyond George's unreliable description and perception and find in Martell through deliberate omissions, unconnected fragments and open interpretations, not a confessor, a regretter, and a converter, but a great character, a hero, a Bethune figure, who puts on a mask by telling what, to make my point as strongly as possible, I will call "lies."

Lie One

MacLennan's technique hints that Jerome might have lied about his stay in China and Russia. Jerome Martell is a complex man socially, politically and professionally, fighting almost all his life to change intolerable conditions. He is impelled into action in Spain, and he fights for a cause that he believes in passionately. It is during his Montreal years and his stay in Spain that his awareness of revolutionary truth takes shape, and those years constitute a period crucial to an understanding of his later involvement in France, Russia, and China, because after the failure of the Spanish Royalists, Martell joins the French Underground out of his own will and remains firm even when he is severely tortured. After the Germans were defeated, Jerome might have decided to go to Russia out of his own will, as the Soviet Union was a Communist country where he could be useful to the cause he believes in. When the Chinese Communists need doctors badly during the Chinese Civil War, he goes to China to save lives, probably again out of his own will. Such a prospect his wife Catherine has foreseen before Martell goes to France; she somehow doubts if Jerome will come home after the Spanish war is over, because "He's involved ... he's involved so deeply nobody can touch him" (309). This has been hinted at by the author through Martell's hesitating attitude when talking with George over the phone right after Martell comes back to Canada (*italics are mine*):

A pause and then [Martell] said in the voice of *a man who can be surprised by nothing*.

'I've been – ' another pause, I heard his *heavy breathing*, and he went on. 'I've been in Russia and I've been in China.'(8)

'George, *I can't tell you all that now*. Russia - China - the war - everything...' I heard him *breathing so heavily* that I wondered if he was sick. 'When the Nazis came in, the French let me out and I had to go underground. I lasted till 1943 before they caught me. They didn't kill me because I was a doctor. They shipped me around for a while, but I ended in Poland after I was caught escaping.'

'Auschwitz?'

'Yes,' he said *simply*. There was *another silence* and I felt even more *unreal* as I tried to imagine what he looked like.

'When the Russians came in they shipped me east. They promised to let me go home but they never did. But they did let me go to China.... The Chinese let me out after I got sick. They let me out to Hong Kong.' He paused...*It's too long a story and it's too commonplace*. What happened to me has happened to *millions of others*.' (10)

This phone call gives one the impression that Jerome Martell is holding something back, omitting something ("too long a story ... too commonplace"). As a matter of fact, what happened to him did not happen to "millions of others"; it is neither that simple nor that commonplace. It is true that millions of people experienced war and concentration camps, but very few of them ended up in Russia or China. It is not likely that the Soviet Communists would have sent a Canadian doctor to China to assist the Chinese revolution against his own will, because the Third International, with its headquarters in Russia, always sent Communist volunteers to China. Besides, any Chinese reader knows clearly that, from the time foreigners began to have contact with China to 1949, the Chinese had always bowed before these "mystery" Westerners, who had enjoyed special privilege in China. In the old Shanghai before 1949, at the entrance of some concessions, there were insulting warnings: "Neither Chinese nor dogs are allowed inside." It is very hard for a Chinese reader to believe that a Canadian doctor could be forced to work in China and was detained there for a long time.

Like Bethune, Martell might have chosen to stay in China. As a matter of fact, after the failure of the Spanish Loyalist cause, Jerome does not have an ideal home country to return to. Because of his involvement in the Communist movement and his affair with Norah, he has to "resign" from his job. Even if he goes back to Canada, people in Montreal will not tolerate him. Besides, Canada is for him an empty homeland; Spain has ended in regret. In his later forties, his personal life has reached a close: his family is part of the past; he cut himself off from his foster parents long ago; he has no close friends, except those few who blame him in one way or another. What

is most disadvantageous to him is that in Canada he is out of place; his progressive ideas are always misunderstood, and he cannot do whatever he likes. Probably, Martell, like Dr. Bethune, is better able to fit in Russia and China, where he feels most comfortable politically. In a letter (August 21, 1938) to a friend, Bethune summarized his feelings in China:

It is true I am tired but I do not think I have been so happy for a long time. I am content. I am doing what I want to do. Why shouldn't I be happy - see what my riches consist of. First I have important work that fully occupies every minute of my time from 5:30 in the morning to 9 at night. I am needed. More than that - to satisfy my bourgeois vanity - the need for me is expressed. I have a cook, a personal servant, my own house, a fine Japanese horse and saddle... No wish, no desire is left unfulfilled. (Stewart *Bethune* 110)

Similarly, Martell might have been treated like “a kingly comrade with every kindness, every courtesy imaginable” (Shephard 203), and he might also have had “the inestimable fortune to be among, and to work among comrades to whom Communism is a way of life, not merely a way of talking or a way of conscious thinking” (Shephard 203). So Jerome might not have been “a virtual prisoner of the Communists” (329). It seems that Catherine, who knows Martell better than anybody else, is correct in her judgement: “I’m so frightened for him! If he goes to Spain the Communists will capture him for good” (242). Having been “captured” by Communists in Spain, Martell does not come back to Canada until his international duty is over.

Another evidence that Martell might have volunteered to help the Chinese Communists can be found from the time of his return to Canada - 1950. When the whole of China was taken over by the Communists in 1949, Jerome Martell’s duty to save the wounded during the Chinese Civil War was over. After that, he spends one year in Hong Kong, and comes back to Canada in the winter of 1950. So Martell’s “pauses” suggest that he might be lying and covering up the fact that he went to Russia and China out of his own free will. While Martell may not seem to intentionally mislead his friend in their telephone conversation, his omission of facts in this political context constitutes a deliberate deception, what I designate here as a “lie.”

Lie Two

A better example of this perhaps is evident when Jerome says to George: “**All I ever wanted was to come home. All I lived for was to come home to Kate and Sally**” (10).

Martell is suggesting that he has his wife and daughter in mind all the time and that he wanted to come home, but that he could not. But first, we have to remember, Martell simply takes Catherine as one of his patients and takes Sally as one of the successful results of the treatment. That is why he leaves them for Spain without any hesitation. He even does not change his mind when Catherine goes down on her knees (283) begging him not to leave. He would not have gone to Spain if he had really felt himself responsible for Catherine and Sally. In Jack's words, Jerome, as "an experienced medical man," went away knowing that Catherine's heart "has begun to fibrillate" (291).

Second, the reason that Jerome gives George for not being able to come back is that the Russians and Chinese would not let him come out. But, as mentioned earlier, foreigners always enjoyed special privilege in China. For example, in 1939 during the Anti-Japanese War when doctors were badly needed, after more than one year's stay in China, Doctor Bethune decided to return to Canada to raise the necessary funds on a speaking tour. He said in a letter to his friend:

I am leaving this region to return to America about the first week in November if I can clean up my work...I plan to be away for three or 4 months, returning next summer. I must have a guaranteed \$1000 [in] gold monthly for this region alone. I'm not getting it. I don't know where the money from America is going to. I can get no information from...America, so I'm going to find out for myself. (Stewart, *Bethune* 157)

Besides, Bethune's letters and diary show no evidence that he had to ask the Chinese Communist authority for permission. He could come and go as he liked. Similarly, in May 1938, "Dr. Richard Brown, a Canadian missionary, who...spoke Chinese like a native, left the Canadian-American Medical Unit [which helped Chinese Communists in their fight against Japanese] for Canada because he had only four months leave from his hospital" (Stewart, *Mind* 91). Even a very useful person like Doctor Brown could leave China freely, to say nothing of Jerome Martell, who does not speak any Chinese at all.

Third, if Jerome really worries about his wife and daughter as much as George describes, "For twelve fearful years, he had lived with the thought of Catherine and Sally in his mind; he had lived to come home to them both. This was his goal, the thing that kept him alive.... Also during those twelve years Jerome had been haunted by the fear that when he did come home Catherine would be dead" (328), then why does he

spend a year in Hong Kong instead of coming back home right after he comes out of China? According to Jerome himself, he has to spend a year in Hong Kong to get his health back, but he “had worked for a year in a hospital in Hong Kong” (11). If his health still allows him to work, that means he is strong enough to come back to his family as soon as possible if he really wants to. Besides, right after he comes back, Jerome himself boasts, “I’ve got a constitution like an ox” (13) to show George that he is still physically strong. George himself finds that Jerome’s body “was younger than most men’s of fifty-two. It was still active and strong” (361). Is Jerome really too sick to come back to join his family? Does he really need one year to recover his ox-like constitution?

Fourth, while in Russia, “Jerome had been married to, or living with a young Russian woman” (96). “So apparently his life-style hasn’t altered radically,” as Lazenby said. “He always attracted women and he never seemed able to protect himself against them” (96). This fact shows once again that Catherine does not mean a lot to Jerome at all, and so in order to make himself acceptable to Canadian society, he lies when he says that she has been in his mind for twelve years.

Lie Three

Jerome: “**One day I woke up and Jesus himself seemed to be in the cell with me and I wasn’t alone**” (329-30).

According to some critics, Jerome converts from Communism to religion by the end of the novel. He renews “his belief in the spiritual as the way of salvation” and “has become a man of transcendent faith” (Lucas 22-23). Therefore, *The Watch That Ends the Night* is MacLennan’s most religious novel.

However, a careful reading of Jerome’s “confession” shows that he does not refer to the conventional religion and the Jesus Christ that Christians know about: Jerome says that Jesus in his cell “*wasn’t anyone I had ever known before. He wasn’t the Jesus of the churches. He wasn’t the Jesus who died for our sins. He was simply a man who had died and risen again*” (italics mine, 329-30). If the Jesus Jerome saw in his cell wasn’t the Jesus of the churches and wasn’t the Jesus who died for our sins, but simply a man who “had died and risen again,” there is no ground for the argument that he has renewed “his belief in the spiritual as the way of salvation.” Therefore, it seems an exaggeration to claim that *The Watch That Ends the Night* is MacLennan’s most

religious novel, especially if Jerome's Jesus is not the Christ who established "the churches".

Besides, Jerome is not a religious man at all. Though he was brought up by a Christian minister, the war "had destroyed his religion and launched him into a new orbit" (215) after he was wounded and during which he killed eleven men. A "young Jew Aronson talked to me about Marx and socialism and the causes of war, and it all added up and made sense" (167). From then on, he turned to Marxism: "We're all compelled by the capitalist system to become murderers" (168). "It was the system, the capitalist system" (166). After that, he even could not stand living together with his religious parents. In addition, according to Jerome himself, even while in a prison cell in China, he does not believe in God. "He said that if he believed in God his only prayer would have been for death" (329). So, how can the apparition of a non-religious Jesus suddenly restore his belief?

What is more, the creator of Jerome Martell was not religious himself; there is no record showing that MacLennan was a pious churchgoer. According to Elspeth Cameron, MacLennan stopped attending church when he was at Princeton (1932-1935). "An implicitly materialistic outlook is reflected in [MacLennan's] academic writing," observes MacLulich (30). On the contrary, having experienced hardship himself in the 30s, MacLennan has his mouthpiece George say "There is no God" (6). "What difference does it make if there is no God? Or if God exists, why worry if He is indifferent to justice?" There is no obvious evidence indicating "that MacLennan is still strongly attracted to a nonmaterialistic or even a spiritual outlook" (MacLulich 30).

Here again we find MacLennan's contradictory treatment of Jerome, who, on the surface, seems to have converted to his religious belief, but in reality, only puts on a beautiful mask in order to get himself accepted into Canadian society. The adjective "singular" (329) which MacLennan uses to modify Martell's story might hint at the doubt of its authenticity. Probably Martell does not have a vision of Jesus nor does he move into the realm of the purified. But MacLennan's possible deception is not easy to detect because it is covered with a religious "cloak": such words as "Jesus," "transparency," "new looks," and "religious" look sound very pleasing to the public.

Lie Four

Jerome: "'Oh Kate, if I hadn't gone mad we might have had all those years'" (331).

According to some critics, Jerome realizes that all his public and political activities have been in error. “His devotion to the surgical unit in Spain, his work in the French Underground, and all the rest - he sees in retrospect as madness” (Donald Cameron 72). But besides this kind remark to his wife (to whom he could not say anything else, for fear of hurting her even further), on no other occasions does Jerome see in retrospect what he has gone through as madness. On the contrary, from other characters’ comments about Jerome after he comes back, we see the same Jerome all the time.

George:
 “But he was, at least partially, still the same Jerome...” (11)

Harry Blackwell:
 “Do you think a man like [Jerome] can come back and say he’s sorry and that makes it all right? Do you think it’s going to be that easy?” (31)

George:
 “How could I even pretend to understand a man who had lived as he had lived these dozen years?” (13)

Jack Christopher:
 Jerome “still has that mysterious thing... He has it more than he ever had it” (369).

George:
 Jerome is thinking a lot that he is not saying (12).

These remarks show that on the one hand, George and other characters find changes in Jerome, but on the other hand, they still find him the same old Jerome. What Jerome says to Catherine hints at the same story:

Kate, I still know you, and you still *know* me, and we both know each other as no others ever did or ever can. About some things I was as wrong *as a man can be*, but about some *I was always right.*’ (330) (Italics mine)

This implies that Jerome refuses to admit what he has gone through is wrong. He only admits he is wrong about “some things” where every man can be wrong, but the fact is that not every man has gone to Spain, France, Russia, and China. So MacLennan has Jerome declare that he “was always right” about the things - his political involvement - that not every man has gone through.

Some special and elusive words MacLennan uses might suggest that Jerome is still his old self but with a mask on. According to George, we can see “the effect produced by [Jerome’s] presence on everyone he met now. Though his features had aged somewhat, they had not altered. It was his expression that was different, that announced an altered personality to the world” (327-33). The only change we can find in Jerome is the appearance and expression that he might artificially put on in order to announce an altered personality. But, in reality, his old self “was entirely recognizable. When you got used to him again you could still see in his face something of the boy who had grown up in Halifax” (328). There is no evidence that Jerome realizes that all his public and political activities have been in error; nor is it shown that in retrospect he sees his devotion to the surgical unit in Spain, his work in the French Underground, and all the rest as madness.

If Jerome does not realize that all his public and political activities have been in error, why does he lie?

A very obvious reason is that Jerome has come back to Canada, where Communism is unacceptable to the general public. “Things have changed. The whole country seems to have changed” (14), we are told, and it is quite different from the thirties; just as Sally says, “The depression was Dad’s real time, wasn’t it? he was a real depression type...he really fitted in and symbolized that whole awful period” (20). In accordance with Canadian standards, Jerome is out of place in Canadian society, as Arthur Lazenby says, “Judged by the standards we use here and I think you’ll agree they’re pretty basic - Martell in the Thirties was a fanatic. Not a crackpot exactly, but absolutely a lone wolf out of line with everyone” (97).

But when Jerome comes back in the winter of 1950, McCarthyism is at its height in exposing, attacking and uprooting Communism, and Jerome Martell is dangerously out of place. Canada is not as free as it might be because it denies liberty to its own individualists. The implied assumption of the novel is that a person cannot find freedom in a conformist society. Jerome has to adapt himself to this changed environment by telling lies. Here what we see might be Martell’s lonely struggle to create a false personhood and meaning in a bewildering and conservative society, where individuals are equipped only with the meagre remains of self.

Section Six: Sympathetic with Harmless Communists

MacLennan might have made his protagonist tell lies because he believes that the country is hostile to harmless communists. This echoes the paradox of the Communist issue in the United States. Peter Steinberg observes: "The American Communist Party may have been the smallest, least effectual minority ever to take on the proportions of a major enemy in the history of the United States. The paradox of the Communist issue during the Cold War was that American communists were almost universally defined as representing no danger to the United States, but their presence was used to fabricate a sufficient hysteria to create an American 'mental strait jacket' on both domestic and foreign policy" (59). In *The Watch That Ends the Night*, there are only two named communists, Norah and Arthur: Norah, except her affair with Martell, does no harm to others but throws herself under a car; Arthur leaves the Communist Party and takes a neutral position by working in External Affairs; Martell (a communist in deed to this reader), as an unselfish sacrificing saviour and a guide all his life, throughout the novel is portrayed as a positive and harmless man. He has devoted much of his life to the poor, the sick, the wounded and the weak. And finally, he comes back home, poor and harming none. Though "he wanted a home and children as much as any man" (49), he has sacrificed himself for others. When he comes back, he stays at the King Edward, a "ghastly hotel" (14). Even by the end of the novel, after helping the other doctors get Catherine out of danger, Jerome's unselfish nature lets George stay with Catherine to share a few more years of the life that remains to her. Jerome himself resigns the right to do so. The novel ends with Jerome leaving for a new remote town, and George and Catherine peacefully living out her last years at the summer place in Quebec. Naked, Jerome came into the world, and naked he goes out into war. Naked he comes back home, a typical symbol of a harmless communist.

But in order to shelter themselves from the hostile world, harmless communists are forced to put on a mask. Arthur Lazenby, away from Communism, has become hypocritical: He

looked like the public idea of a modern Ottawa hand: dark pinstriped suit, dark horn rimmed glasses, just the right amount of flesh on his cheeks and just the right amount of gray on his temples. A big change from the lean and hungry and generally silent young man I had known during the depression. Even more changed was his manner. In the old days Lazenby had been so unobtrusive that

you hardly noticed him. Now, once you had noticed him, once you found yourself engaged with him, he was dominant. He talked suavely of politics for fifteen minutes, dropping just the right number of names in just the right way, and if there was any civil service cliché I had ever heard, he did not miss it. Yet his performance was a competent one, for he was almost entertaining, though both he and I knew that he said nothing that could be quoted against him and nothing I did not know anyway. (95)

Arthur's ever-so-slightly-conspiratorial smile and smooth voice even hold his old friend George at arm's length (97). There is nothing natural left in him. Arthur admits, "I'd like to be invisible" (94), as he also has to wear a mask to protect himself against social discrimination. "The successful, middle-aged Lazenby I know now has a dead face, but not the young one of that evening" (246). The reader is warned against the danger of Canadian life in the fifties: the sacrifices of individualism and creative, satisfying work; the loss of faith and the loss of trust for others at work; it seems that the novel seeks to reaffirm humanism and individualism through the often frightening images of their opposites - the lives of men and women who have lost these precious gifts to the illusory promises of possible success. MacLennan's possible compassion for individualism and Communism is an expression of the independent radicalism and Marxist humanism of the proletarian movement of the thirties. Martell's and Arthur's masks contradict the ideals of individualism which are suppressed in favor of commonly accepted social standards. To survive, people like Martell and Lazenby cut off a part of themselves, just as Cinderella's stepsisters amputated their toes to fit into the brittle glass slipper. What George says after his meeting with Lazenby exactly sums up the trend of society:

What a generation I belonged to, where so many of the successful ones, after trying desperately to hitch their wagons to some great belief, ended up believing in nothing but their own cleverness. (101)

What Steinberg says about American communists might be applied to the fate of Arthur and Jerome, Canadian communists:

In a political democracy all ideas must be permissible, all advocacy should be encouraged. To allow some to set limits for others is to restrict the freedom of everyone. In the postwar years, American communists sought no more than to spread their ideas and advocate their solutions to the United States' problems. They openly believed in a revolutionary political and economic theory, but never gathered guns, nor trained for military action, nor urged violence of any kind. They dreamed of a coming socialist revolution, but often labored to make

American democracy work better. Their actions may sometimes have been foolish, but they presented no threat to the United States. It was in their suppression that the real peril existed. (290)

As a result of the suppression, Arthur becomes one of a “silent generation who grow in the shadow of the Cold War” (Steinberg 292).

Through the tragic side of Martell’s story, the author might have intended to present his sympathy for benign and idealistic communists. In spite of Martell’s unselfish devotion to humankind, he encounters misunderstanding, slander, hate, and the RCMP’s investigation. Arthur says to George, “He was born ahead of his time. Or perhaps behind it. He didn’t fit” (98). MacLennan seems to suggest that, in the past, at present, and in the future, there is no room in this world for humanitarians, internationalists, and communists. The efforts of people like Jerome shelter the world from a “future of fascism and concentration camps” (269), ‘watching’ throughout the dark time (the night), but when the night ends and dawn comes, the world perversely refuses to shelter them.

The Watch That Ends the Night marks MacLennan’s maturity as an ideological and pragmatic writer. As MacLulich points out:

In the early novels, stern and kindly traits are assigned to separate characters, but in the later novels the same character can be both oppressive and loving. The increasingly complex portrayal of human feelings reflects important developments within MacLennan himself...*The Watch That Ends the Night* marks a watershed in MacLennan’s development, announcing his attainment of a truly mature outlook. This novel represents MacLennan’s most harmonious synthesis of all aspects of his artistry and thought...In emotional, artistic, religious, and philosophical terms, MacLennan has learned to live in his father’s house. (123)

In MacLennan’s final portrait of Jerome, because of the first-person narration, where access to the mind of the protagonist is not available, the mask might be the key rhetorical figure which blurs Martell’s real self and depicts the specifically devised artificiality of an outsider within a depressing ideological climate. But even here, because of MacLennan’s contradictory presentation of certain events, heroic illusions have not entirely faded, but they have been sufficiently transmuted into merely secondary ideas to be consigned to the realm of unreality; Martell’s world might be one with its own reality: probably it is a conscious disguise of his real self. So Martell’s new face and character are at the most a consequence of his time. It seems that the deeds of the past, on the other hand, have a firm shape and form: they consist of the

actions of a great hero, and form the real content of MacLennan's story. Martell's heroic past and his present mask reflect MacLennan's ideology as well as his pragmatism.

In "Reflection of Two Decades," MacLennan himself reports that while writing *The Watch That Ends the Night*, he was "like a snake shedding its old skin - the intellectual skin most men of my generation had been wearing since the beginning of the Thirties" (Ross 9). But it seems that, like a snake, MacLennan, together with his character Martell, put on a new skin, a mask, which helps them escape judgement together.

CHAPTER FOUR: FOR MORDECAI RICHLER A COMMUNIST IS NOBODY WHILE A CAPITALIST IS SOMEBODY

Two of the three of Mordecai Richler's novels dealt with in this chapter were written or published after the report of Stalin's purges had filtered into the West. In 1956, at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, bitterly denounced the dictatorial rule and the brutality of the Stalin regime and the personality of Stalin. The purges had led millions of Russian citizens to prison, or their deaths, on absolutely no basis of criminal wrongdoing. As a result, many former Canadian communists, including prominent leaders, resigned or formed new parties, following the accelerated disintegration of the Communist parties in some parts of the world. No episode in Soviet history provoked more rage from the old bourgeois world than the purge of 1937—1938, the unnuanced denunciation of which cast Communism in a different light. By this time Montreal novelist Mordecai Richler's interest in and sympathy for Communism waned and his focus was on re-assessing capitalism as a viable political ideology.

Unlike Ethel Wilson, Montreal novelist Mordecai Richler made numerous observations about politics in interviews and in his writings. In this chapters we will look first at some of those statements gathered from a variety of sources, including two of his early novels, *The Acrobats* (1954) and *A Choice of Enemies* (1957), and then turn to *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, his most popular novel from the 1950s. In the first three sections of this chapter we will see how his conservative political statements are realized in the setting up of this story of a young entrepreneur on the make. Once the capitalist plot of the novel has been examined, we will consider in sections four and five whether Richler, in spite of his professed ideology, does in fact create a more rounded, more sympathetic character in Duddy Kravitz than his theme and politics might suggest. We will consider finally what that rounding of character implies politically.

Section One: The Author's Anti-Communist Attitude Reflected in Disillusionment with Marxism

As a satirist, Mordecai Richler, in many of his works, especially in his first three novels, demonstrates the emptiness of idealism. He satirizes vehement adherence to certain causes, one of which is Communism, a main ideological trend pursued vehemently by many beginning from the Great Depression to the early fifties. In a conversation with Nathan Cohen in 1956, Richler points out: “[A writer] is not writing for money; he is writing from compulsion...I mean to say what I feel about values and about people living in a time when to my mind there is no agreement on values” (Gnarowski, 29). Richler emphasizes specifically that “there has been a collapse of absolute values, whether that value was Marx or God or gold. We are living in a time when superficially life seems meaningless, and we have to make value judgements all the time...To explain this predicament is part of [the artist's] intention. Their other purpose...is to find those values with which today a man can live honorably” (Gnarowski, 45). According to Richler, “What is emerging...is a much more complicated and closely held personal standard of values.” What he implies is that, as a writer, he is reflecting “a very personal and basic set of values,” namely, the pro-establishment and anti-Communist values of his early novels, *The Acrobats* (1954) and *A Choice of Enemies* (1957), which reflect people's disillusionment with Marxism and are concerned with a search for a way-out in a world where there is no “agreed-upon system of values.” To some of his characters, Michael Gnarowski comments, “Marxism has never had any special fascination. For them to judge people and events by a Marxist-Engel-Lenin yardstick, or to see in the deflation of the Stalin idolatry and the breakdown of the Marxist ideal a telling commentary on conditions today, is a notion too preposterous to consider further. To some, the Communist man is meaningless ...The most generous verdict the diehard Communist or the disillusioned ex-Communist and sympathizer bemoaning their lost faith are likely to evoke is a measure of cool pity” (49-50).

First of all, Richler demonstrates the view that Communism can lead to nowhere but destruction. *The Acrobats* is a novel about the experiences in Franco's postwar Spain of a young Canadian painter, Andre Bennett. In his relationship with Derek, a Communist soldier during the Civil War, Bennett discovers that this American poet, who dedicated himself to the Spanish cause both in battle and in his poems, now cynically rejects Communism and in fact fears that “the tyranny of the proletariat will

exceed the boorishness of the petty-bourgeois” (121). Andre agrees with Derek’s opinion because he remembers the brutal actions of some of Guilermo’s followers, the very people who, “once glorified and idealized by the writers of the 1930s, now ridicule their would-be liberators” (Ramraj, 48). Some people’s commitment to revolutionary violence makes them capable only of destruction.

In *A Choice of Enemies*, a novel that examines the experiences of various political émigrés in postwar Europe, the main character Norman Price used to share his father’s belief in Communism for which he unhesitatingly sacrificed his fairly secure job as a professor. But he is beginning to question his comrades’ political stands and dedication: “You signed petitions, you defended Soviet art to liberals, and you didn’t name old comrades. But your loyalties, like those of a shared childhood, were sentimental; they lacked true conviction” (62). The émigrés from the West, refugees from the American McCarthyism of the fifties, meet in London an émigré from the East, a young man who finds the new Communism as distasteful as the old National Socialism. Thus the émigrés in London all come to a dawning realization that they had been considerably misled by Stalin. As a result, Norman has given up his party membership.

Furthermore, Richler shows that Communists or pro-Communists outdo McCarthyites in treating their comrades harshly. In *A Choice of Enemies*, in the climactic scene, Ernst, a refuge from the East, is treated viciously by the North American exiles at a party. Richler uses this scene in particular to underline the ironic parallel between McCarthy’s treatment of those suspected of being Communist sympathizers and their treatment of Ernst.

‘Look,’ Norman said, ‘most of us were on the hot seat at home. Don’t you recognize Horton’s technique of questioning?’

‘Really,’ Horton said, ‘this is too much. Are you accusing me of being a McCarthyite?’

‘That’s just what I mean. Remarks like that,’ Norman said. ‘Twisting my words to his own purpose.’ (85)

A Choice of Enemies exposes the end of human ideologies and shows that Communist political programs are even more pointless and self-defeating than personal ones. Ernst recalls how his father was at last picked up for questioning in Saxony; the Communist police official turned out to be the same one who had used to question him

for the Nazis. Richler argues that there is no difference between the Nazis and Communists. It is to deceive oneself if one believes in either of them. Those who hold a committee-on-unexpatriate-activities hearing about Norman's loyalty to their cause and, with unconvincing evidence, find him guilty are not much better than the Communist hunters who persecuted and drove them from America. The book lays bare the self-aggrandizing close-mindedness of the leftist expatriates in London. The so-called 'enlightened' left is not different from the less intelligent groups it despised. Towards the end of the novel, Norman meets Horton, who used to be a devoted advocate of Communism but has become aware of Stalin's brutality and is disillusioned with Marxism. Norman sympathizes with him and sees him as another victim of blind faith in ideologies. In the final chapter, Norman resolves 'at last to lead a private life' (215), returning to teach in a provincial university, to work on his book on *Dryden*, and to put traditional values over ideological solutions.

As a matter of fact, what Richler advocates is to go back to the old capitalist system. In his review of *A Choice of Enemies*, Walter O'Hearn described Mordecai Richler as a political novelist, who tries to show that the Communist Manifesto, which offered something for humans to believe in, something that could solve social problems, has failed. Richler conveys the message that undoubtedly Communism in practice has made a mockery of its professed purpose and should be abandoned (Ramraj 51). Now it is immensely difficult for any man to live with honor and integrity if involved in Communism. Richler has one of his characters, Chaim, further claim: "There is no idea or cause that will save us. Salvation is personal" (*The Acrobats*, 107). These sentiments are endorsed by Richler outside the novel in an interview with Gibson,: "You know we can no longer hope or only a fool can hope for revolution as a solution. Increasingly we know each system contains its own injustices" (Ramraj 51-52). According to Ramraj, Chaim then, at least here, is Richler's mouthpiece and provides one of the thematic resolutions of the novel. To the author, it is not a good idea to get rid of the present system to set up another one with more injustices, such as a Communist system.

Richler's advocating of sticking to the existing system comes from his conviction that the real intention of the Communist movement is simply taking power. He said in the interview with Cohen in 1956,

I got very interested...in this whole left-wing quarrel, which after I thought about it for a while seemed to me less of an argument of principle and more of

an argument of power, even in the States...the people who have been blacklisted and who have left the States protested that this was a violation of freedom of speech and democracy, and I signed petitions and I believed this. And now it seems to me that it was an argument of power, it was a question of *their* freedom of speech and *their* democratic rights being threatened. And that in reality they are just as intolerant as the people who are in power, without the authority, which makes them a little worse, a little less magnanimous—You see, my new novel, very boldly, is about a refugee from East Berlin who falls in with the people who have been blacklisted in America and are living in London, and they treat him eventually in the same way as they were treated, and they treat him that way because of his political beliefs. I believe that the essence of this whole thing was one of power. (Gnarowski 41)

Here Richler sticks to the capitalist values or power which almost collapsed, without which, it seems to him, life will be ‘meaningless’ and with which “a man can live honorably,” and this is “his closely held personal standard of values.”

Section Two:
A Communist Slogan Versus the Reality:
A Communist Cannot Liberate Humankind
without Liberating Himself and His Family First

One of the most important slogans of Communism is that a proletarian cannot liberate himself without liberating humankind first. Richler shows ironically in reverse is that a communist cannot benefit mankind without liberating himself first. In *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, almost all the Communists and socialists, or those involved with Left-wing political movements are portrayed satirically as negative characters. They are social detritus and a burden to their family, friends, employers, and society. They are either vicious, unkind, and irresponsible people or hopeless drunkards, as seen in the portrait of a Communist in hiding, Mr. Peter John Friar, the so-called distinguished director of documentary films. The main problem with such people is that they do not have a backyard, namely, that they are without any private property. Communist Peter John Friar says, “I have no home” (116) “I am a Communist...I fled the United States one step ahead of the FBI. I am on the blacklist” (119).

First of all, the author describes Friar and his disordered setting as repellent: “Peter John Friar was a small, pear-shaped man with a massive and a fidgety red face. His graying hair was thin but disheveled and there were little deposits of dandruff on his coat collar” (114). When Duddy goes to see him, “Mr. Friar was in the nude, his fallen belly thick with curly grey hair. ... Every drawer in the living-room-cum-bedroom was

open and dripping underwear or shirtsleeves. One wall was completely covered with bull-fighting posters” (117). In turn his behavior is messy: “Mr. Friar freed a couple of glasses from the pile of pots and pans in the sink, wiped the lipstick off with the corner of his sheet, and poured two drinks. He knocked all the magazines off the coffee table with a scythe-like sweep of a hairy leg and set down a tray of ice-cubes beside the bottle” (117).

Further, Communists are portrayed as not only taking others’ things for granted but also of abusing young girls. Friar is always drunk, often as a result of drinking what others have paid for. Several times, he “walked out of the bar” because he “didn’t want to get stuck with the bill” (163). On another occasion, a customer complains about him: “the joy was here again today to look over the house. Not only did he drink all my Johnny Walker, but he tried to get my Selma to sit on his lap. She’s only seventeen...He wrote a dirty poem to her too. It’s called...Advice to Virgins to Make Much of Time ” (171). He even tries to share other people’s girl friends. Although he is “old enough to be her father” (181), he tells Duddy’s girl friend, a chambermaid, Yvette, that Duddy will never marry her: “I’d marry you. I am mad for you” (163). He tries to make Yvette dislike Duddy: “He’s callow. His manners are unbelievably *Gauche*. Why, he hasn’t the first notion of how to treat a woman. What on earth do you see in him?”(163) even though Yvette reminds him that “He’s your friend. He admires you. And I’m supposed to be his girl” (163). When Mr. Friar fails to seduce Yvette, he tries to separate her from Duddy by reminding Duddy, “Don’t it worry you having the deeds under her name?” Richler’s description of Friar echoes the government’s line of anti-Communist propaganda, one aspect of which is that vicious communists, like dirty bandits, have nothing to offer to others but want to share not only their property but also their wives.

In addition, Friar is irresponsible and not trustworthy. He says, “I won’t be bound by any contract. I am a vagabond” (118). Duddy does not dare to trust him to do things alone, “Leaving Mr. Friar on his own for a few days...he could do plenty of damage” (138). Once, Mr. Friar disappears when he is supposed “to go to a *Barmitzvah*” next morning (200); “for three nights running he did not show up;” Duddy and Yvette finally “found him in the Algiers at two in the morning; he was snoozing”(200). He left with five hundred dollars given to him by Duddy for shooting the film, but a hundred and twenty-two dollars is all he has got. Next morning, Mr. Friar arrived “in no condition to shoot a movie. He also discovered too soon exactly where

the liquor was kept” (201). Finally, he “[runs] off” with the camera...He didn’t even say goodbye” (233) to Duddy and Yvette. Through all these details, Richler poses the question: how can such Communists benefit or liberate humankind as advocated by their slogans when they themselves have or do nothing but take advantage of, and cause troubles to, others and society?

Another negatively portrayed character is Mr. MacPherson, who is in fact a personification of the decay of the Communist or socialist consciousness. Different from Mr. Friar, people like Mr. MacPherson have a back yard, some private property, such as a home, but due to their poor skills they fail to “weed it” well, pursuing fashionable but empty communist ideals instead. Some twenty years ago, as an ambitious young man, he began teaching with the high ideals of his vocation, with beliefs about social change and educational methods that were radical for his time, but “two decades of monotonous work, of mental laziness, of dreary marriage, have reduced him to the shell of a man” (Woodcock, 38) who still sticks to some of his empty dreams: he “thought, there’s still time...to help the boys. A club could be formed, perhaps, as was usually done in movies about delinquents.” Pro-Communists like Mr. MacPherson, regarding those who are commercially successful as “Materialists, or philistines” (19), do not know that they themselves are failures. “He had no idea that he was exhausted, bitter, and drained” (32).

Pro-Communist figures are incapable of setting up effective new rules for order but are quick to give up the old ones. In the novel, the author uses strapping as a symbol of order. At school, it is a means to maintain some structure in the classroom. According to a Communist song, *The International*, the old system should be smashed. The Communists or pro-Communists are quick to smash the old order but they do not know how to run a country by setting up new means to maintain order. Specifically, in the novel, Mr. MacPherson gives up the old order by not strapping students. At that time, without strapping, there would be no discipline in the classroom. Mr. MacPherson cannot control his class. As a result, anarchism prevails, symbolizing that Communism advocates giving up the old order and will bring about anarchism. Finally, those who give up the old order finally have no choice but to return to it, and Mr. MacPherson has to strap his students to restore order. But he cannot hold the strap effectively. When he “led Duddy into the Medical Room...breaking with a practice of twenty years, the actual blows were feeble, and it was Duddy who emerged triumphant... the rowdiness in class and his own drinking, increased in proportion to the strappings” (36). Richler

shows that even given power or provided with the means of maintaining order, Communists or pro-Communists cannot rule a class, a city, or a country. At last, it is not Mr. MacPherson but the most fractious students who are in charge of his class. He ends up finding his wife dead, the result of mischief by the boys whom he wants to help. It is implied that ineffectual pro-Communist ideas are good at breaking the social order but benefit nobody socially.

In addition, the author demonstrates that pro-Communist people are immature and mentally unstable. After he is subdued by his students, Mr. MacPherson “began to sit around the house alone. He seldom went out any more.” In despair, he “ripped [the history test papers] apart,” flung them into the fireplace and lit them. He behaves as badly as his students, shouting at them, uttering his racial discrimination: “The trouble with you Jews, ... is that you’re always walking around with a chip on your shoulder” (35) and “you filthy street arab” (40), causing the students to call him “a nazi fascist” (35). “Like bad children” (38), he makes a phone call to Mr. Kravitz at three o’clock in the morning. Finally he breaks down mentally and ends up in an asylum (225). Through the image of Mr. MacPherson, the author tries to show that those who side with or support Communism are either mentally unstable or incapable and irresponsible people. Therefore, one parent asks the principal, “What kind of men are teaching my boy? How can they expect to make decent citizens of them when they themselves are like bad children?” (38) People like MacPherson “have no right to be with children” (40).

Finally, pro-Communist characters are presented as hypocritical. Through the image of Uncle Benjy, Richler “attacks the men of uncertain ethics...who combine success in the capitalist world with a sentimental and conscience-solving dedication to its destruction. Marxism, with Uncle Benjy, becomes an intellectual toy, ...but here again, Richler is intent on isolating the cult from the reality (Woodcock 56). Uncle Benjy, negatively presented as “a short fat” and “a childish man” (141), is a “known supporter of communist causes” in name but a capitalist in deed. “There wasn’t a petition invented that Uncle Benjy didn’t sign in triplicate. He was always good for a touch when there was a strike or a defense fund or the *Tribune* was in trouble. He enjoyed bragging about these contributions in the company of other manufacturers” (59). But he does not allow a union in his sweatshop but devotes himself wholeheartedly to accumulating the private property and taking care of the Kravitz family. Hypocritically, to make himself look fashionable, Uncle Benjy “read the socialist

magazines he subscribed to that came from England and the United States. These bored him more than Miami. Foolishness, romance, about what the workers were, and advertisements for family planning and summer camps where solemn negroes sang progressive songs” (59). He claims himself to be in favour of Communism but has “his little irreverences like making an ostentatious sign of the cross when Peltier mentioned Stalin” (60). “Half the time he talks against religion and then when he’s drunk he goes and says a thing like that [You’re going to be my Kaddish]” (165). Richler lets Uncle Benjy himself expose his own hypocritical nature: “I was the most ridiculous figure of all, wasn’t I?” (280)

Such hypocritical nature is also reflected in what Mr. Macpherson says and does. Talking of strapping, Mr. Coldwell, another teacher, says to MacPherson, “‘Strapping is the worst kind of reactionary measure. I’m a socialist too,’ he added warmly.” But Mr. MacPherson, seeing other teachers walking towards them, says loudly, “‘Socialism is strictly for young men...I hope you too will grow out of it in time’” (31); he hides his true conviction in cowardly fashion. Besides, Mr. MacPherson, a so-called socialist and a heavy drinker, does not have true affection for his wife and is incapable and irresponsible at handling domestic affairs as well. He cannot afford to send his very sick wife to “get a month’s rest in the mountains” (20). He “simply “passed the night overlooking her difficult sleep, squeezing his hands together whenever she coughed” (20). Although his wife is very sick, he goes to a gathering and stays until 3 a.m. Upon getting home and finding her “crumpled on the hall floor, he stared accusingly at [her]... not knowing whether to rip his clothes into shreds or hold her dry hand in his or go out for another drink” (33). Here the message from the author is: How can such hypocritical and incapable “lush-head” drunkards help to improve the social system when their own personal lives are like deserted back yards full of weeds, as it were, and they themselves and their families need others to take care of them all the time? People like Mr. Friar and Mr. McPherson cannot liberate humankind without liberating themselves by having a decent and well cared for home first. The author satirizes the emptiness of idealism: Communism is an empty dream pursued by a group of immoral or ineffectual people.

Section Three: “A Man without Land Is Nobody”: Creating One’s Own Garden

It is generally agreed that Duddy’s pursuit of land is related to an old dream of European Jews, who were not allowed to own land. In fact in Germany in the 1930s, the Nazis confiscated most of their property. Hence acquisition of land is of foremost importance to the Jewish experience of security and identity in Canada. In my perception, there is another layer of meaning in Duddy’s desperate efforts to possess land. The works of Mordecai Richler, while making clear the limitations of both sides of the ideological debate in the 1950s, tend to favor traditional capitalism. Marx and Engels proclaimed their basic doctrines in *The Communist Manifesto*, declaring that the capitalists and the bourgeoisie had successfully enslaved the working class or the proletariat, through economic policies and control of the production of goods. According to Marx, in such a system, the rich simply become richer while the poor become more and more oppressed. To rid society of this situation, Marx believed that the government must own all industries and control the economic production of a country to protect its people from the oppression of the bourgeoisie. But to those of the bourgeoisie who saw property as security, Communists were monsters posing a great threat. In 1948, in a debate of the House of Commons, Prime Minister Mackenzie King said, “There is no menace in the world that is greater than Communism” (Penner 224).

Mordecai Richler’s *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* is the outstanding example of a novel that affirms capitalism. Richler describes positively how a self-made youth who “was born on the wrong side of the tracks with a rusty spoon in his mouth...thrived on adversity” by working eighteen hours a day. It shows that “it is possible to go from rags-to-riches in this country,” thereby negating the Communist claim that there is no way-out for the poor unless the old capitalist social structure is dismantled. Richler advocates in *A Choice of Enemies* through Norman’s rebirth that the solution to human problems is not to be found in politics: “If there was a time to man the barricades, Norman thought, then there is also a time to weed one’s private garden...The enemy was no longer the boor in power on the right or the bore out of power on the left” (215). Namely, the enemy is one’s own laziness. If everyone focuses on one’s own livelihood and weeds one’s own garden, there will be no social problems, and thereby there is no need to smash the existing system.

Having asserted in his early fiction that one must stay away from Communism, Richler puts forward in *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* a standard: if one does not have land, one has nothing to cling to; thereby, a man without land is nobody. Only by having one's own land, one's own property, no matter whether big or small, can one support and help oneself, one's family, and then help others. Duddy is living out the American and Canadian desire to possess land which he can immediately transform, cover with buildings, fill with people, and put to a commercial use to establish his and the Kravitz family's private property. Therefore, the novel is concerned with the apprenticeship of obtaining wealth, the voyage, as it were, that ultimately takes Duddy to a new world and gives him the power to become somebody, a recognized gentleman, a capitalist. *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* is Richler's advocating of creating or owning one's own "garden", namely, his advocating of the private possession system against the collective possession of property as advocated by Communism.

To justify Duddy's pursuit of wealth, Richler lets the desire of obtaining land come from a very decent and superior human being, Grandpa Simcha. "Among the other immigrants he was trusted. He was regarded as a man of singular honesty and some wisdom." Although he is only a shoemaker, he has moral authority and his acts are regarded as "superior" (46) by the community. Simcha is hard working and devoted to his family. He exemplifies the concept that salvation is personal: "Two years after his arrival [in Montreal] he was able to send for his wife and two sons. A year later he had his own shop on a corner of St Dominique Street" (46) and a place to live with its own garden. That is, through hard work, he has got enough, although not a fortune, to support his family. What is most important about Grandpa Simcha is that he is one of those who have created "[their] private garden." "Outside in the gritty hostile soil of his back yard, Simcha planted corn and radishes, peas, carrots and cucumbers. Each year the corn came up scrawnier and cucumbers yellowed before they ripened, but Simcha persisted with his planting" (46). Even though the soil in his garden is not fertile and he cannot produce good vegetables, and he himself still remains a poor man, he does not turn his attention to other people's wealth as some communists do but instills the desire of obtaining wealth in his son and then his grandson to continue his dream of establishing family status by obtaining private property.

Richler connects creating one's own "backyard" with wisdom; that is, creating wealth is a wise action as symbolized by Simcha's dream. Simcha's wisdom makes him ensure that his whole family is self-reliant. First, he puts his hope in his first born son:

Benjy was a delight to him. The others would often see Simcha Kravitz coming out of the synagogue and walking down St. Dominique Street holding the boy's hand. Benjy prospered. He was a shrewd boy, intelligent and quick and without fear of the new country and...The fat teenage boy who ventured into the country to sell the farmers reams of cloth and boots and cutlery, was, at twenty-six, the owner of a basement blouse factory... when Benjy began to read Mencken and Dreiser and no longer came to pray his father said, 'Benjy does what he believes. That's his right.' (48)

To Simcha, whether one believes in God is not important so long as one believes in accumulating one's private wealth through hard work and sticking to this pursuit.

The foundation of the capitalist system is the private possession of property, which belongs either to an individual or a family. Under the essentially patriarchal system, the property of a father is usually passed on to his sons, and then to the grandsons. To Richler, a solid family structure plays an important role in consolidating the foundation of the capitalist system. In the system, there are means to protect an individual or a family's private property from being taken away. In each family, especially during the period not long after the feudal system, the head would try his best to establish the family's status and reputation by building up its private wealth. In *The Apprenticeship*, Uncle Benjy has successfully established his family as symbolized by the house he built "on Mount Royal Boulevard, above Park Avenue and overlooking the mountain" (242). The elevated location of the house symbolizes Benjy's social position. "I built the house...for my son and his sons. That was the original intention" (280). We are told that "There were four bedrooms and a nursery" (242), pointing to Uncle Benjy's desire to have sons and grandsons to continue his family line and inherit the wealth he has accumulated. Failing to have his own son, he refuses to adopt a child because that would mean his wealth would go to someone not in the Kravitz family, someone without any blood connection with him, virtually the same as being taken away by Communists. Instead, he puts his hope in his brother's family. "He loved [Lennie] like a son" (257). What Lennie says about Uncle Benjy shows how anxious Uncle Benjy is to get someone in his family to inherit and protect his private property, "'After he'd had a lot he held me so tight I got scared. You're going to have to be my Kaddish, he said'" (64). After finding out Duddy is a better one to continue the family line, Uncle Benjy decides to give him half of his factory.

Richler uses the subtle relationship between Grandpa Simcha and his son Benjy to show how important it is for one to have sons to continue the family line to protect

one's private property from being taken away. Grandpa Simcha gets very anxious after Benjy's marriage does not result in any sons. When told that Benjy is impotent, Simcha gives him "what looked like a little jar of preserves" to help cure his impotence problem. After all his efforts to help Benjy have a son end in vain, the old man all of a sudden feels defeated and the good relationship between him and his son Benjy ends (In the old Chinese culture, there were four kinds of unfiliation, with failing to give birth to a son as the most serious one). The old man refuses to see Benjy, even after Benjy gets cancer and before he passes away. Simcha tells Duddy, "Your grandfather was a failure in this country...Your Uncle Benjy with all his money is nothing too [because he does not have a son to continue his family line and wealth accumulation]" (49).

In the novel, saintly Simcha is a tireless teacher for his sons and grandsons in order to make them work hard to create the Kravitzs' private property. On the very day he loses hope in Benjy, Simcha "began to look at the rest of his family with more curiosity, and, without any preamble, he took Duddy into the back yard one Sunday morning to teach him how to plant and fertilize and pull out the killing weeds," (48) that is, to teach him to "weed [his] own garden," to follow a decent way of making a living instead of eyeing other people's possessions. He told Duddy, who was only seven at the time, "A man without land is nobody. Remember that, Duddel" (49). Here, through Simcha's first formal lesson to Duddy, Richler sets up a way-out for the poor to get out from the bottom of society: work hard and raise their social status by accumulating wealth, to become somebody. Repeating what he did with teaching Uncle Benjy, Simcha "walked hand in hand with Duddy on St Dominique Street" (49) to give him seminars, and we can assume that it is during such walks that Simcha instills in him again and again the dream of obtaining land, and ever from then Simcha continues his tutorials by having Duddy work in the garden together with him from time to time.

At Ste. Agathe des Monts Duddy receives his other lessons in the class structure of society. When he is working as a waiter at Rubin's resort, the other waiters are college students on vacation; they look down on him for his vulgarity and resort to dirty means to cheat him. He finds himself isolated from those from more prosperous families and his singing is never joined by the others (67). As a result, he is very sensitive to his family's status: "You think I have to be a moron because my old man is a taxi driver? My brother's going to be a doctor" (23). "At the parochial school until he was thirteen years old Duddy met many boys who came from families that were much better off than his own and on the least pretext he fought with them" (50). But

after he enters society, he fights not to defend himself physically but to raise his social status. Haunted by what his grandfather says, Duddy is determined to be a somebody and sets about earning money to realize his final goal: to possess some land. The redefinition of Duddy's enemies shows that only childish and immature people fight against the rich while decent and sensitive people fight to get rid of poverty.

David Sheps describes the capitalist trajectory of this text: "Richler's theme is that of the attempted rise from rags to riches...the maximizing of one's power through the opportunities of the market or the syndrome of the 'careers open to talent' which [the capitalist system offers]" (5). Further, he observes, "It is a truism that the novel is specifically the literary form which is structured by the sense of time and movement as progressive, qualitative change, i.e. the notion that time must not be wasted and that the measurement of time should also measure changes in the person's status or situation...Naturally [the novel] reflects a society where social mobility and the idea of self-development are both possible and social psychological imperatives. His young men are in a hurry or on the make" (6). Richler shows that under the capitalist system that protects the private possession of property, any dream can be realized. Duddy is a young man on the make who has a dream. This is admirably shown when he first sees the lake that he determines he will possess.

[I]n his mind's eye it was not only already his but the children's camp and the hotel were already going up. On the far side there was a farm reserved for his grandfather.

Once the land was his, and he would get it if it took him twenty years, he could raise money for construction by incorporating the project and selling shares. He would never surrender control, of course.

"Do you trust me, Yvette?"

"Yes."

"I want to buy this lake."

She didn't laugh.

"I'm going to build a children's camp and a hotel here. I want to make a town. Ste. Agathe is getting very crowded and five years from now people will be looking for other places to go."

'Tha's true.'

"A man without land is nobody," he said.

Yvette felt that his forehead was hot. (99-100)

After Duddy gets the map of the land around the lake, he "kept it locked in a desk drawer. A week after it had arrived, the map was already greasy from too much

handling. Sometimes Duddy would wake at two in the morning to drive down to his office, and study the map until he could no longer keep his eye open” (120).

Under this author’s pen, the attraction to social status and family reputation, which can be obtained by having one’s private property, is bigger than anything else because a family’s decent survival is more important than anything else. Besides, one is duty bound to guide one’s loved ones to take a right path. Richler shows that, like his father Simcha, Uncle Benjy takes painful efforts to help his brother’s son get a decent profession. “Lennie never wanted to be a doctor. [Benjy] forced him.” Benjy says to Duddy, ‘I did my best for that boy...If I’d left it to your father to bring him up he would be driving a taxi today’” (243). The author has a taxi driver, Duddy’s father, Max, tell how dangerous and risky it is to drive a taxi, especially at night, a job quite similar to standing below a faulty derrick, being sucked by “mosquitoes.”

Uncle Benjy plays a crucial role in making Duddy stick to his pursuit at the critical moment. Before his death, Uncle Benjy “waited by the window for [Duddy] day after day” (256). He writes to Duddy to remind him of his responsibility to continue the family line. “Duddel, you’re the head of the Kravitz family now whether you like it or not... What I have left for you is my house...But that bequest is conditional... You are not allowed to sell it” (280). By imposing this condition, Uncle Benjy makes sure that the status and private property of the Kravitz family will not be lost but kept secure and growing. Duddy reads the letter at the time when his dream is derailed, his worker Virgil’ has suffered an accident, he is bankrupt, and has given up his pursuit of land. However, his new desire for more land is inspired by Uncle Benjy’s letter that advises him to “be a gentleman.” The letter is like a guiding light that makes Duddy wake up from his confusing and lifeless state. Right after he reads the letter, he goes to see his land that he has almost forgotten since Virgil’s accident and he is full of ambitions again:

Duddy walked the length of the land he owned, tapping a tree here, picking up a piece of paper there...He entered the cool damp woods and climbed to the top of the highest hill overlooking the lake and that land was his too...Around and around he could see all the land he owned and the rest, a third maybe, that was still in other hands. Beyond the woods he could make out the highway and Ste Agathe. ...I was right, he thought. I knew what I was doing. Five years from now this land will be worth a fortune...There could have been a real snazzy hotel and a camp, the finest ski-tow money could buy, canoes, cottages, dancing on the lake, bonfires, a movie, a skating rink, fireworks on Israeli Independence Day, a synagogue, a Western-style saloon, and people saying, ‘Good morning, sir,’ adding in a whisper after he’d passed, ‘That was Kravitz. He built the

whole shebang. They used to say he was a dreamer and he'd never make it.'
(281)

Through Duddy's success, the author shows that pro-Communist teachers like Mr. MacPherson can make nothing out of Duddy because their empty dreams and radical beliefs about social change through education as "usually done in movies about delinquents," fail to make any students into anything but a group of hooligans; but Grandpa Simcha's one simple remark, "A man without land is nobody," has sent Duddy on the way to becoming somebody, and a responsible uncle's reminder has prevented Duddy from slipping down the social ladder, falling to the bottom of society and becoming dependent on the work and property of others. He is set again on the track for making a decent living. Richler's view here is that Communist ideals cannot solve any social problems but can cause the collapse of the social order, while capitalist dreams, on the other hand, can turn a hooligan into a somebody.

Section Four: A Capitalist can Benefit Humankind After Liberating Himself and His Family

1. A natural law: survival of the fittest

While Richler asserts in his non-fiction writing that capitalism works best and engages the reader sympathetically on behalf of Duddy's dream of becoming "somebody," he simultaneously shows another side of capitalism as Duddy works to make his dream a reality. In the early part of the novel, Richler, the satirist, entertains his readers with a comic portrayal of Montreal's Jewish community, particularly from the point of view of adolescence. But as he describes how Duddy begins to realize his goals, modeling himself on the ruthless Jerry Dingleman, Boy Wonder, Richler reveals the potentially dark side of what is required to be successful in a capitalist society.

This negative side to capitalism can be related to social Darwinism, a term coined in the late 19th century to describe the idea that humans, like animals and plants, compete in a struggle for existence in which natural selection results in "survival of the fittest." Some social Darwinists argue that governments should not interfere with human competition by attempting to regulate the economy or cure social ills such as poverty. Instead, they advocate a laissez-faire political and economic system that favors competition and self-interest in social and business affairs. Social Darwinism was

rarely cited after World War Two, but it had helped shape the pattern of thought in the capitalist world, and its influence is still recognizable, even today, and we can see its residue asserted in Richler's novel.

Contemporary Social Darwinism insists that the individual is completely self-centered, and one hundred percent self motivated by selfish gain, or for the gain of his group. In this light, notions of altruism are thus considered to be traits of weakness. In *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, Mr. Cohen, the novel's most articulate capitalist, states that it is natural to resort to some immoral or illegal means in the developing stage of capitalism:

‘Duddy, it’s not easy to earn a living. If you went out in the trade and asked about me there are lots of men who would tell you Cohen is a lousy son-of-a-bitch. You think I’ve never had troubles? There’s not one successful businessman I know, Duddy, who hasn’t got something locked in the closet. It’s either that or you go under, so decide right now. You’re going to drive a taxi all your life or build a house like this and spend the winters in Miami.’
(266)

The author implies that without resorting to some tricks, most capitalists could not have come into being. The economy is a natural event and needs no guidance in its evolution and capitalists can do whatever they like to achieve their goals.

Social Darwinists propose arguments that justify imbalances of power between individuals, races, and nations because they consider some people more fit to survive than others. Therefore, social Darwinism gives a moral justification for rejecting social insurance. "In America," says Robert Bork, "'the rich' are overwhelmingly people – entrepreneurs, small businessmen, corporate executives, doctors, lawyers, etc. – who have gained their higher incomes through intelligence, imagination, and hard work" (Bork 88). In the novel, Mr. Cohen tells Duddy exactly the same thing, "'You know I once nearly went to jail, Duddy? I came this close,' he said, 'but I had a partner and he wasn't as smart as me so he went to jail instead. He did two years for receiving stolen goods and all that time I took care of his wife. When he got out he yelled his head off at me. He picked up a knife to me. But I didn't feel bad because I know that if he had been smarter than me I would have been the one to go to jail, but I have got a family and I take damned good care of them'" (267). Later, the author puts Duddy into the rank of the fittest and smartest and at the same time launches his critique of the system. To save money, Duddy gets a second-hand truck at a very low price and tries to sell it to Virgil for one thousand dollars. When blamed by Yvette for taking advantage of Virgil,

Duddy says, “I’m smart. Can I help it?”” (216) The author shows that the rich are rich because they are fit to survive. In nature, only the fittest survived—so too in the marketplace. This form of justification was enthusiastically adopted by many American businessmen as scientific proof of their superiority, but in the exploitation of weaker, sympathetic characters in the novel, Richler reveals the darker side to this economic philosophy.

Social Darwinism provided a justification for the more exploitative forms of capitalism in which workers were grossly underpaid, sometimes a few pennies a day for long hours of backbreaking labor, and made to work in the most harsh conditions. Social Darwinism thereby offered a perfect moral justification for America’s Gilded Age, when robber barons controlled much of American industry, the gap between rich and poor turned into a chasm, urban slums festered, and politicians were bought off by the wealthy. It allowed John D. Rockefeller, for example, to claim that the fortune he accumulated through the giant Standard Oil Trust was “merely a survival of the fittest, ... the working out of a law of nature and a law of God.” Now that the rich and powerful are better adapted to the social and economic climate of the time, the concept of natural selection allowed Richler to show that it seemed natural, normal, and proper for the strong to thrive at the expense of the weak. To the author, that is exactly what goes on in nature every day. In *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, the author shows that, to be successful, no one can avoid the cruel stage of the initial capital accumulation, as proven by Mr. Cohen’s story. He tells Duddy,

‘In my yard once there was an accident with the derrick and a *goy* got killed. The derrick was on its last legs and I got it cheap. So? I was working day and night then like you. It was the best derrick I could afford. I’m no monster. I had bad dreams...I cried too. But you know what I thought to myself. Moishie - I thought to myself - your wife’s got one in the oven. A boy maybe [to continue his family line and inherit his property]. When that boy grows up do you want him to have to stand under faulty derricks for a lousy thirty-five bucks a week? No. Then pull yourself together, Moishie, and stop being a woman. Make yourself hard.’ (267)

Cohen explains further: “‘My attitude even to my oldest and dearest customer is this,’ he said, making a throat-cutting gesture. ‘If I thought he’d be good for half a cent more a ton I’d squeeze it out of him. A plague on all the *goyim*, that’s my motto’” (268). According to the author, it is logical and natural for the world to be divided into classes. “‘Whatever you want to do, don’t stand under any faulty derricks for thirty-five bucks a

week. That's how people get killed...It's a battlefield, [Cohen] thought, it sure is. But you and I, Duddy, we are officers, and that makes it even harder... We're captains of our souls, so to speak, and they're the cabin boys. Cabin boys, poor kids, often get left standing on the burning deck...It's a battlefield. I didn't make it (I was asked). I've got to live, that's all'" (268).

According to Cohen, divisions are on both economic and racial lines: he says the poor or Communists would do the same thing as the Nazis did. "'Given the chance [Virgil] would have crippled you,' he shouted, 'or thrown you into a furnace like six million others.' 'Jeez' Duddy said. 'Wait a minute. Virgie is not a Nazi.'... 'They're all Nazis. You scrape down deep enough and you'll see. Up to here, Duddy,' he said, repeating his throat-cutting gesture." (268). It is implied that Communists and Nazis are of the same nature. What Cohen says echoes what the former Chinese communist party Chairman Mao Tse-Tong said about what Communists should or would do, "A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another" (Mao 12).

Violence is the means Communists will resort to in order to overthrow the capitalist system. Virgil looks like a mild and gentle person and has been helped and taken care of by his boss Duddy, who, for example, lets him live in his bedroom without charge, but Virgil's magazine contains a lot of Communist and socialist propaganda: "Next issue: A Biography of Jos. V Stalin; A SPECTRE IS HAUNTING EUROPE" (271). In the Editor's corner, there is such stimulating content as "United we stand--- Divided we fail. It's time to get in there and start pitching, comrades" (272). Part of a different editorial reads like this: "They all use publicity. We don't and why not? Because we're not organized yet. We don't meet and form pressure groups. If the Communists can have an *International* so can we... According to Senator McCarthy there are plenty of commies and homos in the State Department. There must be some epileptics too" (273). In quoting from these magazines, Richler satirizes vehement adherence to any cause. On a personal level, Virgil's identification with his epilepsy renders him a distorted and pathetic figure; on a public level, poor people, communists, and those who are discriminated against, given a chance, will do the same illegal things as capitalists do. Virgil does illegal things within his ability, such as smuggling ten gambling machines from the U.S. to Canada. Further, the poor, even often helped by

those a little better off than themselves or by the rich, do not feel grateful, but jealous or resentful. For example, Grandpa Simcha has helped many people, but “those who had broken down in the shop and still more those who owed him money they couldn’t repay...wished bad luck [on his son] Benjy” (47). When time is ripe, the poor will take up arms to kill those who have helped them before.

Richler lets Uncle Benjy expound on human nature to expose the theory of the survival of the fittest. “A boy can be two, three, four potential people, but a man is only one. He murders the others” (280). Richler’s observation is that all human beings live in this world under the same natural law, the survival of the fittest. It is human nature to struggle for a better living within limited space and resources, and capitalism is the natural result of such a struggle. Uncle Benjy’s “man” includes all men, both capitalist men and Communist men. All this once again echoes Richler’s “closely held personal standard of values” that it is not a good idea to get rid of the capitalist system despite its dark sides to set up another one with more injustices, such as a Communist system.

Besides, capitalism could have never come into being if those desiring to establish themselves had held back when their pursuit conflicted with morality. Richler has Jerry Dingleman, the capitalist Boy Wonder in the novel, say of Simcha, ““Those old men. Sitting in their dark cramped ghetto corners they wrote the most mawkish school-girlish stuff about green fields and sky...Your grandfather doesn’t want any land. He wouldn’t know what to do with it...They want to die in the same suffocating way they lived, bent over a last or a cutting table or in a freezing junk yard shack”” (312). This implies that people like Simcha have been pursuing an empty dream. Duddy comes to the same conclusion, too, as he says to Simcha, ““You don’t want a farm. You never have. You’re scared stiff of the country and you want to die in that stinky old shoe repair shop.”” Upon hearing this, “Simcha took a deep breath” (315). If Uncle Benjy and Duddy had done things the same way as Simcha does, they might have been working in the same repair shop or driving a taxi. The Kravitz family would not have its own decent property or land but a backyard with poor soil covered by Simcha’s “hopeless vegetables” (90).

Finally, Richler again uses a decent man’s reaction to Duddy’s pursuit to both justify and condemn the capitalist means for their ends. Many critics point out that Simcha totally condemns Duddy’s way of getting the money to purchase the land and refuses to have anything to do with Duddy. But I would argue that Simcha supports Duddy’s pursuit not only in the beginning but also, to a certain degree, at the end of the

novel. The ending, contrary to many critics' perception, shows Simcha's mixed reaction to the means of capital accumulation. Simcha is a very proud and firm person. He sticks to his pride and beliefs and "couldn't even go to see Uncle Benjy before he died." As Duddy says, "You're just too goddam proud to live, you..." (315). If he totally condemned Duddy's way of getting the money, his pride would prevent him from coming to see the land. But after Duddy has purchased all the land around the lake, Grandpa Simcha, having already heard of Duddy's way of getting the money, also comes with the other family members to see the land. This shows that what is more important to the old man is not the means by which Duddy got money, but to see with his own eyes the land his grandson has got and to see that Duddy has made the old generation's dream come true. Otherwise, he might have chosen not to come and have refused to see Duddy anymore just as he refuses to see his dying son Benjy.

However, after seeing the land, the old man refuses to come out of the car. He breaks down; Lennie says, "Would you believe it...[Simcha's] crying. I thought I'd never live to see the day..." (316). Nobody in the family has seen Simcha crying before. Even at Uncle Benjy's funeral, "Simcha watched without tears when they lowered the coffin into the earth. But when Duddy freed his hand from his grandfather he saw that the palm was cut and bleeding and he wrapped a handkerchief round it" (256). This shows that Simcha, who holds firm to his attitude and pride, does not cry in front of the person he does not forgive. But he cries now in front of Duddy and other family members because Duddy has made his dream come true, because the Kravitz family has established itself and because his sons and grandsons will be gentlemen and not have to suffer like those struggling at the bottom of society. He has given up his pride in front of Duddy's success. But his refusing to come out of the car shows his mixed feelings, so his tears are puzzling ones as well. Richler leaves the reader to decide if the honest and decent character Simcha has given in and accepted with regret the theory of Darwin's social survival of the fittest.

2. Capital accumulation is mainly based on hard work and painstaking efforts

One of the consistent themes in the novel is that one has to work hard if one wants to be somebody. Capitalists have built up their wealth mainly by working hard. Richler has created the image of an ambitious young capitalist, Duddy Kravitz, who started working at a very early age and "had been putting money in the bank since he

was eleven" (75). He "took his first regular job at the age of thirteen" (56). While working at a resort, Duddy "was so quick in the dining room that...Mr. Rubin gave him three extra tables" (68). Besides, he "hung around the card tables and picked up additional tips running errands for the players" (77).

Capitalists in this novel do not rely on luck but are ambitious, aiming high: "At night, lying exhausted on his cot, Duddy realized how little money he had in big business terms...He wanted...to own his own land and to be rich, a somebody." At the age of seventeen and a half, he is determined that "he didn't want to wait on tables for the rest of his life. He needed a stake" (75). To realize his dreams, he burns his candle at both ends: he drives his father's taxi at night and "during day he got a job selling liquid soap and toilet supplies to factories" (113). He has a clear target in his mind: He goes to see his lake when he has a fever; his eyes "were swollen and his cheeks were burning red...Duddy fainted and had to be carried into his room, but the next morning he was gone before anyone was up" (101). When he has to work the whole night to drive a hundred and fifty miles to pick the pinball machines, he has to take pills to keep himself awake. "One of his ears, he was sure, was frozen, and his eyes were bloodshot. There was a ringing inside his head" (207). Virgil says, "You're remarkable, Mr. Kravitz. You have a great fighting spirit" (213). He works "too hard" and "there's nothing but bones" (91) in him.

Because of his hard work on his way to becoming a capitalist, Duddy, as local newspapers mention, is "soon to celebrate his first year in show biz, has three original productions under his belt already, and his plans for the future include a feature-length comedy production with our town's Cuckoo Kaplan...*Howdy dood it? 'I work eighteen hours a day,' he says, 'and if I drive my staff hard they know I've always got my shnozolla to the grindstone too.'* How old is he? Nineteen! *So don't let any socialist sad-sacks tell you it's no longer possible to go from rags-to-riches in this country...* Born and bred on St Urbain Street, Duddy was working as waiter not many months ago" (223-24).

Richler shows that to obtain wealth, capitalists not only need to work hard but also take pains to work out a carefully made plan to follow. Duddy begins to have some business ideas when very young, such as trying to set himself up in the movie rental business, to make color movies of weddings, and to publish a Ste Agathe resort newspaper (74). He told his friend Cuckoo that he is not "the kind of a jerk who walks around deaf and dumb. I keep my eyes peeled.' And already Duddy had plenty of

ideas” (76). For example, in order to learn how to run a children’s camp, Duddy “had a long chat with Grossman, the owner of the Camp Forest Land” and plans to make a film there so that he would have an opportunity to see the camp from the inside to learn some first hand experience (162). Duddy is good at making contacts and grasps every opportunity to do business. On his way to Toronto to look for his brother, he “exchanges cards with eight guys” (181). Duddy also takes a course in business administration. His plan is so well carried out that Virgil says, “Duddy can do anything” (228). Many businessmen call him “Some kid, Some operator” (202). ““Intellectual stimulation is good for you,’ Duddy said. ‘I read in Fortune where nowadays executives go to the university in the summer to read up on philosophy and shit like that. It broadens you’” (226).

Last but not least, Richler has Duddy try many different means to become a gentleman. Duddy begins to read poems. Soon his apartment “had become a gathering place for bohemians...Duddy bought Beethoven’s nine symphonies on long playing records and listened to them in order...He also began to collect Schubert and Mozart and Brahms” (224). To refine himself further, Duddy pursues contact with intellectuals, such as his former classmate, Hersh, now a writer. Duddy “ran up enormous food and liquor bills but Hersh’s crowd gave him more pleasure than he had before” (227). He tries to get into the upper social circle and “was determined to make friends with the mayor there and he succeeded” (223), and pretty soon he often goes to dinner with Mr. Hugh Thomas Calder, who is on the board of governors at McGill University. Richler observes that capitalists not only make money but are often gentlemen or try hard to become gentlemen.

Richler seems to be saying then that since the wealth of the capitalists comes from hard work and painstaking efforts and is their private property, it is not fair to smash the capitalist system and take away their property. They are entitled to enjoy the fruit of their hard work and protect it. This view is voiced in *The Acrobats* by Barney, an American tourist of the 1950s, who embodies the concept of capitalism. He openly declares his beliefs to the reader: “I don’t see why if I worked so hard all my life so that I could have it easy when I was old I should give my money to guys who were just too lazy to sweat like me. Do you think Communism is fair? It’s sort of robbery in a way’ (149). In *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, this concept of private ownership is emphasized again and again: “It had cost [Cohen] fifty thousand dollars to build the house...It’s my house, he thought, and I can do what I want here” (269). After Duddy

has purchased his land, “Its’ mine, he thought. This is my land and my water, and he looked around for an interloper so that he could say, ‘I’m sorry, there’s no trespassing allowed here’” (281). The property owners have the right to enjoy their property and protect it from being taken away by those like Communists.

3. Family values: Capitalists and pro-capitalists weed their own gardens

In *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, Richler repeatedly puts forward his response to social problems, namely, traditional values over ideological solutions. What is important is not involvement in ideologies and alliances but adherence to ‘small virtues’ (215), to the traditional values of honesty, goodness, and honor in one’s everyday relationship with one’s fellow man. Duddy’s remarkable love for and willingness to help the members of his family both in their daily life and at critical moments echo Richler’s motif: ordinary human beings should devote their time and energy to the well being of themselves and that of their close relatives, namely, weeding their own garden instead of sacrificing themselves for the benefit of the whole of mankind as Communists have advocated while their backyard fills with ‘weeds.’ The author tries to show that when people take care of their own affairs, the system will naturally stabilize itself.

Again, Richler’s weeding the garden story starts with the same decent man, Grandfather Simcha. He advocates the unity of his “small family,” telling Duddy to forgive his uncle Benjy, who treats Duddy badly. This is echoed by his son, Max: “‘We’re loyal’” and by his grandson, Lennie: “‘We’re a small family...But we stick together.’” The author emphasizes again and again that Duddy does not take the land as his own but as the property of the whole Kravitz family. He tells his father, “‘A whole lake.’ It’s gonna be ours—its gonna belong to all of us – and you’ll be able to retire. We’ll be rich’” (297).

Family is important above all other social relations. A decent person should tolerate family members so that a family will not split but remain united. Simcha’s wife “spoke to him sharply when others were present, but Simcha did not complain” (46). “Once Moishe Katansky, a new comer, dared to sympathize with Simcha Kravitz about his marriage, and Simcha looked up from the last and stared at him so severely that Katansky understood and did not return to the shop for many months” (46). His neighbors wonder, “‘He’s only a shoemaker...so why does he act so superior?’” (46)

The author tries to show that Simcha tolerates his wife to maintain the family unity. His superior behavior can prevent split and divorce.

Uncle Benjy actually follows his father Simcha's example closely. His wife Ida stays away from him most of the time and is not faithful to him, but he tries to keep the family together. We learn "there was something noble about Benjy. That he told his father he was impotent because he loved and wanted to protect" (238) his infertile wife, who says, "Why wouldn't he leave me if he wanted a child so badly? He hasn't got a mistress either. He never had one. He couldn't do that to me, he said, and then he'd forgive me all my little affairs" (242). Not only does Benjy take a good care of her and forgive her during his life time but he leaves her half of his factory and arranges "a regular income" (280) for her before his death. Besides, Uncle Benjy also takes good care of those in the Kravitz family. He has put his "heart into educating Lennie" (183). When Lennie is missing, Uncle Benjy becomes very worried and cannot sleep at all and his eyes become "heavy and bloodshot." Besides, Uncle Benjy leaves "enough [money] to set Lennie up in practice" (280). Before his death, Uncle Benjy asks Duddy to take over his duty to take care of the whole Kravitz family: "There's your father and Lennie and Ida and soon, I hope there will be more. You're got to love them, Duddel. You're got to take them to your heart no matter what. They're the family, remember, and to see only their faults is to look at them like a stranger" (279).

Then Richler lets Duddy continue the theme of weeding gardens, taking responsibility and forgiving the loved ones. He was only six when his mother died. When he is at home, sick with a high fever, nobody takes care of him (107). Nonetheless, Duddy is passionately devoted to his family. On the night after he has been cheated and lost three hundred dollars, the fruit of his whole summer's work, at the most depressing moment when he walks through "hopeless vegetable patches," (90), Duddy "was reminded of his grandfather and St Dominique Street, and he promised himself to send the old man a postcard" (91). He thoughtfully buys what the old man likes: "a pair of blue overalls, a couple of dozen seed packages, and a pair of gardening shears" (108). When he purchases the lake area, "On the far side there was [the greenest field] reserved for his grandfather" (99); all the gifts are related to the garden, the symbol of a private family and dedication to one's family's well being and private interests. Duddy's father "hadn't treated him as well as Lennie" (89). But Duddy still "bought [his father] half a dozen sports shirts...one of them is hand-woven"(107). While on a trip, "he sent postcards to his father and Lennie" (139). When Lennie wants

to borrow ten dollars from him, Duddy “handed three tens.” When Lennie is in trouble and runs away from Montreal after he has been involved in a botched abortion on a Westmount rich girl, Duddy at once responds and mobilizes the friends of Lennie, who “had never mentioned that he had a brother” (165). Mr. Calder says, “Well, you can tell him for me that he’s lucky to have you for a brother” (198). When he has found Lennie, Duddy “took the stairs two at a time” rushing to see Lennie. That night, while sharing a bed with Lennie, “Duddy huddled close to him, embracing Lennie’s waist. Twice Lennie moved away, embarrassed and uncomfortable, but each time Duddy pulled tighter to him again” (188).”

Although Uncle Benjy treats Lennie much better than Duddy, when he is struck by cancer, Duddy feels “appalled by the thought of his uncle’s death.” He sets out on a long journey to bring back his wife, Aunt Ida, although he is so busy that he can scarcely leave his business at all. When a doctor comes to see Uncle Benjy, “Without thinking Duddy seized the doctor, ‘Don’t let him die,’ he shouted. ‘He’s my uncle” (245). Blood is thicker than water, and family connection is stronger than that of the community at large. Duddy feels duty bound to keep the family together by loving and helping them. Richler has set Duddy up as an example for others to follow in the late forties and early fifties, when Communist ideals were still around and many people simply left their loved ones uncared for and dedicated themselves to liberating the whole of humankind. According to the author, salvation is personal and one should take care of one’s own garden and take care of one’s loved ones instead of resorting to impractical and empty Communist movements to solve social problems.

4. Capitalists help to liberate humankind after getting and taking care of their own garden

Different from Communists or pro-Communists like Mr. Friar and Mr. McPherson, burdens to society, who can neither liberate humankind nor themselves, Richler’s capitalists reach out to help those in need once their own gardens and their loved ones’ personal interests are taken care of. For example, Mr. Cohen says, “The more money I make the better care I take of my own, the more I’m able to contribute to our hospital, the building of Israel, and other worthy causes” (268). Uncle Benjy remembers his “own days as a hungry salesman in the mountains and how “I struggled for my first little factory” (280). But after he has established himself, he pays back to society. He pays his workers the highest wages and is lenient to them. He has also “left

something for student scholarships” (280). As a result, he is respected by his workers, who all attend his funeral.

Later, Richler’s young capitalist to be, Duddy, echoes the same view: “Yvette, you are looking at the man who is going to build a town where only bugs and bullshit was before. I’m going to create jobs. Jeez, I’m a public benefactor...’ He had spoken with such quiet and certainty that she began to doubt herself” (317). As a matter of fact, even before he becomes a capitalist, Duddy takes good care of Virgil. Virgil has never had an apartment of his own but lives in Duddy’s bedroom for free, which has caused a lot of inconvenience to Duddy and Yvette because these two lovers cannot live in the same bedroom anymore. “When it was possible, Duddy showed films free of charge, for instance, at the Knights of Pythias evening for under-privileged kids or any charity event in Ste Agathe. Lots of his free showings got him mentioned in *Mel West’s What’s What* and once he got a whole paragraph to himself. It read: ‘A MONTREALER WITH A HEART: Up-and-coming cineman Duddy Kravitz informs me he’s rarin’ to show movies free any time, anywhere, if the cause is worthy” (223).

Even when dreaming about his success, Duddy imagines how he will be respected because of his contribution to charity: “There could be his grandfather on the farm and everybody saying how Duddy was the easiest touch in town, allowing ten St Urbain Street boys into the camp free each season, helping out Rubin with his mortgage after the fire there, paying a head-shrinker fortunes to make a man out of Irwin Shubert, his enemy of old (‘throwing good money after bad,’ people said), building a special house for the epileptic who had been hurt working for him in those bygone days of his struggles, and giving so many benefit nights for worthy causes” (282). Under this author’s pen, when compared with the Communist Mr. Friar, who lives on others, capitalists like Mr. Cohen, Uncle Benjy and Duddy Kravitz are contributing in concrete ways to help make society a better place.

Section Five: The New Capitalist Is Somebody

Fundamentally, in *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, Richler continues the message he first put forward in *The Acrobats* and *A Choice of Enemies*: with first God, then gold, then Marx all gone, where should people turn? Richler answers this question by creating a new kind of capitalist who is better than the old one symbolized by the Boy Wonder.

Because of its corruption, the old capitalist system lost its appeal for many people; it is represented by the deformed body of the monstrous Jerry Dingleman, whose moral degeneration is paralleled in his physical deterioration:

His shoulder and chest developed enormously and his legs dwindled to thin bony sticks. He put on lots of weight. Everywhere he went the Boy Wonder huffed and puffed and had to wipe the sweat from the back of his rolled hairy neck with a handkerchief. The bony head suddenly seemed massive. The grey inquisitor's eyes, whether hidden behind dark glasses - an affection he abhorred - or flashing under rimless ones, unfailingly led people to look over his shoulder or down at the floor. His curly black hair had dried. The mouth began to turn down sharply at the corners. But the most noticeable and unexplained change was in the flesh of his face. After his illness it turned red and wet and shiny. (132)

The Boy Wonder's physical abnormalities are used to symbolize a spiritual and moral ugliness. According to Woodcock, "The Boy Wonder is a key figure in Richler's succession of dark presences...within the *Apprenticeship* he has a special importance not merely for the polarity of characters his presence establishes, but also for his changing role as Duddy's exemplar" (Woodcock 2, 45). He remains throughout the novel a vicious character, and his dark presence is used as a foil to make Duddy's behaviors more human and more acceptable. Namely, in the capitalist system, the old generation of capitalists is being replaced by a new generation of capitalists who dwarf the old ones and bring value back to the system. Through Duddy's image, Richler tries to create a world without Communists but filled with the new kind of benevolent capitalists.

Richler has purposely, step by step, set up Duddy's positive sides, thereby to let the readers see the positive sides of the new capitalist. According to David Sheps, "The world of Duddy Kravitz is whole, and Duddy himself, while not particularly likeable, is very much alive. He wins readers to his side, moreover, because his reaction to traditions is a positive one. The control he wants, the mastery to which he is apprenticed, is a valid aim. His iconoclasm is of value not for itself, but because it is a route towards inhabiting a new world and fulfilling a social individuality" (Sheps 7).

Richler has Uncle Benji admit his wrong perceptions of Duddy: "I was wrong because there was more, much more... There's more to you than mere money-lust... the fine, intelligent boy underneath your grandfather, bless him, saw" (280). "God help me but I wish I'd see what your Zeyda saw" (245). What does the author want us, positioned with Grandpa Simcha, to see in Duddy?

1. Childhood mischief versus the harsh environment

The author tries to blame the environment for some of Duddy's early behavior. It is true that, in his childhood, Duddy is ruthless towards some teachers and is the leader of mischief in his class. But it is shown that Duddy is not as bad as he first seemed to be. First, Duddy's mischief is used to show the result of the lack of order caused by some so-called pro-Communist or socialist teachers who give up the physical punishment to maintain order. Second, Richler puts Duddy into a harsh world to let readers weigh Duddy's responsibility for his cruel and selfish actions against his upbringing and environment: "Where he sprung from the boys grew up dirty and sad, spiky also, like grass beside the railroad tracks" (46). He has no mother, and his father, a part-time pimp, has given him no positive moral foundation, teaching him to admire nothing but the questionable success of the Boy Wonder. Victor Ramraj writes that "left alone, Duddy responds to his society as a jungle where one must struggle to survive...but when he leaves school for the large society, he himself confronts exploitation and ridicule" (32-33). The episode at Rubin's serves, in a sense, to elicit our sympathy for the same character whom we were invited to condemn in the first chapters of the novel. Arnold Davidson puts the case this way: "Unless he pushes, he is pushed. His aggressiveness, then, is merely a survival mechanism, a necessary attribute of someone who does not reap the benefits of a rich uncle, a good address, or a university scholarship. The misadventures at Rubin's also show Duddy's vulnerabilities—his pathetic desire to be liked, to 'be somebody.' His aggressiveness parallels his insecurity" (86). Richler deliberately and favorably compares Duddy's conduct with that of the snobbish McGill student Irwin, whose acts are full of malice and that of Linda as reflected in Duddy's reaction to her:

Look at me, he thought, take a good look because maybe I'm dirt now. Maybe I've never been to Paris and I don't know a painter from a horse's ass. I can't play tennis like the other guys here, but I don't go around spilling ketchup in other guy's beds either. I don't trick guys into crazy promises when they're drunk. I don't speak dirty like you either. You make fun of your father. You don't like him...But he sends you to Europe and Mexico. (94)

This suggests that in his treatment of others Duddy is a decent boy and is morally much better than many of his age. The author has laid a foundation to some extent to justify Duddy's future actions in obtaining land.

2. Dignified and morally sound

Many critics react negatively to the image of Duddy Kravitz. For example, D.J. Dooley, writing in the *Dalhousie Review*, “found Duddy ‘utterly without decency and dismissed the novel on moral as much as stylistic grounds’” (George Woodcock 17). He sees the protagonist as a human disaster who, far from achieving any real success, “destroyed himself and...those who loved him.” To many critics, to reach his goal, Duddy has been ruthless towards those outside his family. To him they are merely tools to be used to reach his end. However, what those critics see is but part of what Richler intends to demonstrate through the character of Duddy, in whose portrait, we find the author’s ambivalent treatment of the themes: “his tendency to mock and at the same time to accommodate human shortcomings and his tolerance and censure of...Duddy Kravits, whom he has admitted, he both admires and despises” (Ramraj 1). On the one hand, Richler makes clear the limitations of capitalism. Essentially, the novel reflects its title. What dominates the book is an apprenticeship, a process of learning about the complexities of survival and human relationships. In his struggle to become “somebody,” Duddy’s means of achieving his goal reveal some of the harsh, often cruel practices engaged in to be successful in a capitalist society. On the other hand, Richler observes that new capitalists are not without feelings. In my perception, what Richler admires in Duddy outweighs what he despises.

Outside of his family circle, Duddy is, most of the time, a decent man in his relationship with those around him. His treatment of Yvette is a sound one morally. On the surface, Yvette is no more than a convenience, an object. He says she is his girl Friday. But he treats Yvette very honestly and does not cheat on her, telling her that “he might have to marry a rich woman if he could get one, but if she helped him he would always look after her and she would get a share in the profits” (100). As a matter of fact, gradually, Duddy falls in love with her so deeply that whenever something happens between them, he suffers emotionally. Besides, Duddy has his principles; though he says he needs to marry a rich woman for money and goes out with Linda, whose father is rich, when he finds out Linda cheats on him with Irwin, he stays away from her and never wants to have anything to do with her again.

In the case of Virgil, Duddy is not a pusher all the time, and he does not stick to his mistake. When Yvette blames him for taking advantage of Virgil by selling an old truck to him for one thousand dollars and refuses to see him, Duddy tries to raise

Virgil's pay and purposely loses five dollars to Virgil in a gambling game. Finally he "handed Virgil a cheque for the difference" (219). Moreover, it is not totally Duddy's fault when Virgil gets into an accident while working for Duddy. Virgil is thrilled at the offer of a job: his "eyes filled with excitement. 'When could you know definitely?' he asked, his fists clenched" (215) because, as he had explained to Duddy, as an epileptic, he could not find a job: "Who would take a chance on me as a waiter?" (208) "That's why I started out in the pinball machine business in the Bronx, you know. Nobody would hire me so I had to go into business for myself" (209). Duddy has taken a chance in treating Virgil as a normal human being. Virgil "was happy to get the job. [Duddy] didn't force it on him. 'Crossing the street is dangerous. You've got to live. A guy takes chances'" (248). But after the accident, Duddy takes responsibility right away, "'I'd take care of him for the rest of his life,' he said. 'He'll never want for anything. I swear it...He's my friend too'" (248). "Every Friday he sent Virgil his cheque" (253).

Richler further shows that Duddy is not an indifferent and cold-blooded person. Virgil's accident and Yvette's subsequent withdrawal throw Duddy into a mental and spiritual collapse. In order to cope with massive guilt, he unconsciously punishes himself. He does not eat or sleep; he never wants to go out and experiences a lot of nightmares. Very often he "wept bitterly before he sunk into a stupor again" (259). He fails to keep appointments and almost deliberately offends all of his most important clients. For example, he tells the person he has signed a contract with that he cannot stick to it because his heart "bleeds" (254). In a matter of days, Duddy is forced to the edge of bankruptcy and barely stirs from his self-destructive lethargy to recognize the fact that he is ruined. He is surrounded by "creditors, cancelled orders, indignant clients." He even offended one of his most important friends, Mr. Hugh Thomas Calder, "acting like a young man on the verge of a nervous breakdown" (261). His passionate withdrawal from the path to success signals the depth of his sensitivity. Despite all the past evidence to the contrary, this rising capitalist Duddy is human after all. He tells Mr. Cohen, "'Money isn't everything'...'[Virgil] is crippled for life. It's my fault'" (266).

Richler also makes Duddy put off reading Uncle Benjy's letter for several days just to indicate his moral regret and listlessness and lack of interest in anything after Virgil's accident; the author is waiting for a thematically appropriate occasion to introduce the letter reading, according to Ramraj, at a time when he is not possessed by his frantic endeavors to obtain his land; he "has just recovered from his nervous

breakdown—which suggests an apparent rebirth” (Ramraj 37). After he is reunited with Yvette and Virgil, the three of them live like a family: “every day at five-thirty Duddy would wheel Virgil out to meet [Yvette]. Duddy was thin and, it seemed to her, nervously spent. But in a week’s time he was tanned, he had stopped biting his nails and he ate with appetite again. And he was gradually losing his fear of Virgil too” (278).

To make this new capitalist’s image more acceptable, the author even makes Duddy feel regret about his responsibility in the death of Mr. MacPherson’s wife: “I wonder, he thought, if - objectively speaking - I could be blamed for the death of MacPherson’s wife?” “How was I to know that his wife would answer the phone?” he asked, his voice breaking” (263). “If I had known that ...I would never have...” (263). Such “occasional lapses into regret...tend to mitigate the harsher aspects of Duddy’s personality and make us feel more tolerant towards him. George Bowering has remarked...that Richler has the ‘ability to take a basically negative character and to draw a sympathetic picture of him” (Sheps 14).

3. An ambitious end justifies the means

Once the stage is set for Duddy’s positive image, the author sets Duddy to finish his journey to become somebody, a new capitalist. Inspired by his uncle’s letter, once more he is in pursuit of land to become a gentleman. But when one final plot of land must be quickly acquired or else lost to Dingleman, Duddy has no proper means to get money. In Richler’s hand, allowance can be made for Duddy because he has tried every other means of getting money in a vicious world before resorting to stealing from Virgil: he borrows or tries to borrow from Cohen, Aunt Ida, his father, and Hugh Calder; he attempts to blackmail Dingleman; and he sells off the furniture Uncle Benjy left him. Finally, with no choice left, Duddy is driven to an extreme of dishonesty. Although he is regarded by most critics as a monster mainly because he forged Virgil’s cheque, many details in the plot make his action acceptable.

First of all, Virgil, whose loyalty to Duddy is unwavering, would have lent Duddy the money to purchase the final piece of land if Yvette had not intervened as shown by the conversation between Virgil and Yvette.

'Does Duddy need more money?' Virgil asked.
'Don't you say a word,' Yvette said.
'But-'

'You heard me, Virgil.' (301)

Virgil even cries when Duddy tries to borrow money from him and Yvette tells him not to do so, because Virgil finds his loyalty torn between Yvette and Duddy .

Secondly, after forging the cheque, Duddy feels guilty for what he is doing:

But the signed cheque frightened him. He concealed it in his back pocket. I'll wait an hour, he thought, well, three-quarters anyway, and if they show up before then I'll tear up the cheque. If not - Well, they shouldn't leave me alone for that long. Not in my desperate condition.
Duddy waited an hour and a half. . . . (308)

“Such qualms never affected him before.” It is not characteristic of Duddy to wait for Virgil and Yvette to return: when he wants something, he will have it right away. His hesitation shows that he is still waiting for a better way to get the money so that he will not betray his friends. Davidson points out that “He steals outright, and from a sick friend, in order to realize his dream... Even Duddy’s fall, his worst act, is presented through the polarity of two quite different perspectives. He would view the not-quite-authentic thousand-dollar cheque as an aberrant means to an end so manifestly just that it must redeem the means. At the worst, ‘in [his] desperate condition,’ he has succumbed only to irregular borrowing, for he insists that he will repay Virgil later” (99) and intends to provide financially for Virgil once he acquires his land. Besides, he treats Virgil as one of his family, letting Virgil and Yvette live together in his uncle’s big house; he tells Yvette, “Look, I did it for all of us...I had to act quickly, Yvette. I had to think for all of us. What I did was...well, unorthodox ...He’ll get every last cent of his money back whether he likes it or not. And that’s not all either. I’m going to build him a pretty white house” (316). The author tries to show that, because Duddy regards Virgil and Yvette as his own family members, he expects them to support him at this critical moment. Even though this final act terminates the relationship Duddy values most, in the end Duddy’s reaction is one of anger rather than defeat, for he now sees himself as a solitary fighter, betrayed by his friends.

At this point, Richler does force pity on the reader through his writing:

“‘Nobody’s ever interested in my side of the story. I’m all alone’” (315), Duddy shouts after Simcha has confronted him with his ideas. Later, when Yvette tells him she never wants to see him again: “He gave her an anguished look, started to say something, held back, swallowed, shook his fist, and said, his voice filled with wrath, ‘I have to do everything alone. I can see it now. I can trust nobody.’ “We betrayed you, I suppose.”

‘Yes. You did’”(317). Duddy's emotional reaction to both Yvette's anger and Simcha's disappointment indicates that Duddy is not the monster that he is frequently made out to be. What the author says outside the book proves his intention. In 1971 Richler said that running through all his novels, but grasped by almost nobody, was the persistent attempt "to make a case for the ostensibly unsympathetic man" (Cameron 117). And in another place he spoke of "the writer as a kind of loser's advocate," able to stand up for all those the rest of the world considers trash (113). Duddy falls into that category. In an interview with Richard Jagodzinski, Richler says: "I've always liked [Duddy Kravitz] as a character, he has many redeeming features. He had his eye on the main chance and took a lot of shortcuts, but there was an energy to the character and an appetite that I approved of. You can't sit down and write a novel about a character you dislike. There has to be some affection at least" (*FFWD Weekly*, January 22, 1997). As a result, under Richler's pen, "Duddy's naivete does make for his one major crisis of conscience in the novel, and, whether we approve of him or not, through this crisis the author does make us once more at least sympathize with Duddy...because Duddy's insecurities and even his tenderness have always been there" (Davidson 97). Another critic, Warren Tallman, has also found in Duddy a hero for his times, a truly modern man whose frenetic scheming reflects the "accelerated image" that his age demands. Tallman praises Duddy for the honesty of his appetites, for his exuberance. Richler's hero has his own story to tell; even though Duddy laments "'Nobody's ever interested in my side of the story,'" Richler is, and has made readers listen to Duddy and get interested in his story and accept his means. According to Davidson, Duddy Kravitz

is the *pusherke*, the pushy Jew...In Richler's hands; however, the *pusherke* is humanized and understood. He is assessed within the context of his immediate ... neighborhood; within the large context of post-World War II Montreal; within the still larger context of modern North America. In each setting Duddy is a survivor, a swindler with a heart not of gold but of brass. Richler neither castigates nor exonerates Duddy. He neither sentimentalizes nor romanticizes. Instead, Duddy is dispassionately assessed...[He] represents a new twist to the Horatio Alger fable: now the bad boy makes good. (81-82)

It is implied that, like social systems, no human being is perfect, and Duddy is a human character, far more human than monster, with real emotions, strengths and weaknesses related to a universal tale of struggle between the nobler and baser aspirations of every man. In effect, Richler rewrites the American Dream, casting in the hero's role a new

emerging capitalist. With such individuals forming the backbone of the capitalist system, there is no need to smash it and resort to another one with more injustices.

4. The new capitalist dwarfs the old one

For Richler, what is most important is that the new capitalist foundation is based on what honest, wise, and superior Simcha stands for and what the old generations believe in - land and its picturesque beauty. Several passages in the novel evoke the pastoral beauty of Duddy's property and its situation: "Before him spread a still blue lake and on the other side a forest of pine trees. There was not one house on the lake. Some cows grazed on the meadow near the shore and over the next hill there was a cornfield and a silo. There were no other signs of life or construction" (97). And again: "A thin scalp of ice protected the lake and all his fields glittered white and purple and gold under the setting sun. All except the pine trees were bare. It must be pretty in autumn, he thought, when all the leaves are changing colors" (212).

In addition, the new capitalist combines commercial development with the preservation of the land: "On the far side there was a farm reserved for his grandfather" (99), for the people who enjoy working with land, nature, and who value traditions. "Duddy saw where he would put up the hotel and decided that he would not have to clear the wood all in one shot. It's lovely, he thought" (212). When Duddy takes his family to see the land, he tells them, "'Wait till you see the trees I've got there.' 'You're beginning to sound like a real dumb farmer,' Max said. 'What's so special about trees?' 'Aw, you'll love it, Daddy. It's so restful by the lake'" (310).

By contrast, the older capitalist, Dingleman, does illegal things such as smuggling drugs from the United States. He "was connected with an international smuggling organization with an Italian tie-up...[there] was a recapitulation of the gambling house and a police bribery charge" (285). As a result, the police "raided [his] joint...There's going to be a trial" (278). But Duddy has never been engaged in such illegal businesses. Comparatively, Richler's Duddy is never truly evil.

To rectify the social problems and to maintain and improve the old system, Richler tries to identify a new capitalist to replace the old one. He portrays positively Duddy's growth: "The little baby-fat there had been in Duddy's face was gone. He was taller, more broad, and he had no more need to encourage a beard. The boyish craftiness in his eyes had been displaced by tough adult resolution. He was able to sit still longer and he seemed calm and confident. Like his grandfather he now gave the appearance of a man

who held plenty in reserve” (108). He is a positive acquisitive boy in an acquisitive world. Woodcock says:

There is a difference between him and the others, in the sense that he is not locked like them within one of the small cells of habit or prejudice or pretense. He really combines the role of an *ingenu*—for there is a ferocious animal innocence about Duddy—with that of a Max Stirner egoist who, in relentlessly pursuing an aim he has decided is right for him, turns out ironically to be more moral—or moral in a deeper sense—than the people around him, because he is moved by natural and spontaneous desires while they [those like the Boy Wonder] are moved by dead precepts whose validity they have never examined. (38)

Through the negative portraits of communists and pro-communists and socialists and the relatively positive image of Duddy against the old corrupting capitalists, Richler implicitly confirms his view which is repeated again many years later in *Cocksure* through one of his characters, “Remember this, Griffin. The revolution eats its own. Capitalism recreates itself” (Chapter 22), echoing Richler’s compulsion to say in 1956 “what I feel about values and about people living in a time when ...there is no agreement about values” and to emphasize again in 1971 that “from the very beginning, in a faltering way” he had been “most engaged ... with values, and with honour. I would say I’m a moralist, really” (Cameron 124).

In the end of *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, with negative individuals such as the Boy Wonder deteriorating and leaving the historical stage, the world would seem to be a much better place. In the final moment, the old capitalist is pushed off the stage as symbolized by Duddy’s driving Dingleman from his land, ““FASTER, YOU BASTARD. RUN, DINGLEMAN. LET’S SEE YOU RUN ON THOSE STICKS”” (314). Richler lets the once triumphant evil man hobble away, suggesting that the corrupted and paralyzed old capitalist has left the political stage, the new one has taken it, and a new era without the extremes of Communism and corrupted capitalism will prevail.

CONCLUSION

From the portraits of the characters and plot arrangements in some Cold War novels and the critics' perception of them, we can see that many Canadian writers of the time based their writing and criticism on the ideology of upper and middle class concepts. As a result, because of Mordecai Richler's pro-capitalist ideology, the three novels dealt with in the Richler chapter present an absolute denial of Communism and a confirmation of capitalism despite some dark sides of the latter. Objectively speaking, every coin has two sides, and so do Communism and capitalism. As a matter of fact, the capitalist system in western countries has survived not because it is a sound one or because Communism was defeated, but because some socialist and Communist ideas have been gradually adopted by the capitalist countries.

One great project of the late 20th century was the construction of vast welfare states in wealthy nations to protect people against the insecurities of the business cycle and the injustices of unfettered capitalism. The term "welfare state" is believed to have been coined by Archbishop William Temple during the Second World War. Changed attitudes in reaction to the Great Depression and the ruling class's desire to get rid of the strong influence of Communism were instrumental in the move to the welfare state in many countries, a model in which the state assumes primary responsibility for the welfare of its citizens and adopts a more efficient system of ensuring that workers' very basic needs were met. After World War II, spending on welfare in real terms rose under several non-left governments that all unambiguously stated their belief in it - Macmillan in Britain, Adenauer in West Germany, de Gaulle in France, and Presidents Roosevelt, Kennedy and Nixon in the US. The welfare state emphasized the need to offset any social discontent after the Great Depression in order to keep the economy operating at maximum efficiency and to help mitigate against social unrest and to stave off the calls for more radical socialist or Communist alternatives that many countries had experienced from the late thirties to the early fifties. For example, as soon as it was defeated by the Chinese Communist Party in 1949, the Chinese National Party carried out land reform in Taiwan, forcing the landlords to give much of their land to the poor farmers, something that it opposed before and that was advocated by its enemies, the

Communists, because it had learned a lesson from its downfall. By forcing the rich to share some of their wealth with the poor through taxation, something partially similar to what socialists or Communists advocate, rulers in the capitalist countries feed and clothe the people, so the people will not resort to violent means to solve social problems.

What Richler failed to see fully is that some of Communism's ideas have positive sides in ethical, humanitarian and moral principles. It is the tempering of capitalism with Communist ideas that has stabilized capitalist societies. Although Richler presents a sympathetic view of his hero as capitalist, blending ambition with compassion, his writings remain negative toward socialism and his fiction a prismatic reality. Similarly, Ethel Wilson, as well as most critics, including Alice Munro, neither questions what she describes nor criticizes the philosophical foundations of the social world on which they comment. As Arnold Itwaru observes, there is a marked absence of criticism, a ready acceptance of the existence of contrived contradictions. "But it is this very isness in the narration, which is problematic. At one level it affirms the growth and dominance of British conservative sensibility in this part of the synecdoche, Canada, as natural. But the writer's refusal to investigate the manifest contradictions must also be seen as a latent legitimization, and implicit celebration of the sensibilities depicted" (Itwaru 38). Although Wilson appropriates certain features of the bourgeois ideology and creates a model of self-help and social mobility, she produced a new fictional heroine selectively; thus an excessive social ambition and an obsession with upward social mobility increasingly is far from natural or laudable – is indeed morally ambiguous.

Morley Callaghan, like his character McAlpine, could not have been tolerated by the capitalist society had he openly attacked it, especially during the Cold War period. What he adopts is a kind of commercial and prismatic strategy - namely, to get his books published, survive police scrutiny and get his messages conveyed. Because of his implicit denouncement of the social system, he is often misunderstood and regarded as an ambiguous writer, and there has been only partial understanding that Callaghan's primary intention in *The Loved and the Lost* is, in fact, a morally and politically didactic one. As Milton Wilson has written, "The special talent of Callaghan is to tell us everything and yet keep us in the dark about what matters. He makes us misjudge and rejudge and misjudge his characters over and over again; we end up no longer capable of judgement, but not capable of faith" (Conron 81). Besides, because of his prismatic strategy, Callaghan never engaged in criticism or vilification of those institutions or

individuals who are traditionally held responsible for the Great Depression. Nor was he regarded as a revolutionary. Most importantly, perhaps, he did not share in that tendency, so prevalent on the left, to submerge individual identity in the open and real Communist mass movement explicitly. The words *Communism* and *capitalism* are never mentioned in *The Loved and the Lost*. They are filtered through Callaghan's prismatic mirror so that the novel is about McAlpine's love for Peggy in name but his love for Communism in deed.

Because of Hugh MacLennan's new technique and style, *The Watch That Ends the Night* has brought the author what he might have desired: approval and disapproval from both sides, because "they recognized that MacLennan was saying something that challenged their basic assumptions. He touched too many exposed nerves" (Elspeth Cameron 59). In addition, the book is often misunderstood or interpreted in different ways. For example, one critic says MacLennan's book "repeatedly mentions as truth all the wicked stories fabricated by the bourgeois press about Communist countries and should be treated as an example of the trash produced by the Cold War propagandists in support of imperialism. MacLennan's communists are monsters without feelings and communist sympathizers like Dr. Martell are dupes" (Clark 87). Another critic says, "Communists, on the other hand, being materialists, are treated to unflattering descriptions. By the same token, MacLennan sees Jerome Martell as manipulated, misguided by the communists; he is seen as a prisoner of all the materialists, whether Nazis or communists" (Ross 74). Probably such reaction from the critics really meets MacLennan's taste because it makes the ideology of the whole novel opaque and his hero Jerome still has "his obscure wisdom" and "his obscure power" (373).

Margaret Atwood says, every country or culture has a single unifying and informing symbol at its core (31). And Frye observes, "Every society, of course, imposes a good deal of prescribed social behavior on its citizens, much of it being followed unconsciously, anything completely accepted by convention and custom having in it a large automatic element. But even automatic ritual habits are explicable, and so every society can be seen or described to some extent as a product of conscious design" (111). This is "where the engaged or committed aspect of literary scholarship has its origin" (Frye, *Mundi*, 104).

So in Canada, as anywhere else in the world, public opinions are manipulated by critics and writers, most of whom have followed middle and upper class values and tastes, especially during the Cold War, when the conflict between Communist and capitalist concepts tested many

people's class biases. Richler, as a very young writer, easily got his first two novels published because of their anti-Communism and pro-capitalism and establishment themes. Ethel Wilson and her work have been favorably received in Canada. She has been lauded for her sincerity, religiosity, and her love of people and of the British Columbia landscape. But Itwaru finds such reception of Wilson (and Richler as well) symptomatic of large cultural forces at work. It demonstrates, he writes, "some of the ways in which facade-factors work as blinders, beneath which a writer's conformist authoritarian proposition finds articulation" (38). The affirmation of Richler and Wilson by so many Canadian literary scholars is itself a revealing commentary because when we look at the context and the pattern of their works, we are faced with a revelation of their upper middle-class social consciousness and bias. Furthermore, Richler and Wilson's adherence to the capitalist values and system are also legitimated by "those members of the academy of scholars, and writers, who, it would seem, have refused to see or have not seen" (Itwaru 38) Richler's slandering of Communists or any negative description of the poor in Wilson's works. Similarly, because of their ambiguous writing styles, both Callaghan and MacLennan have been well received, and the latter received the Lorne Pierce Medal for Canadian literature and the Canada Medal and the Governor General's Award five times. As Gordon Collier says, "Manipulation of public opinion, however politically or socially shaded, depersonalizes readers and creates acceptance of a set of truths which has nothing to do with many people from the lower orders. This is an historical phenomenon: upper class concepts and their resultant prejudices have been totally integrated into existing cultural and social norms" (Collier 213). This I hope to have shown in my study of the prismatic reality of Canada's Cold War novels.

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