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| Scott, F. R. (1899-1985) |
| Francis Reginald |
| F.R. Scott was a prominent 20th century Canadian poet, social activist, and intellectual. Scott challenged the style and activities of traditional Canadian poets of his time, and ushered in a new age of Canadian Modernism in poetry through his involvement with the Montreal Group (a collaboratory of young writers who met at McGill University in the 1920s) and *The McGill Fortnightly Review*, which he founded with A.J.M. Smith in 1925. His poetry is characterized by its leftist politics, frequent Satire, social views, and an Expressionistic attention to Canadian landscape that aligned Scott with the Group of Seven artists instead of his literary predecessors, the Confederation Poets. Scott also wrote extensively on Canada, democratic socialism, law, and the Canadian Confederation. He remained a potent figure of Canadian arts and politics until his death on 31 January 1985. |
| F.R. Scott was a prominent 20th century Canadian poet, social activist, and intellectual. Scott challenged the style and activities of traditional Canadian poets of his time, and ushered in a new age of Canadian Modernism in poetry through his involvement with the Montreal Group (a collaboratory of young writers who met at McGill University in the 1920s) and *The McGill Fortnightly Review*, which he founded with A.J.M. Smith in 1925. His poetry is characterized by its leftist politics, frequent Satire, social views, and an Expressionistic attention to Canadian landscape that aligned Scott with the Group of Seven artists instead of his literary predecessors, the Confederation Poets. Scott also wrote extensively on Canada, democratic socialism, law, and the Canadian Confederation. He remained a potent figure of Canadian arts and politics until his death on 31 January 1985.  Scott was born on 1 August 1899 in Québec City. His early career was punctuated with accomplishments; Scott was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University (1920-1923), taught at Lower Canada College upon his return to Canada, entered Law School at McGill University (1924-1926), and began teaching law at McGill University in 1928. In 1931-1932, Scott founded the League for Social Reconstruction with Frank Underhill. He also participated in the drafting of the Regina Manifesto (1933), and was active in the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), which later developed into the New Democratic Party of Canada (1961). After moving away from his public leftist leanings, Scott became Dean of Law at McGill University from 1961-1964. Among various awards and distinctions, Scott was a member of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, and won both the Governor General’s Literary Award for Non-fiction with *Essays on the Constitution* (1977) and for Poetry with *The Collected Poems of FR Scott* (1981).  In 1936 public notice of Scott’s poetry significantly increased with the publication of an anthology of Canadian modernist verse entitled *New Provinces,* anonymously co-edited by Scott, Leo Kennedy, and A.J.M. Smith. Scott published *Overture,* the first collection of his own poetry, in 1945*.* Scott was noted for his satire and his blatant distaste for traditional, Romantic or Victorian styled Canadian writers. ‘The Canadian Authors Meet’, from *Overture*, encompasses this sentiment as Scott poignantly critiques, ‘O Canada, O Canada, O can / A day go by without new authors springing / To paint the native maple’. In 1957 Scott and Smith co-edited another more satirical anthology, *The Blasted Pine.* In his workScott frequently employed the form of the ‘trouvaille’ or found poem, a genre whereby the poet takes previous works, public documents, or conversations and situates them in such a way to exemplify or produce a specific meaning. Scott even constructed ‘The Robinson Treaties’, a trouvaille made out of treaties from the Indian Act that exposes the injustices of those negotiations.  Criticism on Scott surrounds his assertions that the Canadian landscape was a blank slate to be inscribed, as articulated in the frequently anthologized “Laurentian Shield.” Although Scott was a predominant intellectual prone to speaking out against inequality or injustice in social institutions, his views towards the landscape may potentially deny the significance of the population of First Nations peoples who inhabited Canada pre-settlement and pre-colonization. Regardless, Scott remains a significant voice of social change in Canadian politics and stylistic change in Canadian poetry.  [File: Scott.jpg]  Figure 1 F.R. Scott  <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/frank-scott>  [File: FRScott.jpg]  Figure 2 F. R. Scott  <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/canpoetry/scott_fr/index.htm> List of Select WorksPoetry *Overture* (1945)  *Events and Signals* (1954)  *The Eye of the Needle: Satires, Sorties, Sundries*. (1957)  *Signature* (1964)  *Trouvailles: Poems from Prose* (1967)  *The Dance is One* (1973)  *The Collected Poems of F.R. Scott.* (1982)   Non-fiction *Canada Today: A Study of Her National Interests and National Policy* (1939)  *Essays on the Constitution: Aspects of Canadian Law and Politics* (1977)  *A New Endeavour: Selected Political Essays, Letters, and Addresses* (1986) Anthologies *New Provinces: Poems of Several Authors* (1936)  *The Blasted Pine: An Anthology of Satire, Invective, and Disrespective Verse, Chiefly by Canadian Writers* (1957) |
| Further reading:  (Djwa, A Life of F.R. Scott: The Politics of the Imagination)  (Djwa, F.R. Scott: Biography)  (Djwa, Nothing by Halves: F. R. Scott)  (Geddes)  (Horn)  (Moss)  (New)  (Richardson) |