

Modernity and the Catholic Church: Religious Advertisements in Québec

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Modernity and the Catholic Church: Religious Advertisements in Québec**

**Mélissa Bourgeois**

The Catholic Church in Quebec has oftentimes been regarded as an institution which had, for many years, thwarted the economic and social growth of Quebec. The aim of this thesis, however, is to argue that the Church understood, at least to a certain extent, the need to keep up with the pace of industrialization and urbanization in Quebec.

In order to substantiate this hypothesis I will investigate the rise of the consumer society in Quebec, focusing primarily on the sale of religious goods in major Quebec newspapers. I argue that there is a definite link between these sales and the role of the Catholic Church at the time. I posit that a conclusion can be reached from them which will allow us to better understand the ways in which the Church took its place within the consumer society. The adaptation of the Roman Catholic Church to “modernization” is the subject of my analysis and the advertisements in major Quebec newspapers are the object. By connecting these two it is my intention to unveil a new perspective on the Church: how it used Capitalism and was used by it.

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Finally, to Adam my love. Thank you for changing my life in so many wonderful ways. For opening my eyes to things I had never thought of, and for supporting me no matter what. My heart is yours.

## **DEDICATIONS**

To my Grandmaman Deschenes and to my Granny Bourgeois. I dedicate this to you both for giving me the gift of being a knowledge chaser.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Chapter One.....	10
A Review of Three Schools dividing Quebec Historians.....	10
The Montreal School.....	11
The Laval School.....	14
The Revisionist School.....	17
Chapter Two.....	21
The Modernity of the Catholic Church? .....	21
Old and New Collide: L’Action Catholique Revised.....	22
Modern Church? .....	24
Chapter Three.....	26
What Is Ultramontanism? .....	27
A religious ‘awakening’.....	30
Ultramontanism & Quebec: Pre-Industrial Revolution.....	31
Further Evolution of Catholicism in Quebec.....	33
Social Catholicism in Quebec.....	34
Embracing Modernity?.....	37
Chapter Four.....	39
Traditional Sales.....	40
Clergy and Mass Media.....	43

Cinema and Theatre in Quebec.....	52
General Conclusions.....	56
Chapter Five.....	57
Protestantism and Religious Goods.....	60
Christmas Holidays in Quebec: Consumed.....	63
Catholic Material Goods in Québec.....	71
The Sale of Religious Goods.....	72
Pilgrimages.....	78
Use of Symbolic Imagery.....	82
The Profane or the Sacred?.....	85
Chapter Six.....	87
Durkheim and the Sacred.....	87
Modern Reaction to Modernity?.....	88
Bibliography.....	92
Appendix.....	99

## **Introduction**

*People in greater and greater numbers are drawing upon religion as consumers.*

-- Reginald Bibby, 1990<sup>1</sup>.

The Roman Catholic Church in Quebec has oftentimes been regarded as an institution which had, for many years, thwarted the economic and social growth of Quebec. Admittedly this had been my own belief and as such this project stemmed from my own questions regarding the actual role of the Church as the dominant institution in pre-Quiet Revolution Quebec. Interested in advertisements, something caught my attention when browsing through old ads in most of the major newspapers in Quebec. During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, I was apt to notice that there were a variety of ads targeting Catholics as believers. How was this possible, I asked myself? Was something Catholic not inevitably sacred and thus irreducible to the market economy? It was this initial question which led me to develop the following thesis topic.

This research topic is relatively novel in its approach with regards to the role of the Catholic Church in Quebec. Leaving behind my previous notions of the Church as an utterly traditional, archaic institution which refused to accept any part in the new modern world, I began to uncover that the Church too, not unlike most other social institutions at the time, strove to find its place in the new Industrial Age. Relatively aware of its need to accommodate to modernization, the Church approached this modernization positively at

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<sup>1</sup> Bibby, Reginald. Framgeded gods. The poverty and potential of religion in Canada (Toronto: Stoddard, 1990), 82.



times, by seeking a place for itself within it.<sup>2</sup> The Church was not blind to the changes going on around it. As such I argue that it tried to adapt itself to the new forms of life within the consumer society while at the same time trying to transform the consumer society in its own image.

In order to substantiate this hypothesis, I will investigate the rise of the consumer society in Quebec, focusing primarily on the sale of religious goods found in advertisements from major Quebec newspapers. I argue that there is a definite link between these sales and the historical role of the Catholic Church in Quebec, and I posit that an analysis of newspaper advertisements can be developed that will allow us to better understand the ways in which the Church took its place within the emerging consumer society.

### **The structure of this thesis**

The adaptation of the Roman Catholic Church to “modernization” is the subject of my analysis and the advertisements in major Quebec newspapers are the object. By connecting these two, it is my intention to unveil a new perspective on the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Quebec: how it “instrumentalized” Capitalism and was “instrumentalized” by it.

In order to allow one to fully understand the various perspectives surrounding the subject of my analysis, in Chapter One I submit a review of the three schools dividing Quebec historians. The first two schools would vary in their interpretations but their

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<sup>2</sup> Ryan, William. The Clergy and Economic Growth in Quebec (1896-1914) (Quebec, Presses de l'Université Laval, 1966) 270.

underlying goal remained the same: to understand how Quebec supposedly trailed behind economically from the rest of Canada. The Revisionist camp, of which this thesis finds its primary basis, is one which ascribes to no such complete delay and as such is able to argue that the Catholic Church held its own place within Quebec society. They argue that it too, like most other institutions in Quebec, strove to make sense of and take its place within the new consumer society.

Chapter Two serves to explain the new ideologies which have emerged regarding the place of the Catholic Church within modernity. It serves to further explain the view of the Church in Quebec as one which allowed a place for modernity within it and helps us understand some of the manners whereby the Church itself engaged in the new social world. I analyze the ways in which I argue that the Church had a modern reaction to modernity. This idea will become an underlying facet of this thesis for which I will provide examples to substantiate the key points.

Chapter Three surrounds the evolution of Catholic social thought as it pertains to its fight against Liberalism. Here I describe the evolution of Catholic social thought, including an overview of Ultramontane thought. This chapter also includes a section describing how and why the Catholic Church was viewed to be the dominant institution in Quebec. I also describe how the Catholic Church took on and adapted to new social roles in Quebec. The last part of this chapter analyzes the place the Catholic Church took with regards to its stance on Capitalism. I explore the manner by which Liberalism was rejected in exchange for a social order which could be molded into a proper, noble form.

Chapter Four and Chapter Five present evidence for the hypothesis I have put forth. Through an analysis of print advertisements I have gathered, Chapter Four is an

exploration of the manner by which the Church adapts itself to Capitalism. Here I explore examples which show that the Church had a modern approach to things in the consumer market, oftentimes being treated like a business itself. Taking into account such things as censorship and its impact upon mass media, I discuss the three manners by which I view the members of the Clergy to have adapted themselves to the media in question, going so far as to developing their own print media when they became aware of the growing power of the press in Quebec.

Chapter five is where I seek to understand why religious goods themselves were being sold. I explore what the needs were for these goods and if and how they were created. Next I explore the difference between Catholic religious goods and Protestant religious goods and analyze how both were sold but for different reasons. Here as well, I highlight specific examples using advertisements, as I analyze the various Catholic goods themselves that were being sold.

## **Methodology**

In order to better understand the role of Catholicism within consumer society in Quebec, I have undertaken a discourse and image analysis. That is, I have taken discourses and images from Quebec newspaper advertisements and analyzed their content with regards to what they inform us of society at the time; particularly what they say of the role of the Catholic Church in the rising consumer society. Dabbling a bit in the realms of material culture, I am prone to argue that “materiality is an integral dimension

of culture, and that there are dimensions of social existence that cannot be fully understood without it”.<sup>3</sup>

While I am not here stating that with this master’s level thesis I can achieve a thorough understanding of Quebec society and culture, I will however say that using material goods such as advertisements are one way to analyze the rise of consumer culture and as such help us understand the world in a way we may not have thought of before. Indeed, using ads is a relatively novel approach to studying Quebec society. Recently, Dominique Marquis, in her book, *Un Quotidien Pour L’Eglise*, develops a historical analysis of Quebec culture through a historical examination of the newspaper *L’Action Catholique*. While her work does not center upon advertisements specifically, she does use some of them at times to convey the development of modern ideas in Quebec. Jean de Bonville also writes of advertisements in Quebec newspapers in his classic book, *La Presse Quebecoise de 1884 a 1914. Genese d’un media de masse*. He uses statistics which show the developments of Quebec newspapers; of specific interest to my work is the way he devotes a chapter on publicity, showing that newspapers in Quebec understood the notions of competition and development and as such were keeping up with the developments in newspaper publishing that were also taking place in the rest of Canada.<sup>4</sup>

Traditionally, material culture is a study which involves attempting to understand the world through the examination of the meaning of things. Through this analysis, it is believed that one can understand particular beliefs and patterns of life specific to various

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<sup>3</sup> Tiley, C. et al. *Handbook of Material Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 2006) 1.

<sup>4</sup> Bonville, Jean de. *La Presse Quebecoise de 1884 a 1914. Genese d’un media de masse*. (Quebec, Les Presses de L’Universite Laval, 1988) 331.

cultures.<sup>5</sup> In a way, this thesis is a collection of material items (advertisements) with which I am using to understand a society (Catholic Quebec).

As this thesis goes into relatively uncharted waters, I had very little in terms of starting data and, almost adopting the role of a historian, was hence pushed to find my own. The manner by which I gathered data is the following. Trying to gather the most systematic and inclusive data possible, I first collected ads with any form of religious content for one complete month over a period span of every five years. The scope of this thesis and time did not allow for much more than this.

From there, I organized the advertisements first by year and then by journal to which they belong. After this, I was able to distinguish various categories into which to place the ads. They were the following: religious goods (catechisms, rosaries, etc), goods sold to the Clergy, goods sold for the Church, goods sold using religious symbolism, the mass media, pilgrimages, religious products, and Christmas. Overall, I collected five hundred and fifty three advertisements over the thirty five year span. Note that some advertisements were duplicated in various newspapers and others were simply beyond the scope of this thesis. As well it should be noted that some newspapers had larger representations of advertisements than others, *la Patrie* and *L'Action Catholique* for example held the bulk of advertisements for pilgrimages and other religious goods.

The manner by which I chose which advertisements to include within the thesis was driven first by my interest in the advertisements in particular. Next, I used certain categories of advertisements as proof for the statements I was making with regards to this research. Finally, some ads were simply too frequent to ignore which in turn led me to

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<sup>5</sup> Colleen McDannell, "Interpreting Things: Material Culture Studies and American Religion" *Religion*, 1991, p.371.

believe that something would need to be said about them. As the reader will note, not even one eighth of the ads I collected even made it to the final draft of this thesis. One reason for this lies in the fact that I am a Sociologist and not a Historian and hence attempt to make deductions based upon the data at hand, all of which I was forced to collect on my own since this has never been done before in Quebec.

I focused primarily upon the following Quebec newspapers: *L'Action catholique*, the *Montreal Daily Star*, *Le Soleil*, *La Presse*, *Le Devoir*, and *La Patrie*. These were the major newspaper dailies in Quebec at the time.<sup>6</sup> As all were at one point or another popular in terms of readership, they had the greatest amount of influence upon readers in Quebec. I also analyzed catalogues of which I had access to such as les *Fournisseurs d'institutions religieuses* as well as the catalogues of Dupuis Freres. I noted here that not only was the Church being used as a way to sell things, it was also being sold to and treated as a business itself. Seeking more proof for my hypothesis that the Church was taking its place within the Capitalist system, I sought catalogues which *sold* things directly to and for the members of the clergy.

I chose to analyze the time period of 1896 to 1930 – although the reader will note that some later advertisements were at times used to promote a certain point. It was in 1896 that Wilfred Laurier was to be elected Prime Minister of Canada and these years were to be described as “The Golden Age” within which Canada (including Quebec) enjoyed unprecedented growth and prosperity. It is also during this time period that a

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<sup>6</sup> Note that during this time period, great developments were taking place in newspaper publishing. Competition was at an all new height, and newspaper readers were sought in much the same way as consumers for any other goods were sought. The newspapers recognized the duality that would mark their existence: attract newspaper readers meant higher call volumes for which they could boast their newspapers up for potential sellers. In order to get these sellers, however, they needed the readers and hence the circle continued.

truly consumer culture developed in Quebec, one which took its place due to the changes brought forth by industrialization.

The late 19<sup>th</sup> Century spanning to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century is a time of great transformations. « La production manufacturière et de la consommation des produits de base (vêtements, chaussures, aliments) » rose sharply over a very short period of time. « Les boutiques tendent à se transformer, les grands magasins font leur apparition et le divertissement commercial se développe »<sup>7</sup>. These emerging goods will be found and attempted to be sold in newspaper advertisements. They are indicative of the developments and occurrences of mass consumption, one in which the emergence of consumer society was developed.

. Lamonde describes this period as « l'aurore d'une culture de masse : par exemple, la presse populaire, le cinéma, l'automobile, commence à rejoindre la majorité de la population. ».<sup>8</sup> Lamonde's work finishes in 1920 and mine does not extend much past the aftermaths of WWI. Because I am using the developments in mass culture to explain the place the Catholic Church took within Quebec, I argue that it was important for me to insist on a period when traditional popular culture and the merging consumer culture met. This time period then has been documented repeatedly as a time when this was occurring.

The new focus on material goods that comes into existence during the early part of the 1900's served to transform, reinvent, circumscribe, start trends, and present models of desirable products like no time before it. Fascinating I find, is the way even Catholic goods had to now compete for a piece of the market and did so in large part through

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<sup>7</sup> Lamonde, Yvan ; assisté de Lucia Ferretti et de Daniel LeBlanc. *La culture ouvrière à Montréal (1880-1920) : bilan historiographique* (Québec : Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, 1982) 42.

<sup>8</sup> 43.

advertisements in newspapers. The advent of such mass advertising is what will allow us to understand that society was changing from a merchant/customer type of relationship to one which is primarily buyer seller and hence understand the changes that were brought forth in society because of them.<sup>9</sup> Particularly, the changes of the Catholic Church.

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<sup>9</sup> Elkin, Frederick. Rebels and Colleagues : advertising and social change in French Canada. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1973)7.



## **Chapter One:**

### **The Three Major Schools of Thought in Quebec History**

#### **1.1. A Review of Three Schools dividing Quebec Historians**

My work is framed in a historical type of analysis as I am aiming to understand the developments in Quebec consumer society and how they affected (or were perhaps affected by) the Catholic Church. In order to understand the developments of the Catholic Church, it was important for me to develop the ways in which I would choose to interpret past events. In order to understand the historical perspective within which this thesis is framed, one needs to understand recent historiographic debates in Quebec. In the past forty years three major schools of historical thought developed in Quebec, each with its own form of interpreting the evolution of Quebec as a nation, society, and province. Since my approach is situated within the context of recent historic work, it is my intent in this section to provide a discussion of these schools and introduce the main contributors for each.

In this section, then, I will outline the three schools beginning with the Montreal School, proceed with the Laval School, and conclude with the Revisionist School (the term “school” designates a camp of historical thinkers who attempted, through various means, to interpret the shortcomings and realities of Quebec society). Both the Montreal and Laval schools had definitively political approaches in their historical writings. The

evolution of the Revisionists, in turn, came from their shying away from taking any political stances and in fact began a new vein of scientific thought in Quebec.

In Quebec, the 1950's brought about a rather pronounced rift in historical interpretation between two schools of thought -- the Montreal School and the Laval School. The key proponents of the former were Guy Frégault, Maurice Seguin, and Michel Brunet. Those of the latter were Marcel Trudel, Fernand Ouellet, and Jean Hamelin.<sup>10</sup> The most obvious similarity between these two schools lay in their attempt to understand why Quebec society post- WWII had an economic and political stature that was weaker than the rest of Canada. This goal, however, would be the rift which would come to divide them in their interpretations.

## **1.2. The Montreal School**

The Montreal School argued that Quebec had never recovered from the Conquest of 1760 and hence was continually marred by the resulting delayed political and economic success.<sup>11</sup> The Conquest, they argued, had a disastrous effect on Quebec because it thwarted its ability to develop in accordance with its alleged destiny. It not only allowed for English doctrines and ideology to permeate into Quebec society, but served to repress the positive economic growth of the Quebecois. Blinded by their prejudices and ethnocentrism, the English Canadians failed to open up to the French Canadians.<sup>12</sup> The historians attempted to interpret Quebec's history based on the group

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<sup>10</sup> Rudin, Ronald. Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec. (Toronto: Univeristy of Toronto Press, 1997), 92.

<sup>11</sup>P.93.

<sup>12</sup> P.105

collectivity found in the struggling Quebecois people. Basing itself on such premises, one does not wonder why the Montreal School held strong nationalistic inclinations.

Guy Frégault is the first of the Montreal School to write of the *disastrous* Conquest. According to him, the pre-Conquest period of Quebec history corresponded to a thriving and strong economy. The society at the time, he argues, “enjoyed a relatively high standard of living and education”.<sup>13</sup> Before 1760, the New France *Canadiens* were evolving economically at the same pace as all the other North-American colonies. The colony was prosperous and modern; using trade and other modern economic devices available at the time it maintained a viable economy.

After the Conquest, the English cut Quebec off from trade with France and other metropolitan areas leaving the French Canadians to find new ways to survive; ways which were much less economically viable.<sup>14</sup> With a tinge of nostalgia for the French regime, Frégault argued that after the Conquest, the prosperity Quebec had previously known was thwarted by the English who already had their own set of “economic, political, social, religious, and cultural institutions” which they expected the new colony to adapt to.<sup>15</sup>

Maurice Seguin continued the case of economic inferiority post-Conquest. He furthered the argument, however, by relating the economic failures of the Quebecois on the insistence expressed by the British to make the former an agricultural people. Agriculturalism, Seguin argued, was foisted upon French Canadians by the Conquerors.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Rudin, Ronald. *Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec*. (Toronto: Univeristy of Toronto Press, 1997), 105.

<sup>14</sup> Gagnon, Nicole *Histoire du Catholicisme Quebecois*. (Montreal : Boreal Express, 1984), 10.

<sup>15</sup> P.12

<sup>16</sup> Rudin, Ronald. *Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec*. (Toronto: Univeristy of Toronto Press, 1997), 113.

They were given no choice, he continued, but to turn to agriculture as the only economic means for survival as this was the only opportunity the British would allow them economically. Because agriculture was limited in many respects, it became difficult for the Quebecois to amass capital and in turn the economic benefits of modern industrialism were lost on them. From his perspective, the French Canadians were repeatedly exploited by the English bourgeoisie and allowed little if any room for their own personal economic advancement.<sup>17</sup>

Michel Brunet also blamed the Conquest for the economic inferiority of the French Canadians. He argued that entrepreneurs had existed in New France prior to 1760, but that these initiatives were quashed by the conquerors who insisted on the submissiveness of the French to their rules and orders. He developed his ideas further by arguing that because they were a minority, the French-speaking Quebecois were at a political disadvantage when it came to developing their economy in the new Industrial age. Because they were dependant upon the federal system, then, and as such formed a minority of dependents, they were not given a space by which to make their own decisions regarding the evolution of the state. Only through provincial autonomy, he argued, would Quebec be able to develop economically.<sup>18</sup>

Here we see the continued underlying thought pattern, cast throughout the Montreal School of thought, of Quebec nationalism. The main vein of Frégault, Seguin, and Brunet's argument lies in their insistence upon new strategies which would allow Quebec to develop its autonomy and return to the productive society that it once was.

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<sup>17</sup> Gagnon, Nicole *Histoire du Catholicisme Quebecois*. (Montreal : Boreal Express, 1984), 10.

<sup>17</sup> P.14.

<sup>18</sup> P.18, 19.

Only through their own means, claims the Montreal School, could the Quebecois ever catch up to modernity.<sup>19</sup>

### 1.3. The Laval School

At the same time as the Montreal School was forming its historical outlook, so too was another approach emerging not from Montreal but from Quebec City -- the Laval School. Instead of blaming the Conquest, the Laval School shifted the blame for the economic inferiority of Quebec to the Quebecois themselves. Adopting a more introspective approach, this school perpetuated the notions that the Quebecois were to blame for their own problems. In contrast with the Montreal School, the Laval School held as such a much more federalist rather than nationalist standpoint.<sup>20</sup> Uninterested in demonizing the British, the historians teaching at Laval insisted that Catholicism was in fact the major reason why French-speaking Quebecois held positions at the bottom of the social ladder.

Marcel Trudel viewed the pre-Conquest as a much different society than the Montreal School. He argued that the French colonial society had *not* been as economically viable as those in the Montreal School presented it. He considered the colonial economy of the time to be rather weak and stipulated that the economic activity was less than thriving.<sup>21</sup> The 19<sup>th</sup> Century was viewed as a time of great reliance upon Catholicism for social and economic growth. However, as much as the Catholic Church

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<sup>19</sup> Rudin, Ronald. Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 127.

<sup>20</sup> P. 93.

<sup>21</sup> Gagnon, Nicole *Histoire du Catholicisme Quebecois*. (Montreal : Boreal Express, 1984), 20.

would be praised for its help in preventing assimilation, it would also be blamed as a key reason for the economic inferiority of French Canadians. Instead of blaming the British Conquerors, the Laval School blamed the inability or unwillingness of the Roman Catholic Church and its Clergy, who thoroughly immersed itself socially into diffuse areas of Quebec society, open itself up to the inevitable reach of modernity. This approach viewed Quebec society as flawed by a traditional ruling class (especially the Clergy but also the Seigniors) which was unable or unwilling to respond to a changing world.<sup>22</sup>

Jean Hamelin also argued that a bourgeoisie as such never existed in New France. The British had tried to incorporate the Quebecois into the North American business world but because of their dependence on the Clergy, had rejected their repeated invitation. Based on the fear of assimilation warned to them by the Clergy, the Quebecois continued to blindly follow the precepts and dictates put for them by the leaders of their time -- the Clergy. This group of spiritual and political leaders resisted any form of British cooperation because of the risk of Protestant infiltration. Fear of political and social assimilation was as important as the fear of spiritual assimilation.<sup>23</sup> Because of this strong dependence on the Clergy, French-speaking Quebecois allegedly continued to follow an outdated, anti-modern Clerical rule, and were left to cope with the flat lined economic letdown that would follow.

Certainly the most representative of the Laval School, Fernand Ouellet focused on social and economic history throughout his work.<sup>24</sup> He too argued that pre-Conquest

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<sup>22</sup> Rudin, Ronald. *Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec*. (Toronto: Univeristy of Toronto Press, 1997), 161.

<sup>23</sup> Gagnon, Nicole *Histoire du Catholicisme Quebecois*.(Montreal : Boreal Express, 1984), 24.

<sup>24</sup> P.24.

Quebec was economically unstable and unsuccessful. He furthered the idea that Quebec refused afterward to adapt to new economic strategies. However he detailed this idea by arguing that the reason lay in the education system of the time -- organized of course by the Clergy. In order for economic success and growth to have occurred in Quebec, a modern education system would have needed to be in place; this education system would have encouraged new business, an increase in skilled labor, and would also have encouraged farmers to accept new and advanced agricultural techniques.<sup>25</sup> Again because the education system of the time was Church run, these tactics were largely resisted and in turn led to the economic failure of the Quebecois people. For example, wrote Ouellet, the Quebecois farmers' agricultural crisis of the mid XIXth century -- directly provoked by the depletion of the lands of usable soil -- had its origins in ill-fated attempt to educate themselves on the proper use of the land.<sup>26</sup> Hence bad education was not only the cause of the refusal to engage in the growing industrial economy but of the agricultural demise as well.

No matter how different it might appear to be, the Laval School held some of the same basic presumptions of the Montreal School -- someone was to blame for the social and economic problems of Quebec society. However, unlike the Montreal School, the Laval approach blamed the French-speaking Quebecois for not disentangling themselves from outdated ways of life. They blamed them for tending to Clerical ideology instead of realizing that these forms were insufficient to propel the needs of their time. Overall, however, the point being made is the same for the two schools, both placed blame on

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<sup>25</sup> Gagnon, Nicole *Histoire du Catholicisme Quebecois*. (Montreal : Boreal Express, 1984)25.

<sup>26</sup> Rudin, Ronald. Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec. (Toronto: Univeristy of Toronto Press, 1997), 165.

‘something’ or ‘someone’ for the perceived *abnormal* economically inferior status of Quebec.

Another school of thought, however, would develop in the 1970s and 1980s, one which chose not to focus on the abnormality of Quebec society.

#### **1.4. The Revisionist School**

The focus on the distinctiveness of Quebec society by previous historians opened the door for new thinkers to emerge in the 1960’s who would later be classified as Revisionists.<sup>27</sup> Refusing to consider Quebec as radically different than the rest of Canada, Revisionist historians began to focus their attention on the rather normal aspects of Quebec society.<sup>28</sup> They studied historical trends and analyzed the immigration, urbanization, and secularization patterns of the Western world. Basing their analysis on such statistics, they were able to compare what was already known of Quebec’s history with what was happening in the rest of North America.

In the XIXth and XXth Century, Quebec underwent rapid urbanization, industrialization, secularization, and immigration which were nothing unique. These changes were occurring in many other parts of the world.<sup>29</sup> Revisionist historians would come to find that while trailing a little bit behind perhaps in some aspects, Quebec society was strongly affected by the transformation of the material world, even during the so called “Great Darkness” (“La Grande noirceur”).

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<sup>27</sup>Rudin, Ronald. Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec. (Toronto: Univeristy of Toronto Press, 1997), 131.

<sup>28</sup> P.172

<sup>29</sup> P.183



The Laval approach sought to blame the Catholic Church for thwarting the progress of “modernity” and preventing it from implanting itself in Quebec. The Revisionists, however, argued that even the Church could not resist the Capitalist ideas that were quickly infiltrating various facets of Quebec society. As much as it sought to resist secularization, it was only one institution in a vast array of others vying for power in Quebec. At the risk of losing all of its power, it was forced not only to come to terms with the changes brought forth by the modernizing of Quebec but take its part in it as well.<sup>30</sup> Modernism as a theological idea was rejected, but modernization was inevitable.

Jean-Pierre Wallot and Louise Dechêne are said to be the first to write the history of Quebec as just as normal as any other Western nation.<sup>31</sup> Wallot emphasized that the rational economic side of people included the French-speaking Quebecois and stipulated that for this reason, they too were market oriented beings – and not the inferior creatures they were purported to be. They may not have had obvious dominant economic roles, he recognized, but they still had important economic roles nonetheless.<sup>32</sup> Likewise Louise Dechêne, influenced by the French Annales approach to historical study, embodied the idea that the changing outside world influenced Quebec evolution in much of the same way that it affected the rest of the North American continent.<sup>33</sup> The Annales approach favoured a study of long-term historical structures over events. Geography, material culture, and psychology were also deemed important aspects of studies. While Wallot and Dechêne may not be considered Revisionists by some, they decidedly were the first to

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<sup>30</sup> 1 Rudin, Ronald. Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec. (Toronto: Univeristy of Toronto Press, 1997), 90.

<sup>31</sup> 175.

<sup>32</sup> P.176

<sup>33</sup> P.181

promulgate this type of analysis which in turn lead the way for much more thinking on the not so unique nature of Quebec's history.

Paul-Andre Linteau looked to an analysis of class structure in order to better understand Quebec's history. He looked to the 19 and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Quebecois who were land developers and owners of medium-sized businesses. As previous thinkers had solely concentrated on large corporate businesses owned by the British, this new approach unveiled a class of Quebecois who were, in fact, very much involved in raising and building up of capital. An economic fervor, then, was found to exist in the French-speaking Quebecois of this time, a much different view than the one of oppressed Quebecois previously described. According to Revisionists, capitalism was not inhibited but rather relatively embraced by French Canadians.

Revisionism has perpetuated the North American feel of Quebec; that Quebec was not completely backwards in its economic development, and was rather normal in the ways in which it developed. By using statistics and other forms of study, the Revisionists seek to find patterns and ways by which to compare Quebec society in order to provide support for their theories on its normalcy. This is not to deny that there are some distinctive traditional cultural values which make Quebec unique in its own realm. However, what Revisionists seek to understand is how and why Quebec came into modernity. This school seeks a value-free approach which will help promote a historical analysis that does not have any explicit underlying political aspirations.

Of these three schools of thought, it is the Revisionists which provide the basis of my historical interpretations. . I seek to understand how Quebec came into modernity using the Catholic Church as my primary subject of analysis. As this thesis is rather

novel in the approaches it takes to understanding Quebec society, however, it is necessary to give it a starting off point by situating it within a certain theoretical framework.

Throughout this thesis I will argue that while there were certain limitations to its developments, it was not solely due to the lack of understanding by the Church of the need to “modernize” if you will

## **Chapter Two:**

### **The Catholic Church and Modernity**

#### **2.1. The Modernity of the Catholic Church?**

In the previous chapter I mentioned that the Montreal School approached the history of the Quebecois as a conquered people, the Laval School denounced the negative role played by values rooted in the traditional French Canadian culture, and the Revisionists tried to understand the history of Quebec based on its normality. Since being characterized as either a national institution or an alienator, the Church has scarcely been studied by historians and sociologists in the past twenty five years. For instance, in their grand synthesis of Quebec history, Linteau, Durocher, and Robert<sup>34</sup> included two short chapters on the different Catholic and protestant churches, but more than a dozen on the economic development of the province.

It is only recently that young historians have contributed to the understanding of the changes affecting the Roman Catholic Church in Quebec. These young scholars tend to emphasize how this religious institution was, to a certain extent, *active* in the economic development of Quebec. According to them, the Church had oftentimes worked alongside modern and capitalist notions instead of always fighting them. Not only did the Clergy allow modernization to seep in, per se, but it was also to be involved at almost every level of the province's economy.

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<sup>34</sup> Durocher R, P-A Linteau, J-C Robert, Histoire du Quebec Contemporain (Montreal: Boreal, 1989).

This chapter serves to unveil the certain manners according to which the Church became involved in the modern aspects of consumer society. The Catholic Church had long since been the dominant institution in Quebec maintaining control of education, social welfare, charity and Church life.<sup>35</sup> This was beginning to change, however, as society became a lot more complicated in the ways in which it was organized. As has been mentioned earlier, the Church found itself in a new society in which ideas of liberalism, industrialization, urbanization, and modernism were at the forefront.<sup>36</sup> The church understood that control was not going to be achieved simply by preaching about the ills of modern society in the Churches. It had to become involved in these new “ills” somehow in order to combat them.

## **2.2. Old and New Collide: *L'Action Catholique* Revisited**

When writing about the newspaper *l'Action Catholique*, Jean de Bonville states « La modernisation n'est donc plus perçue uniquement comme une obligation liée à la survie du journal, mais comme une arme supplémentaire pour combattre les ravages de la société moderne. »<sup>37</sup> Hence, it is this “modern reaction to modernity” that I argue takes up the social role of the Church in Quebec during the industrial era and beyond. The ads I will describe later on demonstrate that the Church did not shy away from taking part in this ‘modern’ developments in the world. Print media was fast emerging as perhaps the

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<sup>35</sup> Falardeau, J.C. “The Role and importance of the Church in French Canada” in Rioux, Marcel & Yves Martin. *French-Canadian Society*. (Toronto: McClelland & Steward, 1964), 345.

<sup>36</sup> Marquis, Dominique. *Un quotidien pour l'Église. L'Action Catholique, 1910-1940* (Montreal : Lemeac, 2004) 16.

<sup>37</sup> Bonville, Jean de. *La Presse québécoise de 1884 à 1914 : genèse d'un média de masse*. (Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1988) 133.

most substantial means of communication and as such housed the power to diffuse ideologies- a fact that the Catholic Church in Quebec was well aware.

If we are to take the example of the treatment of the newspaper *L'Action Catholique* nothing can give a better contrast of past and present approaches to Catholicism than the two monographs published by Jones<sup>38</sup> (1974) and Marquis (2005)<sup>39</sup>. These books both offer interesting insights into dualistic modes of thinking with regards to this newspaper. While Jones argues that this newspaper was nothing but a means of perpetuating traditional ideologies, Marquis develops upon this idea but writes that the newspaper was also used as an instrument with which to combat these backward ideologies.

While the two monographs place thorough emphasis on the contents of the newspaper itself, Jones maintains that *l'Action Catholique* was nothing but an archaic journal stuck, if you will, in the Dark Ages. Marquis, on the other hand, shows quite a few instances whereby one would come to note that *l'Action Catholique* did develop in much the same ways as other newspapers in Quebec and even the rest of Canada at the time. It too had to contend with competition and hence became a part of the business world. Advertisements and page layout were just as important for *l'Action Catholique* as it was for the other newspapers. It was not simply a given that the newspaper would be sold to all Catholics, despite its advertisement in most churches. People were taking part in a society which offered them many goods and opportunities, of which *L'Action Catholique* was simply another. *L'Action Catholique* offered the general news, but it also

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<sup>38</sup> Jones, Richard. L'idéologie de l'Action catholique, 1917-1939 (Québec : Presses de l'Université Laval, 1974)

<sup>39</sup> Marquis, Dominique. Un quotidien pour l'Eglise. L'Action Catholique, 1910-1940 (Montreal : Lemeac, 2004) 74.

offered news of Catholics worldwide and hence the fusing of the two, church and newspaper.

### 2.3. Modern Church?

Recent works posit that Roman Catholics are not simply mindless drones, but are actually autonomous individuals who are capable of critical thinking, even of the Catholic Church and its works.<sup>40</sup> They go even further, formulating the hypothesis that the Church was perhaps not so reticent to new liberal and modern ideas but that, indeed, a long process of modernization took place within the Church itself.<sup>41</sup> Instead of a Clergy dressed in strict black clothing barring down displeasingly on its flock, we can sometimes see a leader group who was actually involved in the development of French Canada.

I argue that the Church's history at the turning of the XXth century expresses a *modern* reaction to modernity in other ways as well. Take for example, the works of the "Curé Labelle" during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Here we find an instance where the Priest himself was not afraid to "get his hands dirty", so to speak, and became highly involved in the evolution of the society in which he found himself. Not only this, but he was fully cognizant of the fact that in order for his parish to survive and flourish, it would need to do so by becoming economically active. Seen as the "king of the north", he advocated a new form of re-conquest by the French Canadian people. He encouraged them to take control of themselves in an economic fashion by pushing them to develop and exploit the agriculture and mining resources in their areas, take advantage of the

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<sup>40</sup> Meunier E-M, Jean Phillippe Warren, Sortir de la Grande Noirceur l'horizon personnaliste de la Revolution Tranquille (Sillery : Septerion, 2002), 13.

<sup>41</sup> P.17

work to be found in factories in future cities, work to build the businesses and tourism industry that would develop in their area, and finally take advantage of what the network of railways implanting themselves in the region could bring them economically.<sup>42</sup>

His overall idea for the community was not one that was totally dependent upon the land for economic life. Many previous written works have blamed the Church for remaining blind to the changes taking place but as we can see, the “Curé Labelle” was fully aware of the new modern developments taking place around him and was not hesitant to promulgate these ideas for the benefit of his parish. While he is but one example, it is good evidence to show that not all members of the Clergy were resisting the new modern world but instead some were actively pursuing a part for themselves, and their parishes, within it.

It must be cautioned however, that they did not simply *embrace* modernity with open arms. Instead, I argue, the Church was coming to terms with these new changes as much as anyone else during this time, and was attempting to draw a balance between “the ancient and the modern”. There would be many instances where the Church would be hesitant about the developments taking place in the emerging world due to the perceived evils of the consumer society. The following chapter, then, addresses the question of the development of the Church with regards to Capitalism and Liberalism.

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<sup>42</sup> Dussault, Gabriel. *Le Curé Labelle*. (Montreal : Editions Hurtubise HMH., 1983) 102.



### **Chapter Three:**

#### **The Demon of Liberalism in Quebec**

Liberalism was regarded as one of the greatest threats to the Catholic Church in Quebec during the nineteenth Century. In the following chapter I will first describe how, with Ultramontane thought, the Church formulated a rather modern reaction to modernity. Next, I will explore the new social programs of the Church and how they were taking form through the organization of such things as cooperatives and labor unions. This new form of social Catholicism emerged as new needs arose due to the oftentimes bleak social changes taking place in Quebec. It is in this section that I will outline what I view to be the evolution of the Church's dominant social role in Quebec. In the last part of this chapter, I will analyze the question of economic profit in theology. Was profit something to be admired or admonished? At the end of this chapter, it is my intent that we will then better understand the part taken by the Church in consumer society.

In order to understand the changes taking place within the Church at this time, I argue that one must understand the historic-cultural context of the time. The Church had taken a dominant place as an institution in Quebec and it is important to explain why it took such a place if one wants to understand the manners by which it developed.

## 2.1. What Is Ultramontanism?

By the 1840's the Catholic Church was arguably a part of the culture and spiritual lives of French-speaking Quebecois people and the members of the Clergy were key players in the definition of the province's social reality.<sup>43</sup> Ultramontane Catholicism penetrated various parts of social life including health, education, and even work. With a society rapidly becoming urban and dividing itself into various groups, the original ethnic entity was forcing a different form of social leadership.<sup>44</sup>

Emerging in the XIXth century, Ultramontane thought was a reaction to the secularization that occurred as a result of the French Revolution. There was an intense debate surrounding the place of the church and state in European society. With liberalism came the idea that the state politics must not be regulated by the church.<sup>45</sup> Ultramontane thought strove to further Papal authority and to promote the Catholic Church as centerfold to the (moral) leadership of the state. These thinkers believed that the church, and hence the Pope as divinely appointed leader of the church, had God-destined authority over the state.<sup>46</sup>

Ultramontanism in Quebec arguably developed from the thoughts of de Maistre and Veuillot.<sup>47</sup> Bishop de Maistre believed that the Catholic Church, as superior to the state, was the only manner by which to counter modern and secular notions of the French

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<sup>43</sup> Baum, Gregory. *Religion, economics, and social thought* (Vancouver: Fraser Institute: 1982) 16.

<sup>44</sup> Rioux, Marcel & Yves Martin. *French-Canadian Society* (Toronto: McClelland & Steward, 1964), 178.

<sup>45</sup> Holland, Joe. *Modern Catholic Social Teaching : The Popes Confront the Industrial Age 1740-1958*. (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2003), 32.

<sup>46</sup> Belanger, Claude. "The Roman Catholic Church and Quebec" 2000. Marianapolis College. 2 June, 2005. <http://www2.marianapolis.edu/quebechistory/readings/church.htm>

<sup>47</sup> Voisine, Nive. « L'ultramontanisme canadien-français au XIXe siècle. *Les Ultramontains Canadiens-Français*. Eds. Nive Voisine and Jean Hamelin. (Montreal : Boreal Express, 1985), 68.

Revolution. Not only was the Church the only capable form of protection against revolutionary ideas, he believed, but the Church must be centered on a strong Papacy.<sup>48</sup>

Louis Veillot also had considerable influence upon French Canadian Ultramontane thought. He sought to ensure that the Catholic Church maintain their freedom of expression in various forms such as education and control of other social institutions.<sup>49</sup> As such, he began the Catholic newspaper entitled *L'Univers* which included within it news about Catholic developments as well as reactions to the outside 'Protestant' world.<sup>50</sup> *L'Univers* served as an example of how to promote Ultramontane thought.<sup>51</sup>

While these thinkers expanded upon the Ultramontane tendencies of the other, the underlying scope remained the same -- the Church was to be the vessel by which to fight liberalism and domination of the State. From 1840 to 1896 it can be argued that the Catholic church of Quebec was predominantly Ultramontane in its thought. Like its European counterpart, the Catholic Church in Quebec was fighting against liberal tendencies emerging from the extension of material progress.<sup>52</sup> It too gave considerable attention to the Divine providence that placed the Pope as leader above the State. Belanger writes that, between 1840 and 1876, over 150 Quebecois priests studied

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<sup>48</sup> Sargent, Robert John. The Thought of Monseigneur Louis-Adolphe Paquet as a Spokeman for French-Canadian Ultramontaniam.( Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc. 1968) 38.

<sup>49</sup> P. 40.

<sup>50</sup> Gough, Austin. Paris and Rome: The Gallican Church and the Ultramontane Campaign 1848-1853. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 95.

<sup>51</sup> P.97

<sup>52</sup> Sargent, Robert John. The Thought of Monseigneur Louis-Adolphe Paquet as a Spokeman for French-Canadian Ultramontaniam.( Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc. 1968), 44.

Catholic thought in Europe in a time when the Vatican was a stronghold of Ultramontane ideology.<sup>53</sup>

Mgr. Ignace Bourget is considered the pioneer of Quebec Ultramontane thought.<sup>54</sup> He insisted upon the need of the Church to take part in every sphere of Quebec society, and argued that the only way to do so was by controlling the social and cultural institutions in Quebec. Education was considered the most important facet by which to promote Ultramontane thought, and quite logically Bourget insisted that its foundation be established within it.<sup>55</sup> Education was not restricted to schooling however, and many Catholic newspapers were developed during his lifetime including *Les Mélanges religieux* (1841-1852), *Le Nouveau-Monde* (1867-1881), *le Franc-Parleur* (1870-1878), and *L'etendard* (1883-1888).<sup>56</sup>

Eventually the Quebec Clergy would come to have a prominent role in taking part in various aspects of their everyday lives (i.e. education, newspaper, etc). Voisine writes that the period from 1840 to 1896 corresponded to one of the most important periods in the history of the Church in Quebec. It was during this time that Catholicism strove to take control of most of the cultural institutions in Quebec.<sup>57</sup> It was then to be well served by what Louis Rousseau has called a religious 'awakening', an awakening which transformed Quebec society socio-culturally.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> "Claude Belanger" *The Roman Catholic Church and Quebec*. 2000. Marianapolis College. 2 June, 2005. <http://www2.marianapolis.edu/quebechistory/readings/church.htm>

<sup>54</sup> Voisine, Nive. *Histoire de L'Eglise catholique au Quebec (1608-1970)*. (Montreal :Editions Fides, 1971), 71.

<sup>55</sup> P. 85.

<sup>56</sup> P.77

<sup>57</sup> P. 53.

<sup>58</sup> Nepveu, Danielle. *Bibliographie de Rousseau, Louis et Frank W Remiggi*, dir. *Atlas historiques des pratiques religieuses. Le Sud-ouest du Quebec au XIXe siecle*. 2004. APHCQ. 9 July, 2005. [http://cgi.cvm.qc.ca/APHCQ/scripts/aphecq.pl?get&Bulletin/Comptes%rendus/bib\\_atlas5.html](http://cgi.cvm.qc.ca/APHCQ/scripts/aphecq.pl?get&Bulletin/Comptes%rendus/bib_atlas5.html).

### 3.2. A religious ‘awakening’

According to Louis Rousseau people turned to religion as a solution to crises that took place in the 1830s and 1840s. These were crises in the rural economy, demographic pressures in the form of massive emigration, socio-ethnic tensions between British immigrants and the French Canadians, as well as political crises including lack of faith in the political leadership that followed the defeat of the Parti Patriote.

Before 1840 there was a lack of religious institutions in Quebec. Hence, the people were disinclined to pay much attention to religion.<sup>59</sup> But, argues Rousseau, because of the natural societal developments that took place and eventually turned into crises, traditional ways of dealing with problems no longer held fast and rapidly became outdated. Because of the problems that were occurring in their everyday lives, the people were in need of help. The Quebecois were searching for a new solution to their problems, a solution which they would ultimately find in religion.<sup>60</sup>

Rousseau’s work enables us to better understand the religious transformations which took place starting in the 1840’s. The people sought answers from Catholicism as a way of coping with the changes that occurred during their lifetime. Curé Labelle’s work is a good example. In a way, Rousseau’s work aims to deconstruct the evolution of Catholicism in Quebec. According to him, the people turned to the Clergy in order to find some sort of sense of their chaotic world; they turned to the Church for leadership and guidance in a time of need; they sought solace in the fact that something ‘bigger’, ‘more

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<sup>59</sup> Rousseau, Louis et Remiggi, Frank. *Atlas historiques des pratiques religieuses. Le Sud-ouest du Québec au XIXe siècle*. (Ottawa : Les Presses de L’Université d’Ottawa. 1998), 4.

<sup>60</sup> Rousseau, Louis. *Le Bas clergé catholique au dix-neuvième siècle. Approche comparative d’une population pastorale en voie de changement*. (Québec. Université Laval. 1995), 235.

transcendental' could provide them with a solution to the problems they were then facing and gave basis for the argument that the only true Reason was Divinely appointed.

But how exactly did this "réveil" take place? The *Atlas historiques des pratiques religieuses. Le Sud-ouest du Québec au XIXe siècle*. as well as books such as Rousseau's *Le Bas-clergé catholique au dix-neuvième siècle* calculate the religious transformations between 1840-1870 in Quebec.<sup>61</sup> Simply put, there was a rather large insistence upon increasing religious fervor which developed during this time period. This took shape in various activities initiated by the Clergy to stimulate a renewal. Conferences for the Clergy became a regular occurrence; a Catholic press was developed, as well as other associations poignantly directed towards Catholic conversion.<sup>62</sup> A rather large insistence was placed on participation in religious activities -- attending mass, confession, etc. Rousseau cites evidence of this increase in his 1995 article, choosing to study Montreal parishes in the XIX<sup>th</sup> to show the influx in church participation during this time period. He also notes the rise in vocations that were simultaneously related to the Catholic Church -- rise in the number of priests and nuns, in the number of monasteries and convents, etc.<sup>63</sup>

Catholicism began to encompass much larger aspects of the population than ever before, leading in return to a gradual increase in its ability to organize Quebec society. According to Rousseau and Remiggi, this served to stabilize the province through the Clergy's ability to regulate and control various socio-cultural aspects of Quebecois lives.

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<sup>61</sup> Rousseau, Louis et Remiggi, Frank. *Atlas historiques des pratiques religieuses. Le Sud-ouest du Québec au XIXe siècle*. (Ottawa : Les Presses de L'Université d'Ottawa. 1998), 187.

<sup>62</sup> Nepveu, Danielle. Bibliographie de Rousseau, Louis et Frank W Remiggi, dir. *Atlas historiques des pratiques religieuses. Le Sud-ouest du Québec au XIXe siècle*. 2004. APHCQ. 9 July, 2005. <[http://cgi.cvm.qc.ca/APHCQ/scripts/aphcq.pl?get&Bulletin/Comptes%rendus/bib\\_atlas5.html](http://cgi.cvm.qc.ca/APHCQ/scripts/aphcq.pl?get&Bulletin/Comptes%rendus/bib_atlas5.html).

<sup>63</sup> Rousseau, Louis « A propos du 'réveil religieux' dans le Québec du XIXe siècle : ou se loge le vrai débat ? 'Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française. Vol 49, no 2, automne 1995, p. 223-245.

Not only was the Clergy incremental in adding stability to an otherwise chaotic society, but by analyzing the organizational structures prior to this time period one is able to understand the rapid transformation in attitudes and actions of the people.<sup>64</sup>

Some critics of Rousseau do not agree that the Church simply benefited from a popular movement of spontaneous religious revival. Hardy states that the foundations of Rousseau's "réveil religieux" are shaky. He argues that Quebec did not necessarily transition as quickly as Rousseau may have made it out to be, but rather that the transformation was the result of a slow process of acculturation that would have occurred regardless of the crises emphasized by Rousseau. His main argument is against the naturalistic notion of Rousseau's work. Rousseau writes of the "réveil religieux" as a natural progression from a people in crisis to a solution found *naturally* in the Catholic Church.

But whether one accepts Rousseau's or Hardy's position, the chief phenomenon to analyze is unquestioned; the progressive dominance gained by the Roman Catholic Church over French Canadians. Measured in terms of ecclesial apparatus or diffuse influence, the general portrait of a French Canadian nation organized institutionally and symbolically by the Church is difficult to refute. Of course this is not to say that local bourgeoisie or lay intellectuals held thin influence in Quebec; my opinion is rather that the Church was only one of many organizational powers striving to influence French Canadians. Nevertheless French Canada as a specific social order cannot be understood without considering the role played by the Church in its societal reproduction. "The

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<sup>64</sup> Rousseau, Louis et Remiggi, Frank. *Atlas historiques des pratiques religieuses. Le Sud-ouest du Québec au XIXe siècle.* (Ottawa : Les Presses de L'Université d'Ottawa. 1998), 187.

dominant institution of a dominated people” is how Ferretti describes the Catholic Church in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>65</sup>

### **3.3. Further Evolution of Catholicism in Quebec**

The 19<sup>th</sup> Century saw a great increase in the influence of Catholicism in Europe and America. As a result of their fight against liberal tendencies and Protestantism, the Church took it upon itself, during this time period, to organize the territory, society, and nation of French Canada in the manner by which it sought fit.<sup>66</sup> The Church had become a part of the social fabric of French Canadian society. The two were inseparable and as such the church was a national institution of sorts.

Based upon the threat of secularized modernity, liberalism, and the spread of Protestantism at the time, the Catholic Church sought to preserve control over French Quebec. From 1840 to 1900, the clergy’s influence spread to such areas as missionary expeditions to Native Americans missions, setting up pioneer settler campaigns, as well as creating various organizations to help the poor.<sup>67</sup> More importantly, it fought for the right to a Catholic school system.<sup>68</sup>

By the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Ferretti argues that Ultramontane thought maintained a primary and dominant role in Quebec society. As the century came to a close, however, the economy in Quebec began to change in such drastic and different

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<sup>65</sup> Ferretti, Lucia. *Breve histoire de l’Eglise catholique au Quebec*. (Montreal : Boreal. 1999), 63.

<sup>66</sup> P.56.

<sup>67</sup>P. 58

<sup>68</sup> P.77



ways that Ultramontane thought would be lost in its own evolution and in its stead the Clergy would have to adopt a somewhat different social doctrine.

### 3.4. Social Catholicism in Quebec

Social Catholicism is in a sense an extension of Ultramontane thought (which was, according to Ferretti, definitely losing ground in 1896). The advent of a new industrial age challenged the scope of the church's traditional reach in Quebec. People may have been incredibly devoted to Catholicism yet they did not forget about their need for survival.<sup>69</sup> French Canadians might have been extremely attached to their Church and their land, but this attachment did not prevent them from going looking elsewhere than to the Church if the economic conditions were such as to force them to do so. Between the years of 1870-1900 as many as 410 000 people migrated to the United States in order to find employment.<sup>70</sup> From 1900 to 1910 alone the number rises to 150 000 people.<sup>71</sup>

This led to ever more social problems including crime and disease.<sup>72</sup> Not only did the industrial revolution lead to an influx in French Canadian migration, it also brought to light the ever growing disparities between the Anglo-Saxon bourgeoisie and the French Canadian proletariat. The society in Quebec had an enormous number of adjustments to make, as did any other society undergoing modernization at the time. Being at the core of French Canadian society, the Church was to hold the ringside seat to social thought and

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<sup>69</sup> Trudeau, Pierre Elliott. "The Province of Quebec at the Time of the Strike" *The Asbestos Strike*. Ed. Pierre Elliott Trudeau. (Toronto: James Lewis & Samuel. 1949), 12.

<sup>70</sup> Ferretti, Lucia. *Breve histoire de l'Eglise catholique au Quebec*. (Montreal : Boreal. 1999), 108.

<sup>71</sup> Poulin, Pierre. *Histoire du Mouvement Desjardins Tome 1*, (Montreal : Editions Quebec/Amerique. 1990),17.

<sup>72</sup> Ferretti, Lucia. *Breve histoire de l'Eglise catholique au Quebec*. (Montreal : Boreal. 1999), 103.

action.<sup>73</sup> The Catholic Church sought ways to cope with these fast-paced changes and in the end the task at hand became to modernize Quebec without sacrificing its Catholic character.

Some of these changes included mass emigration from Canada to the United States. In the first phase of the emigration movement, the Church condemned French Canadians who wished to emigrate to the US. It argued that this was the fastest road to assimilation and should be avoided at all costs. Many priests also argued that French Canadians were agriculturalists at heart, and hence must stay in Quebec to glean from the land. Such an opinion explains its massive encouragement of colonization to remote and largely unpopulated parts of Quebec.<sup>74</sup>

In the cities, massive fluctuations of people formed a large industrial society. The population of Montreal alone more than quadrupled from 1881 to 1921 and the city fared no exception to the sickness, poverty, and misery brought about by intense urban migration, for instance.<sup>75</sup> Here too, the church took a hands-on approach and formed various associations to help people cope with their new living conditions. At the same time, churches were being erected all over the city to keep people from straying from their faith. These not only served as a spiritual reminder, however, but were also used as social domains where artisans could display their works, clubs could come to be formed (helping the social network of employers to be set up), and general social activities of the time could be conducted.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Baum, Gregory. *Religion, economics, and social thought* (Vancouver: Fraser Institute: 1982), 33.

<sup>74</sup> Ferretti, Lucia. *Breve histoire de l'Église catholique au Québec*. (Montreal : Boreal. 1999), 105.

<sup>75</sup> Lamonde, Yvan ; assisté de Lucia Ferretti et de Daniel LeBlanc. *La culture ouvrière à Montréal (1880-1920) : bilan historiographique* (Québec : Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, 1982) 25.

<sup>76</sup> P.108

Through its social programs, the Church adapted itself to urban industrialism and made rampant use of its ability to influence these.<sup>77</sup> The Clergy was also involved in the encouragement of a cooperative movement (note the growth and popularity of les Caisses Populaires Desjardins in Rudin, 1990)<sup>78</sup>. The Catholic Trade Union was also created. This was created out of the need to organize workers because of the threat of international unions.

It also had a pronounced role to play when it came to being the identifier of French Canadian culture as well as its greatest champion. As such, it is hard to imagine that it simply stood idly by while these changes were taking place. It too recognized the changing dynamics of society and realized the need for it to assume a stake in the consumer society. In the new consumer society, leisure was quickly becoming routine in most peoples' lives. Industrialization lead to changes in lifestyles and these were to challenge the role of the Catholic Church in Quebec. This new society was looked upon with dismay and perhaps even disdain, however, but the church was not to remain indifferent to these changes or it would quickly lose its social power.<sup>79</sup>

Certainly these endeavors by the Clergy were not as economically viable as some would dream that they could be. Some – such as the colonialist movement -- even turned into little human disasters. However, the Church did attempt to formulate a religious and social response in a time when answers were crucially needed.

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<sup>77</sup> Ferretti, Lucia. *Breve histoire de l'Eglise catholique au Quebec.* (Montreal : Boreal. 1999), 110.

<sup>78</sup> Rudin, Ronald. *In Whose Interest?* Montreal & Kingston. McGill-Queen's University Press. 1990.

<sup>79</sup> Marquis, Dominique. *Un quotidien pour l'Eglise. L'Action Catholique, 1910-1940* (Montreal : Lemeac, 2004) 74.

### **3.5. Embracing modernity?**

Put in very simple terms, Ultramontane thought aimed at imprinting upon Quebec a rather medieval spirit whereas social Catholicism wanted to modernize Quebec while preserving its traditional culture. I argue however, that these two avenues were not the only ones in which the Catholic Church engaged. My focus is instead to analyze the embrace of “modernization” by the Catholic Church in Quebec. In this manner I will demonstrate the ways in which the Church did try, so to speak, “to fight the Devil using the Devil’s weapons”. Hence, I will focus my attention on the ways in which the Church worked along with Capitalism within modernity.

I am seeking to set forth an analysis of yet another example of how the XIX<sup>th</sup> century and XXth century Roman Catholic Church had not remained stuck in the ‘dark ages’ as some would put it. Instead of obstinately refusing anything modern things and clinging to the last vestiges of traditionalism, I argue that in many instances the very opposite occurred. While some authors may posit that the Church simply replaced all forms of social thought with Catholic doctrine, I argue that the embrace of “modernity” was not so lacking as to call it utterly incomplete, narrow minded, or even old fashioned. In very real and productive ways, the church incorporated itself into society; infiltrating its biggest sectors (education, social programs, and economic plans). Although we might now completely disagree with its aims, its goal does not seem so far off.

Hence, the next chapter uses the data I have collected in order to demonstrate the ways in which the Catholic Church attempted to take a place within the world constructed by Capitalism. Church operates as business. I will demonstrate how the Church itself, in

some ways, became its own business dealing in very much the same ways as any other business in Quebec at the time. It too was not above selling goods to consumers. But more importantly Catholics were now increasingly perceived and defined as consumers by a large variety of industries and businesses. “God” was now more and more a “good” to be advertised and sold.

## **Chapter Four:**

### **Capitalism: The Church Within It**

Did the Church actually take its place within the Capitalist system as I have hypothesized? In order to demonstrate the manner by which the Church took its place within the society produced by Capitalism, I will be providing evidence for my hypothesis that the Church used some aspects of modernity against modernity itself.

I wonder whether, in many ways, the Church used the formal methods of accumulating capital in order to get to the greater underlying facets of its work- saving souls. Can it even be said that the Church became partly Capitalist in the ways in which it dealt with people? This is the question I seek to answer in this chapter. To demonstrate this, the first section deals with what I term the more traditional sales taken about by the Church. With the sale of things such as church benches, the Church not only made a fiscal profit but also demonstrated a savvy ability to detect manners in which to augment and serve the most benefit for its parishes. Other things such as marriages and baptisms as well were being sold for profit, something which is interesting when one recognizes that marriages and baptisms were sacerdotal events which were necessary in leading a pious life.

Following this, I take an exploratory journey through the mass medias present in Quebec. I explore methods by which the church itself became involved in newspaper publishing as a method of counteracting what it viewed to be ailing morals being perpetuated by newspaper dailies. I introduce a time of Clerical censorship with regards

to various forms of mass media albeit newspapers, cinema, or theatrical acts. I take the time to explore this avenue because I argue that it is a highly important part taken by the members of the Clergy in its attempt to come to terms with and adapt to new developments in the society around them. While they could never completely combat them, I think it would be wrong to state that the church declined and lost its place as a dominant institution in Quebec society because it adamantly refused to adapt itself to the new modern changes taking place. It did, indeed, try to adapt. It was the *means* by which it did which were not necessarily the most beneficial.

This chapter and the next then, serve to explore these means. I will describe the various manners by which the Church was present in newspaper advertisements in order to demonstrate their *active* role in the modern developments taking place in Quebec.

#### **4.1.Traditional Sales: The Church and the sale of Itself and For Itself**

While it is most often the case that the Catholic churches in Quebec made the bulk of its money from the tithe of its parishioners, there are some cases in which the Church was involved with sales coming from within it. One of these cases is the sale of church pews.

In *L'histoire de Saint-Jean de l'Ile D'Orleans à travers les contrats notaires de ventes de Bancs*, Raymonde Bonenfant and Raymond Letourneau analyze old notary books which contained documentation of the sale of church benches for the parish of Saint Jean in the nineteenth century. Their goal was to analyze the religious life in Saint-Jean at the time through the purchasing of church benches by parishioners. Their analysis

finds that the sale of church benches, in a lot of ways, was a reflection of the social structure of the society in Saint Jean at the time, for instance the closer one's bench was to the front of the Church, the more social prestige was accorded to them. They write that since church was the single most important social gathering, most common one as well, to own a bench at the front of Church was viewed with utmost importance. It was important for a family to own a bench, no matter where in the church, for there was always a limited amount of benches available. Some were left standing at the back of the Church if they could not afford a bench, something which demonstrated a lack of social prestige. As they write « Aussi, ne semble-t-il pas exagéré d'affirmer que l'histoire des bancs reflète celle de la vie de la paroisse ou chaque famille y avait sa place choisie. »<sup>80</sup>

In 1879, thirty two benches were sold for 703\$, a significant amount of money for the time. Just like a business, the church searched for an adept carpenter to undertake renovations for the parish as well, and to add more benches since more benches meant a greater profit. They chronicle the ways in which the Clergy of the area were aware of the changing times and were seeking to establish more comfortable, modern Church decorations. Letourneau, in his own book, *Un visage de l'île d'Orléans: Saint-Jean* writes that the Clergy had long since, in their records, accorded a great source of appreciation for the sale of church benches since it offered considerable revenues for the parish. He writes that in 1879, 190\$ would be made from the renting of 17 benches, 38\$ for twelve, which meant that a median price of 58\$ was paid for each bench<sup>81</sup>. Each year in March, he writes, the owner was to allocate a check for the bench to the Church. A

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<sup>80</sup> Bonenfant, R. & Letourneau R. *L'Histoire de Saint-Jean de L'île D'Orléans A Travers les Contrats Notaries de Ventes de Bancs*, 1981. p.3.

<sup>81</sup> Letourneau, Raymond, *Un visage de l'île D'Orléans: Saint-Jean* Presses de L'Eclaireur Ltee, Beauceville, 1979. p. 103.



considerable amount of money was spent each year to procure this bench, but as it was important for the perception of one's family, there is more than one instance by which people fought over the "good" bench areas which were becoming available upon the death of its previous owners. If the bench was not paid for each year, after a three month period it could be sold to someone else without any warning. Letourneau also writes that benches are still being sold today but that they are of less importance to people than previously. With the decline in the number of people who attend church on a regular basis, he argues that people are more inclined to purchase a bench out of tradition than as a method to convey one's social status.<sup>82</sup>

Aside from the sale of Church benches, the Church also sold baptisms and marriages. People paid fees for such things in order for the priest to perform these functions. A book on Canadian folklore states that "Another couple was to be married as soon as the man could get enough money to pay the priest's fee."<sup>83</sup> While I could not find information relating to the actual prices conferred for such events, it is still important to recognize that "Priestly duties" as well were charged to the consumer for them.

The selling of things by the Church was not the only instance of the instrumentation by the Church for profit. Monasteries had long since sold wines for various reasons, only some of which were for used for Church itself. However, this simply demonstrates that the Church was aware of capital and the idea of profit. This is not a foreign concept, the Church was a part of society and hence able to recognize the changes from days of barter to days of capital exchanges. However, as the next section

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<sup>82</sup>Letourneau, Raymond, "*Un visage de l'Île D'Orleans: Saint-Jean*" Presses de L'Eclaireur Ltee, (Beauceville, 1979) 104

<sup>83</sup>Greenough, William Parker. *Canadian Folk-life and Folk-lore*.(New York : George H. Richmond, 1897), 86.

describes, the new forms of developing social capital were evidently becoming attractive to the Church although I posit that the Church had other reasons than the accumulation of capital when it became involved to the extent that it had in the developments of mass media.

#### **4.2. The Clergy and the Mass Media**

The mass media would come to be viewed as one of the greatest challenges to the powers of Catholicism in Quebec. It would also be viewed as something which could possibly lead people away from their lives of good Catholics. Because of this, I explore three strategies by which the Clergy sought to come to terms with these new challenges. They are the following: 1. Refuse. 2. Replace. 3. Remake. While I have put them in numerical order, it should be noted that the strategies oftentimes overlapped with one another and one did not necessarily lead to the other.

I first explore how they sought to eliminate (Refuse) through censorship, non confessional activities completely. I will explore this step by describing a few instances of Clerical censorship as documented by Pierre Hebert. I will also delve into an example of Clerical censorship which ended with the eventual abomination of the newspaper daily *L'Electeur*. It should be mentioned that condemnations and censorship were not always the most fruitful of methods of control. People were far too intrigued and attracted to some of the new forms of leisure activity to be bothered by such Clerical demands.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Marquis, Dominique. Un quotidien pour l'Eglise. *L'Action Catholique*, 1910-1940 (Montreal : Lemeac, 2004) 25.

The Clergy also sought to replace unwanted activities with their own. In this instance I describe the development of a completely Catholic daily newspaper, *L'Action catholique*. I will explore the development by using Dominique Marquis' book, *Un quotidien pour l'Eglise* as I believe that she adequately describes in part what this thesis seeks to support- the adaptation of the Church to modern ideas which, while not always completely successful, do still demonstrate that they were not completely stuck in traditionalism and archaic ideas.

The third strategy which I term the Remake stage, shows the adaptive potential by the Clergy. This section will be one which serves to describe the advent of mass media in Quebec. I explore the ways in which mass media, in certain respects, forced the Clergy into action. In response to the vast array of daily newspapers quickly becoming popular in Quebec, the Church would eventually branch into newspaper publishing itself. It is important to understand that while the members of the Clergy may not have always made what most would regard to be the best political, social, economic moves, they were attempting to strike a balance between these while remaining grounded in the faith. They were aiming for a dual balance between God and man, the public and private sphere, and in some instances "good and evil". While before the Clergy had always been in control of such domains as education, politics, private lives, the family, and social welfare it was now being challenged in all of these sectors.

While the priest may be in the most pronounced place of reaching people in traditional societies, the mass distribution of newspapers which would take over Quebec posed an immense threat to the power of the Clergy.. We can think of a time before radio

or television, a land where once a week people attended mass. If ever anyone were to be reached, it would likely be done rather easily through the priest.

The first impulse of the Church, so to speak, in reaction to the newspapers which were quickly becoming daily household items was pure rejection. This was done through censorship and preaching against this so-called evil. They were witnessing before their very eyes an opening up of new ideas by which not all were deemed appropriate for good Catholics and this was only being rapidly perpetuated through daily newspapers. There is more than one instance of Clerical censorship in Quebec and this is not only with regards to newspapers. Over the years, cinema, books, and plays would be highly scrutinized as well for their failure to adhere to the morals of human piety.

Today in Quebec it is rather difficult to open a newspaper and have it be filled with Catholic content. However, with newspapers in the early nineteenth century, one emerged which would celebrate much success in its early years, *L'Action catholique*. Before I get to the evolution of this newspaper, however, it is important to understand where exactly this need arose from. One good example of this is the Church's response to and eventual destruction of the Quebec newspaper *L'Electeur*. At the end of 1896, this Sunday fared noteworthy because throughout Quebec Churches a pastoral letter was being read a loud. This letter by Cardinal Begin contained a strict warning to those who would use their time reading the newspaper *L'Electeur*. Whoever reads this newspaper, it warned, is disobeying the authority of the Church and committing a grave sin. With this, some 320,000 Catholics were reached, a rather devastating blow to the newspaper, for not many were yet brave enough to disobey clerical teaching.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Lemieux, Louis-Guy. *Le Roman du Soleil: Un journal dans son siecle* (Sillery : Les editions du Septentrion, 1997) 15.

What had *L'Electeur* done to bring upon such Clerical wrath? Three things were said to have caused the final damnation by the Clergy: first, they had openly encouraged Prime Minister Laurier in his dealings with the Manitoba schools Affair, a stance which the Clergy found to be unjust to the Western Canadian Francophones. They went so far as to state that Laurier was nothing short of abandoning them to assimilation. The Clergy had a rather strong and obvious encouragement in the province for their conservative leader Charlevoix. *l'Electeur* was not shy of stating that the Church was unfairly interfering in politics and should hence stay out of it which was the second reason for which the Church was not fond of this newspaper. The third reason for the condemnation was their publishing of an overview of the book by Laurent-Olivier David "*Le Clerge canadien, sa mission, son oeuvre*". This book was highly and outwardly condemned by the Clergy and the publication of it by *L'Electeur* was unforgivable.<sup>86</sup>

The culmination of these three "sins" led to the aforementioned letter and from one day to the next, the sales of *L'Electeur* plummeted and this daily went bankrupt. While the directors of *L'Electeur* would rebuild a new daily which was to become the journal we know today to be *Le Soleil*, the Clergy realized that it too would need to create a daily if it was to take part in the instruction and perpetuation of ideologies that newspapers allowed for. It would take until 1907 before this became possible, however, and in the meantime censorship continued to be the dominant form of controlling unwanted literature.

Pierre Hebert in his book *Censure et littérature au Québec. Le livre crucifié, 1625-1919* argues that the church evolved their literary censorship in three periods.

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<sup>86</sup> Lemieux, Louis-Guy. *Le Roman du Soleil. Un journal dans son siècle* (Sillery : Les éditions du Septentrion, 1997) 16, 17.

First, in a pre-censor form from the 1625-1840 by which the church remained fairly uncontradicted in terms of appropriate literature since they had the power to personally censor through confession and masses. Next from 1840 to 1910 came a more proscriptive period where censorship took on the role of forbiddance (rejection) and here the Clergy was obvious about the rejection of certain pieces of literature. Finally, prescriptive censorship takes place between 1896 and 1919 in which judgments were overtly passed on written works and influence over the population with regards to whom held overall authority was held.

The blow and death of certain journals were meant to eliminate opposition as well as serve as an example of why one was not meant to protest religious intolerance.<sup>87</sup> However, the Clergy was mindful of the fact that it would not be able to control all the modern aspects of daily life if it did not replace those modern elements with something similar but Catholic. It recognized that these new forms of society were becoming more complex than ever before and that its traditional forms of social control were waning. The Clergy was fully aware of the power of the press and was not refusing to recognize that the press was quickly becoming a part of life that was not going to go away despite their best attempts. What censorship alone did was promulgate fear which would only go so far. The press, however, was a new avenue of exploration that even the Clergy could take advantage of. If the presses were so adamantly refused for misuse of propagating false ideologies, why could it not be used by them to further the proper, doctrinal, Catholic values? In an effort to replace those it had eliminated (*l'Electeur*) and in an effort to fight the major newspapers at the time (*Le Soleil, La Presse, the Montreal Daily Star*), Begin

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<sup>87</sup> Godin, Pierre. *La lutte pour l'information. Histoire de la presse écrite au Québec* (Montreal : Le Jour, Editeur, 1981) 23.

would form an entirely Catholic daily called *L'Action sociale* (to become *L'Action catholique* in 1915).<sup>88</sup>

*L'Action catholique* was founded as a result of the perceived need for a newspaper which promoted the news from a Catholic perspective, a perceived lack in dailies at the time. These dailies failed to adhere to Catholic doctrine and hence were seen to be at fault.<sup>89</sup> Just like any other newspaper, however, *L'Action catholique* had to reach its readers with something which caught their attention and kept them interested in buying the paper. As the modern world continued to progress, it became necessary for the survival of *L'Action catholique* to conform to some modern business notions such as advertising and page layout, etc. It was well understood by this time that advertisements were the primary source of revenue for newspapers.

Hence *L'Action catholique* is a good example of how the Church adapted itself to modern phenomena by seeking ways to replace the Liberal daily newspapers which were filled with harmful messages. A Catholic daily would help dissuade people from straying from the proper moral values and would even help encourage the right ones. Just like any other newspaper, *L'Action catholique* was seeking to enable their readers to construct opinions and thoughts.<sup>90</sup>

Much in the same way that advertisement seeks to create a want or desire for a product, so too is a Catholic daily needing to create its image in a manner in which it will come to be highly desired and sought out and finally purchased. *L'Action catholique* however was not all that good at marketing itself at first since those who ran the

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<sup>88</sup>Marquis, Dominique. Un quotidien pour l'Eglise. *L'Action Catholique*, 1910-1940 (Montreal : Lemeac, 2004)149.

<sup>89</sup> P.83.

<sup>90</sup> P.85

newspaper were not so much businessmen as they were “lay missionaries” working to fulfill a need in the Catholic world. Although it was highly advertised in churches, its success was not automatically guaranteed. Begin was not a savvy business man and his intention was to have a paper which offered the news of Catholics around the world not necessarily for profit.<sup>91</sup> This is where *Le Soleil*, among others, had the advantage of experience on their side and was at a place where *L’Action catholique* was to strive to catch up to. This might in part explain why it is that not all Catholics automatically gravitated to reading *L’Action catholique* for it is apparent that some were reading *Le Soleil* as well. But *L’Action catholique* would, in the late 1930s to 1950’s come to be a valuable source of competition to the other Quebec dailies just as it too adapted to new forms of competition.

The popularization of advertisements would take on a crucial role in the survival of the dailies. No longer could mere word of mouth ensure the popularity of a newspaper. Just like other goods, newspapers were commodified. *La Presse*, *La Patrie*, *le Soleil*, and *The Montreal Star* were taking their place within it by organizing their content accordingly. Content and page layout would play a crucial role in how newspapers were received.

When they took out *L’Electeur*, the Clergy was under the impression that it had cleared a path for a Catholic daily which would take up all the space of dailies in Quebec.<sup>92</sup> As I have mentioned, other dailies did emerge nonetheless. In fact, *Le Soleil* was born out of the remnants of *L’Electeur* and would prove to be the biggest competitor

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<sup>91</sup> Marquis, Dominique. *Un quotidien pour l’Eglise. L’Action Catholique, 1910-1940* (Montreal : Lemeac, 2004) 74.

<sup>92</sup> Lemieux, Louis-Guy. *Le Roman du Soleil. Un journal dans son siecle* (Sillery : Les editions du Septentrion, 1997) 113.



and overall successor over *L'Action catholique* in Quebec City. Non-confessional newspapers would continue to exist despite their best efforts. Hence, *L'Action catholique* would be left no choice but to enter into competition with these papers. It should be noted that *Le Droit* was another French-Canadian Catholic daily which existed at the time in the Ottawa area and was subject to the same pressures to perform in a consumer society. The newspapers like the *Montreal Daily Star* and *La Presse* were already adapting well to the new forms of journalism and copying the American method. *L'Action catholique* strove more to diffuse moral and spiritual values in their presses and hence remained a step apart from these forms, however they too would later on become adapted to them in their own way.<sup>93</sup> “La modernisation est perçue comme une arme supplémentaire pour combattre les ravages de la société moderne”.<sup>94</sup>

The Clergy was well aware of the power of the press and Begin wanted to put the power of the press to the service of the church.<sup>95</sup> It also understood the need to take its place in the new developments of the social world or become lost from it. If it did not act, the Clergy ran the risk of losing the population completely.<sup>96</sup> In order to attract advertisers, however, *L'Action catholique* had to work harder; it had to prove that it had a high enough call volume. Interestingly enough, while many Catholic based stores did advertise in *l'Action catholique* the majority of the ads found in this newspaper were not Catholic based. They sold goods like any other. However, it should be noted that some things surprisingly would come to be advertised in *L'Action catholique*. Things such as alcohol, cigarettes, and cinema or theatre events were advertised in *L'Action catholique*

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<sup>93</sup> Lemieux, Louis-Guy. *Le Roman du Soleil. Un journal dans son siècle* (Sillery : Les éditions du Septentrion, 1997) 78

<sup>94</sup> P.119

<sup>95</sup> P.150

<sup>96</sup> p.31

albeit with reluctance. The Catholic element was slowly being taken over by the modern elements in *L'Action catholique*. However, this simply demonstrates that *L'Action catholique* had to make certain concessions in order to remain in the competitive market<sup>97</sup>.

As well, Jewish advertisements were not to be allowed in *L'Action Catholique*. While this may have harmed profit, the Clergy were unwilling to relent on the rejection of these things, bringing a good example of how they would make concessions for some aspects of the modern world but remain steadfast in their traditions with others, regardless of profit. While some may deem this as a failure on the part of the Church, I argue that it is the underlying values of the Church which is the reason it is still 'alive' today. While some things could be accounted for and acceptable, some things simply could not.

However, just by becoming involved in newspaper publishing demonstrates again that the church was taking an active role in the modern world. It was using modern tools (newspaper advertising, page layout, the newspaper itself) to combat the ills it viewed to be quickly taking over Quebec society. While the newspaper was not a complete success, it is a good example of the Church partaking in modern life instead of merely using traditional tools (such as censorship). It recognized that these tools were outdated, if you will, and strove to adapt with new ones.

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<sup>97</sup> Lemieux, Louis-Guy. *Le Roman du Soleil. Un journal dans son siècle* (Sillery : Les éditions du Septentrion, 1997) 86.

### 4.3. Cinema and Theatre in Quebec

As newspapers were quickly becoming a daily part of life in Quebec, so too were leisure activities becoming commonplace in people's lives. This section then, is a description of leisure activities that were encouraged by the Church. Here too we see instances of the Church taking on the role of promoter of leisure activities, but these activities were pious ones. As I will demonstrate, certain forms of media such as plays were adapting to the creation of a niche market- good Catholics. I explore the advent of religious plays in Quebec and how their popularity demonstrates a micro star system within Quebec which were approved by the Clergy and hence attended by the masses without fear of reprisal.

While it would not become directly involved with this, there were definitely instances in which it encouraged the attendance of some plays or movies over others. Much like modern day movie critics, priests would watch plays or movies and in turn encourage people to see some, while discouraging them from others. Here too we can attribute the three R's to theatre although the Clergy seemed to be more strong in their refusal of cinema over that of theatre. Perhaps with the nationalist inclinations felt so strongly in Quebec, having French Canadian actors was simply not so great of a challenge for the Clergy as foreign films were.

Mass media took a pronounced place in Quebec society at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The opening of the Ouimetoscope for example, is an instance of a French Canadian imitation and adaptation to American/European modern developments in film. Before cinema however, are instances of plays with undeniably Catholic subject matter. *La Conscience d'un prêtre* was an original French Canadian play written and starred by

Julien Daoust who founded Le Théâtre National in an effort to showcase French-Canadian talent. In the early 1900's, French Canadian plays were opening up all over Quebec and professional Quebec theatres companies were established including Léon Petitjean's Théâtre des Variétés (1898), Julien Daoust's Théâtre National (1900), the Théâtre des Nouveautés (1902) in Montréal, and in Québec City L'Auditorium (1903).

*La Conscience d'un prêtre*, a part of the Theatre Canadien Français, was advertised in *La Presse* in 1915<sup>98</sup>. This particular ad indicates the relative popularity of this play; as is written in the advertisement, "At the demand of thousands of people who haven't had the chance to see it", *La Conscience d'un Prêtre* was sensationalized by newspapers and likely radio; in 1915 word of mouth was likely have a popularization factor as well. The adaptation was written by Julien Daoust, a relatively successful writer/actor who along with *La Conscience* also wrote *La Passion, le Triomphe de la Croix, le Chemin des Larmes*. As is evidenced by the names of these plays, all had Catholic themes. In 1900 to 1911, Daoust's plays were to have the greatest successes with the largest numbers of audiences in Quebec<sup>99</sup>. Catholic theatre, in a lot of ways, was regarded with a certain respect and admiration. Julien Daoust understood the power of the Clergy very well, and understood that a great deal of success was to be had by representing French Canadian and Catholic plays on stage.<sup>100</sup>

Being produced in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, these Catholic plays emerged at the time when being French Canadian almost always simultaneously meant being Catholic. The linking of leisure activities such as plays and melding them with

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<sup>98</sup> Advertisement: *La Presse*, 13 fevrier, 1915, p. 11.

<sup>99</sup> Beaucage, Christian. *Le Theatre au Quebec Au Debut du XXe Siecle*. (Nuit Blanche Editeur : Quebec, 1996) 143.

<sup>100</sup> P.144.

Catholicism, then, was a matter of good timing and good business sense. Just like pilgrimages which I will get to in the next chapter, Quebecois Catholic plays show how the modern commercial world embraces Catholicism, giving a place within leisure to add it in. A play such as *La Conscience d'un prêtre*, shows how people were connecting with Catholicism once again outside of the Church walls. Something as acclaimed as Daoust's plays, as popularized as they were, indicates that people once again connected with the familiar -- the Catholic. Beaucage writes that one of the reasons Catholic plays enjoyed such success was that not only that they were Catholic in content, but that they were defenders of Catholicism as well. According to him, to be greatly encouraged by one's Priest shows just how much power the Clergy had in Quebec at the time .<sup>101</sup>

To reach outside the church to spend time watching something about it shows something that goes beyond the mere scope of the Church walls. Despite the rather hostile reaction of the Clergy to plays and movies, to produce Catholic plays would seemingly allow people to attend them without fearing the repercussions by the Clergy. While none of the plays came highly recommended by a spiritual leader as the pilgrimages did, neither is there indication of outright condemnation of these plays in particular. To incorporate or visit a religious play may perhaps be a form of balance sought between the secularized world of drama and the Catholic world. Note, however, that there were indeed many foreign plays that were condemned such as Sarah Bernhardt's plays.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Beaucage, Christian. *Le Theatre au Quebec Au Debut du XXe Siecle*. (Nuit Blanche Editeur : Quebec, 1996) 146.

<sup>102</sup> Lemieux, Louis-Guy. *Le Roman du Soleil. Un journal dans son siecle* (Sillery : Les editions du Septentrion, 1997) 86.

Plays were on their way out quickly being replaced by the new movie industry in the 1920's. Leo-Ernest Ouimet would get his start with Daoust's Théâtre National with which he would begin by creating a new more modern form of lighting for their closing night in 1901. From here his ideas only expanded into what would become the world's largest movie theatre in 1907. If the great success of *La Conscience d'un prêtre* was still being advertised in 1915, it is indicative that movies were to slowly push out theatre and also shows that despite the failure of his theatre company, Julien Daoust continued to write Catholic plays. However, Ouimet was almost forced to leave Quebec because of the resistance he encountered at the hands of the Clergy for having movies on Sundays.

Going along the same leisure lines and the cross of the boundaries between secular leisure and Catholic leisure is the now defunct Musée Catholique Canadien. A wax museum whose boast of the best shows runs along the same lines as watching a movie about the life of Pope Leo XIII (as was advertised in a 1900 ad in *La Patrie*)<sup>103</sup>. Usually it is interest which draws people to spend their leisure time watching certain things, attending plays, and wanting to engage with religious characters is simply another interest for the people at the time. To understand that people chose to go to a Catholic play, even seemingly enjoying it very much, means that perhaps a liberation from the idea that every aspect of social life was monitored and dictated by the Clergy and allows one to surmise that a lot of people were willingly spending their extra time engaging with Catholic subject matter. An interest in a Catholic wax museum means an interest in bringing to life the characters that people related to. To see Pope XIII in wax form perhaps allowed people to have a connection with him in a way they would not have otherwise. To imagine other religious persons coming to life meant a new way of

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<sup>103</sup> Advertisement: La Presse, 8 juin, 1935. p.41.

engaging and connecting with the sacred. Before wax museums and pictures, people had drawings but always they felt the need to have a connection to the sacred a point I will discuss further on in Chapter Five.

#### **4.4. General Conclusions**

This section has shown the manner by which Catholics became involved in the Capitalist system to pursue religious enterprises. They did not simply refuse to accept modernization. I used advertisements which showed the manners by which the Church and fervent Catholics involved themselves within it.

The next chapter emerges as an overflow of my own curiosity over the sale of religious goods and how it came about. I wonder about the fact that that they were even able to be sold without being desecrated. I wonder where the need arose from for these goods, whether they were created or whether it has something to do with a want for a material connection to a supernatural God? Indeed Catholics were certainly more open to the use of material goods as an overflow of spiritual devotion; different from the view most early Protestants took by which only those who were unlearned were in need of such material goods since they themselves in their simple minds were unable to comprehend the supernatural without bringing it down to their humble humanness.

## **Chapter Five:**

### **Religion Colonized by Capitalism**

*Catholic sacramental theology contends that there are certain ritual gestures established by Christ himself that sanctify people and their religious communities. Through “words and objects” these “sacraments” are ways of worshipping God and instructing the faithful. They also nourish, strengthen, and express belief. The sacraments required visible, sensual signs in order to be effective.*

-- Colleen McDannell, 1995.<sup>104</sup>

As we have seen, the Church had taken a rather large part of society in Quebec during the industrial age, becoming involved not only the traditional forms it always had but taking new modern aspects of involvement in things such as newspaper publishing, advertisement, and being movie/theatre critics. This chapter diverges from the role of the Catholic Church itself and instead will analyze the way in which the Catholic religion in Quebec was, in a sense, ‘colonized’ by Capitalism. Certain aspects of Catholicism were becoming market goods, commodified means of worship were being sold, and tokens of faith mass produced. These things could be bought in the stores or even ordered from catalogues, making it seem as though no good was too *sacred* to be sold or bought.

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<sup>104</sup> McDannell, Colleen. Material Christianity (London: Yale University Press, 1995), 19.



I contend that there may be three reasons for which a person may wish to *consume* a religious good. While these three points are here presented as separate entities, please note that they may be used as separate from one another for one person, while another may use all three at the same time.

First, sacraments offered by using material goods may show increased devotion to God and enable a person to feel closer to Him. As such, this good is similar to an “icon” which serves as a mediator between God and man. In much the same way as a picture of a loved one who lives far away from us may help us to feel closer to him, or even having something of his to hold makes us feel as though he is closer to us, for many, to use a physical object that reminds them of God makes them feel closer to him.

Second, in a continuously evolving consumer economy, one may wish to affiliate one’s religious devotion with one’s identity. In many cultures, religion is a deeply rooted affair to which most people within that culture ascribe. In order to feel as though one is a part of this society, one may adhere to a symbol of unity (e.g. a cross, etc.). In a religion with which icons are present, then, using these goods helps to perpetuate identity and belonging.

Third, as popular culture evolves, so does the commodification of goods. In this sense, even religious items are offered as kitch in popular culture. Take, for instance, the Jesus statuettes offered in retail stores. While their original intended purpose may have been to be used in a ritual gesture, a statuette which may seem to be entirely religious may have been devoid of this meaning and replaced by the simple need to own something belonging to popular culture and not to a religious community.

The consumption of religion would be brought forth in many different ways, some of which were thoroughly discussed by McDannell in her book Material Christianity. I intend to use her discussion of the absorption of material goods by Protestant-Americans as a segway to my own discussion of the religious goods that were consumed in Quebec; as such the first section will entail a brief overview of McDannell's book. Next, I discuss the commercialization of Quebecois Catholicism. For example I analyze the evolution of Christmas, as found through various print advertisements. Bearing in mind that Christmas is a very Christian holiday with a perceived non-commercial beginning, I deem it is a good starting point to show the evolution of a commercial, perhaps even somewhat profane, Catholicism consumed.

Next, I turn my attention to the sale of religious goods themselves. While of course I will deal with why such things as rosaries were being sold, I am also interested in the "how" in this question. Were religious goods sold in the same way as any other good? Pilgrimages, for example, become a rather marked commodity in the early part of the 1900's and I explore potential reasons for their highly marketed value. A point I will be stressing is the ways in which the marketing of religious goods in Quebec was not very different from any other advertisement. While perhaps the content of the ads differed, there was not much of an indication of difference between selling a dress for one's first communion and selling a dress for summertime. The essence of the ads remains the same -- sell and appeal to the consumer. However, there is a basis for the appeal of certain items over the appeal of others, and I argue that marketers caught on very early to the fact that people were interested in participating in things which were

Catholic. Advertisers at this time were well aware of the importance of the Church in Quebec.

What then of the last point of analysis, the use of symbolic imagery to sell goods? I will present iconic imagery that is used to sell the goods themselves and explore goods that are not necessarily Catholic goods, but rather use images that are familiar to Catholics to sell. For instance, there are examples of ads inspiring people to buy something bearing the stamp of approval of a Cardinal. These goods bear no direct physical link to the Church and yet we are reminded of the familiar when Catholics view these advertisements. There is a link I argue.

“Why do people feel compelled not only to uphold the tenets of their faith but to use objects that reflect and secure their beliefs?”<sup>105</sup> There are many reasons for which various religious goods were being commodified and sold. In the final section I ask the noteworthy question -- do people use Catholic material goods merely to reflect their religious beliefs or do they use them because they are marketed to them?

### **5.1. Protestantism and Religious Goods**

According to McDannell, Protestantism has no theologically defined way of interacting with material objects. She states that “Catholic sacramental theology contends that there are certain ritual gestures, established by Christ himself, that sanctify people and their religious communities. Through words and objects these “sacraments” are ways

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<sup>105</sup> McDannell, Colleen. *Material Christianity* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), 17

of worshipping God and instructing the faithful. They also nourish, strengthen, and express belief".<sup>106</sup>

Whereas Catholics have, for centuries, been encouraged to use certain material goods to promote, perpetuate, and encourage their personal faith, Protestants were not. Because of the idea that things were either sacred or they were profane, many Protestants believed that to mix the two was impossible. By using a certain object to promote one's faith, it was as if it was tainting the sacred and was, hence, prohibited. However, as much as it was not as obvious as it was within Catholicism, McDannell cites many examples of how Protestants still allowed sacred things to become part of their daily mundane (albeit profane) lives. Things such as the household Bible and cross are an example of how goods were taken to commonality in the Christian home. It is simply because of this fear of the item becoming commonplace that I think most items were to remain in their sacred place. However, with the advent of industrialization and things being available in vast amounts as they never were before, a Bible became something almost every home could have.

Because her analysis is based upon material culture, McDannell explains why and how certain items were used as a reflection of one's religious devotion. With Catholics in particular, she found that visual signs were greatly encouraged. These were such things as rosaries, prints, and shrines. In the Catholic domain, then, one uses these objects to create a bridge, so to speak, between the human and the Divinity. These objects, in turn help people to see and feel the divine. The Catholic Church has long encouraged its people to use these items to help one to remain steadfast in his or her faith. However, these items also served to further deepen his or her relationship with the Holy Christ and Saints.

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<sup>106</sup> McDannell, Colleen. *Material Christianity* (London: Yale University Press, 1995)19

Hence, it is not surprising that in my own research I have found many instances of the sale of such items.

McDannell uses the example of the portrait of Christ, painted by Warner Sallman, as a clear example of how people were willing to consume the sacred -- even Protestants. She cites instances of people's testimonies which revealed how they used their prints during times of desperation and need. The popularity of these prints is telling of how the images used for devotion were sold for profit. She continues to show the instances of many other items, sold in Christian bookstores, which are used by devout Christians to show devotion to their faith. A t-shirt with Christian logos on it shows one's belonging to a certain community of believers, a shroud shows devotion to another.

While McDannell's focus turns to the communal aspect of Christian material goods, mine takes a different direction. I argue that goods such as first communion dresses may have been bought for more than one reason. While we cannot say that the material act of purchasing a first communion dress can be a direct act of devotion, the wearing of the dress itself can be. Second, when one commits to their first communion they are taking part in a ritual which allows them to show their devotion and their belonging to the Catholic faith. Hence, a mass produced first communion dress bought in a store while at first seeming far removed from its intended purpose of taking part in a religious activity lends itself to being the very reason that one can show devotion to God and belonging to Catholicism. However, with the new ability to purchase a dress made from a specific company with certain unique characteristics, the First Communion dress also acts as an item belonging to popular culture. Style and fashion now become a part of

First Communion events. Something which has nothing to do with the actual event and yet, because it is a religious item, can't help but be linked to it in its deepest essence.

I will get to a further analysis on religious attire shortly, however for now I would simply like to explain that religious goods had various meanings attached to them. By using sacred religious customs to sell profane goods, we think that perhaps all sacred aspects of the good are lost. However, by thinking of these items as having tri-functional purposes at times, we are more able to see how the Church would allow these goods to be sold, and even at times be the encourager of the sales.

## **5.2. Christmas Holidays in Quebec: Consumed**

Today the Christmas season in Quebec is not much unlike that found in the rest of Anglophone North America. Images of Santa Claus, Christmas shopping, Christmas trees, and happy children abound, so much so that it seems as though this is what Christmas in Quebec has always been. There was a time, however, when a French Canadian Christmas was an almost entirely religious event, housed within the traditions of Catholic upbringing. The history of the celebrations of Christmas in Quebec stem back to the original French colonies as these settlers brought with them their culture including their language, their religion, and their various customs<sup>107</sup>.

In XVIIIth century Quebec, the nativity was celebrated with deep rooted ties to Catholicism. Christmas traditions during this time focused on the celebration of the three masses (including midnight mass), confession, and the nativity scene itself. The masses

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<sup>107</sup> Montpetit, Raymond. *Le temps des fetes au Quebec* (Montreal : Les editions de l'homme, 1978) 17.

were celebrated with deep fervor during this time as Christmas was, at this time, focused solely on the birth of Christ<sup>108</sup>. The celebration of Christmas was thought to be a time of deep religious reflection, but also a time for the enlarged family to be together. Hence, the emergence during this time of “le réveillon”, or the traditional Christmas meal served after midnight mass, was less a private affair with the immediate family than one which embraced community.

It is during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century that, historically, the bulk of most “modern” Christmas traditions emerged and continued to carry through to the present day. At the same time as they were developing, however, these traditions were also being greatly influenced by commercialization. While most argue that commercialization has destroyed any remnants of a ‘pure’ Christmas like that of the past, I want to argue that it is commercialism itself which created this idea of an innocent Christmas season.

Taking from it the remnants of a holiday fused with Catholic devotion and with a great commercial focus on children and charity, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Christmas developed into what it is today. The holiday that was once a deeply religious, *sacred*, and spiritual celebration would come to be inseparable from material goods as the 19<sup>th</sup> Century introduced Quebecers to the commercial aspects of Christmas: mass gift giving, card sending, the Christmas tree, and Santa Claus.<sup>109</sup> It is my intent, then, to outline what it is that I have determined to be some of the transition changes which occurred from the traditional Quebecois family Christmas. A more modern, industrial Christmas is seen through a study of advertisements found in Quebec newspapers from 1886 to 1905. It is during this time that Santa Claus and an increase on the importance of gift giving at

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<sup>108</sup> Monpetit, 146.

<sup>109</sup> Berube, Josse & Judith Gagne. *Fetes et celebrations en milieu rural et milieu urbain*. (Rimouski : College de Rimouski. 1975) 42.

Christmastime occurred. Christmas was named a national holiday in the US in 1890.<sup>110</sup> During this time period, the giving and receiving of Christmas gifts was starting to be a normal occurrence. A new look at the spirit of Christmas emerged, coincidentally at a time in which those with excess now had a new reason to purchase and give away. The image of Christmas during this time was created to appeal mostly to children, whom were the most frequent recipients of Christmas gifts. At this time as well, children were beginning to take their place of importance in the family unit. While the beginning of the industrial revolution led to many instances of child labor, by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century this was all but obliterated and children were seen as innocent beings that were to be indulged at specific occasions.<sup>111</sup> Christmas proved to be the perfect chance to indulge both children and adults alike with material goods. No reason is better to spend money on than to perpetuate the happiness of childhood innocence, an essence of life that I argue to be deemed sacred.

No analysis of the North American Christmas would be complete without a thorough analysis of Good Saint Nick, also known as Santa Claus. Without Santa Claus, Christmas would simply not be the same -- and this for more than one reason. The sacred Santa has replaced the sacred Jesus in some ways yet as I shall describe shortly, many of their underlying characteristics are the same.

Take, for example, an illustrated portrait published in *Le Monde Illustré* in 1893.<sup>112</sup> While this is not an advertisement, the imagery that can be drawn from it is a rather good indication of what Christmas in French Quebec meant in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In

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<sup>110</sup> Belk, Russell W. "Materialism and the Making of the Modern American Christmas" *Unwrapping Christmas*. Paul Miller (ed). (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. p 75-105) 77-79.

<sup>111</sup> Goldby, J. & A.M Purdue. *The Making of the Modern Christmas*. (Stroud: Sutton, 2002), 51.

<sup>112</sup> Advertisement : *Le Monde Illustré*, 1893.



the center is a poem written by Robert Ferland, surrounded by five pictures. At the top are at least three church steeples covered by a star which I interpret as the author's intent to represent midnight mass -- an already largely traditional aspect of Quebecois Christmas's past. Next in the portrait is what looks like a group of impoverished people which likely represent the need for Christian charity during the Christmas season. The other three pictures, however, are of a Christmas tree adorned in childlike ornaments, a picture of a Santa-like creature (long white beard, cape -- perhaps Saint Nicolas), and of children playing around what seems to be a Christmas tree and holly. Such strong imagery suggests that already in 1893, Christmas was beginning to focus on children. And it is children, I argue, that will come to receive the most attention from Capitalist Christmas, as it is towards them that most Christmas gifts were marketed.

It seems as though Santa Claus and modern Christmas cannot be separated. For who of us when we think of Santa really relegate our memories to a saint born centuries ago? Instead visual imageries pop into our heads of a man with rosy cheeks, a long white beard, dressed in a white and red suit, surrounded by reindeer. Let us not also forget his jovial laugh, the merry twinkle in his eyes, and the way he travels around the world dropping off gifts for good children on Christmas Eve. Child or adult alike, most celebrators of Christmas today have a venereal nostalgia for Good Saint Nick. But where did this image come from?

The earliest rendition of a picture of Santa Claus was a series of paintings done by Thomas Nast in 1863-1886 in *Harper's Magazine*. While the pieces of Santa's imagery were not fully taken solely from Nast, it is during this time period that the white beard, merry twinkle, etc., came to be. The global identity of Santa Claus is largely American

made and has spread through North America and has become a large part of even Quebec Christmases. But how Santa became the predominant figurehead of Christmas came largely through the mass spreading of his image, which took place only after the advent of popularized new official modes of communication.

From the first appearance of Santa Claus in the Quebec advertisement *La Presse* comes a small ad from John Murphy and Cie. While there is not yet a visual picture of Santa Claus in this ad, it is the first I found to have mentioned him. This ad, taken from *La Presse* in 1895, encourages consumers to get ready for Christmas just like Saint Nicholas.<sup>113</sup> Now then, it is reasonable to assume that French Canadians must have been already somewhat familiar with the legend of Saint Nicholas before this time, despite this ad being the first mention in *La Presse* of his name that I have found. If I found an already commonplace reference to Santa in a Quebec ad in 1895, it is plausible that Quebec Christmas was indeed keeping pace with the commercialism of the US Christmas. From 1895 on Santa Claus will be the most popular face in French Canadian publicity for years to come.

The next advertisement to have an image of Santa Claus in *La Presse* is that on page 2 of the December 20<sup>th</sup> 1895 issue. Here again, there is no mention of his being Santa Claus and yet the image of a jolly old man with a suit and long white beard, a bag of gifts, and children peering in, is used to sell toys for G.A. Holland & Fils.<sup>114</sup> It is the rather large assumption that readers are familiar with Santa which I find interesting.

But it is with the advertisements from Le Magasin Scroogie, however, that a more interesting Santa Claus appears. This advertisement campaign, which encompasses

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<sup>113</sup> Advertisement : *La Presse*, December 17, 1895, p.5.

<sup>114</sup> Advertisement: *La Presse*, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1895, p. 2.

eleven advertisements in *La Patrie* for the month of December 1905 and 14 in the December 1905 issue of *La Presse*, includes stories of Santa's antics while at the same time sells various household items. These ads give Santa a human side, as they are often humorous stories of his comings and goings throughout the world. It is an identifiable humanlike characteristic with the Jolly Saint Nick that these advertisers give, an image of a wholesome being enveloped in the joy of Christmas cheer and giving.<sup>115</sup> While most of the advertisements attempt to sell children's items, Santa Claus is not used simply to sell toys. An ad from Willis & Co. in *La Presse* 1905, sells a piano.<sup>116</sup> Ogilvy shows Santa with his reindeer and sleigh selling clothing<sup>117</sup> Other ads include slippers, food, and sewing machines all which have at least one *visual* reference to Santa Claus.

While the early print media in *La Presse* shows that children emerge as targets of Christmas consumerism as early as 1895, there was a rather small number of ads dedicated to children play toys at the time (ads were for such things as candy and children's desks -- much less frugal gifts). This may demonstrate how children were beginning to take their place of importance in the family unit. While the beginning of the industrial revolution led to many instances of child labor, by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century this was slowly obliterated and children were seen as innocent beings that were to be indulged on various occasions.<sup>118</sup> Christmas would prove to be the perfect chance to indulge both children and adults alike with material goods and the early XXth century saw a rather large conversion towards the selling of an increasingly diverse amount of children's goods and toys.

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<sup>115</sup> Advertisement : *La Patrie*, 1905.

<sup>116</sup> Advertisement : *La Presse*, 1905.

<sup>117</sup> Advertisement: *La Presse*, 1905.

<sup>118</sup> Schmidt, Leigh Eric. Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

While it appears at first glance that consumerism changed Christmas forever, the emphasis on family and gathering together remained. There is a rather large lack of visual religious Christmas imagery in both the early issues of *La Presse* and *La Patrie*, which leads me to deduce that the consumer industry marketed Christmas through different means other than religion. This seems a bit surprising given the extensive Catholic mindset in Quebec at the time. However it does not seem as though there was a deep need to stay within the confines of religion to market Christmas goods to “Québécois”. But despite the ways in which Capitalism was to affect the ways in which they celebrated Christmas during this time French Canadians did really have religious ties and attended midnight mass,

If in fact, Christmas is traditionally known to be the celebration of the birth of Christ, how does one explain the huge influx in spending on gifts, the belief in a surreal Santa Claus, or even the need to decorate a tree to commemorate this special day? What happened to the baby Christ? Christmas was intended to be a celebration from which the family partook in their own activities, with a central focus on children. However, as the 20<sup>th</sup> Century evolved, it became evident that there was a lack of community, decay, poverty, corruption, and disorder in some parts of society.<sup>119</sup> Christmas, however, was already a symbol of a time of harmony, peace, faith, family, and community and a turn to public displays of Christmas because people yearned for these. During this time there was a nostalgic feeling of desire for the good old days; days of childhood innocence, happiness, family, and community. And it is through advertising I argue, that this image was not only conveyed but consumed. From a people who were traditionally rural people,

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<sup>119</sup> Restad, Penne L. Christmas In America: A History. (New York: Oxford Univeristy Press, 1995) 160-165.

selling the sacred-ness of “the good old times” allowed people to reflect upon more simple times. Whether these times existed or not is negated by the fact that it still existed in the minds of people. A yearning desire for a time of innocence encouraged nostalgic feelings in people which in turn attracted them in the consumer society to consume market goods. In a lot of ways, I argue, many were attempting, through celebrating Christmas in this new way, to buy a connection to a more humane, simple, even innocent life.

The increasingly large world of goods to consume shaped many aspects of social life and came to affect change in the traditional world of ritual, festival, and celebration.<sup>120</sup> The market economy, then, was an influence in altering Christmas but it was so mostly in the ways in which it was consumed. Because of the almost sacred aspects of traditionalism, commercialism has allotted a space for both the sacred and the profane to meet through Christmas. It is not even the necessarily spiritually sacred (such as the Christ in Christmas) but one in which people have come to rely upon Christmas cleverly marketed as a time of love, peace, and harmony to bring these to their lives.

Santa has proven to be a beneficial portal to the marketing of Christmas, but not only he. Traditions in modern Christmas are sold through visual imagery of what Christmas is supposed to look like. With a firm handle on the power of nostalgia, Christmas ornaments are adorned, nativity scenes bought, and massive meals are prepared. By taking traditions held so close to the heart, the consumer economy has managed to incorporate itself into Christmas without many even being aware.

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<sup>120</sup> Schmidt, Leigh Eric. Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995) 33.

Christmas has both become the greatest celebrated Christian holiday while simultaneously the greatest commercial holiday as well. For who can really make sense of the melding of such things as the original nativity with the need to purchase one's own ornamental nativity scene made of pre-fabricated wood in order to decorate one's home? Berk (Schmidt?) argues that it is exactly this that makes Christmas so strong, yet so paradoxical.<sup>121</sup> The mix between the profane and the sacred is undeniable, and at points even inseparable.

In the next section I further explore the mix that I argue exists of the sacred and profane in Quebec's consumer market by discussing the sale of Catholic material goods themselves.

### **5.3. Catholic Material Goods in Québec**

In some obvious ways the selling of Catholic material goods helps perpetuate the faith as a physical indication of one's belonging to Catholicism. Beyond this first social purpose however, I argue that goods are also sold as a way of achieving "tangible faith". Certain objects are used by Catholics to build their relationships with God. Pieces of certain religious goods allow some to keep a piece of the sacred with them, in their everyday lives.<sup>122</sup> To use items in physical form helps one to move beyond the mind to an actual image. With a concrete 'image' one is better able to connect with God, for instance, a crucifix on the wall might help one focus on the Christ and his crucifixion. In

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<sup>121</sup>Schmidt, Leigh Eric. Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995) 75

<sup>122</sup> Suzanne K. Kaufman, Consuming Visions Mass Culture and the Lourdes Shrine (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005) 55.

Catholicism specifically, icons take their place of importance. Many Catholics do not shy away from the purchasing of icons with religious connotations which enable them to connect on a deeper level with God and the Saints.

In this next section I analyze what I argue to be the commercialization of faith through advertisements. I argue that these material items serve as evidence of a Catholic popular culture which emerged during industrialization. To a certain extent the Catholic faith was incorporated into the new Capitalist market in Quebec. In an effort to clarify this point, I analyze Catholic items themselves as they are sold to Catholics in Quebec and argue that in many ways a commercialization of faith emerged without it even being noticed. Although, for the most part, the Church did not play a dominant role in advertisement, the goal of this section is to outline the crossover of a commercial world into the private Catholic home. I argue that despite their original intended purpose, icons too were not safe from the reach of consumer society. Just as Christmas was changed, so would the intended use of Catholic icons be changed by their mass distribution.

#### **5.4. The Sale of Religious Goods**

*Depuis déjà quelques décennies [1914], le Québec est devenu ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler une société de consommation.*

--Jean de Bonville, 1988<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Bonville, Jean de. *La Presse québécoise de 1884 à 1914 : genèse d'un média de masse*. Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1988.

Just because a good was considered religious, and in this instance was even used for a particular religious purpose, did not mean that the mass distribution of it was prohibited. Neither did it necessarily mean that its original sacred purpose was being negated by its flowing into the market system. According to McDannell, the leaders of the Catholic faith clearly describes in what ways material goods can be used as a link between the human and God. This perhaps makes it easier for a Catholic to purchase these goods.<sup>124</sup> For example, a rosary had become a symbolically sacramental item which could be used in the privacy of one's home to pray on one's behalf or for another. In an ad taken out in an April 1925 edition of *La Presse*, we see a full page spread for religious items being offered. In the middle of the advertisement are five rosaries for sale, each of which offers a variety of prices and descriptions of each. One rosary is made of white metal, another at over a dollar more than the others, boasts hand cut stones<sup>125</sup>. Here an item whose original purpose is religious is being marketed. Strange it seems, that rosaries should even need to be advertised, for had they not already been used by many for centuries?

In a sense such an ad shows how the development in particular Catholic material goods was evolving just as any other good. A demand was not really created for it already existed. However, a demand for the specific, unique items was quickly being discovered. Paradoxically, French Canadian people were increasingly striving for the unique in their lives as an anonymous mass culture took shape. They were also now more accustomed to the brand name aspect of goods and were also becoming increasingly

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<sup>124</sup> Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), 19.

<sup>125</sup> Advertisement Dupuis Freres, *La Presse*, 1 Avril, 1925, p.24.



distant from the production of their own goods. Hence, because of this distance they were also becoming increasingly reliant upon the mass culture at the time to explain to them what it is that they so desired.

In a society where things had previously been handcrafted, the dichotomy between the sacred and the profane might be more marked since I view sacredness to be tied with unique value. Baudrillard writes that objects were more homogenous before the industrial age. With the advent of new forms of production, this homogeneity was traded in for more candid values being attributed to objects and mass products in turn lost their value.<sup>126</sup> Today the underlying function of the rosary remains the same. It is used as a form of sacramental devotion to God. Its intended purpose does not change simply because it is sold through mass production. Whether someone bought a pink or blue rosary is of no consequence when it was being used in its intended purpose. Hence, I argue that the sacred aspects of items were not being lost when they were mass produced. New elements were being added to the rosary, however, but none of the original ones were directly and necessarily being taken away.

It is for this reason that marketers had to be very careful when selling religious goods themselves. It was important to remind people that the goods being sold were still goods which allowed them to engage with God. In a religion such as Catholicism which allowed people to own icons, I argue that much would have been made of a situation whereby the original intended purpose of such items was replaced by those of popular culture. While today people can buy a Jesus bobble head for their vehicles this is but a manner of showing off one's personal style; something intimately religious has been commodified within popular culture. The goods I have described never really delineate

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<sup>126</sup> Baudrillard, Jean. The System of Objects (London: Verso, 1996. Translated: James Benedict), 137.

from their original intended purpose. They might expand upon it, but never venture away from it completely. Simply because a good is found within the mass produced market, does not mean that it is less sacred. Kaufman makes an interesting remark with regards to the selling of the so-called sacred. The ability to produce many copies of a desired object was touted by entrepreneurs as a great improvement for the religious world because it provided a greater number of people with a greater access to the sacred.<sup>127</sup>

Catechisms were being sold by the dozen in an 1889 advertisement<sup>128</sup>. This in some respects shows the importance of such a book in Quebec society as people would buy them by the dozen. It is quite possible that it was to the Clergy to which this ad was directed, for to purchase bulk catechisms might be something they would be interested in for their schools or parishes. In a much later ad placed by Le Secretariat des Oeuvres in 1923, Catechisms were being offered which boasted personal aspects such a nice paper, golden titling, even varying colors. This ad boasts that these books were valued at fifty cents but being sold for only twenty five. Very keeping-with-the-times, this ad offered a sale price on a book used for prayer.<sup>129</sup> The original intention of the catechism remained the same, a book which helps one perpetuate one's religious devotion. However, the new ability to have a catechism which was much more decorative shows that its original intended use is being expanded from good used to perpetuate and expand faith to good which does this plus for example, entitles one to display taste. In a society where tastes were rapidly being developed because they were important to the discovery of one's identity, the choice of colors with regards to catechisms, and even rosaries, becomes

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<sup>127</sup> Suzanne K. Kaufman, *Consuming Visions Mass Culture and the Lourdes Shrine* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005) 47.

<sup>128</sup> Advertisement ED. Arpin, *Le Franco-Canadien*, 11 Octobre, 1889, p.4

<sup>129</sup> Advertisement Au Secretariat des Oeuvres, *L'Action Catholique*, 1923, p 2.

important because one is able to recognize that religious objects as were well being transformed from the original use to a new more modern one. I am not saying that the original use was replaced, rather I suspect that it was simply given an added element, that of personal style.

An advertisement by Dupuis Freres in 1935 shows just how far the reach of Catholicism was in the everyday lives of the Quebecois. At the price of just 98 cents one was able to buy a kit called a “Nécessaire de St-Viatique”. This kit was designed for young boys so that one could play dress up and act like a priest. Here we see, next to an ad for rosaries, a direct indication of the novelties of the time<sup>130</sup>. Priests were highly respected and a noble profession was it so deemed, what more could parents want than to have a young son grow up to be a priest? Why not start this young boy young and allow him to use his toys to follow up on his spiritual life?

Analyzing ads taken for first communion allows us to see how very important of a time this was. Full page ads were being devoted to the sale of various items needed in order to celebrate this special day. One’s first communion is a very sacred event. Certainly an event that takes place only once in a lifetime and is directly related to the advancement of one’s spiritual life can be defined within the realm of the sacred. Yet one may posit that this attire is a commodity of sorts because it is being marketed in the same way as a young person’s regular clothing. The need to dress the part, to enjoy the material gifts bestowed upon the celebrant is also very profane and I posit that these ads are yet another instance of the sacred meeting the profane.

As is indicated in many ads, first communion attire ranged from the sale of everything from girls’ white dresses to boys shoes and socks. Ties were needed for the

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<sup>130</sup> Advertisement Dupuis Freres *La Presse*, 8 Juin, 1935, p. 32.

young boys just as ribbons were needed for the girls' hair. Many varieties of dresses were being offered, and one could choose various styles of suits for boys. In an ad from Murphy's in *La Presse* the caption reads: « Comme elles sont belles et gracieuses les fillettes qui prennent part a cette solennelle cérémonie vêtues de ces charmantes robes confectionnées en France et en Belgique. Veiles (sic) suisses, gorgettes françaises, et crêpes de Chine. Presque toutes faites à la main. Une ou deux seulement de chaque modèle. Garnies de remplis, véritable dentelle filet, dentelle irlandaise, et brin tire 6.95 à 29.99.»<sup>131</sup> Not only in this instance the girls are being sold dresses, but dresses which boast of the days fashion as well as in its unique quality. So too Vallières offers the latest in First Communion attire when it boasts a beautiful assortment of 'flouncings' for First Communion dresses in 1908.<sup>132</sup> If a dress is only sold in limited quantities, this must mean that it is even more unique and special.

Children's goods during this time period were beginning to be targeted for sale. Using a day which would never be repeated, one's first communion, and advertising it as such made the purchasing of a special outfit for the day almost a necessity. One was not to let the day go by without purchasing something which would make the day as sacred as it could and should be. Advertisers were well aware of ensuring this was the word being spread. To buy one's daughter a dress from France meant that she would be ensured the best available for her special day. Not only would the daughter benefit, however, so too would the store selling it to her, and the manufacturer as well and it is here that we can see the direct effects of Capitalism intertwining itself with the Church, even taking an active role in such a sacred act as one's first communion.

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<sup>131</sup> Advertisement Murphy's. *La Presse*, 11 Avril, 1925, p.19.

<sup>132</sup> Advertisement Vallieres, *The Montreal Daily Star*, April 4, 1908, p. 14.

Through these ads we can see how the sacred is slowly becoming used by consumer culture. We can also see evidence of a French Canadian popular culture arising through the sale of religious material goods. Through various marketing strategies we see how many aspects of the sacred (things such as, innocence, purity, unique, luxury) were being marketed as a method of consuming the profane (Rosary: Luxury, Children's gifts: Innocence, First Communion dresses: Unique). In this way we see how certain things were being used as images while others were being consumed.

### **5.5. Pilgrimages**

Turning away from the focus of the sale of religious goods to children, we move now to pilgrimages to Rome which were mainly sold to adults. Pilgrimages were trips which allowed people to engage directly with the sacred. To plan a trip to Rome or to various other shrines meant that people were interested in Roman Catholic holy places. The varieties of trips planned, the various groups planning them, and the years that spanned their popularity are striking. In various Quebec newspapers pilgrimages were dominant in the pages advertising various trips.

What is interesting here in particular is the balance between both the sale of a holiday and the sale of a Catholic spiritual journey. Both are coupled together. Pilgrimages offered to some the ability to go to a sacred place, to engage their faith in a way they couldn't otherwise. In most instances a pilgrimage offered people the chance to be a tourist while at the same time express their religious devotion, something which was obviously attractive to many. According to Kaufman, pilgrimages offered "rich

possibilities for expressing faith and connecting with the sacred in a modern world”.<sup>133</sup> She also argues that acts such as pilgrimages offered Catholics the chance to respond to the modern day challenges to their faith incurred by modernity.<sup>134</sup> Not only were pilgrimages a direct path to spiritual adoration, they were also familiar to most as a place that had, at some time or another, claimed great spiritual fame. During a time of rapid economic and political changes, pilgrimages offered a chance for some people to recapture their religious fervor.

Another important aspect of these pilgrimages is that they are planned for Catholics to visit Rome, the home of the Pope and the epicenter of Catholicism. Thomas Cook, in a 1925 ad, labels itself the official travel agent for the Holy See. It offers the patron the opportunity to purchase a Canadian Pilgrimage to Rome, guided exclusively under the spiritual direction of Rev Father E.J. Devine.<sup>135</sup> It is to be noted that not one of the tours found selling pilgrimages were without the spiritual guide of some form of Catholic leader (i.e. Archbishop, Priest).

Canadian Pacific ads also boast that their tours are found to be under the personal patronage of Cardinal Begin.<sup>136</sup> Begin, the founder of *L'Action catholique*, had strong views about the social lives of the Catholics in Quebec, yet at the same time did not withhold his approval from paid trips to Rome. Note that a holiday in itself might have been considered a much too secular enterprise, however, a spiritually guided holiday with the intents of showing one's devotion to the Catholic faith seemed acceptable. Hence,

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<sup>133</sup> Suzanne K. Kaufman, Consuming Visions Mass Culture and the Lourdes Shrine (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005) 4.

<sup>134</sup> p.6

<sup>135</sup> Advertisement Thomas Cook & Son, *Montreal Daily Star*, April 11, 1925, p.13.

<sup>136</sup> Advertisement Pacifique Canadien, *L'Action Catholique*, 4 Avril, 1925, p.11.

again a coupling of a profane leisure act (holiday trip abroad) with the sacred (holy reverence in a place of worship) seems to occur.

The ads in 1925 for pilgrimages are invariably the same. Interestingly none of the companies are yet Catholic founded. They are secular companies offering a spiritual guided tour and the chance for patrons to become pilgrims. Hence, there is some attraction and allure to offering guided tours to Rome and making a profit; in 1925, these trips were still close to 500\$. Some tours offer a tour at the same time as the beatification of Quebecois Jesuit Martyrs which here shows that people found yet another modern attraction to these pilgrimages.

The pilgrimages in 1925 were not yet marketing other attractive features such as stopovers in other parts of Europe, but they soon would. Through the later ads we witness an increase in leisure time and vacationing becoming an integral part of life as these trips could last for over a month. While I focused on advertisements taken out by Thomas Cook and Canadian Pacific in 1925, it should be noted that there were at least three other competing companies -- the Agences de Voyages Jules Hone<sup>137</sup>, the Compagnie générale transatlantique<sup>138</sup> and le Comité des pèlerinages à Rome<sup>139</sup> -- offering guided spiritual pilgrimages to Rome, an indication of the popularity and possible profit afforded to companies offering Quebecois pilgrimages to Europe.

Moving past the perceived origins of advertised pilgrimages, further on in *L'Action catholique* we find that Pacifique Canadien (Canadian Pacific) offers the pilgrimage patrons the chance to stop over in Bordeaux, France. Not only can a patron fulfill a spiritual journey, but they may now extend their holiday into a tour of Europe.

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<sup>137</sup> Advertisement : Les Agences de Voyages Jules Hone, *Le Devoir*, 16 Fevrier, 1926.

<sup>138</sup> Advertisement : Compagnie Generale Transatlantique, *Le Fournisseur D'Institutions Religieuses*, p.10.

<sup>139</sup> Advertisement Comite des Pelerinages a Rome, *L'Action Catholique*, 30 Septembre 1930.

Interesting that as the times and technology changed, so did the methods of getting to the pilgrimages., The flights to pilgrim destinations cost a much higher price than the ships and yet it seems that Catholics who could afford to were willing to take part in these modern technological advances and enjoy the benefits from them. Under the patronage of Mgr Maurice Roy, the archbishop of Quebec, these tours also coupled a pilgrimage with a tour of Europe, offering patrons the chance to extend their stay in Europe if they so desired. As late as 1950, the Comité des pèlerinages à Rome continued to offer three pilgrimages.<sup>140</sup>

We not only see an interesting link between the church and profit, but we can also see that these trips continually evolve from being a celebration of devotion to coupling it with a nice holiday to Europe. What is important to note, however, is that not one of the advertisements for pilgrimages, regardless of which company was selling it, came without some form of Papal authority. Whether this rested in the naming of a spiritual leader who would accompany the tour or in the name of the company putting on the tour, no pilgrimage was sold without some spiritual authority giving it the credibility it needed. Perhaps one reason for this was because the connection between the profane leisure holiday and sacred spiritual journey could still not completely be made without the validation of one's spiritual leader. Another reason may lie in the idea that the Church felt that the pilgrimages were important spiritual acts. The marketers may have been the ones adding on the extras in order to add validation.

Not exempt from its involvement in this, the Church founded its very own committee which sold these pilgrimages just like any other travel agency. Perhaps as a method of social control, perhaps simply as a part of being involved in the pilgrimages

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid..



themselves, the Clergy thought it important to establish its own committee to offer guided tours. While there is little indication from the advertisements as to whether these tours were more successful than those offered by secular companies, we see here an instance where the Church does not outright refuse to take part in profit-based activities.

### **5.6. Use of Symbolic Imagery: Priests Selling Profane Goods**

With the priests advocating pilgrimages, I also found other instances of Clerical endorsements of products which would prove to be an effective (if not at least popular) marketing strategy. Recommendation by the face/name of a Spiritual leader seems, during this time period, to add a large amount of credibility to the services/goods being offered, not simply in those for the pilgrimages. The Pearline Company boasts in an ad taken from a 1900 issue of *La Patrie* that “La propreté est bien près de la sainteté”<sup>141</sup>. Within this ad, we can see that a pastor recommends it for the cleaning of the temple and that, for these reasons, Pearline is the only product necessary for cleaning. Symbolically purity is almost always linked sacredness. Purity is deemed as something which is entirely good, something which is always unattainable for humans. Because of this unique characteristic, and because it is something that humans themselves can never obtain, it is also often linked with something supernatural because something is pure inasmuch as it has not been tainted by the everyday mundane aspects of life. Hence, because it holds the values of the sacred, purity is sacred.

While a pastor is recommending Pearline in this particular ad, Priests would come to be figureheads for the sale of many profane goods in Quebec newspapers. For instance,

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<sup>141</sup> Advertisement Pearline *La Patrie*, 6 Aout, 1900, p.5

in an ad for le Vin Mariani, Pope Leo XIII himself is said to endorse this healing tonic. With its ability to help those with a cold, Vin Mariani boasts that the Pope himself sends his thanks to Monsieur Mariani for his tonic<sup>142</sup>. Here is a great instance of a mélange of a good level of recognition and legitimacy being given to a product as endorsed by a superior spiritual figurehead.

While we are well used to celebrity endorsements of products today, it is interesting to think that in the XIXth Century, the Pope was a popular celebrity endorsement tactic to use. The Pope was revered as an all knowing, all spiritual guide, and his endorsement might have meant an increase in the relative popularity of Vin Mariani.

But Vin Mariani is not the only tonic to be revered and recommended by spiritual leaders. As early as 1897 Father Koenig's Tonic was being sold by an American company in *Le Soleil*. Note here that Father Koenig was written in English in this advertisement but that there was a portrait of the Father in his habit, easily recognizable as a religious figure to those who might not understand English. The instance of American companies using religious imagery is commonplace and one can only stipulate that these companies understood the value of linking the spiritual leader with their 'healing' tonic.

As I began to uncover many instances of this priest/tonic ad campaign, I could not help but ask myself the following question: why is it that a priest is used to recommend healing tonic? I posit that one reason for this might very well be that traditionally the priest was seen as a healer of the masses. A sick man or woman could ask one's priest to pray on his or her behalf. But with the advent of modern ideas of medicine, people were

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<sup>142</sup> Advertisement Vin Mariani, *La Presse*, 12 Mars, 1902, p5.

no longer content with prayer. The spiritual world was increasingly melding with the physical in a sense. In some ways we can assume that selling of healing tonic by using the imagery of a priest might very well be a way of depicting it as what was traditionally known as holy water. Miracles are many times directly linked to one's belief in a spiritual God and hence, to meld medicine with a religious figure is, I argue, strong encouragement to consume something.

Another example is found with Father John's Medicine in another ad which boasts its ability to help strengthen the body against illness. Found in local stores, this product did not have to be ordered via mail from the US.<sup>143</sup> Here again note the coupling of the words Father John and Medicine. Again, I argue, a coupling of the Sacred and Profane. Interestingly, "Rev Père Morrissey" also sells healing. His varieties of healing medicines are used for things such as rheumatism and colds. While this product is sold by Father Morrissey Medicine Co. Ltd, the ad is taken in a French newspaper and is translated into French. With the image of the priest in the center of the ad, this once English advertisement sells varieties of healing. Unlike Father John's, Morrissey's ads translate even the name to Père Morrissey in order to provide a certain French Canadian authenticity to their brand. Perhaps because this company is based out of New Brunswick and not the United States, as with Father John's, the value of French traditions was not lost upon this company in particular.

In the same vein, the Remedés God-O-Var were being promoted by Abbé Emile Warré. With personal testimonials by people in every ad, this product was not only promoted by a Priest but also by one's neighbour. Each testimonial included the name of the person, their location within Quebec, and what their illness was. Also included was

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<sup>143</sup> Advertisement Father John's Medicine *La Presse*, 5 Janvier, 1922, p.20

how the tonic healed their varied illness thanks to the remedies of L'abbe Warré.<sup>144</sup> These remedies were said to promote health and wellness, here again a mix of the healing powers of the tonic and the priest are not lost.

Would these ads have been so effective without the coupling of the spiritual with the physical? These ads are different from the pilgrimages, I argue, because they are not directly targeting a Catholic act to come from the ad. I'm not quite convinced that even those whom were not Catholic would not have found a certain appeal in the medicine proclaimed to heal by a Spiritual leader.

Quebec companies did not lose on this either, and "Le remède du Père Mathieu" was sold by La Cie des Laboratoires S. Lachance Limitée in Montreal. Here again, this medicine was sold with iconic imagery, however, interestingly this tonic was a cure for alcoholism, a perceived grave threat to the souls of good Catholics. Seen as an illness, this medicine boasts the ability to heal alcoholism if used properly. Taking away one's desire for alcohol, "Le remède du Père Mathieu" also boasts that one only needs no more than three bottles to achieve this healing effect.<sup>145</sup>

### **5.7. The Profane and the Sacred? Is There One Without the Other?**

In this chapter, we saw that some goods were sold because of their spiritual benefits. Goods which perpetuated the faith were almost always connected to Catholicism and in this way the novelty of mass produced goods went only so far. The advertisements selling these goods were remarkably similar to those selling any other goods. Christmas, I

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<sup>144</sup> Advertisement Remedés God-O-Var, *La Presse*, 1 Mai, 1930, p.30.

<sup>145</sup> Advertisement Le Remede du Pere Mathieu, *La Patrie*, 7 Decembre, 1905, p. 7.

have argued, was a very good template for the advent of the consuming of faith. Even faith was an object for commodification and as such led to a Catholic popular culture of sorts that came about through material wants and desires. The dichotomy between the sacred and the profane was marketed in such a way which allowed it to be consumed without shame or guilt by fervent Catholics because it never sold one without the original, sacred, other. I showed how not only goods were being sold, but goods which at first glance seemed to have nothing to do with the Church. Upon closer reflection, however, we could see that these good were being sold by using the start power of religious figureheads, trusted by people in much the same way that people today trust celebrity endorsements of beauty products. Hence, overall this chapter has served as a drop off point by which I argue that the consumption of religion was offered and taken with equal fervor.

**CONCLUSION:**  
**Thoughts on the Catholic Church and Consumer Society**

**6.1. Durkheim and the sacred**

Underlying throughout the course of this thesis was an analysis of the underlying tenet of the sacred and the profane. According to Durkheim, the sacred is a transcendental occurrence that is set apart from the mundane of everyday life. The sacred is something special, unique, and spiritual in nature. By contrast, the profane is something common which rested in everyday experience. Durkheim's understanding of the sacred and profane can be described as one which divides things categorically into either sacred or profane, with no aspects of either being close to the other. "The division of the world into two comprehensive domains, one sacred, the other profane, is the hallmark of religious thought"<sup>146</sup> While such things as the temple or church building itself might be considered sacred, the individual's home or the place where they worked would be profane. Further, the Clergy is sacred, common people were not, and the two would never mix.

As this thesis demonstrated, things are not so continuously easy to separate into categories of either sacred or profane. McDannell makes the argument that the material dimension of real religious life tells of centuries old methods that American Christians used to join the two and mould them into their own form of religious life.<sup>147</sup> For instance, what can be said of the image of a priest selling cough medicine? And what of the store that sells religious medallions beside a pair of socks? Most of the examples (but not all) gathered in this thesis go counter to the Durkheimian notion of the separate

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<sup>146</sup> Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. Translation: Carol Cosman)36.

<sup>147</sup> McDannell, Colleen. *Material Christianity* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), 5

entities of sacred in one camp and profane in the other. Although we most often consider that the notions of sacred and profane, of spirit and matter, or of piety and commerce tend to be very oppositional to one another, I argue that the sacred and profane are continuously blended by most North Americans who take part in any religious form.

## **6.2. The Catholic Church: Modern Reaction To Modernity?**

In this project I have explored the manner by which I view the Catholic Church in Quebec to have adapted itself to the rise of consumer culture. Throughout this work I have presented arguments that go counter to the image of a Catholic Church stubbornly rooted in traditionalism. Quite the opposite, I have argued that the Church in many ways strove to adapt itself to the new modern forms taking hold of Quebec society. I described the manner by which the Catholic Church took its place within modernity and then presented evidence of this through print advertisements taken from major Quebec newspapers. Did I manage to clearly outline the ways in which the Catholic Church took its place in consumer society? In many instances I submitted an overview of strategies the Church took in order to retain its place in Quebec society. However, there are always limits to this hypothesis. In many cases I cannot generalize based on the small amount of data I have at my disposal. I have simply shown that overall the Catholic Church was not completely immersed in consumer society. However, I have also described instances which served to demonstrate that the Church did not have a dominant role in this consumer society either.

While I have mentioned that it did have a place within it, it was certainly not dominant. Part evidence of this is the fewer ads that were found even in the 1940's and 1950's which had any Catholic connotations. With the complicated, overall overwhelming, and far-reaching elements of consumer society, the Church and market were two very different things. While it may have tried to maintain a dominant role in society, it could have never imagined the ways in which consumer society would affect people and in turn affect itself. Despite, as I have shown, the fact that it did recognize to a certain extent the power consumer society could have over people, I posit that it simply could not fight it despite its best efforts.

Out of the industrialization that took place in Quebec came a consumer society. This consumer society would prove to be the downfall of the Catholic Church in Quebec as a dominant institution. However, this is not because it failed to adapt itself. It is because the ways in which it adapted itself were shortsighted, unable to comprehend the extent to which consumer culture would encompass every part of daily life. The Church and hence the members of the Clergy were, in many ways, naïve in their intentions to take part in mass culture. They could not realize that simply replacing certain aspects of consumer society such as newspapers would be enough to hold people back from taking part in it in a way that made the Church more and more marginal.

In this project I have explored the manner by which I view the Catholic Church in Quebec to have adapted itself to the emerging society produced by Capitalism. While not all has been said on this topic, throughout this work I have argued that the image that one often has of a stiff-cloaked Clergy sitting in his parish with a frown of disdain upon his face as he looks about at the people shopping and laughing in the streets is one which is



not wholly accurate. I have argued that the Church did try to adapt itself to the new modern forms taking hold of Quebec society. I have also attempted to demonstrate the manner by which the Roman Catholic Church has taken a part in the social changes through an analysis of advertisements. While these forms of adaptation might not have always been the most convincing, they were still steps taken by the Church to adjust.

Reginald Bibby writes that Christian societies no longer exist. He argues that at one time a Catholic society did exist in part because of the control it had over the state, culture, schooling, etc. The Church could never have imagined the changes brought forth by the consumer society. In the end, the Church went through what we can say to be three stages:

1) Dreams of recreating a Christian society. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Church in Quebec did all it could to progress and have a society which would be culturally and socially Christian. Whether a time existed when society was ever fully Christian leaves to be debated, however, I have shown some of the ways by which the Church attempted to keep Catholicism at the forefront of peoples lives.

2) Dreams of playing a bigger role. At the turning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Church had to shape the society from within. L'Action Catholique is a great example of such means, albeit a failed one. In this stage the Church believed that by infusing itself into the microcosms of society, it could change society from within. This project failed in part because nobody could predict the spectacular growth of the consumer society.

3) Hence this leaves us with the third and present day Church. Trying to remain confident in its true form, the Church is ready to welcome the lost and the hurt when those people are ready; it waits quietly for those who are seeking refuge in such claims to

come join it. Hence the church serves to represent a shelter from the outside world and preserves the true value of traditional Catholicism. It is the image it likes to project. However Bibby states that Canadian Catholics no longer proscribe to simply one form of religion but search around for a type of religion that suits their own personal needs. In Quebec for example over 80% of people still consider themselves Roman Catholic but a certain number of them also believe that they are Buddhist or Muslim. Here it is found that in a consumer society, even *religion* is for sale for one to 'choose' from.

As Bibby writes, the modern/post-modern individuals have not seen the destruction of religion as such. They have, however, witnessed the ways in which the traditional religious methods of being have changed. With regards to these various religions, "They have been broken into pieces and offered to religious consumers in piecemeal form"<sup>148</sup>. I have hoped to demonstrate this with this thesis, the very manner by which the Church adapted itself within modernity. In its trying to do so, it had to adapt itself in much the same way as any other institution and as such had the same failures and successes that many had at the time. With the new ways in which society continues to progress, it is no wonder that people have come to consume "à la carte". By the ways in which it strove to adapt itself to consumer society, the Church would come to lose itself within consumer society. In this way, the Catholic Church of Quebec itself would come to be an object of mass consumption.

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<sup>148</sup> Bibby, Reginald. Fragmented gods. The poverty and potential of religion in Canada (Toronto: Stoddard, 1990), 85.

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La Presse, June 8th, 1935. Page 41.



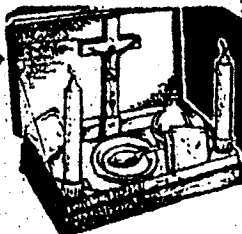
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*Spans the World*

The Montreal Daily Star. April 7th, 1925. Page 26.

Puis que jamais auparavant, il ne fut responsable de tout événement par l'influence de la Vierge et de la sainte Marguerite. — S. S. PIE XII. —  
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Bulle d'indiction du jubilé universel 1950

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The Montreal Daily Star. April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1925. Page 34.

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L'Action Catholique. September 14, 1950. Page 8.

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La Patrie. August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1900. Page 5.

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*" Il m'a plu à Sa Sainteté de me confier la mission de transmettre en son auguste nom ses remerciements à Monsieur Mariani, et afin de témoigner encore d'une façon spéciale sa reconnaissance, Sa Sainteté a même désigné d'être à Monsieur Mariani une Médaille d'Or portant son vénérable portrait.*

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Grande valeur alimentaire de l'huile de foie de morue mélangée, par procédé exclusif, avec d'autres ingrédients précieux.

Les germes de maladies ne saignent pas un pouce de terrain dans un organisme qui est en bonne condition. Il y a constamment en suspension dans l'air une quantité innombrable de germes, mais si l'organisme est en bonne santé, il a le pouvoir d'y résister. La meilleure chose à faire pour ceux qui sont faibles et épuisés, c'est donc de reconstituer leur pouvoir de résistance, et, pour cette fin, Father John's Medicine possède une valeur toute particulière. Il contient de vrais et sains éléments nutritifs sous une forme telle qu'ils peuvent s'assimiler facilement de façon à produire un sang nouveau et riche et de nouveaux tissus.

L'huile de foie de morue, si riche en substance nutritive, entre en de fortes proportions dans la composition de Father John's Medicine. La plupart des gens trouvent l'huile de foie de morue ordinaire très difficile à digérer, mais peuvent prendre Father John's Medicine. Par un procédé exclusif, l'huile de foie de morue est désagrégée en globules ténués, ce qui rend Father John's Medicine facile à digérer.

Father John's Medicine est riche en substances nutritives et il est possible, même aux systèmes digestifs affaiblis, d'en digérer les éléments alimentaires et de les convertir en ce bon sang rouge, en cette vigueur et en cette vitalité dont chacun a besoin pour résister à la maladie.

Il ne contient ni alcool ni drogue dangereuse.



# PRENEZ GARDE AUX RHUMES D'ÉTÉ

On est souvent porté à négliger un rhume d'été. On a bien tort parce qu'aussi bien en été qu'en hiver, un rhume affaiblit l'organisme, diminue la résistance à la maladie et prédispose par là à d'autres affections plus graves.

D'autant plus que les rhumes pris durant la saison chaude sont ordinairement tenaces et durent parfois plusieurs semaines.

## Le Remède No 7 de l'abbé Warré

vous débarrassera rapidement de la toux ou de la bronchite et cela sans nuire aucunement à votre digestion comme le font la plupart des remèdes contre le rhume. Il est à la fois calmant, émollient, expectorant et sudorifique.

LE REMÈDE No 13 DE L'ABBE WARRE est incomparable pour le traitement de l'ASTHME et de la FIEVRE DES POINS.



Témoignage de Mme B. Cormier

"Je souffrais de bronchite depuis long-temps, ce qui me causait toutes sortes d'ennuis. Les remèdes que j'avais essayés jusqu'ici ne m'avaient procuré aucun soulagement. Le Remède No 7 de l'abbé Warré ainsi que le No 13 m'ont complètement débarrassée de ma bronchite. Je vous en suis toute reconnaissante."

(Signé) Mme B. Cormier

323 Ontario est,  
MONTREAL.



## Vous pouvez retrouver la santé

Les Remèdes de l'abbé Warré ont ramené à la santé des milliers de malades de toutes catégories. Des personnes qui se croyaient gravement atteintes ont souvent vu leurs maux disparaître grâce à l'un des bienfaisants Remèdes de l'abbé Warré. VOUS AUSSI, vous pouvez bénéficier de l'efficacité de ces remèdes: faites-en l'essai et vous en serez rapidement convaincu.

## Remèdes GOD-O-VAR

Equivalents Liquides des Remèdes de l'Abbé Warré

### GOD-O-VAR No 3

PUISSANT DIGESTIF

Dans toutes les maladies d'estomac, GASTRITE, GASTRALGIE et DYSPÉPSIE, le Remède God-O-Var No 3 est d'une efficacité incontestable. Il rétablit l'activité des fonctions digestives en provoquant l'expulsion des gaz et en augmentant les sécrétions de l'estomac. La bouteille \$1.25

### GOD-O-VAR No 7

CALME LA TOUX EN MOINS D'UNE HEURE

C'est un des plus puissants remèdes contre toutes les affections de la gorge ou des voies respiratoires. Fluidifie et expectorement efficace, il liquéfie rapidement les sécrétions bronchiques, favorise les expectorations et procure un soulagement ultra-rapide. La bouteille \$1.25

### GOD-O-VAR No 11

LAXATIF AGREABLE

God-O-Var No 11 constitue, suivant la dose à laquelle on le prend, un laxatif ou un purgatif d'une efficacité incomparable. Il habitude peu à peu les intestins à fonctionner régulièrement par eux-mêmes. Il ne provoque aucun dérangement toxique. La bouteille \$1.25

En Vente chez nos Distributeurs et à nos Bureaux

## CONSULTATIONS MEDICALES GRATUITES

Ces consultations sont données gratuitement par des MÉDECINS QUALIFIÉS à toute personne qui se présente à nos bureaux.

HEURES DE CONSULTATIONS TOUS LES JOURS de 9 1/2 h. du matin à 9 h. du soir

EXAMENS AUX RAYONS "X" ELECTRICITE MEDICALE

## LA COMPAGNIE DES REMÈDES DE L'ABBE WARRE LIMITEE

1010, rue Ste-Catherine Est, coin Amherst (5e étage)

Tél. Harbour 9108-9109 MONTREAL, CANADA

Bureau de Québec: 59, rue St-Joseph Aux Etats-Unis: Father Warré Medicine Co., Rouse's Point, N.Y.

Exigez sur chaque boîte le sceau de garantie

ABBE EMILE WARRE  
Initiateur du mouvement de retour aux  
plantes médicinales naturelles pour  
le traitement des maladies.

