

**The Role of Religion in Lionel Groulx's
Nationalist Thought**

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«ABSTRACT»

This study examines the role of religion in the nationalist thought of Lionel Groulx (1878-1967). It attempts to demonstrate that Groulx's understanding of the Incarnation constitutes a paradigm whereby he developed a rationale for the synthesis of Catholicism and French-Canadian nationalism. Chapter 1, the "Historical Background, precedes an examination of Groulx's thought in the light of his theological and philosophical education.(Chapter 2) Chapters 3 and 4 explain his construct of the Incarnation. Chapter 5 sets forth Groulx's conception of French Canada based on the Hebrew scriptures. Chapter 6 explores the implications of his incarnational thought for his nationalist pursuits. Chapter 7 summarizes the pivotal idea of "The Primacy of the Spiritual in the Nation," while Chapter 8 sheds light on Groulx's critical, if not negative understanding of Catholic Action. The conclusion reflects on the turn of events in French Canada which evolved so contrary to his aspirations.

Despite his myriad activities, prodigious body of work, and such a long, varied career, Groulx remains an enigma primarily due to his transitional role between old religio-nationalist French Canada and secular, contemporary nationalist Quebec. The apologetic intent of his work compounds this enigma since Groulx thereby attempted to apply the conservative social doctrines and praxis of conventional Catholicism to the rapidly changing context of modern, increasingly nationalist Quebec. His thought, therefore, possesses many facets and eludes facile definition.

Due to their segregated analyses of Groulx's thought, previous historical, political and ideological studies remain insufficient because they represent largely secular, anachronistic, specifically post-'Quiet Revolution' approaches that truncate the role of religion in the world view of a Catholic priest in French Canada at the turn of the twentieth century. These analyses do not sufficiently take into account the theological principles which shaped his nationalist thought.

Writing as editor-in-chief of *Le Devoir* the day after Groulx died, Claude Ryan declared Groulx "the spiritual father of modern Quebec." However, this assessment largely stands or falls on the place of the 'spiritual' vis-à-vis the 'secular' in Groulx's thought, for the reversal of their respective importance in French-Canadian society announced the advent of modernity in Quebec. In fact, the contemporary debate concerning the proper roles and relationship of the secular and the spiritual in twentieth-century Quebec gave rise to Groulx's apologetic. This study seeks therefore to examine the spiritual and the temporal in Groulx's thought, and how he related the two so that we may come to a better understanding of Groulx's contribution to modern Quebec.

«RÉSUMÉ»

Cette étude examine le rôle de la religion dans la pensée nationaliste de Lionel Groulx (1878-1967). Elle cherche à démontrer que sa compréhension de l'Incarnation sert de paradigme à son effort de synthèse du catholicisme et du nationalisme canadien-français. Après le chapitre un sur «L'arrière-fond historique» de la période contemporaine de Groulx, et à la différence des études précédentes, qu'elles soient historiques, politiques ou idéologiques, le chapitre deux examine la pensée de Groulx à la lumière de ses études théologiques et philosophiques. Alors que les chapitres trois et quatre analyse sa compréhension de l'Incarnation, le chapitre cinq explique sa conception du Canada français telle que fondée sur l'Ancien Testament. Le chapitre six concerne les implications de la pensée incarnationnelle de Groulx dans son engagement nationaliste, et le chapitre sept analyse le principe fondamental de la «primauté du spirituel dans la nation» selon lui. Le chapitre huit est consacré à sa critique de l'Action Catholique, et la conclusion dresse un bilan des développements du Canada français qui a évolué à l'encontre des attentes de Groulx.

Malgré des activités multiples, une œuvre immense et une longue carrière, Groulx demeure une énigme en grande partie à cause de son rôle dans les rapports entre le passé religio-politique du Canada français et le nationalisme séculier du Québec moderne. La visée apologétique de son œuvre complique encore les choses, puisque Groulx cherchait à défendre les doctrines sociales conservatrices du catholicisme traditionnel dans un Québec en pleine évolution sur le plan autant du nationalisme que de la modernité. Sa pensée est d'une complexité qui échappe aux simplismes.

Les études de la pensée de Groulx parues jusqu'ici ne tiennent pas assez compte du rôle primordial de la religion dans la vision du monde d'un prêtre catholique canadien-français au tournant du vingtième siècle, et elles ne reconnaissent pas assez l'importance capitale des principes théologiques qui ont formé la pensée nationaliste de Groulx. Ces études font montre d'une approche séculière typique de l'esprit de la post-Révolution Tranquille qui ne prend pas suffisamment en compte une visée théologique qui, comme celle de Groulx, se refuse à séparer le temporel et le spirituel.

Au lendemain de la mort de Groulx, le rédacteur en chef chez du *Devoir*, Claude Ryan, déclarait que Groulx était "le père spirituel du Québec moderne." Cette déclaration soulève toute la question de savoir si et dans quelle mesure la sécularisation de la société québécoise au vingtième siècle ne remet pas radicalement en cause le lien étroit du spirituel et de la nation, un lien que Groulx a constamment cherché à affirmer et à consolider. La présente étude offre une analyse plus nuancée de cette question, notamment à la lumière des affirmations de Groulx et de ses critiques à l'endroit du tournant, trop sécularisé à ses yeux, du nationalisme québécois dans la seconde moitié du vingtième siècle. Elle contribue ainsi à une plus juste appréciation de la contribution de Groulx au Québec moderne.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Groulx's Opus: A Survey

The quantity of Lionel Groulx's published work by any measure amounts to a herculean feat.¹ A Catholic priest, Groulx (1878-1967) earned doctorates in philosophy (1907), theology (1908), and belatedly in history (1932), at the ripe age of 54. By this time, however, he had already taught history since 1915, when he inaugurated the first chair of Canadian history at Université Laval (Montréal),² a position he occupied until 1949. Moreover, from its inception in 1917, Groulx wrote for the monthly publication *L'Action française*,³ served as editor (1920-1928) for most of its existence,⁴ and in so doing, historian Fernande Roy notes, developed it into "the most dynamic review of the

¹ To grasp the magnitude of Groulx's work see Victor Barbeau, *L'oeuvre du chanoine Lionel Groulx: témoignages et bio-bibliographie*, pp. 23-24ff, and Juliette Rémillard, "Lionel Groulx-bibliographie (1964-1979)," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 32/3 (décembre 1978): 465-475. (hereafter: *RHAF*). See also Jean Genest, "Une vie de travail et d'amour," *L'Action nationale* 57/10 (juin 1968): 1047-1114 (hereafter *AN*); Réginald Hamel, John Hare, Paul Wyczynski, "Lionel Groulx," in *Dictionnaire des auteurs de langue française en Amérique du Nord*, pp. 641-644.

² Founded in 1876 and opened in 1878 as a branch of Université Laval, in 1920 the Montreal institution became a full and independent university known as Université de Montréal. See Andrée Dufour, *Histoire de l'éducation au Québec*, pp. 66-67. See also Réjean Plamondon, "Université de Montréal," in James H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia: Year 2000 Edition*, p. 2414; Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, *Québec: A History 1867-1929*, pp. 211, 468; Claude Galarneau, *Les collègues classiques au Canada français: 1620-1970*, pp. 44, 60.

³ In its maiden issue, *L'Action française* 1/1 (janvier 1917): 7, (hereafter *AF*) prominently announced a forthcoming piece by Groulx which appeared as the lead article of its second issue. See L. Groulx, "Une action intellectuelle," *AF* 1/2 (février 1917): 33-43. Groulx devoted one entire volume of the four-part *Mes mémoires* to his association with *L'Action française*, which indicates the significance it held for him within the purview of his lifework. See L. Groulx, *Mes mémoires*, (hereafter *Mémoires*) 1920-1928, 2: 11-15. See also P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Québec: A History, 1867-1929*, pp. 392, 455, 520, 532-533, 536-538; Robert Lahaise, *Une histoire du Québec par sa littérature, 1914-1939*, pp. 31, 168-171, 226-227, 311, 312, 316, 395, 588; L. Groulx, *Dix ans d'Action française*, pp. 43-44ff; Fernande Roy, "L'Action française," in James H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia: Year 2000 Edition*, p. 16.

⁴ Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, *Action Française: French Canadian Nationalism in the Twenties*, pp. ix-x, 10-11ff.

day.”⁵ Its rebirth in 1933 as *L’Action nationale*,⁶ the oldest journal of opinion still published in Quebec, owes much to the initiative, guidance, and writings of Groulx, particularly during its first decades as a fledgling periodical. In fact no sooner had *L’Action française* come to an end in its final form as *L’Action canadienne-française* (1928), than Groulx himself set out to re-establish it. He proceeded cautiously to avoid pontifical censure, as evident in his letter to the Oblate priest Jean-Marie-Rodrigue Villeneuve,⁷ February 11, 1929:

However, your telephone call concerning a possible rebuke from Rome puts all plans on hold. What really lies behind all this? Have you gathered even more threatening news in the capital? We will not begin work until we receive your answer ... I would most appreciate the prayers of your community for the resurrection of the *Review*... Please keep this *absolutely secret* until the newspapers announce the rebirth of the *Review*.⁸

⁵ “C’est la revue la plus dynamique de cette période.” (Fernande Roy, *Histoire de la librairie au Québec*, p. 159).

⁶ R. Lahaise, *Une histoire du Québec par sa littérature*, pp. 31, 168, 226-227, 312, 316; L. Groulx, *Mémoires, 1926-1939*, 3: 271-273; see also pp. 201, 261, 288-289, 309; P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, F. Ricard, *Quebec since 1930*, p. 77; André J. Bélanger, *L’apolitisme des idéologies québécoises: le grand tournant de 1934-36*, pp. 22, 257-259, 271; Pierre Trépanier, “L’Action nationale,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 16.

⁷ On Villeneuve (1883-1947) archbishop of Québec City and cardinal, see Nive Voisine, “Jean-Marie-Rodrigue Villeneuve,” in James H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 2461. On Villeneuve as philosophical and theological, specifically Thomist writer, see Hervé Gagné, “Quelques pierres de doctrine: essais du cardinal Jean-Marie-Rodrigue Villeneuve,” in Maurice Lemire, ed., *Dictionnaire des oeuvres littéraires du Québec*, 2: 934-936 (hereafter *DOLQ*). On Villeneuve’s long, close friendship with Groulx and its break-up over Villeneuve’s support of a Canadian “total war” effort during WWII, see L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 216-219, 229-240, 342-346; 4: 46, 213-234, 274.

⁸ “Mais votre téléphone, au sujet d’une censure possible de Rome, fait suspendre tous les projets. Qu’y-a-t-il, au juste, au fond de tout cela? ... Avez-vous cueilli dans la capitale des nouvelles plus menaçantes? Nous attendons votre réponse avant de nous mettre à l’oeuvre ... Je vous serais bien reconnaissant de recommander aux prières de vos gens ... la résurrection de la *Revue* ... D’ici l’annonce dans les journaux, *secret absolu*, s.v.p. sur la renaissance de la *Revue*. ” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, Groulx to Jean-Marie-Rodrigue Villeneuve, 11 February 1929.) Please note that all translations, unless otherwise indicated, are those of the present writer.

A prolific writer from adolescence, Groulx first tried his hand at poetry, composing many solicited and unsolicited poems, some of which he reworked over time.⁹ Although he professed to have achieved only modest results,¹⁰ and eventually abandoned the serious pursuit of poetry, he proudly prefaced his first book *Une croisade d'adolescents* (1912) with a poem written by himself,¹¹ and his collection of vignettes, *Les rapaillages* (1916) similarly began with a poem by Groulx,¹² while his memoirs carefully preserved other poems he had penned as a young man.¹³ With some 90,000 copies in print *Les rapaillages* marked Groulx's most successful work,¹⁴ which by virtue of its style and content bespoke "the ideology of the 'terroir,' the rural homeland of the *Canadien* people,"¹⁵ a subject then commonly treated in the endeavor to develop a national literature for French Canada. Groulx subsequently authored two

⁹ See Victor Barbeau, *L'oeuvre du chanoine Lionel Groulx: témoignages et bio-bibliographie*, p. 95.

¹⁰ Giselle Huot and Réjean Bergeron, eds., *Lionel Groulx, Journal, 1895-1911*, 1: 164-165, 178-179, 183, 194-195, 198-201, 206-207, 210, 213, 243, 246-249, 262, 272-276, 281, 284, 286-287, 296-297, 301, 311-312, 314-319, 336-338, 342, 344, 346, 366-367, 377-379, 388-391, 430; (hereafter *Journal*, 2 vol.). *Journal*, 2: 632-633, 761-762, 768-769, 783-788, 823, 841-843, 847-851. See also G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Lionel Groulx: Correspondance, 1894-1967*, 1: *Le prêtre-éducateur, 1894-1906*, 1: 181, 181-182 n.2, 182 n. 6, 251, 251 n. 5; G. Huot, J. Lalonde Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: *Un étudiant à l'école de l'Europe, 1906-1909*, 2: 438-439, 439-440 n. 1, n. 3-18, 614, 614 n. 4; (hereafter *Correspondance*); L. Groulx, *Une croisade d'adolescents*, p. iv; L. Groulx, *Les rapaillages*, p. 9-11; L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 44, 52, 161, 198-199, 217; V. Barbeau, *L'oeuvre du chanoine Lionel Groulx*, p. 95. Concerning the presentation of Groulx in Jean-Pierre Gaboury's, *Le nationalisme de Lionel Groulx : aspects idéologiques*, S. M. Trofimenkoff appropriately asks: "Where is the poet that was Groulx?" (*Canadian Historical Review* 52/ 3 (September 1971): 320 [hereafter *CHR*]).

¹¹ L. Groulx, *Une croisade d'adolescents*, p. iv. Displeased with the original edition, Groulx, a careful writer with a concern for literary style, completely revised the 1938 edition of this work. See Laurier Renaud, "Une croisade d'adolescents," in M. Lemire, *DOLQ*, 2: 1111. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 102.

¹² L. Groulx, *Les rapaillages*, pp. 9-11. This work exemplified a trend in contemporary French-Canadian literature which extolled an idyllic, bygone era through a hybrid literary genre that combined elements of storytelling and poetry. See Maurice Lemire, "Introduction," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: xxii. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 21, 199, 346-356. Groulx's poem in *Les rapaillages*, namely, "La leçon des érables," was set to music in 1935 by Sister Marie François Solano; see V. Barbeau, *L'oeuvre du chanoine Lionel Groulx*, p. 95.

¹³ L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 52, 160.

¹⁴ Maurice Lemire, "Les rapaillages," in M. Lemire, *DOLQ*, 2: 942.

novels which articulated one of his primary concerns, indeed a leitmotif in his thought, namely the state of French-speaking minorities outside Québec.¹⁶ Thus, *L'appel de la race* (1922), which at the time caused a literary and theological controversy, dealt with Franco-Ontarians,¹⁷ while *Au Cap Blomidon* (1932) epitomized Acadians reclaiming their ancestral lands in the Maritime Provinces.¹⁸ Both works constituted novels of ideas (*roman à thèse*) and pursued a prominent theme in contemporary French-Canadian literature, specifically, the "reconquest"¹⁹ of Canada for French language and culture, as well as for the Catholic faith.²⁰ Groulx's fictional writings not only provided other literary vehicles to elaborate his thought, but also extended its influence, as historian Kenneth McNaught states with reference to French-Canadian fiction of the 1920s:

An historian by training, Groulx turned to the novel as a means of bringing to the popular level his historical thesis of the clerical-agrarian basis of French-Canadian

¹⁵ Michael Lord, "Short Stories in French," in Eugene Benson, William Toye, eds., *The Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature*, p. 1065, (hereafter *OCCL*).

¹⁶ Literary historian and critic Maurice Lemire notes in this regard that "Groulx never accepted the limitation of French America to the borders of Quebec alone." "Groulx n'ayant jamais accepté de limiter l'Amérique française aux seules frontières du Québec." (Maurice Lemire, "Au Cap Blomidon," in M. Lemire, *DOLQ*, 2: 81).

¹⁷ Ramon Hathorn aptly points out that *L'appel de la race* represented one of the rare Québécois novels to be set in Ontario; Ramon Hathorn, "Lionel-Adolphe Groulx," in E. Benson, W. Toye, eds., *OCCL*, p. 498. See also Maurice Lemire, "L'appel de la race," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 53-57; L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 368-369; 2: 86-97, 109-110; Olivar Asselin, *L'oeuvre de l'abbé Groulx*, pp. 6-24.

¹⁸ See Maurice Lemire, "Au Cap Blomidon," in M. Lemire, *DOLQ*, 2: 81-84. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 239; 3: 210-215.

¹⁹ Speaking respectively of *L'appel de la race* and *Au Cap Blomidon* Guy Monette observes, "After this reconquest of the family, Groulx moved on to a reconquest of the territory." G. Monette, "Novels in French 1920 to 1940," in E. Benson, W. Toye, eds., *OCCL*, p. 857. See also Maurice Lemire, "Introduction," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: xxvii.

²⁰ Concerning the idea of "reconquest" M. Lemire notes, "Like many nationalists at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, Groulx harbored a distinct optimism for the future of the French race in America, and did not accept that their struggle only took place within the borders of Quebec." "Comme plusieurs nationalistes de la fin du XIX^e et du début du XX^e siècle, Groulx nourrissait un certain optimisme sur l'avenir de la race française en Amérique, et il n'acceptait pas que le combat se jouât uniquement à l'intérieur des frontières du Québec." (Maurice Lemire, "Au Cap Blomidon," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 84).

nationality. Here the work of Abbé Lionel Groulx was of incalculable importance.²¹

Contrary to McNaught's statement, Groulx himself claimed that the writing of fiction represented for him nothing more than a hobby. He insisted, "*Au Cap Blomidon*, *L'appel de la race* and *Les rapaillages*, sought only to meet a need for leisurely activity. I never viewed them as anything but a diversion or pastime during vacations."²² Yet his memoirs abundantly evidence the concern he characteristically lavished on these writings as on all his endeavors. One wonders if Groulx ever knew how to lay down his pen since even in youth he maintained for years a detailed diary,²³ and later wrote *Une croisade d'adolescents* while hospitalized in Europe,²⁴ to say

²¹ Kenneth McNaught, *The Pelican History of Canada*, p. 239. Here McNaught erroneously identifies Adjutor Rivard's collection of short stories, *Chez nos gens*, as a novel, and compounds the error by attributing this work to Groulx, "His two best-known novels, *Chez nos gens* (1920) and *L'appel de la race* (1922) sold widely." (K. McNaught, *The Pelican History of Canada*, pp. 239-240). In fact Groulx published a similarly titled historical essay, *Chez nos ancêtres*, in 1920. See Maurice Lemire, "Chez nous et chez nos gens," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 225-227. See also Laurent Mailhot, "Chez nos ancêtres," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 223-225.

²² "*Au Cap Blomidon*, comme *L'appel de la race* et comme *Les rapaillages*, n'ont prétendu satisfaire qu'un besoin d'évasion. Je n'y ai jamais vu qu'un amusement ou un passe-temps de vacances." (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 239).

²³ Young Groulx's extant diary, which he began at age seventeen and continued well into adulthood, comprises two volumes which in many respects cover the most formative years of his life. A perceptive observer and serious thinker from adolescence, Groulx's journal historically constitutes an invaluable primary source not only on Groulx himself, but also for late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Quebec, to say nothing of his reflections on Europe during his studies and travels there from 1906 to 1909. See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*.

²⁴ See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 847-848. See also G. Huot, J. Lalonde Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 613, 619, 625-526, 632-633; L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 102, where, in reference to *Une croisade d'adolescents*, Groulx states, "Il faut dire que la première ébauche du petit livre fut écrite à Fribourg (Suisse), dans une chambre de malade où je luttais contre une grave maladie qui mettait même mes jours en danger." Groulx adds elsewhere, "Accoudé en mon lit de malade j'esquisse aussi ce qui va devenir *Une croisade d'adolescents*. J'en trace le plan; j'en ébauche quelques chapitres." (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 161). See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 190. With respect to Groulx's writing of *Une croisade d'adolescents* Laurier Renaud points out: "En dépit d'un surmenage à peu près constant, il entreprend la rédaction de ce premier ouvrage, au cours d'un voyage en Europe. Le texte est rédigé en grande partie à Fribourg (Suisse), en 1909. L'abbé Groulx parachève cette publication à son retour." (L. Renaud, "Une croisade d'adolescents," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 1109).

nothing of compiling the four volumes of *Mes mémoires* as a senior citizen ostensibly convalescing under orders from his doctor.²⁵

In his review of *Abbé Groulx: Variations on a Nationalist Theme*, edited by Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, Benoît Lacroix notes the multiple facets of Groulx reflected in this anthology of his writings: “Groulx the man of letters (23-54), Groulx the orator (55-96), historian (97-162), ideologist (163-197), and autobiographer ... (198-233)”.²⁶ While readily acknowledging Groulx’s contribution to Quebec historiography,²⁷ Pierre Hébert adds, “Groulx also played an important role as a literary figure in Quebec.” The author of *L’appel de la race* acquainted himself with nearly all forms of personal and fictional literature.²⁸ Groulx made it clear that he considered literature the very stuff of existence for a people, indeed their life-blood: “The literature of a people must be consubstantial with that people.”²⁹ In the light of this literary dimension of Groulx’s thought, one perceives why his first article for *L’Action française* dealt with the state of literature in Quebec and called for the creation of new literary works in all genres as a

²⁵ An irrepressible hard worker Groulx opened his memoirs with the statement that he considered it a pastime to write them, “La Providence a voulu qu’en mes soixante-seize ans, j’aie connu une période de fatigue. Le médecin m’a condamné au repos forcé. Pour me divertir, j’écris *Mes Mémoires*.” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 13). Despite this disclaimer Groulx’s memoirs, as historian Mason Wade affirms, constitute “a major contribution to the intellectual and social history of French Canada [and] ... required and absorbing reading for anyone who wishes to understand French-Canadian nationalism and the intellectual history of French Canada.” (M. Wade, book review of *Mes mémoires*, *CHR* 52/3 [September 1971]: 321-322).

²⁶ “Groulx homme de lettres (23-54) à un Groulx orateur (55-96), historien (97-162), idéologue (163-197) et autobiographe ... 198-233” (B. Lacroix, “L’après-Groulx –à propos d’une anthologie--” *RHAF* 28/3 [décembre 1974] : 416).

²⁷ Jean Basile, “Literature in French,” in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians: 1867-1967*, p. 664.

²⁸ “Le Groulx littéraire occupe aussi une place considérable dans les lettres québécoises. L’auteur de *L’appel de la race* a fréquenté presque tous les genres de la littérature intime ou de la fiction.” (P. Hébert, “Quand éditer, c’était agir, *RHAF* 46/2 [automne 1992]: 239-240).

²⁹ “La littérature d’un peuple doit être consubstantielle à ce peuple” (L. Groulx, *Dix ans d’Action française*, pp. 9-10.) See also T. E. Clarke, “Consubstantiality,” in William J. McDonald, ed., *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, IV: 251-253 (hereafter *NCE*); Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek*

means of cultural, religious, indeed nationalist activism.³⁰ The link between literature and history in Groulx's thought is essential to understand:

No one acknowledges the historian as an artist nor allows them this title. In French Canada literary criticism particularly measures the progress of literature by the works of poets and novelists alone. Only they truly do creative work. Yet when I consider the acutely painstaking, meticulous intellectual endeavor necessary to recreate bygone societies and past centuries, I ask myself if this artisan does not also merit the title of creative artist. The historian works on 'still life' while novelists and poets deal with living subjects.³¹

In the end Groulx authored some thirty fictional, historical, and autobiographical books. Not surprisingly, he holds a place in Canadian literature and constitutes a subject of its study. Lacroix speaks of Groulx's "oratorical lyricism"³² and characterizes him as "this man who stands out as no other in our literature."³³ Jean Marcel affirms that Groulx's body of writings "constitute the most imposing monument of our literature."³⁴ Though not uncritical of him in other regards, Guy Frégault thus characterized Groulx: "The truest and most professional of all Quebec writers died

Theological Terms, pp. 80-88; Ramon Hathorn, "Lionel-Adolphe Groulx," in E. Benson, W. Toye, eds., *OCCL*, pp. 497-499.

³⁰ See L. Groulx, "Une action intellectuelle," *AF* 1/2 (février 1917): 34-43. R. Lahaise aptly calls this article a "literary manifesto" (manifeste littéraire). See R. Lahaise, *Une histoire du Québec par sa littérature, 1914-1939*, pp. 7, 31, 475. See also P. Hébert, "Quand éditer, c'était agir," *RHAF* 46/2 [automne 1992]: 220.

³¹ "On refuse à l'historien le titre ou le rôle de créateur. Au Canada français particulièrement, la critique littéraire ne mesure les progrès de la littérature que selon les oeuvres des poètes et des romanciers. Eux seuls feraient vraiment oeuvre de création. Et pourtant quand je songe à l'effort intellectuel si patient, si minutieux que requiert la reconstitution des sociétés mortes et des siècles éteints, je me demande si cet ouvrier-là ne mérite pas, lui aussi, le titre de créateur? L'historien travaille sur de la nature morte; le romancier et le poète, sur de la matière vivante." (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 3: 38).

³² "le lyrisme oratoire" (B. Lacroix, "L'après-Groulx--à propos d'une anthologie--", *RHAF*, 28/3 [décembre 1974]: 417).

³³ "cet homme unique dans notre littérature" (B. Lacroix, "L'après-Groulx--à propos d'une anthologie--", *RHAF* 28/3 [décembre 1974]: 418).

³⁴ "...constitue le plus vaste monument de notre littérature" (J. Marcel, "Le maître de prose," *AN* 57/10 [juin 1968]: 993).

writing.”³⁵ Furthermore, Groulx had little difficulty bridging the gap between literature and history, especially since fiction in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Quebec tended to have an historical character. Although a strong critic of Groulx on other matters Mason Wade affirms that his “memoirs are required and absorbing reading for anyone who wishes to understand French-Canadian nationalism and the intellectual history of French Canada,” and he describes his writing as “eloquent and evocative.”³⁶ Groulx himself reflects, “I have always asked myself if any historian who respects their field can, in all good conscience, pursue something besides history.”³⁷ Thus, in a largely historical, academic vein, Groulx authored about twenty opuscles, over two hundred articles, an equal number of reviews, several monographs, a seminal two-volume history of Canadian French-language education, *L’enseignement français au Canada* (1933),³⁸ and his major historiographical work, *Histoire du Canada français* (1950-1952), a four-volume survey whose impact led to four editions during the remaining years of Groulx’s life.³⁹ Looking beyond his own death to the future of Quebec historiography, in 1947 Groulx, now almost seventy, founded and edited for twenty years the *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française*, which remains one of the foremost scholarly journals in Canada. At the same time he took Quebec history from the ivory

³⁵ “Le plus vrai et le plus professionnel de tous les écrivains québécois est mort en écrivant.” (Guy Frégault, *Lionel Groulx tel qu’en lui-même*, p. 10. See Ronald Rudin, *Making History in Twentieth-Century Quebec*, p. 226 n. 24).

³⁶ M. Wade, review of Lionel Groulx’s *Mémoires, 1: 1878-1920*; *CHR*, 52/3 (September 1971): 322.

³⁷ “L’historien qui respecte son métier, ai-je toujours pensé, peut-il, en toute sécurité de conscience, faire autre chose que de l’histoire?” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 2: 12).

³⁸ P. Hébert, “Quand éditer, c’était agir,” *RHAF*, 46/2 (automne 1992): 220. See also R. Lahaise, *Une histoire du Québec par sa littérature, 1914-1939*, p. 716.

³⁹ R. Rudin, *Making History in Twentieth-Century Quebec*, p. 98; R. Lahaise, *Une histoire du Québec par sa littérature*, p. 312.

tower to the people through roughly one hundred radio broadcasts.⁴⁰ Indeed historian Ronald Rudin singles out Groulx as “the individual most responsible for the emergence of an historical profession in Quebec.”⁴¹ Although critical of him, Wade nonetheless declares Groulx “the most influential French-Canadian historian of his day” and “a master of broad historical synthesis.”⁴² Is it any wonder Groulx earned a reputation as the “national historian” of Quebec?⁴³ On a popular level through his novels, fictional writings, and teaching history on the radio CKAC, he prefigured the role of Alex Haley in contemporary Afro-American culture. That is to say, Lionel Groulx historically and literarily gave roots to “a minority people on the verge of losing their history, their civilization and indeed, their soul.”⁴⁴

Groulx himself wrote that “people will realize that I gave the best of my life to history.”⁴⁵ While this statement indicates the priority Groulx gave to the pursuit of history, it nonetheless belies the apprehension that his myriad activities had undermined his historiographical work, which partly explains the intent of *Mes mémoires* as an apologia for his life.⁴⁶ In this vein Nive Voisine notes that Groulx:

was not solely an historian. He took on multifarious tasks throughout his life. From 1915 to 1927 he had to spread himself thin in order to make a living, but

⁴⁰ He did so 1949-1952 on CKAC, the first French-language radio station in Canada, founded by *La Presse* in 1922. See P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History 1867-1929*, p. 349. See also P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, F. Ricard, *Quebec since 1930*, pp. 123-124; R. Rudin, *Making History in Twentieth-Century Quebec*, p. 98. See also V. Barbeau, *L'oeuvre du chanoine Lionel Groulx: témoignages, bio-bibliographie*, pp. 58, 91, 155; J. Rémillard, “Lionel Groulx-bibliographie (1964-1979),” *RHAF* 32/3 (décembre 1978): 465.

⁴¹ R. Rudin, *Making History in Twentieth-Century Quebec*, p. 220.

⁴² M. Wade, review of Lionel Groulx’s *Mes mémoires*, 1: 1878-1920; *CHR*, 52/3 (September 1971): 321.

⁴³ G. Frégault, *Lionel Groulx tel qu’en lui-même*, 54; See R. Lahaise, *Une histoire du Québec par sa littérature, 1914-1929*, p. 311.

⁴⁴ “à un petit peuple en train de perdre son histoire, sa civilisation, son âme” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 13-14).

⁴⁵ “À l’histoire, on le verra, j’ai donné le meilleur de ma vie.” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 3: 234).

⁴⁶ See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 13-14.

thereafter he chose of his own will to assume concurrently the role of preacher for religious retreats, keynote speaker at conferences, journal editor ... so that he had relatively little time for historical research ... His innumerable pursuits, more than anything, limited this priest-educator as an historian.⁴⁷

Regarding Groulx's place in Quebec historiography and that of François-Xavier Garneau (1809-1866), known as the first 'national historian' of French Canada, Maurice Lemire states, "Groulx without doubt represented for the twentieth century what Garneau did for the nineteenth."⁴⁸ Groulx so influenced French Canadians in his day and age that Claude Ryan referred to him, the day after Groulx's death, as "The spiritual father of modern Quebec."⁴⁹

Yet for all his work, indeed because of its sheer dimension, combined with the fact that Groulx wrote over such a protracted period of time, some sixty years, he remains an enigmatic figure. Lacroix thus appropriately cautions:

The first difficulty to face lies in the Groulxian corpus itself that constitutes an immense, extraordinarily varied body of work. As early as 1905 he wrote articles for *Le Semeur*, and the evening of the day he died, May 23, 1967, the Montreal publisher Fides had scheduled him to attend the evening launch of his *Constantes de vie*, later followed by *Mémoires* (1971-74). He practiced nearly every form of contemporary literature: poetry, novels, historiography, essays, critiques, discourses, radio presentations, 30 books, hundreds of articles. His

⁴⁷ "... il n'est pas exclusivement historien et sa vie est remplie de multiples tâches. De 1915 à 1927, la nécessité l'oblige à s'éparpiller pour vivre, mais, plus tard, il choisit lui-même d'être à la fois prédicateur de retraites, conférencier, directeur de revue ..., ce qui lui laisse relativement peu de temps pour la recherche historique." (Nive Voisine, "Essai sur l'histoire," in Paul Wyczynski, François Gallays, Sylvain Simard, eds., *L'essai et la prose d'idées au Québec*, pp. 205-206).

⁴⁸ "Groulx a certainement été, pour le XX^e siècle, ce que Garneau avait été pour le XIX^e." (M. Lemire, "Introduction," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: xxxi). J. Basile affirms, in reference to Groulx's historical work and nationalist theories, "it was mainly through these that he acquired in the thirties his incomparable reputation and the sway he held over an entire generation of thinkers." (J. Basile, "Literature in French," in J. M. S. Careless, R. C. Brown, eds., *The Canadians*, p. 664).

⁴⁹ "Le père spirituel du Québec moderne" (*Le Devoir*, May 24, 1967).

archives comprise more than a thousand unpublished writings, including an enormous correspondence.⁵⁰

No wonder then that Jean-Pierre Gaboury concludes, “The corpus of Lionel Groulx is immense and ineluctably multifaceted ... so that the work of this controversial figure naturally gives rise to diverse interpretations.”⁵¹

The enigma of Groulx only intensifies when one seeks to understand the exact relationship of the spiritual and the national in his thought.⁵² Speaking on the relationship between Catholicism and nationalism in Groulx’s thought Wade affirms, “For him the two were inextricably one.”⁵³ Regarding Groulx’s impact on French-Canadian nationalism, as early as 1944 influential political journalist Blair Fraser observed, “Even more than Henri Bourassa he [Groulx] is the spiritual father of all modern nationalist movements in Quebec.”⁵⁴ Those who have attempted to locate Groulx have variously assessed him as “a nationalist priest” (Trofimenkoff) and a “crusader of Roman Catholicism” (Phyllis M. Sherrin). Trofimenkoff therefore rightly queries:

⁵⁰ “La difficulté à contourner tout de suite tient à l’oeuvre même de Groulx. Oeuvre immense, diversifiée au possible. Dès 1905 il signe des articles dans *Le Semeur* et encore le soir de sa mort, le 23 mai 1967, on l’attend aux bureaux des éditions Fides de Montréal pour le lancement de *Constantes de vie* qui seront suivies des *Mémoires* (1971-74). Tous les genres littéraires de l’époque, ou presque tous, il les pratique: poésie, roman, historiographie, essai, discours, conférence, causerie radiophonique. [sic] 30 livres, des centaines d’articles. Ses archives contiennent plus de mille inédits, dont une correspondance énorme.” (B. Lacroix, “L’après-Groulx—à propos d’une anthologie—”, *RHAF* 28/3 [décembre 1974]: 405).

⁵¹ “L’oeuvre de Lionel Groulx est immense et inévitablement complexe...Il est normal que l’oeuvre de ce personnage controversé suscite des interprétations diverses.” (J.-P. Gaboury, *Le nationalisme de Lionel Groulx: aspects idéologiques*, p. vii).

⁵² For the purposes of this study the present writer adopts the following definition: “Nationalism is a conscious bond shared by a group of people who feel strongly attached to a particular land and who possess a common language, culture, and history, marked by shared glories and sufferings. Nationalists ... exhibit great pride in their people’s history and traditions and often feel that their nation has been specially chosen by God or history.” (Marvin Perry, Myrna Chase, James R. Jacob, Margaret C. Jacob, Theodore H. Von Laue, *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics and Society*, v. 2: *From the 1600s*, pp. 555-556).

⁵³ M. Wade, review of Lionel Groulx’s *Mes mémoires*, v. 1: 1878-1920; *CHR*, 52/3 (September 1971): 321.

What exactly does one make of this man Groulx harking back and harking forward while seemingly crying in a contemporary wilderness? He appears to be less the epitome of the old religio-nationalism (of which Jules-Paul Tardivel and Henri Bourassa are perhaps the true spokesmen) than a bridge to the new secular nationalism of the 1960's.⁵⁵

Groulx represents an enigma precisely because of his role as a transition between the old religio-nationalist French Canada and the new secular-nationalist Quebec. The apologetic intent of his work compounds the enigma, inasmuch as Groulx attempted to reconcile the conservative social doctrines of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Catholicism with rapidly changing, modern Quebec and its increasingly heady nationalism. His thought therefore evidences nuance and eludes facile definition. In reference to Groulx, Jean-Pierre Wallot observes:

A profoundly complex individual, he evoked many enigmatic images, none of which captured the wealth of his being, thought, and endeavors; none which completely fit this theatrical yet undeniably larger-than-life figure.⁵⁶

While Groulx's transitional role elicited Ryan's sympathetic assertion of him as the spiritual father of modern Quebec, this assessment precariously stands or falls on the place of the secular vis-à-vis the spiritual in Groulx's thought, since the reversal of their respective importance in Quebec society marked its accession to modernity. In fact Groulx's apologia arose out of the debate over the proper relationship between the temporal and the spiritual in contemporary Quebec society. This study therefore

⁵⁴ Blair Fraser, "Crisis in Quebec," *Maclean's Magazine* 57/16 (August 15, 1944): 43.

⁵⁵ S. M. Trofimenkoff, *Abbé Groulx: Variations on a Nationalist Theme*, p. 12.

⁵⁶ "Personnage éminemment complexe, sur qui les étiquettes flottent comme autant d'énigmes sans jamais en capter la richesse d'être, de pensée, d'action; sans jamais coller entièrement au personnage théâtral certes, mais plus grand que nature" (Jean-Pierre Wallot, "Groulx historiographe," *RHAF* 32/3 [décembre 1978]: 408).

proposes to examine the spiritual and the secular in Groulx's thought, so as to ascertain how he related the two and lead us to a better understanding of his contribution to modern Quebec.

1.2 Current Scholarship

While we cannot expect to examine all of Groulx's opus, we consider this study necessary because current scholarship evidences a tendency to compartmentalize, if not to dichotomize, Groulxian thought. This particularly holds true when scholars attempt to relate his pronounced nationalism to his undeniable Catholicism. The two went hand in hand in French Canada at the end of the nineteenth century, and specifically so for Groulx, as his diary entry on September 13, 1897, illustrates:

Religion and Homeland, these will ever remain the two loves of my life. No matter what career God has in store for me, my heart, my soul, my life belong to these two great causes. I will make sure that others respect my language, and I vow never to speak any other language than the beautiful French language for as long as people speak it on the banks of the St. Lawrence. However, before being a French Canadian I want to be a Catholic, because in serving well God one always serves better one's own country. I will become a soldier, I will live a militant life, I will fight as long as it pleases God not to break the feeble weapons he has given me.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ "La Religion et la Patrie; tels seront les deux amours constants de ma vie. À quelque carrière que Dieu me destine, mon coeur, mon âme, ma vie est à ces deux grands noms. Je ferai respecter ma langue; et je m'engage à ne jamais parler d'autre langue que la belle langue française, tant qu'on la parlera sur les rives du Saint-Laurent. Mais avant que d'être Canadien français, je veux être catholique. En servant bien son Dieu on sert toujours mieux son pays. Je serai soldat; ma vie sera une vie militante, je combattrai tant qu'il ne plaira pas à Dieu de briser les faibles armes qu'il m'a données" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal* 1: 341). Regarding Groulx, G. Huot observes, "In the same way that he viewed the ideals of his cause, 'Homeland and Religion' or 'God and Country' as inseparable, so too he deemed the fundamental Catholic and French elements of the French-Canadian nation indivisible within this entity." "Autant ses objectifs de combat, 'Patrie et Religion' ou encore 'Dieu et la Patrie' sont inséparables, autant sont indissociables les caractéristiques, primordiales selon lui, de l'entité de la nation canadienne-française: catholique et française." (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 37). B. Lacroix refers to Groulx as "a fervent advocate of a national religion which protects language rights" - "un vif partisan d'une religion nationale protectrice des droits de la langue"—(B. Lacroix, "L'après-Groulx---à propos d'une anthologie---," *RHAF* 28/3 [décembre 1974]: 419).

Despite such affirmations, François-Albert Angers makes a sharp distinction between Groulx's nationalism and Catholicism. Angers thus states in reference to Groulx, "he knew how to separate the demands of national liberation from ... devotion to the constituent elements of a culture."⁵⁸ Wallot concurs, affirming that Angers "rightly situates Groulx's religion 'first and foremost within culture'."⁵⁹ Meanwhile, characterizing him as decidedly dualistic, Trofimenkoff does not hesitate to assert "the ambivalence, the equivocation, the almost split personality...of Groulx."⁶⁰ Esther Delisle conversely collapses Groulx's nationalist ideas and religious convictions into an overall "millenarian Fascism."⁶¹ In this vein noted author Mordecai Richler, although not a specialist on the subject, unequivocally declares Groulx a "vile little cleric [who] was also a fascist."⁶²

Such interpretations pay little or no attention to the theological principles that shaped Groulx's nationalist thought. For example, not one of the seven chapters in Gaboury's *Le nationalisme de Lionel Groulx: aspects idéologiques*, addresses directly and at length Groulx's Catholicism. Gaboury instead subsumes the latter under what he refers to as the "humanism"⁶³ of Groulx. Lacroix therefore adroitly posits this caveat in relation to Groulxian studies:

⁵⁸ "la séparation qu'il savait entre les exigences de la libération nationale ... et la fidélité à un contenu culturel." (F.-A. Angers, "Mesure de l'influence du chanoine Lionel Groulx sur son milieu," *RHAF* 32/3 [décembre 1978]: 383).

⁵⁹ "situe bien la religion de Groulx 'essentiellement dans la culture'." (J.-P. Wallot, "Groulx historiographe," *RHAF* 32/3 [décembre, 1978]: 417, n. 38).

⁶⁰ S. M. Trofimenkoff, ed., *Abbé Groulx: Variations on a Nationalist Theme*, translated by Joanne L'Heureux and S. M. Trofimenkoff, p. 10.

⁶¹ Esther Delisle, *The Traitor and the Jew: Anti-Semitism and Extremist Right-Wing Nationalism in Quebec from 1929 to 1939*, p. 177.

⁶² Mordecai Richler, *Oh Canada! Oh Quebec!: Requiem for a Divided Country*, p. 89.

⁶³ Jean-Pierre Gaboury, *Le nationalisme de Lionel Groulx*, pp. 65-89.

I repeat, however, our middle ages ended in the 1960s, so that we have become increasingly unfamiliar with the medieval construct of his faith, which still remains crucial to the explication of his militant, missionary nationalism.⁶⁴

Reviewing his book, *Le nationalisme de Lionel Groulx: aspects idéologiques*, Trofimenkoff notes that Gaboury “accepts much too candidly the numerous secondary sources which he quotes; the theories of Michael Oliver and Michel Brunet, for example, are surely open to serious questioning.”⁶⁵ Moreover, Trofimenkoff’s critique of Gaboury belies her own contention that Groulx provided the bridge from religious nationalism to secular nationalism, as well as her supposition of Groulx’s split personality. She observes:

Where, indeed, is an entire historical perspective that would, I believe, render Groulx’s nationalism much more intelligible? One needs neither Gaboury’s seventeenth century, Weber’s Catholic-Protestant dichotomy, nor Brunet’s *agriculturisme* to explain Groulx’s attitudes; nineteenth-century Victorian rural Canada will suffice. Abbé Groulx displayed all the characteristics: the doctrine of work, duty, thrift, frugality, prudence, and other-worldly rewards. That kind of man looked askance at the twentieth century.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ “Mais, je le répète, nous devenons de plus en plus étrangers à la problématique médiévale de sa foi - notre moyen âge s’étant terminé dans les années 1960 - qui reste pourtant fondamentale pour expliquer son nationalisme militant et missionnaire.” (B. Lacroix, “L’après - Groulx - à propos d’une anthologie -,” *RHAF* 28/3 [décembre 1974]: 420).

⁶⁵ S. M. Trofimenkoff, review of Gaboury’s *Le nationalisme de Lionel Groulx: aspects idéologiques*; *CHR* 52/3 (September 1971): 320-321. Questioning the reduction of Groulx to an ideological abstraction, Trofimenkoff writes on p. 320 in reference to Gaboury’s *Le nationalisme de Lionel Groulx*: “A strange picture of Abbé Groulx emerges from this study. Instead of the warm, generous, humorous, and gentle priest that many generations of students knew and appreciated, we have a bloodless concept, a late nineteenth-century conservative with seventeenth-century overtones, a static mind with little originality, a dictatorial separatist, a passive model on which the academics’ (notably F. Hertz and R. Girardet) definition of nationalism can be fitted.”

⁶⁶ S. M. Trofimenkoff, review of Jean-Pierre Gaboury’s *Le nationalisme de Lionel Groulx: aspects idéologiques*, *CHR* 52/3 (September 1971): 319-320.

Despite its ring of truth, Trofimenkoff's criticism sounds hollow to the extent that it lacks any reference to the primary role which religion played in the nationalism of this priest from "nineteenth-century Victorian rural [French] Canada." In this regard Lacroix observes:

S.M.T. [Susan Mann Trofimenkoff] reads Groulx during the period of our so-called quiet revolution, completing her doctoral thesis on *l'Action française* and *l'Appel de la Race* in 1970 at Laval University ... Yet 1970 already represents one of those 'new' years for Quebec.⁶⁷

These polarized analyses of Groulx's thought err by employing secular, anachronistic, specifically post-'Quiet Revolution' approaches which truncate the role of religion in the worldview of a French-Canadian, Roman Catholic priest at the turn of the twentieth century.⁶⁸ This secular approach to Groulx's thought is particularly inadequate because Groulx's religion was both personal and popular, as well as that of an intellectual and clergyman. Lacroix alerts current Groulxian scholarship:

The watershed of the 1970s constitutes another difficulty for readers to comprehend the talents of a linear writer of the 30s and 40s, much less the all-embracing mindset of this conversationalist historian and cunning pamphleteer, to say nothing of the early twentieth-century style which still romanticized the past and engaged in hero worship rather than revisionist critique.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ "S.M.T. lit Groulx au temps de notre révolution soi-disant tranquille. En 1970, elle termine sa thèse doctorale à l'Université Laval sur *l'Action française* et *L'appel de la race*... Or 1970 est déjà une de ces années 'nouvelles' pour le Québec (B.Lacroix, "L'après-Groulx—à propos d'une anthologie---," *RHAF* 28/3 [décembre 1974]: 416.

⁶⁸ B. Lacroix, "L'après-Groulx—à propos d'une anthologie--," *RHAF* 28/3 (décembre 1974): 416.

⁶⁹ "L'autre difficulté est de faire sentir au lecteur en rupture des années 1970 les talents de l'écrivain linéaire des années 30/40, ainsi que les perspectives universalistes de l'historien causeur, les ruses du pamphlétaire, sans compter que la mode au début du XXe siècle est encore à l'exaltation romantique du passé et au culte du héros plutôt qu'au révisionnisme critique". (B. Lacroix, "L'après-Groulx—à propos d'une anthologie--," *RHAF* 28/3 [décembre 1974]: 415-416).

More and more, due to the inevitable changes in critical thinking and writing, the interpretation of Groulx will cause academic research dilemmas. Therefore...will it not be all the more necessary to resort to the sacred in Groulx's thought, rather than to his Catholic faith alone, and if necessary, to secularize it in order to grasp more fully its comprehensiveness?⁷⁰

To do justice to his thought, one must study Groulx integrally with the theological philosophical world view that was his. This is essential because Groulx's scholarly training was primarily in philosophy and theology. Wallot notes, "Educated as a theologian,... Groulx must improvise as an historian."⁷¹ Furthermore, the ambience of Groulx's education was theologically polemical, not to say socially reactionary.

Frégault observes in this respect:

His theological and political mindset unconsciously developed along the lines set out by French Catholics during the early years of the Third Republic ... The time of his birth connected him to this period in which he immersed himself through his mentors. Like so many others, his instructors were French clerics who had brought with their baggage the struggles, allegiances, and animosities of the Catholic milieu of their youth. Quebecers and Groulx along with them, then sang –and would sing for a long time to come– the hymns of the militant faithful on the other side of the Atlantic.⁷²

⁷⁰ "De plus en plus, à cause des changements inévitables de mentalités et à cause des nouvelles techniques d'écriture et de critique, l'interprétation de Groulx posera des problèmes méthodologiques. Ainsi...faudrait-il...en appeler au sacré plutôt qu'à sa seule foi catholique, au besoin le séculariser pour mieux l'accepter ensuite dans sa totalité?" (B. Lacroix, "L'après-Groulx—à propos d'une anthologie--," *RHAF* 28/3 [décembre 1974]: 419-420).

⁷¹ "Formé à la théologie ... Groulx doit s'improviser historien..." (Wallot, "Groulx historiographe." *RHAF* 32/3 [décembre 1978]: 409).

⁷² "Sa culture théologique et sa culture politique se structurent et se développent inconsciemment sur le modèle de celles qu'élaboraient les catholiques français dans les premières années de la Troisième République ... Il touche à cette époque par sa naissance, il y entre par ses maîtres. Comme tant d'autres, il a eu pour professeurs des ecclésiastiques français qui avaient emporté dans leurs bagages le milieu catholique de leur jeunesse, avec ses combats, ses fidélités et ses ressentiments. Les Québécois, et lui avec eux, chantent alors et chanteront encore longtemps les cantiques de repentance agressive qu'ont fait retentir les fidèles d'outre-mer." (G. Frégault, *Lionel Groulx tel qu'en lui-même*, p. 118).

Not without reason then, Sherrin remarks with regard to Groulx, “Despite the passage of time and his intellectual growth, he always remained tied to the world of Vatican I with its fearful criticism of contemporary society.”⁷³

Catholic moral theology and apologetics were the foci of Groulx’s initial studies. With reference to the first volume of Groulx’s memoirs which cover the years 1878-1920, Wade notes the invaluable contribution of “Groulx’s critical picture of classical college and seminary life at the turn of the century.”⁷⁴ Lacroix adds, “He received the standard classical college education: studies of the Greco-Roman heritage, general culture, European history – all viewed through the prism of Catholic morality and an apologia which sought to solve problems before defining them.”⁷⁵ Indeed Lacroix refers to Groulx’s “exclusively Catholic culture and his penchant for apologetics.”⁷⁶ Moreover, in Groulx’s own context theology and philosophy were synonymous with Thomism. It was the epistemological basis of Groulx’s academic training from his classical college, the Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse-de-Blainville, to his doctoral work in Rome at the Dominican college of St. Thomas at the Minerva (1906-1909). Huot notes the numerous references in Groulx’s diary to Aquinas’ *Summa theologiae*, “This work constituted and long remained the cornerstone of theological

⁷³ P. M. Sherrin, unpublished doctoral thesis, “The World, the Flesh and the Devil: The Crusade of Lionel Groulx 1878-1967,” p. 1, CRLG.

⁷⁴ M. Wade, review of Lionel Groulx’s *Mes mémoires*, v. 1: 1878-1920; *CHR* 52/3 (September 1971): 322.

⁷⁵ “Au collège, il reçoit la formation classique que l’on sait: étude de l’héritage gréco-romain, culture générale, histoire de l’Europe, le tout filtré par la morale catholique et une apologétique qui invitent à résoudre les problèmes avant de les poser.” (B. Lacroix, “Lionel Groulx cet inconnu” *RHAF* 32/3 [décembre 1978]: 333).

⁷⁶ “les dominantes de sa culture exclusivement catholique, son goût de l’apologétique” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, I: XII).

and philosophical studies in the classical colleges of Quebec.”⁷⁷ In fact, the period of Groulx’s scholarly training coincided with the strong modern revival of Thomism. Groulx studied with the renowned Dominican medievalist Pierre Mandonnet (1858-1936) at the Catholic University of Fribourg in Switzerland. At Rome he attended the lectures of the noted Dominican philosopher A. - D. Sertillanges (1863-1948).⁷⁸ Groulx also attended in Paris the lectures of Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), French philosopher and noteworthy interpreter of Thomas Aquinas. As his own writings attest, Groulx often quoted Maritain as an authority, along with Etienne Gilson (1884-1978), Catholic philosopher and outstanding medievalist.

Closer to home and therefore all the more significant, was the theological nationalism of Louis-Adolphe Pâquet (1859-1942). Unassailable in his Catholic orthodoxy, contemporary French-Canadian Thomist par excellence, Pâquet was dean of the Faculty of Theology at Université Laval (1904-1938) and also founder of the Académie canadienne St-Thomas-d’Aquin (1930). He was considered the ‘national theologian,’ and his benchmark oration “La vocation de la race française en Amérique” (June 23, 1902) epitomized French-Canadian theological nationalism. In a letter, dated April 21, 1917, Groulx avowed the theological and philosophical definition Pâquet gave to the nationalism of Groulx’s generation:

I can honestly say that in the years to come, when people will look for those who shaped our course of action, you will stand among the foremost mentors of this present generation. In Rome I studied your handbooks to prepare for my theological examinations, and I know how much one can learn to think soundly through your lucid teachings. I believe that such desire

⁷⁷ “Cet ouvrage était alors et fut longtemps le fondement des études théologiques et philosophiques dans les collèges classiques de Québec” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 283, n. 54).

⁷⁸ Groulx’s library included some twenty books by this author.

for cogent ideas has largely contributed to giving all of us a more acute sense of the nationalist and religious realities of our country. Indeed quite recently, when it seemed to us that questionable doctrines threatened our most treasured traditions, we youth once again found welcome support in your towering authority.⁷⁹

The influence on Groulx of Thomism in general and Pâquet in particular, gave rise to his primordial belief in the social omnicompetence of Catholicism. This was in keeping with modern Thomism's endeavor to achieve epistemological comprehensiveness. In a letter to Pâquet, dated May 13, 1933, Groulx affirmed the competency of Catholic theology to help resolve social, national, and even political problems:

When I attempt to analyze your impact on my generation it occurs to me that beyond the model of a singularly impeccable, uplifting life, we also stand in your debt for exemplifying just how much profound philosophical and theological studies can contribute to all issues in the public realm. Furthermore, we better appreciate the importance of grounding all pursuits in the unerring, vital principles of Catholicism so as not to work in vain. For those public figures not bent on going astray, you have proven the mentor who sets out the conditions essential to the welfare of a Christian State.⁸⁰

One must study Groulx in view of the express purpose of his work which aimed to provide an apologetic for the role of Catholicism in French Canada and for the role of

⁷⁹“Quand on cherchera plus tard les influences qui auront déterminé notre action, je vous le dis sans flatterie, vous prendrez rang parmi les tout-premiers maîtres de la génération actuelle. J'ai préparé mes examens de théologie à Rome dans vos manuels, et je sais jusqu'à quel point vos clairs enseignements peuvent apprendre à penser juste. Le goût des idées claires a beaucoup fait, je pense, pour nous donner à tous un sentiment plus vif des réalités patriotiques et religieuses de notre pays. Et tout dernièrement encore, quand nous nous sentions menacés par d'étranges doctrines, dans les meilleures de nos traditions, c'était un bonheur, pour nous les plus jeunes, de pouvoir nous rebrancher derrière votre haute autorité” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, Lionel Groulx to L.-A. Pâquet, April 21, 1917).

⁸⁰“Si j'essaie d'analyser votre action sur la génération dont je suis, il me semble que nous vous devons, outre l'exemple d'une vie qui n'a connu que la ligne droite et montante, l'exemple aussi de ce que peuvent apporter à tous les problèmes de la vie publique, de fortes études philosophiques et théologiques. Nous savons mieux également l'importance de se rattacher en tout, pour ne pas faire oeuvre vaine, aux principes certains et vivants du catholicisme. Pour ceux de nos hommes publics qui ne veulent pas être délibérément distraits, vous avez été le maître qui enseigne les conditions de vie pour un état normal et chrétien” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to L.-A. Pâquet, May 13, 1933).

French Canada in North America. Groulx's thought must also be studied in the light of his self-understanding. Clearly his self-perception was first and foremost sacerdotal. This is of no little importance in the relation of his French-Canadian nationalism to his Catholicism, since clerical nationalism was the historical matrix of Groulx's thought. W. L. Morton is helpful in this connection. He notes:

French-Canadian nationalism had grown steadily since the Red River Resistance of 1870. It was, however, partly secular nationalism and partly ultramontane clericalism. Even when greatly inflamed by the Boer War, the revival of the schools question in Ontario and Manitoba after 1913, and the conscription crisis of 1917, it remained clerical as well as secular in nature. Given the role of the Church in the maintenance of the French language and culture, there could be no other result...the leadership of the Quebec revolt still lay in the hands of clerics such as the Abbé Lionel Groulx, gifted and devoted scholar...⁸¹

Yet it was not simply by contemporary conventionality that the priesthood was determinative in Groulx's thought. Groulx was acutely conscious of his apostolate and had a profound sense of mission. In explaining the reason for writing his memoirs, Groulx reveals his *raison d'être* as he understood it, and as he believed others likewise perceived it:

When Providence took me from Valleyfield, put me in a chair at the University of Montréal, and entrusted me with teaching the history of my country, I heard time and again, often from very reliable sources, that I had received a mission. In their minds that meant a mission to my fellow French Canadians, a small people on the verge of losing their history, civilization, and indeed their soul. My task consisted of reawakening in them an awareness of their past, as well as the spiritual dimensions of their culture and civilization, so that they could rediscover their ethos, and by the same token, their divine destiny.

⁸¹ J.M.S. Careless and R. Craig Brown eds., *The Canadians 1867-1967*, pp. 212-213.

Was this mission indeed mine? I have good reason to think so since I did this in strict obedience to my superiors and with their blessings. Moreover, I write these pages in the hope that when I die they will not only summarize the endeavors, concerns, and ideas I sought to advance during my lifetime, but that in some small way they will also carry on the work for which I lived. I strive to fulfill my mission inasmuch as it constitutes that mission which others attributed to me.⁸²

In contrast then to the secular assessment of Groulx, this study gives careful attention to the Christian basis of Groulx's schema. The dual character of Groulx's thought, i.e., French and Catholic, cannot be understood unless one takes into account the natural - supernatural paradigm of his thought. What to a secular, post-Quiet Revolution interpretation appears to be a contradiction, or a ploy, which used Catholicism to justify French-Canadian nationalism, represented for Groulx two sides of the same coin. The apparent ambiguity of his thought is a reflection of this natural-supernatural dialectic. From the cornerstone presupposition of Catholicism's social omniscience, Groulx elaborated the theological concept of 'incarnation' into a social principle whereby he relates the 'spiritual' to the 'temporal.' Their reconciliation constitutes the axis of Groulx's thought. In turn, the resolution of the spiritual and the temporal on the basis of incarnation provides Groulx's rationale for the symbiosis of French-Canadian

⁸² "Quand la Providence m'a tiré de Valleyfield pour m'asseoir dans une chaire, à l'Université de Montréal, et m'y confier l'enseignement de l'histoire de mon pays, on m'a dit, et d'excellentes âmes me l'ont dit et répété: j'étais devenu un chargé de mission. Et cela voulait dire, dans leur esprit, une mission envers mes compatriotes canadiens-français. À un petit peuple en train de perdre son histoire, sa civilisation, son âme, ma tâche aurait consisté à lui rappeler son passé, les éléments spirituels de sa culture, de sa civilisation, et par là, lui faire retrouver son âme, et du même coup, le destin que Dieu y a inscrit.

Cette mission fut-elle vraiment la mienne? J'aurais quelque raison de le penser, puisque je n'ai rien fait que par obéissance à mes supérieurs et avec leurs encouragements. Or, si j'écris ces pages où je résume le travail, les soucis de ma vie, les idées que j'ai essayé de mettre en circulation, c'est avec l'espoir de continuer quelque peu, quand je ne serai plus, ce pourquoi [sic] j'ai vécu. J'essaie de continuer ma mission, si tant est que cette mission fut celle que l'on a présumée" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 13-14).

nationalism and Catholicism. The concept of incarnation is a paradigm whereby Groulx's thought may be most fully comprehended.

1 -- HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

French-Canadian society experienced many vicissitudes during the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹ The execution of Louis Riel (1844-1885), a francophone, Catholic² Métis leader and founder of Manitoba, provoked in Montreal the largest demonstration to date in Canadian history,³ and galvanized French-Canadian nationalist sentiment so that under the leadership of Honoré Mercier (1840-1894), an architect of the Parti national and premier of Quebec from 1887 to 1891, “provincial autonomy became the political expression of Quebec nationalism.”⁴ This episode marked

¹ Historian Gérard Bouchard summarizes the pivotal events which shaped the national consciousness of French Canadians from the immediate post-Confederation era to WWII :

Durant toute cette période cependant, aussi bien dans les classes populaires qu’au sein des élites, la conscience nationale demeurait vive, sans cesse relancée par les vexations et reculs infligés au fait francophone à l’échelle canadienne: exécution de Riel en 1885, violation des droits scolaires et linguistiques au Nouveau-Brunswick, dans les provinces de l’Ouest et en Ontario, engagements politiques non tenus par le gouvernement canadien (crises des conscriptions de 1917 et 1942). Les controverses qui entourèrent ces péripéties contribuèrent à durcir les traits de la culture de la survivance chez les Francophones. (G. Bouchard, *Genèse des nations et cultures du nouveau monde*, p. 113).

² On Louis Riel as a late nineteenth-century religious visionary and millenarian leader, see Thomas Flanagan, *Louis ‘David’ Riel: Prophet of the New World*, pp. 178-186. See also P. Sylvain, N. Voisine, *Histoire du catholicisme québécois: les XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*, v. 2 : *Réveil et consolidation*, p. 391; Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History*, pp. 285-286.

³ See W. S. MacNutt, “The 1880s,” in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians 1867-1967*, pp. 98-99. Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, *Quebec: A History, 1867-1929*, p. 236, notes in reference to Honoré Mercier and the mass meeting which took place on November 22, 1885, “He spoke at a famous rally in which 50,000 people gathered on the Champ-de-Mars in Montreal, and began his speech with the words: ‘Riel, our brother, is dead’.”

⁴ P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History*, p. 261. With regard to this political development Kenneth McNaught observes:

Led by an eloquent Quebec nationalist, Honoré Mercier, the new provincial government spearheaded a concerted assault upon the Conservative view of confederation. Announcing that ‘the murder of Riel was a declaration of war on the influence of French Canada in Confederation, a violation of right and justice,’ Mercier opted for the compact theory of Confederation. Arguing that the BNA Act reflected a compact amongst the provinces who merely delegated certain powers to Ottawa, he concluded that the provinces remained autonomous and equal in powers to the central government. (K. McNaught, *The Pelican History of Canada*, p. 180).

Groulx's nascent consciousness. Looking back over his most vivid childhood memories he mused:

Quite often in the evening, after supper, my mother read out loud for us and stepfather, entire columns of *L'Etendard* or the weekly *La Minerve*, the first newspapers welcomed into our home. Through such readings I learned in 1886 about the Riel affair, an 'Affair' which turned all of us schoolboys into jingoistic firebrands. The patriotic tensions of those days opened our naive minds to the racial conflict in Canada. An astonishing wave of piety and anger swept over the country of Quebec. You should have heard us in the schoolyard and down the village lanes singing at the top of our lungs, to the tune of the French *Marseillaise*, the Rielist *Marseillaise*, whose first quatrain remains fixed in my memory:

Children of New France
We can no longer lack confidence,
From the gallows of his woe
Riel hangs a victim of our foes.⁵

Not without reason then political scientist Daniel Latouche refers to Honoré Mercier as "the first Quebec political leader to assert that the Quebec government was the national government of Quebecers, and is therefore considered a father of Quebec nationalism." (D. Latouche, "Honoré Mercier," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1470). See also Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec*, pp. 447-448; Y. Lamonde, Claude Corbo, *Le rouge et le bleu: une anthologie de la pensée politique au Québec de la Conquête à la Revolution tranquille*, pp. 275-279; G. Bouchard, *Genèse des nations et cultures du nouveau monde*, p. 112.

⁵"Le soir, assez souvent, après souper, notre mère lisait, à haute voix, pour nous et pour le papa, des colonnes entières de *L'Etendard* ou de *La Minerve* hebdomadaire, premiers journaux accueillis dans la maison. C'est par ces lectures, qu'en 1886, je fus mis au courant de l'affaire Riel, 'Affaire' qui fit de nous, petits gars d'école, d'ardents cocardiens. Jours de tension patriotique où serait révélé à nos esprits d'enfants, le duel des races au Canada. Un frisson étrange de pitié et de colère passait sur le pays de Québec. Il fallait nous entendre, dans la cours de l'école, dans les rues du village, chantant à tue-tête, et sur l'air de la *Marseillaise* de France, la *Marseillaise* rielliste, dont le premier quatrain est resté accroché en ma mémoire:

Enfants de la Nouvelle-France
Douter de nous n'est plus permis,
Au gibet Riel se balance
Victime de nos ennemis! " (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 35-36).

Y. Lamonde notes in reference to Senator François-Xavier Trudel, an ultramontane, lay activist who published the newspaper *L'Etendard*, "Au moment de l'affaire Riel en 1885, F.-X.-A. Trudel avait accusé le premier ministre Chapleau dans *L'Etendard* de faire passer les intérêts de son parti avant ceux du pays." (Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec, 1760-1896*, p. 453). Groulx followed Trudel's line of thinking on political partisanship, particularly in times of national crisis such as the Riel episode. In the context of the latter Groulx wrote:

Parmi les bonheurs de mon enfance, j'estime à son prix d'avoir été élevé par un père ... qui, phénomène rare à l'époque, répugnait à toute partisannerie politique... Plus tard, quand je pus réfléchir, je compris quel service insigne nous avait rendu notre père en nous prémunissant tout jeunes contre l'imbécillité de l'esprit de parti. (L.

Not coincidentally, after this passage in his memoirs Groulx pointedly added with regard to his stepfather, "During the days of 'rielism,' he unabashedly voted for Mercier's candidate."⁶

1.1 The Schools Question and the Specter of Anticlericalism

Yet the Riel episode constituted but one in a series of developments which bedevilled French Canadians after the Confederation of 1867. Indeed the profound impact of Riel's execution lay in its symbolic portent of French Canadians' fortunes within this new political regimen. As early as 1871 the New Brunswick Schools Question⁷ contested French Catholic education rights, and Groulx fully acquainted himself with the New Brunswick proceedings.⁸

Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1:36). See also P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History*, p. 272.

Under the ownership of Ludger Duvernay, who helped found the Association Saint-Jean Baptiste, *La Minerve*, originally a pre-Confederation newspaper, proved one of the most influential in Lower Canada since it served as a voice for the Patriote Party. See Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec*, pp. 142, 144, 148, 171. See also Wilfred Kesterton, John S. Moir, "Communications," in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians*, p. 526; P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History*, p. 283; Gisèle Villeneuve, "Ludger Duvernay," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 708. Gilles Chaussé aptly characterizes the pre-Confederation *La Minerve* as the "Montreal nationalist newspaper." (Gilles Chaussé, "French Canada from the Conquest to 1840," in T. Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Canada*, p. 88; see also p. 99).

With regard to the Conservative Party in the wake of Confederation, Roberto Perin points out that *La Minerve* represented "the leading French-language Conservative organ." (R. Perin, "French-Speaking Canada from 1840," in T. Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, p. 224).

⁶"À l'époque du 'riellisme,' il vota franchement pour le candidat de Mercier." (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 36). His father, Leon Groulx (1837-1878) died less than six weeks after Lionel's birth. His mother married William (Guillaume) Émond (1854-1924) on February 5, 1879.

⁷See Fernand Harvey, "Le Canada français et la question linguistique," in Michel Plourde, ed., *Le français au Québec: 400 ans d'histoire et de vie*, p. 145. See also Roberto Perin, "French-Speaking Canada from 1840," in Terence Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, pp. 203, 224. With regard to New Brunswick Brian Clarke notes:

In 1871 the Protestant-dominated assembly cut off funding to denominational schools, establishing a non-denominational system in their place. After a protracted battle in the House of Commons and in the courts, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council ruled that as denominational schools were not by law established prior to Confederation, they did not fall under the protection of the British North America Act. (B. Clarke, "English-Speaking Canada from 1854," in T. Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, pp. 294-295). See also P. B. Waite, "New Brunswick School Question," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1621; Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada: The Vatican and Canadian Affairs in the*

The fundamental issues raised by the New Brunswick litigation found a sequel some twenty years later in the Manitoba Schools Question, which related to that of New Brunswick because the latter set a judicial “precedent that was to influence the outcome of later school cases in the West.”⁹ For French Canadian clergy of the day these two matters seemed so connected that they referred to them as “the Manitoba-Brunswick question,”¹⁰ which they considered a common cause for Catholic rights. Nor did this lack relevance to the controversy over Louis Riel, who many French-Canadian clerics, at least initially, regarded as a defender of “Catholic educational rights in Red River,”¹¹ since together with the bishop of St-Boniface, Alexandre-Antonin Taché (1823-1894), Riel

late Victorian Age, pp. 35, 215, 217-218; Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec*, p. 449.

⁸ L. Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, pp. 21, 28-54, chronicles the New Brunswick Schools Question from the perspective of jurisprudence and constitutional praxis of the BNA Act.

Groulx's 1917-1918 lectures on the origins of Confederation provocatively tied the New Brunswick Schools Question to the ongoing controversy over Regulation 17 in Ontario, which came to a head during the WWI Conscription crisis:

En 1872 et en 1875, le parlement fédéral, par une très forte majorité, consentait à voter un vœu en faveur des écoles du Nouveau-Brunswick; il allait jusqu'à la Reine d'user de son influence en faveur d'une petite minorité d'à peine 100,000 âmes. Il n'y a pas deux ans, le même parlement fédéral refusait d'agir en faveur d'une autre minorité de 250,000 âmes, et fermait l'oreille aux plus dignes revendications. (L. Groulx, *La confédération canadienne*, p. 191; see also pp. 179-181).

Groulx interpreted the New Brunswick Schools's Question as an archetype of Catholics' in general, and French Canadians' in particular, lack of solidarity at times of threats to their fundamental rights, and the consequent precedent for the federal government and/or Protestant Canadians to exploit divisions both among the Catholics of Canada and within French-Canadian society:

En ces luttes autour de l'école, une autre constatation vient s'offrir et non moins pénible: l'impuissance des catholiques et des Canadiens français, à laisser tomber les passions partisans pour faire cause commune devant l'adversaire. La faute première et capitale remonte à l'affaire des écoles du Nouveau-Brunswick (1870-1874). Dès lors, le persécuteur put se rendre compte que diviser l'opinion canadienne-française et l'opinion catholique, sur leurs plus graves intérêts, lui était chose possible. (L. Groulx, *Histoire du Canada français*, 4: 127; see also pp. 123, 128).

⁹ Brian Clarke, “English-Speaking Canada from 1854,” in T. Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, p. 295.

¹⁰ “la question Manitoba-Brunswick” (R. Perin, *Rome in Canada*, p. 125; see also p. 123).

¹¹ R. Perin, “French-Speaking Canada from 1840,” in T. Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, p. 224; see also p. 214 where Perin points out that, “The Grey Nuns in Red River regarded Louis Riel, whose sister was a member of their community, as the savior of his nation.”

helped formulate the Manitoba Act (1870), which safeguarded English-and French-language rights, along with Protestant and Roman Catholic educational rights.¹² However, it did not protect the right to education in either English or French, which soon gave rise to the Manitoba Schools Question, “the most complex and far-reaching of Canada’s several crises involving minority school rights.”¹³

Young Groulx followed closely this course of events. Indeed the Manitoba Schools Question stood front and center before Groulx and his fellow students at the Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse. Thus, on May 20, 1896 when the archbishop of St. Boniface, Adélard Langevin (1855-1915), visited the seminary, Groulx wrote in his diary:

This morning we will receive Mgr Langevin, the bishop of Manitoba. I imagine that after celebrating mass this preeminent guardian of the French-Canadian minority will have a few words for us on the schools question...

¹² Fernand Harvey sets out the terms of the federal Manitoba Act which the provincial government repealed two decades later:

À l’autre bout du pays, la loi de 1870 créant la province du Manitoba accordait une protection aux écoles séparées francophones (article 22) et établissait le bi-linguisme officiel au sein du Parlement (article 23), comme pour le Québec. Vingt ans plus tard, en 1890, une loi provinciale mettait fin au soutien financier des écoles catholiques et abolissait l’usage du français au Parlement et devant les tribunaux. (F. Harvey, “Le Canada français et la question linguistique,” in M. Plourde, ed., *Le français au Québec*, p. 139).

¹³ Paul E. Crunican, “Manitoba Schools Question,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1426. Peter Waite sets the scene and points out the apparently irreconcilable differences which the Manitoba Schools Question entailed:

There was no solution to the Manitoba School question, not at any rate one that was acceptable to both sides. On the one hand there was the provincial government of Manitoba – something of a Protestant rampage and in the other was the Roman Catholic church represented by the Archbishop of St.-Boniface, Alexandre-Antonin Taché (Riel’s old mentor), and his more extreme successor, Adélard Langevin. The issue itself was not difficult: did separate-school rights accorded to Catholic Manitobans in 1870 still obtain twenty years later? Were constitutional rights permanent, or could they be abrogated by a simple act of legislature later on? In 1890 Protestant Manitobans believed that a majority was entitled to overrule past decisions, that whatever rights might have been given in 1870, a majority in 1890 could abrogate them. (P. Waite, “Between Three Oceans: Challenges of a Continental Destiny, 1840-1900,” in Craig Brown, ed., *The Illustrated History of Canada*, pp. 368-369).

Monsignor has spoken to us. He seemed weary to me and no longer burned with the same fervor as last year. The enemies of the faith have grieved his soul but he still has hope and nothing can shake his belief. While speaking to us he said, 'The faith will triumph because this legal dispute is God's cause.'¹⁴

Archbishop Langevin's presence at Sainte-Thérèse, indeed in Quebec, during late May, 1896, did not happen by chance.¹⁵ With a view to the impending federal election on June 23, 1896, the French-Canadian episcopacy assembled its prelates¹⁶ to crusade for "legislation to reinstate Catholic educational rights in Manitoba."¹⁷ To this end on May 6, 1896, the French-Canadian ecclesiastical hierarchy promulgated "a joint pastoral obliging Catholics in conscience to vote for candidates favouring the re-establishment of Catholic

¹⁴ "Nous aurons ce matin la visite de Mgr Langevin, l'évêque du Manitoba; le grand défenseur de la minorité canadienne-française nous doit, après sa messe nous adresser quelques mots sur la question des écoles, je suppose.

Monseigneur nous a parlé. Il m'a paru fatigué; ce n'est plus le même feu de l'année dernière. Les ennemis de la foi ont mis le chagrin dans son âme mais il espère, et rien ne peut ébranler son espérance. "La foi triomphera, nous a-t-il dit en parlant, parce que la cause en litige c'est la cause de Dieu." (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 202-203). Young Groulx rightly observed the onset of battle fatigue in Langevin's case. R. Perin points out that, "Since Rome effectively prevented the Quebec hierarchy from exerting their weight on behalf of Manitoba Catholics after January 1897, it fell to Archbishop Langevin to fight the minority's battle alone." (R. Perin, *Rome in Canada*, p. 127).

¹⁵ Langevin came expressly to Quebec at this time to lobby publicly for French, Catholic education rights on the eve of the federal elections, as P. Sylvain and N. Voisine note, "Pour appuyer les sermons politiques que multiplie Mgr Adélard Langevin en tournée au Québec, les évêques se réunissent à Montréal, le 6 mai 1896." (P. Sylvain, N. Voisine, *Histoire de catholicisme québécois: les XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*, v. 2: *Réveil et consolidation*, p. 393).

¹⁶ Y. Lamonde sets the scene for these elections: "En pleine campagne électorale de 1896, un cardinal, sept archevêques et vingt évêques sont confrontés au Parti conservateur, qui promet une loi remédiate, et au Parti libéral de Laurier qui s'engage vaguement à redresser les droits des Catholiques à la satisfaction et de la majorité protestante et de la minorité catholique." (Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec*, p. 449).

See also P. Sylvain, N. Voisine, *Histoire du catholicisme québécois: les XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*, v. 2: *Réveil et consolidation*, p. 393-394).

¹⁷ R. Perin, *Rome in Canada*, p. 109. As John T. Saywell points out, Protestant clergy acted similarly in this election: "The bishops were not alone in taking a stand. Protestant conferences had declared unequivocally against Catholic schools, and the pulpit was a vehicle for political education. A Methodist minister in western Ontario informed his flock that a liberal vote 'would stare the voter in the face at Judgement Day, and condemn him to eternal perdition,' while a Presbyterian divine assured Clarke Wallace that 'the country is with you in its truer conscience and God is, and the Pope and the Devil are not'." (J. T. Saywell, "The 1890s," in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians*, p. 125).

education in Manitoba.”¹⁸ Not surprisingly, this issue served as a focal point of the elections.¹⁹

The ensuing electoral campaign and results proved the first major political event on which Groulx consciously reflected. June 26, 1896, three days after the election, eighteen-year old Groulx wrote in his diary:

Now that the dust raised by the general elections has begun to settle and made room for deliberation, we can take a more objective look at the situation we face with the fall of the Conservative Party and the Liberals' victory. The final results struck the Dominion like a bolt of lightning. Despite most expectations the Conservative Party, which has already enjoyed success for nearly eighteen years, suffered a crushing defeat. The Right Honorable Wilfrid Laurier, leader of the Liberal Party, won power with a majority of more than twenty seats and has the honor of being the first French Canadian since Confederation to hold the office of prime minister of Canada. What a credit to our race. God grant that this not turn to our detriment! Everyone expects a new era for the country. The winners espouse a policy almost radically at variance with that of the old party! Throughout the Dominion Liberal trumpets already herald the hour of deliverance and prosperity. However, my

¹⁸ R. Perin, “French-Speaking Canada from 1840,” in T. Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, p. 223. See also Y. Lamonde, C. Corbo, *Le rouge et le bleu*, pp. 290-297, which provides the text of this joint pastoral letter; J. T. Saywell, “The 1890s,” in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians*, pp. 124-125.

¹⁹ Indeed, with regard to the Manitoba Schools Question Paul E. Crunican argues that, “The June 1896 federal election was fought primarily on this explosive issue.” (P. E. Crunican, “Manitoba Schools Question,” in J. H. Marsh, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1426). Meanwhile, R. Perin qualifies such an assertion by stating simply that the Manitoba Question “became a focus of the federal election of 1896.” (R. Perin, *Rome in Canada*, p. 109). P. Sylvain and N. Voisine situate the import of this issue first and foremost within the Quebec political arena, “les élections fédérales de 1896, du moins au Québec, portent en grande partie sur la question des écoles du Manitoba.” (P. Sylvain, N. Voisine, *Histoire du catholicisme québécois: les XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*, v. 2: *Réveil et consolidation*, p. 393). However, J. T. Saywell goes further in circumscribing the political significance of this issue as he points out other factors which informed the elections:

The Manitoba Schools question was not the only, and in some areas it was not even the main issue in the election of 1896. Bad times, trade and tariff policies, agrarian and working-class discontent, Liberal indication of sympathy for prohibition, Conservative disintegration, and with falling revenues and strict orders from the Minister of Finance in 1895 to cut out all unnecessary expenditures, a decline in the extent of patronage and boodle, all played their role. (J. T. Saywell, “The 1890s,” in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians*, pp. 125-126).

modest perceptiveness keeps me from seeing so bright a future. I have serious reservations about the winners' platform. Indeed a party with almost unanimously anticlerical mouthpieces who attack the clergy brings back too many memories from the nineteenth century for my liking.²⁰

Although he obviously sensed the dominant spirit of the times²¹ encapsulated by Laurier's confident prediction that "The twentieth century shall be the century of Canada",²² young Groulx nevertheless echoes the hostility of the contemporary French-Canadian Catholic hierarchy towards the Liberal Party whose immediate predecessor, the Parti rouge, maintained a staunchly anticlerical position voiced through the newspapers *L'Avenir*, and *Le Pays*. Nor did the fact that he weaned the Rouges' successors from anticlericalism make the French-Canadian episcopacy forget that the Liberal leader Wilfrid Laurier (1841-1919), once served as vice-president of the ecclesiastically anathematized Institut

²⁰ "Voici que la poussière soulevée par les élections générales commence à s'apaiser. Et maintenant qu'il y a eu place pour la réflexion on envisage plus froidement la situation qui nous est faite par la chute du parti conservateur et le triomphe des libéraux. Le dernier résultat a éclaté sur le Dominion comme un coup de tonnerre. Le parti conservateur victorieux déjà depuis près de dix-huit ans, contre l'attente générale s'est vu battre cette fois-ci d'une manière écrasante. L'Honorable Wilfrid Laurier, chef libéral a conquis le pouvoir par plus de vingt voix de majorité et a l'honneur d'être le premier Canadien français à occuper la place de premier ministre au Canada depuis la confédération. Grande gloire pour notre race et fasse Dieu qu'elle ne nous soit point préjudiciable! On attend pour le pays une ère nouvelle. Les vainqueurs sont les défenseurs d'une politique presque radicalement différente de celle du vieux parti! Les trompettes libérales sonnent déjà par tout le Dominion l'heure de la délivrance et de la prospérité. Avec mon humble perspicacité, je ne plonge pas dans l'avenir cependant avec trop de confiance. Je redoute le programme des vainqueurs et d'ailleurs un parti dont les organes sont presque unanimement anticléricaux et combattent le clergé sent, ma foi, beaucoup trop le XIX^e siècle." (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal 1*: 218-219). This federal election did prove in Quebec a particularly crushing defeat for the Conservative Party. Y. Lamonde notes, "Le 23 juin 1896, sur les 65 députés du Québec à la Chambre des communes, Laurier fait élire 49 de ses candidats contre 16 conservateurs." (Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec*, p. 450). However, the same did not hold true in Ontario, as J. T. Saywell observes, "The net result was a draw as both Liberals and Conservatives won forty-three seats in the big English-speaking province." (J. T. Saywell, "The 1890s," in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians*, p. 125).

²¹ See Ramsay Cook, "The Triumph and Trials of Materialism, 1900-1945," in Craig Brown, ed., *The Illustrated History of Canada*, p. 377.

²² O. J. Firestone, "Industrial Development," in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians*, p. 454.

Canadien, and previously upheld the radical stance of the Parti rouge through *Le Défricheur*, a newspaper Laurier ran.

This background helps explain the apprehension of anticlericalism that Groulx's above journal entry clearly evidences. Yet such wariness did not stem only from the past but also from the present since, as literary historian Pierre Hébert affirms, "The year 1896 witnessed the concretization of a perhaps unprecedented chorus of anticlerical voices."²³ These included *Curés et bedeaux*, *Les hommes noirs*, and *Saintes Comédies*, three anonymous, small works that amounted to "appalling indictments against the clergy,"²⁴ and seemingly, if not expressly, appeared during the final sprint of the 1896 electoral campaign.²⁵ Moreover, in the shadow of this election Laurier's "closest friend,"²⁶ journalist, politician, and historian, Laurent-Olivier David (1840-1926) published at Laurier's behest²⁷ *Le clergé canadien, sa mission, son oeuvre*, which concluded with a temperate critique of clerical electoral interference over the Manitoba Schools Question.²⁸

²³ "L'année 1896 voit se manifester de nombreuses voix anticléricales dans un concert qui n'a peut-être jamais eu d'équivalent." (Pierre Hébert, "Laurent-Olivier David: le libéral radical malgré lui ou Réflexions sur l'année 1896," in Yvan Lamonde, ed., *Combats libéraux au tournant du XX^e siècle*, p. 132).

²⁴ "des charges épouvantables contre le clergé." (Pierre Hébert, *Censure et littérature au Québec: le livre crucifié, 1625-1919*, p. 157). See also P. Hébert, "Laurent-Olivier David: le libéral radical malgré lui ou Réflexions sur l'année 1896," in Y. Lamonde, ed., *Combats libéraux*, pp. 131-133).

²⁵ P. Hébert states that these three pamphlets "parurent vraisemblablement à partir du mois de juin." (P. Hébert, "Laurent-Olivier David: le libéral radical malgré lui, ou Réflexions sur l'année 1896," in Y. Lamonde, *Combats libéraux*, p. 132).

²⁶ "Laurent-Olivier David, l'ami le plus intime de Laurier." (Marc La Terreure, "Wilfrid Laurier à la tribune, 1871-1890, recueil de discours, édité par Ulric Barthe," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ, 1: des origines à 1900*, p. 793).

²⁷ Regarding the decision to publish *Le clergé canadien, sa mission, son oeuvre*, P. Hébert states, "David hésite, et dit qu'il n'y consentira qu'avec l'assentiment de son ami Laurier. Non seulement Laurier accepte-t-il, mais il se charge même de l'impression." (P. Hébert, "Laurent-Olivier David: le libéral radical mangré lui ou Réflexions sur l'année 1896," in Y. Lamonde, ed., *Combats libéraux*, p. 135). See also P. Hébert, *Censure et littérature au Québec*, p. 145).

²⁸ With regard to *Le clergé* and the author's chronicle of clerical interference in the political realm P. Hébert observes, "David esquisse quelques-uns de ces moments où le clergé aurait dû s'abstenir et, bien sûr, il consacre pour terminer plusieurs pages à la question manitobaine et aux élections de juin 1896." (P. Hébert, *Censure et littérature au Québec*, p. 145). See also Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec*, p.

Despite immediately provoking the ire of the ecclesiastical authorities so that Rome hastened to place it on the *Index* before the end of 1896,²⁹ David's work proved "the decisive book of that year"³⁰ in Quebec. Like the manifest defeat of the clerical position on the federal elections, *Le clergé canadien, sa mission, son oeuvre*, served as a sign of changing times in French-Canadian society where the clergy saw its place profoundly challenged. Only in this light does one see the spectre of anticlericalism which young Groulx feared, and vowed to combat on behalf of the church and for the good of his country.

In this vein, almost a year to the day after Laurier and the Liberals' victory, Groulx related their parliamentary performance to that of the French politician and champion of Catholicism, Pierre-Antoine Berryer (1790-1868):

I delight to think of the role a man of that calibre could have played in our Canadian parliament these last few years. The Manitoba Schools Question! Now that cause Berryer would have made his own as a recognized defender of the oppressed and persecuted. How brilliantly, with a master's touch, he would have taught a harsh lesson to Cartwright, Sproule, Martin, and other Orangemen equally instilled with the most fanatical bigotry! What shame and scorn he would heap on our cowardly French-Canadian delegation who have sacrificed their honor, rights, and religion in order to remain in power!³¹

451; P. Hébert, "Laurent-Olivier David: la libéral radical malgré lui ou Réflexions sur l'année 1896," in Y. Lamonde, ed., *Combats libéraux*, p. 135.

²⁹ "Laurent-Olivier David ignore cependant que son livre avait été condamné par Rome même, et ce, le 9 décembre... le Saint-Office émet un décret contre *Le clergé* ... le 18 décembre, la Sacrée Congrégation de l'Index interdit formellement le volume." (P. Hébert, *Censure et littérature au Québec*, p. 152). J. T. Saywell adds, "At the same time L. O. David saw his tract on the clergy placed on the index because he described Lafleche's action during the election as a subversion of political liberty and constitutional government." (J. T. Saywell, "The 1890s," in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians*, p. 127).

³⁰ "le livre déterminant de cette année-là est sans nul doute *Le clergé canadien, sa mission, son oeuvre*." (P. Hébert, "Laurent-Olivier David: le libéral radical malgré lui ou Réflexions sur l'année 1896," in Y. Lamonde, ed., *Combats libéraux*, p. 134).

³¹ "Je songe avec délices au rôle qu'aurait joué un homme de cette trempe en notre Parlement canadien, durant ces dernières années. La cause des écoles du Manitoba! Voilà bien une cause qui eut [sic] entré dans

Groulx had reason to single out Laurier's current minister of trade and commerce Sir Richard Cartwright (1835-1912),³² since in keeping with the "pan-Anglo-Saxonism"³³ of many late-Victorian English Canadians, this prominent descendant of Loyalists had publically called on those of like lineage " 'to bring together in a union all English-speaking races'."³⁴ Meanwhile, Joseph Martin (1852-1923), attorney general of Manitoba and characterized as "an agitator more suited to opposition than government,"³⁵ in 1890 had sponsored legislation ending the official use of French and public support for separate schools in Manitoba.³⁶ As for Thomas Simpson Sproule (1843-1917), a well-known member of the Orange Order, this Protestant fraternal society which reached the peak of its importance in Canada both politically and socially in the last quarter of the

les vues de Berryer, lui, le défenseur attitré des opprimés et des martyrs. Et quelles rudes leçons, quelle maestria appliquée de main de maître, il eut [sic] donné, aux Cartwright, aux Sproule, aux Martin, ces orangistes doublés du plus étroit fanatisme! De quelle honte, de quel mépris il eut [sic] couvert notre lâche députation canadienne-française qui pour se cramponner au pouvoir, sacrifia son honneur, ses droits, sa religion! (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, *Journal*, 1: 321).

Groulx certainly did not stand alone in such an opinion of Laurier and the Liberals' treatment of the Manitoba Schools Question after they won the 1896 elections. Yvan Lamonde observes:

Mais cette victoire a un goût doublement amer: l'abolition du français au parlement manitobain et la perte des droits scolaires des catholiques francophones de cette province ouvrent les yeux des Canadiens français sur le sens à donner à la Confédération de 1867, qui suscite une certaine désillusion. En même temps émerge cette idée que Laurier, qui avait trop promis, avait fini par placer les intérêts du Parti libéral au-dessus de ceux de ses compatriotes canadiens-français en ne tenant pas parole sur la question scolaire du Manitoba. Laurier était dorénavant identifié à 'l'esprit de parti'. (Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec*, p. 463).

³² See Donald Swainson, "Sir Richard John Cartwright," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 415.

³³ J. T. Saywell, "The 1890s," in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians*, p. 120.

³⁴ Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914*, p. 79.

³⁵ H. Guest, "Joseph Martin," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1440.

³⁶ Historian Kenneth McNaught does not mince words regarding the draconian curtailment of French Catholic education under the Liberal administration of Thomas Greenway (1838-1908):

In 1890 the provincial government tore to shreds the minority guarantees of the 1870 Manitoba Act. That statute had provided for continuance of denominational school rights as they existed prior to the establishment of the province. Later, provincial education laws established Quebec-like separate schools with proportional state support...Thus the 1890 Act abolished separate schools and forbade teaching in French in the unified state school system. (K. McNaught, *The Pelican History of Canada*, p. 185)

nineteenth-century,³⁷ noised far and wide the dictum ‘One flag, one language, and one school.’³⁸ Such words boded ill for Groulx and his fellow French Canadians.³⁹ Indeed the battle-cry of the Orangemen represented but one of the “Protestant crusades of this era...preparing the ground for the eventual assimilation of the country’s francophone minorities.”⁴⁰

In this politically charged environment the Liberal premier of Manitoba and the newly elected prime minister of Canada negotiated the Laurier-Greenway compromise of late 1896 which effectively ended a protracted crisis but meant that the French Catholic minority of Manitoba never again had the separate schools they enjoyed prior to 1890. Historian Réal Bélanger thus maintains that Laurier’s dealings proved him “more a skilful politician than a sincere defender of the Catholic minority.”⁴¹ Little wonder then that Groulx’s above journal entry concluded with an expression of acute bitterness towards the first federal government headed by a French Canadian. This bitter memory remained with Groulx who at the end of his life recalled:

In that extraordinary year of 1896 I followed the rhetoric program of studies at Sainte-Thérèse. Our instructor, abbot Sylvio Corbeil, a very fine man and a godly priest as well, naturally declared himself a devout Conservative, like all the clergy in those days. After such turbulent elections one

³⁷ See Hereward Senior, “Orange Order,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1726.

³⁸ Brian Clarke, “English-Speaking Canada from 1854,” in T. Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, p. 305.

³⁹ C. P. Stacey characterizes the Orange Order of the late nineteenth century as “the most aggressive and best-organized ‘British’ pressure-group in Canada ... very powerful politically in the province of Ontario.” (C. P. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, v. 1: 1867-1921, p. 6).

⁴⁰ Brian Clarke, “English-Speaking Canada from 1854,” in T. Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, p. 305. Kenneth McNaught adds, with regard to the implications of the uprising Louis Riel led in 1885, “In Ontario the Orange Order and many less extreme English-speaking nationalists had taken the suppression of the Northwest Rebellion as a symbol of their conviction that Anglo-Saxon dominance in the west would be a make-weight ensuring a basically British Canada.” (K. McNaught, *The Pelican History of Canada*, p. 184).

⁴¹ Réal Bélanger, “Sir Wilfrid Laurier,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1302.

can well imagine that whether relevant or not to contemporary history, he vituperated in no uncertain terms the Liberal leader who quashed the remedial *Bill*, brought down the party seeking redress, and rose to power over the dead body of the Manitoba minority.⁴²

Groulx rightly underscored the crisis of 1896 which at the time brought into question the Confederation itself. Yet beyond this immediate concern the turn of events in 1896 also had long-term ramifications by giving rise to a host of political, cultural, and intellectual questions which preoccupied Canada throughout the twentieth century.⁴³ Not coincidentally therefore, from the perspective of modern Quebec the issues surrounding the Manitoba Schools Question stand in Canadian history as the most significant loss of French and Catholic rights outside Quebec.⁴⁴ Reiterating the conclusion of fellow historian William Lewis Morton (1908-1980), Carl Berger affirms, “The great tragedy of Manitoba’s –and Canada’s –history was that this principle of duality, ratified in 1870 ... was then overthrown with the abolition of bilingualism and state supported separate schools in the early 1890s.”⁴⁵

⁴² “A Sainte-Thérèse, je fais mes classes de Rhétorique, en la fameuse année 1896. Notre professeur, l’abbé Sylvio Corbeil, un fort brave homme et un saint prêtre au surplus, s’affiche naturellement, comme tout bon clerc de l’époque, dévot conservateur. On imagine en quels termes, à-propos d’histoire contemporaine ou sans à-propos, et au lendemain d’élections particulièrement orageuses, il abomine le chef libéral, responsable de l’échec du *Bill* [sic] remédiateur, de la chute du parti de la justice, hissé au pouvoir sur le cadavre de la minorité manitobaine. (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 317).

Regarding the death of remedial legislation on the Manitoba Schools Question prior to the federal election, Kenneth McNaught notes, “In the early months of 1896 the fateful remedial bill was slowly strangled by debate and filibuster while the five-year legal limit of Parliament moved relentlessly closer.” (K. McNaught, *The Pelican History of Canada*, p. 186).

⁴³ See Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec*, p. 448.

⁴⁴ See Paul E. Crunican, “Manitoba Schools Question,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1426. See also Fernand Harvey who observes that French Catholic education rights in Manitoba did not find some redress until the late twentieth century, “Les Franco-Manitobains devront attendre la fin des années 1970 pour bénéficier de mesures plus équitables à l’égard de l’école de langue française.” (F. Harvey, “Le Canada français et la question linguistique,” in M. Plourde, ed., *Le français au Québec*, p. 145).

⁴⁵ Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing since 1900*, p. 248.

The Manitoba Schools Question also served as a lightning-rod which divided francophone politicians along party lines, seemingly at the expense of the overall good of French Canadians throughout the country.⁴⁶ This led to the charge that francophone Liberals in general and Laurier in particular acted out of a mercenary 'partisan spirit' in the 1896 federal elections.⁴⁷ More to the point, in reaction to this apparent sacrifice of collective French-Canadian interests to those of party politics, the Manitoba Schools Question fostered "the resurgence of a nationalism that 'transcended partisanship'."⁴⁸

This seemed all the more necessary to young Groulx as he saw developments unfold in the North-West Schools Question. Section 11⁴⁹ of the original 1875 North-West

⁴⁶ In his study on Canadian French-language education outside Quebec Groulx caustically remarked, "c'est en 1896... autour du droit scolaire de la minorité manitobaine, le droit incontestable par excellence, que les députés canadiens-français s'acharnèrent le plus inconsidérément à dynamiter les ramparts constitutionnels de leurs compatriotes." (Lionel Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, p. 177).

Indeed Groulx perceived the partisanship of French-Canadian politicians as a consistent and major factor in undermining the rights of language, education, and religion for French Canadians outside Quebec. Deploring this state of affairs he concluded, "Mais l'on eût vu les Canadian français catholiques eux-mêmes, si peu économes de divisions intestines, lorsqu'il ne s'agit que de leurs compatriotes et de leurs coreligionnaires, se porter, en pareil cas, d'un élan unanime, à la rescousse de l'opprimé." (L. Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, pp. 178-179).

Continuing in a similar vein Groulx subsequently called to account French Canadians in general, and their politicians in particular, for not standing together to defend their rights throughout the country: "Mais une autre singularité de cette histoire, c'est bien la trop facile résignation de la population catholique, du moins en son élément parlementaire, à l'indigne condition qui lui a été infligée. Si les notions de droit et de justice ont considérablement fléchi au Canada, les catholiques canadiens ne peuvent décliner en ce manheur leur lourde part de responsabilité. (L. Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, p. 180).

⁴⁷ Y. Lamonde observes:

La question des écoles du Manitoba ne sème pas la division que parmi les catholiques et le clergé catholique. Très tôt, on s'interroge sur l'attitude de Laurier qui endosse le règlement Greenway et sur ce qui paraît comme une promesse électorale vague et non respectée parce que le nouveau premier ministre avait placé les intérêts du Parti libéral au-dessus de ceux du pays ou de ses compatriotes canadiens-français et catholiques, qui lui avaient pourtant fait confiance malgré les mises en garde des évêques catholiques. (Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec*, pp. 452-453).

⁴⁸ "la renaissance d'un nationalisme 'au-dessus des partis'." (Y. Lamonde, C. Corbo, *Le rouge et le bleu*, p. 291).

⁴⁹ Regarding the provisions of section 11 Groulx stated:

L'article 11 du statut fédéral de 1875, véritable constitution de ces domaines, se montrait très net sur le sujet. L'autorité politique pouvait légiférer en matière

Territories Act had created a dual system like that of Manitoba with separate schools for Protestants (mostly anglophone) and Roman Catholics (mostly francophone).⁵⁰ Furthermore, an amendment in 1877 had made French and English the official languages of the courts and territorial council.⁵¹ However, following the example of Manitoba in 1892 the assembly of the North-West Territories ended the use of French in the courts and legislature, while also eliminating French as a language of instruction except in the primary grades.⁵² Despite Catholic appeals in 1894 to the federal government for more control over education, by 1901 the territorial government exercised complete control of all schools, so that the Catholic or Protestant 'separate' schools came as much under government direction as the non-sectarian 'public' schools.⁵³ These matters reached a head during almost ten weeks of debate between February and July 1905, when the autonomy bills⁵⁴ to create the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan occasioned a national controversy and threatened to split Laurier's Liberal Party due to a clause in the first draft of legislation which "seemed to restore an independent Catholic school system as had existed in the 1880s."⁵⁵ To avoid the impending rift Laurier accepted a

d'enseignement public, sans jamais porter préjudice ni aux droits de la minorité, ni à ceux de la majorité. Celle-ci pourrait établir, partout où elle le voudrait, les écoles de son choix; les mêmes droits et pouvoirs appartenaient à celle-là, sans obligation, ni pour l'une ni pour l'autre, à un double impôt scolaire.

Il est à noter que cet article 11 avait été accueilli par un vote unanime de la Chambre des Communes et qu'au Sénat une seule voix divergente s'était élevée. (L. Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, p. 139).

⁵⁰ M. R. Lupul, "North-West Schools Question," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1657.

⁵¹ Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History*, p. 223.

⁵² G. Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies*, p. 259.

⁵³ G. Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies*, p. 240.

⁵⁴ See David J. Hall, "Autonomy Bills," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 169.

⁵⁵ G. Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies*, p. 240. See also M. R. Lupul who maintains that this controversy took place over "a vague school clause in the autonomy bills." (M. R. Lupul, "North-West Schools Question," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1657).

compromise that preserved the territorial educational conditions of 1892,⁵⁶ much to the chagrin of twenty-seven year-old Groulx who wrote in a letter on July 21, 1905:⁵⁷

As expected after the prime minister backed down, we find ourselves once again betrayed in the North-West Schools Question. The amendments proposed by Mr. Bourassa and the francophone Conservative MPs barely mustered seven votes: the MP from Labelle and Armand Lavergne among Liberals and five of the francophone Conservative MPs from Quebec. A split along these same lines shamelessly defeated Mr. Monk's motion for an explicit text to guarantee that French remain an official language there. True to form, the English-speaking contingent had the good sense to hold their tongues in the last debate while our own people treated us to the laughable spectacle of hearing they themselves decree that nothing in the Constitution guaranteed the use of French in the North-West, so that they spurred the loss of those vestiges we still retained.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ See M. R. Lupul, "North-West Schools Question," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1657. See also G. Friesen who adds that the compromise "guaranteed a continuation of school administration according to the territorial ordinance of 1901." (G. Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies*, p. 240). R. Cook notes the sum effect of this compromise "was that the western minorities obtained only minimal protection." (R. Cook, "The Triumph and Trials of Materialism, 1900-1945," in C. Brown, ed., *The Illustrated History of Canada*, p. 402).

⁵⁷ Over twenty-five years later Groulx employed similar, scathing terms to describe the roles English-Canadian and especially French-Canadian politicians respectively played when debating the autonomy bills and the North-West Schools Question:

En 1905 ils offriraient au pays un spectacle du même genre. L'heure venue d'aborder la question de la langue française dans le Nord-Ouest, les députés de langue anglaise, à l'exception de trois ou quatre, jugèrent séant de s'abstenir du débat. Cette leçon de dignité ne fut pas comprise. Si la résolution Monk leur déplaisait, les députés de race française gardaient au moins cette ressource de l'écraser d'un vote silencieux. Ils choisirent un autre parti. Ils en firent une affaire de famille et, le premier ministre à leur tête, on les vit s'appliquer à ruiner pour jamais les droits de leur langue dans l'Ouest canadien... L'amendement de M. Monk, tout comme un sous-amendement de M. Bourassa, ne réunirent que 7 voix. (L. Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, p. 177).

⁵⁸ "Comme c'était à prévoir, après la reculade du premier ministre, nous avons été sacrifiés une fois de plus dans l'affaire des Écoles du Nord-Ouest [sic]. Les amendements proposés par M. Bourassa et les députés conservateurs français ont réuni tout juste sept voix: celles du député [de] Labelle et d'Armand Lavergne, libéraux, et celles des cinq députés français conservateurs de Québec. Une motion de M. Monk pour garantir par un texte explicite le maintien là-bas de la langue française comme langue officielle a été honteusement battue sur la même division: détail caractéristique: Messieurs les Anglais ont eu le rare bon sens de s'abstenir de toute intervention dans le dernier débat et nous avons eu le réjouissant spectacle d'entendre les nôtres décréter eux-mêmes que rien dans la Constitution ne garantissait l'usage de la langue française dans le N[ord-]Ouest, et pousser à la disp[ar]i[tion] des débris de ce que nous avons encore conservé. (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 602-603).

In their appeal across party lines for French Catholic rights during debate over the autonomy bills and the North-West Schools Question, politicians Armand Lavergne (1880-1935)⁵⁹ and Henri Bourassa (1868-1952)⁶⁰ seemingly exemplified the non-partisan nationalist endeavor that Groulx and many of his contemporaries deemed necessary to secure the welfare of the French-Canadian people as a whole. Indeed the roots of Groulx's nationalism lay not in a narrowly provincialist outlook, but rather in a broad concern for the minority rights and consequent fortunes, or *survivance*, of French Canadians outside Quebec. This explains why the autonomy bills and North-West Schools Question long held much significance for Groulx. Over twenty-five years later, after extensively researching these events,⁶¹ Groulx concluded that they marked a watershed in the history of Canada and the legal treatment of its pre-eminent minority:

The perennial challenge to laws covering the French Catholic minorities came to an end with the sombre developments of 1905. Whether the laws violated entailed customary law, as in the Maritime provinces, or customary and constitutional law, as in Manitoba and the West, whether laws prior or after the establishment of the Confederation, the precedence of one law or the soundness

⁵⁹ See Marc La Terreux, "Trente ans de vie nationales, essai d'Armand Lavergne," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 1081-1082. For Groulx's sketch of Armand Lavergne's life and work see L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 3: 183-200.

⁶⁰ On April 17, 1905, Bourassa gave a speech on the autonomy bills and North-West Schools Question that Groulx attended and which left a lasting impression on him. See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 2: 189-193. Groulx's works abound with references to Bourassa, however he summarily surveyed and analyzed - even psychologically - Bourassa's life and work in L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 2: 187-268. Groulx refers to philosopher and psychiatrist Karl Jaspers (1883-1969), while arguing that the analysis of the vicissitudes of French-Canadian nationalism and its leaders requires above all historians of ideas. See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 2: 267-268.

⁶¹ The critical apparatus of Groulx's monograph *L'enseignement français au Canada* bears witness to his statement: "Il m'a fallu compulsier journaux et brochures du temps, me débrouiller de mon mieux en des débats abstrus, dans un fouillis de textes juridiques, mêlés comme à plaisir, par politiques et juristes." (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 3: 215-216).

An indefatigable archival researcher, Groulx ruefully noted the difficulties he encountered in preparing his monograph: "L'historien qui s'aventure dans le passé trop proche, trouve devant lui plus de portes fermées que de portes ouvertes. Trop souvent les archives privées, si précieuses, ne se prêtent à ses recherches qu'à la condition qu'il en tire le moins possible." (L. Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, p. 8).

of another made no difference – in each and every case federal authorities merely evidenced their impotence to rectify disabling legislation. Laws protecting the minorities ceased to exist not only in the older provinces which founded the Confederation, such as New Brunswick, but more disconcertingly, Ottawa had to forgo upholding such laws or incorporating them into the statutes of the new provinces it itself created.⁶²

1.2 Henri Bourassa's Formative Influence on Groulx

Since he represented the chief spokesperson for French-language minorities⁶³ during Groulx's early adulthood, Bourassa's advocacy profoundly informed Groulx's understanding of French-Canadian nationalism as the pursuit of minority rights. Moreover, by providing throughout these critical years very public moral leadership, at least in young Groulx's eyes, Bourassa markedly colored Groulx's perception of politics as the endeavor to apply ethics within society at large. Not surprisingly most politicians, to say nothing of the hard-scrabble realities of politics itself, deeply disillusioned Groulx. Thus, with regard to the political wrangling over French Catholic education outside Quebec, he wryly remarked:

They say that in human affairs politics constitutes the art of the possible and does not bother with the ideal – a more theoretical than legitimate excuse. Yet does not the history of minorities everywhere, indeed all history teach that in

⁶² "Avec ce triste dénouement de 1905, le droit des minorités catholiques et françaises achevait son cycle d'épreuves. Que le droit violé fût un droit coutumier comme dans les provinces maritimes, un droit coutumier et constitutionnel comme au Manitoba et dans l'ouest, un droit antérieur ou postérieur à l'établissement de la Confédération, l'ancienneté ou la solidité de l'un ou de l'autre importaient peu: en chaque cas les autorités fédérales venaient de démontrer leur impuissance à corriger une législation spoliatrice. Et non seulement le droit minoritaire avait cessé d'exister en de vieilles provinces, fondatrices de la Confédération, telle que le Nouveau Brunswick; mais encore, et voilà qui était d'une particulière gravité, ce droit, Ottawa avait dû renoncer à le maintenir ou à l'inscrire dans le statut des provinces nouvelles, créées de sa propre main. (L. Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, p. 178).

⁶³ R. Cook, "The Triumph and Trials of Materialism," in Craig Brown, ed., *The Illustrated History of Canada*, p. 402.

this world human choice above all else determines the realm of the possible?⁶⁴

Bourassa proved a formative influence on Groulx in yet another respect. Bourassa's pan-Canadian⁶⁵ vision of "equal rights throughout the country"⁶⁶ for the language, education, and religion of French Canadians primordially shaped Groulx's concept of French Canada as a nation which transcended provincial boundaries and comprised all those who shared a French Catholic heritage and culture. Groulx therefore significantly titled the second volume of his seminal two-part survey of French education in Canada, *The Schools of the Minorities*,⁶⁷ which opens with the declaration that:

This historical study, as everybody knows, cannot limit itself to the land of Quebec since French Canada constitutes more a national than a geographic entity. It includes the entirety of those people of French origin living on Canadian soil: that is to say, some two and a half million who steadfastly reside in the birthplace of the nation, and almost a half-million dispersed among the other provinces from the Atlantic to the Pacific.⁶⁸

Following this line of thinking to its logical conclusion Groulx's idea of the nation went beyond the borders of Canada to include that minority in the United States who also shared a French Catholic heritage and culture, namely Franco-Americans. Economic

⁶⁴ "Art du possible dans les choses humaines, la politique, a-t-on coutume de dire, ne s'accommode point de l'absolu. Excuse plus théorique que légitime. L'histoire des minorités à travers le monde et l'histoire tout court n'enseignent-elles point que la mesure du possible ici-bas est singulièrement déterminée par la volonté humaine?" (L. Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, p. 180).

⁶⁵ See P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History, 1867-1929*, p. 495, which refers to Bourassa's "pan-Canadian nationalism." See also R. Cook, "The Triumph and Trials of Materialism, 1900-1945," in C. Brown, ed., *The Illustrated History of Canada*, p. 434, which characterizes Bourassa's endeavour as "pan-Canadian."

⁶⁶ Joseph Levitt, "Henri Bourassa," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 285.

⁶⁷ "Les écoles des minorités" (L. Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, p. 7).

⁶⁸ "Cette histoire, comme chacun sait, ne saurait se limiter au pays québécois. Entité moins géographique que nationale, le Canada français embrasse l'ensemble des hommes d'origine française en pays canadien: soit environ deux millions et demi restés fidèles au berceau de la race et près d'un demi-million disséminés dans les autres provinces, de l'Atlantique au Pacifique." (L. Groulx, *L'enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *Les écoles des minorités*, p. 7).

motives impelled Groulx's own father to work in New Jersey,⁶⁹ and for French-Canadian society "the critical period of emigration was the last three decades of the nineteenth century, during which Quebec lost ten per cent of its population."⁷⁰ Roughly the first twenty years of Groulx's life thus witnessed a "seemingly unstoppable exodus"⁷¹ when some 365,000 French Canadians emigrated from Quebec to New England.⁷² Yet this crest constituted but one of the successive waves of emigration⁷³ from 1840 to 1930 that

⁶⁹ See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 16; see also pp. 18-19.

⁷⁰ See P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History, 1867-1929*, p. 29.

⁷¹ "l'exode semble incontrôlable" (Yves Roby, "Émigrés canadiens-français, Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et images de la société américaine," in Gérard Bouchard, Yvan Lamonde, eds., *Québécois et Américains: la culture québécoise aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles*, p. 134).

⁷² See Yves Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre: rêves et réalités*, p. 32. See also Y. Roby, "Émigrés canadiens-français, Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et images de la société américaine," in G. Bouchard, Y. Lamonde, eds., *Québécois et Américains*, p. 134).

Beyond its obvious demographic consequences, Y. Lamonde points out the compensatory significance of French-Canadian emigration to the United States in the wake of the annexation movement which foundered by 1860:

Peu populaire à l'époque, l'idée d'annexion traduisait néanmoins une tentation étatsunienne pour certains Canadiens français, tout comme l'émigration de plus en plus massive de milliers des leurs vers les villes manufacturières de la Nouvelle-Angleterre répondait d'abord à une nécessité économique doublée d'un attrait symbolique. (Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec*, p. 395).

⁷³ Y. Roby observes, "La migration épouse le mouvement des marées. Quand la prospérité règne en Nouvelle-Angleterre, la nouvelle gagne rapidement le Québec et c'est l'exode, comme en 1865-1873, 1879-1882, 1885-1888, 1891-1893." (Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 28). Y. Roby also notes:

Après la guerre de Sécession, les choses changent radicalement. De 1865 à 1900, plus de 325,000 Canadiens français du Québec gagnent définitivement la Nouvelle-Angleterre. De 37, 420 qu'ils étaient en 1860, les émigrés et leurs enfants nés aux États-Unis sont 208,000 en 1880, 365,000 en 1890 et 573,000 en 1900. (Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 32).

Y. Roby further remarks:

De 1920 à 1930, 130,000 personnes auraient définitivement quitté le Québec à destination des États-Unis. Certaines années, de 1923 à 1926 par exemple, le mouvement prend une telle ampleur qu'il rappelle les pires moments de l'exode qui a eu lieu entre 1865 et 1900. (Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 266).

P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert point out that, "For every decade between 1871 and 1931, Quebec's net migration was negative; more people left Quebec than entered it." (P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History, 1867-1929*, p. 28). See also Y. Roby, "Émigrés canadiens-français, Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et images de la société américaine," in G. Bouchard, Y. Lamonde, eds., *Québécois et Américains*, p. 134, 136, 138.

brought about 900,000 French Canadians to the United States from Quebec.⁷⁴ This demographic “hemorrhage”⁷⁵ had crucial consequences because by 1901 nearly the same number of French Canadians lived elsewhere in North America as in Quebec.⁷⁶

Groulx followed closely these developments⁷⁷ and soon evidenced a solicitude for Franco-American affairs that paralleled his concern for French-Canadian minorities outside Quebec. Accordingly in 1907, as his extant annotated copy attests,⁷⁸ Groulx read the monograph of journalist Jules-Paul Tardivel (1851-1905), *La situation religieuse aux États-Unis: illusions et réalité* (1900), which provided “an opportune apologia for

⁷⁴ See Y. Roby, “Émigrés canadiens-français, Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et images de la société américaine,” in G. Bouchard, Y. Lamonde, eds., *Québécois et Américains*, p. 131, 138).

P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert observe, “Between 1840 and 1930 more than 900,000 Quebecers left their homeland...The vast majority of these emigrants, ranging from two-thirds in some years to four-fifths in others, were French Canadians.” (P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History 1867-1929*, p. 28).

See also “Le français: un statut compromis, 1850-1860,” in M. Plourde, ed., *Le français au Québec*, p. 136, which notes with regard to the decades following Confederation, “au cours de cette période, près de 900,000 Canadiens français quittent le Québec pour tenter leur chance aux États-Unis. La population du Québec s’en trouve gravement affaiblie et devient de plus en plus minoritaire dans l’ensemble canadien.”

⁷⁵ See P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History, 1867-1919*, p. 28, which notes with regard to French-Canadian emigration to the United States between 1871 and 1931, that “the geographer Raoul Blanchard, in the twentieth century, spoke of a haemorrhage.”

Sociologist Madeleine Giguère comments “on what might have been the size of French Québec population without *la saignée* to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th century. Projecting the traditional natural increase in a French Québec population from 1840 (no migration) to 1971 would give a population of around nine million, i.e. some four million larger than the actual 1991 French population of Québec.” (M. Giguère, “Recent and Current Sociological and Anthropological Research on Franco-Americans,” in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 97).

⁷⁶ See P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History, 1867-1929*, p. 31. With reason then Bruno Ramirez notes in reference to this francophone “exodus” from Quebec to the United States, “son rôle déterminant dans l’évolution structurelle et dans l’univers culturel de la province.” (B. Ramirez, “Émigration et Franco-Américanie: bilan des recherches historiques,” in Dean Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 9).

⁷⁷ Thus on April 7, 1908, in reference to the half-century preceding the birth of the Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Franco-Américaine in 1908, Groulx wrote: “Elle germe spontanément des semences déposées à pleines mains, pendant plus de cinquante années, dans le sol héroïque de vos cités françaises! Et je me dis que sans doute, ce devait être l’une des récompenses des Franco-Américains, après un demi-siècle d’incroyables héroïsmes, de voir cette levée enthousiaste de leur fils, jurant de prolonger l’effort de la vieille génération.” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2 : 448-449).

⁷⁸ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P., Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 380n.6.

Franco-Americans and their brethren of the *diaspora*.”⁷⁹ Then while studying at Rome Groulx wrote to the Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Franco-Américaine,⁸⁰ which made him an honorary member,⁸¹ and published his letter on July 21, 1908, in the newspaper *L'Opinion publique*⁸² of Worcester, Massachusetts.⁸³ Here Groulx opined:

Do not many often talk about the anglicization of the next generation of Franco-Americans? The answer therefore lies with the youth of today. Since you do find yourselves at a turning-point in your history, they will provide either a confirmation or refutation of those who believe that the evolution of races, as well as redrawing the geographic map, depends solely on politics and those defeatists who

⁷⁹ “une défense commode des Franco-Américains et de leurs frères de la *diaspora*.” (Pierre Savard, “La situation religieuse aux États-Unis. Illusions et réalité, essai de Jules-Paul Tardivel,” in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 1020. See also Jules-Paul Tardivel, *La situation religieuse aux États-Unis*, pp. 170-179, 219, 227-228, 286-287, 289-296.

With regard to the development of the French Catholic ecclesiastical infrastructure of New England which followed emigration there by francophones from Quebec, Janice Farnham and Bruce Bradley note:

The first French-Canadian parish in New England was St. Joseph's in Burlington, Vermont (1851). Within two years of its foundation, French-born Louis de Goesbriand (1816-99) became Vermont's first bishop, and did much to recruit priests for the Québécois. The number of French-language national parishes in the New England area arose from fewer than twenty in the 1870s to 138 in 1911, and to 178 in 1945. (J. Farnham, B. Bradley, “French-Canadian Catholics in the United States,” in Michael Glazier, Thomas J. Shelley, eds., *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, pp. 551).

Despite such exponential growth not until 1907, with the appointment of Georges-Albert Guertin (1869-1931) as bishop of Manchester, New Hampshire, did a French-Canadian rise to the episcopacy in New England. See J. Farnham, B. Bradley, “French-Canadian Catholics in the United States,” in M. Glazier, T. J. Shelley, eds., *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, p. 551). See also Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 161, 181-182).

⁸⁰ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 448-451. Concerning the ACJFA Yves Roby notes:

En 1908, un jeune prêtre de Spencer (Mass.), l'abbé Deny Lamy, organise un premier cercle de l'Association catholique de la jeunesse franco-américaine (ACJFA) dont les règlements sont calqués sur ceux de l'Association catholique de la jeunesse canadienne-française (ACJC). Vingt-deux jeunes, étudiants pour la plupart, en font partie. Une douzaine de cercles virent le jour dans les années suivantes. Après des débuts prometteurs, ces cercles, ignorés par les évêques, dépérissent lentement et disparaissent avec la guerre de 1914. (Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 208).

Groulx corresponded with the ACJFA soon after its inception. See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 448; see also p. 709 regarding Lamy.

⁸¹ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 452n. 1.

⁸² Concerning the newspaper *L'Opinion publique* of Worcester, Massachusetts see Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 317; see also pp. 117, 138, 187-188, 209, 260.

⁸³ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, p. 451n.1. .

take no account whatsoever of Providence, which has the deciding voice on such matters and who can, when necessary and a people deserves it, safeguard and ensure their future.⁸⁴

1.3 The Challenge of Survival

These statements indicate why the French-Canadians minorities outside Quebec and the Franco-Americans held such significance for Groulx. He obviously saw them as grappling with the same critical issues that confronted the francophones of Quebec, specifically linguistic and cultural assimilation through an anglicizing current so strong that it cast doubts on the very future of francophones in North America. Furthermore, though they shared a common struggle, its outcome seemed particularly tied to the fate of Franco-Americans and the French-Canadian minorities outside Quebec who by virtue of living beyond the pale of the French Catholic heartland, served as bellwethers of what awaited all their francophone co-religionists within the larger context of the North American continent. In sum, they proved a litmus test of the *survivance* at the dawn of the twentieth century.

The concept of the *survivance* enjoyed prolonged currency⁸⁵ from the time François-Xavier Garneau published his three-volume *Histoire du Canada* (1845-1852)⁸⁶

⁸⁴ “Ne parle-t-on pas assez couramment de l’anglicisation de la prochaine génération des Franco-Américains? La réponse sera donc faite par la jeunesse d’aujourd’hui. C’est elle, puisque vous êtes à ce tournant de votre histoire, qui donnera raison ou le démenti à ceux qui croient que les évolutions de races, aussi bien que les remaniements de la carte géographique dépendent tout uniment des politiques et des découragés, sans tenir compte que la Providence a, pour le moins, voix prépondérante au chapitre, et qu’Elle peut, quand il le faut et qu’un peuple en est digne, défendre et sauver son avenir.” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 449).

⁸⁵ Historien Gérard Bouchard proposes that the “paradigme de la survivance” proved determinative in Quebec society for a century, that is to say, from about 1840 to 1940. In this vein he states with regard to the paradigm of the *survivance*: “Son emprise fut telle que, pendant un siècle et plus, elle a fourni au discours historiographique ses catégories dominantes.” (G. Bouchard, *Genèse des nations et cultures du nouveau monde*, p. 105). See also pp. 99-154.

⁸⁶ Regarding the articulation of a primarily cultural concept of the French-Canadian nation in the wake of the Durham Report (1839), G. Bouchard cautions:

which “presented the history of French-Canadians as a struggle for survival.”⁸⁷ However, this rationale faced a formidable challenge after Garneau’s contemporary⁸⁸ Charles Darwin (1809-1882) published *On the Origin of Species* (1859), which imparted scientific verisimilitude to “the application of evolutionary principles to human society,”⁸⁹ as championed by the British philosopher Herbert Spencer (1820-1903),⁹⁰ one

Mais d’une culture particulière, selon un modèle que François-Xavier Garneau se chargea d’accréditer dans son *Histoire du Canada* (1845-1852) en guise de réplique à Durham: nourrie de la mémoire épique des ancêtres et de la tradition française, axée sur la protection des acquis symboliques, sur la fidélité aux origines. Il revint en effet à cet historien d’avoir mis en place les paramètres de ce qui allait devenir la célèbre idéologie de la survivance. (G. Bouchard, *Genèse des nations et cultures du nouveau monde*, p. 104).

⁸⁷ Pierre Savard, “François-Xavier Garneau,” in J. H. Marsh, eds., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 950).

⁸⁸ Charles Darwin and François-Xavier Garneau were respectively born on February 12, 1809 and June 15, 1809.

⁸⁹ Tim S. Gray, “Herbert Spencer,” in *Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, p. 856).

⁹⁰ Stephen G. Brush points out that social Darwinism “is based on ideas articulated most clearly not by Darwin himself but by Herbert Spencer.” (S. G. Brush, *The History of Modern Science: A Guide to the Second Scientific Revolution, 1800-1950*, p. 109). Concerning the relationship between the thought of Charles Darwin and that of Herbert Spencer, Roger Scruton states with regard to the latter’s *Principles of Sociology*, 1867, which articulated Spencer’s social evolutionism: “He had begun to develop his influential account of this before Darwin’s *Origin of Species* 1859, and later argued that Darwin’s theory confirmed his own.” (R. Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought*, p. 181). In reference to the French biologist Jean-Baptiste de Monet Lamarck (1744-1829) and the social theorization of biological evolution, J. Burrow observes, “Much of this theorizing, and the use of evolutionary language, was inspired by Herbert Spencer, whose own evolutionist doctrines were derived chiefly from Lamarck.” (J. Burrow, “Social Darwinism,” in D. Miller, ed., *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, p. 481). With respect to the social conceptualization of ‘survival of the fittest,’ Terrell Carver notes: “This phrase was popularized by Herbert Spencer, the chief theorist of social Darwinism.” (T. Carver, “Social Darwinism,” in W. Outhwaite, T. Bottomore, eds., *The Blackwell Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Social Thought*, p. 587). Sociologists Raymond Boudon and François Bourricaud substantially qualify the role of biology in general and evolution in particular in Spencer’s thought:

Spencer croit à l’évolution. C’est que la *Loi de l’évolution* lui paraît gouverner non seulement les sociétés, mais l’univers, non seulement le ‘supra-organique,’ mais l’organique. C’est pourquoi les *Principes de sociologie* sont précédés des *Principes de biologie*. Et dans les *Principes de sociologie*, Spencer évoque constamment les analogies entre les phénomènes biologiques et les phénomènes sociologiques, les notions de fonction, de structure, d’équilibre, de différenciation, d’organe s’appliquant bien aux deux règnes. Mais s’il y a des raisons pour qu’elles puissent êtres employées dans les deux cas, il faut voir aussi, Spencer souligne ce point avec une grande insistance, qu’il s’agit bien d’analogies et que dans tous les cas il faut prendre soin de marquer les limites de l’analogie. Une société ‘est un organisme,’ mais uniquement en un sens analogique. (R. Boudon, F. Bourricaud, “Herbert Spencer,” in R. Boudon, F. Bourricaud, *Dictionnaire critique de la sociologie*, p. 563).

In a similar vein Bernard Valade cautions:

of “the nineteenth-century founders of cultural and social evolutionism.”⁹¹ Indeed the analogical argument that “society must inevitably reflect the harshness of nature”⁹² found full-orbed expression in late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century social Darwinism.⁹³

Il ne faut pas exagérer le ‘biologisme’ de Spencer. Malgré des abus de comparaison, il n’omit pas de souligner les dissemblances existant entre les organismes régis par la loi de la symétrie et la société qui est, par nature, asymétrique. Ses convictions politiques et éthiques l’amenèrent même à accentuer certaines différences qui distinguent les sociétés humaines des sociétés animales. (B. Valade, “Herbert Spencer,” in *Dictionnaire de la sociologie*, p. 825).

However, sociologists Bert N. Adams and R. A. Sydie affirm the essential congruence of Darwin and Spencer’s thought:

What Darwin’s work contributed to Spencer’s theories was a satisfactory mechanism -- natural selection -- to explain organic evolution...In 1864, in his *Principles of Biology*, Spenser proposed that the phrase *survival of the fittest* was equivalent to Darwin’s concept of natural selection, and apparently Darwin agreed with the suggestion. Darwin’s term, *natural selection*, suggested an intelligent agent -- Nature -- doing the selecting for humanity’s benefit...

In fact, however, Spencer’s term went beyond Darwin. Darwin focused on the process of transformation for each species, whereas Spencer focused on both the biological and the social processes, and on the end result -- the survival of the fittest... Darwin himself recognized that his explanation of organic evolution had been expanded in Spencer’s account to include human society, and he suggested that in the future Spencer would be acknowledged as ‘by far the greatest living philosopher in England; perhaps equal to any that have lived.’” (B. N. Adams, R. A. Sydie, *Sociological Theory*, p. 70).

⁹¹ “les fondateurs de l’évolutionnisme culturel et social du XIX^e siècle.” (Bernard Valade, “Herbert Spencer,” in *Dictionnaire de la sociologie*, p. 822). As historian of philosophy Frederick Copleston notes, “Seizing on an idea which was already in the air and to which Darwin gave an empirical basis in a restricted field, Spencer turned it into the key-idea of a synoptic vision of the world and of human life and conduct.” (F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, v. 7: *Bentham to Russell*, p. 121; see also pp. 122-145).

Social anthropologist Alan Barnard observes that evolutionism represented:

The idea that society gradually advances often explained in terms of stages from ‘primitive’ to ‘barbarian’ to ‘civilized.’ Some societies are slower to advance than others, and these slower, ‘primitive’ societies are held to remain at lower stages of evolution. Evolutionism in social anthropology developed to some extent independently of evolutionary theory in biology. It was largely overthrown in the 1920s by the onset of functional theory. (A. Barnard, “Evolutionism,” in Jennifer Bothamley, ed., *Dictionary of Theories*, pp. 186-187).

See also Neil J. Snelser, “Social Structure,” in N. J. Snelser, eds., *Handbook of Sociology*, pp. 106-108.

⁹² Peter J. Bowler, “Charles Robert Darwin,” in *Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, p. 192.

⁹³ Stephen G. Brush proposes that “‘Social Darwinism’ was identified ... in Richard Hofstadter’s classic work, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (1944, rev. ed., 1955).” [S. G. Brush, *The History of Modern Science*, p. 109]. Published in 1988, Brush’s own work now requires qualification in the light of the 1997 monograph by Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945*, where, pp. 21-38 offer an extensive definition of social Darwinism.

Sociologist Ronald Fletcher succinctly defines social Darwinism as: “The application of the concept of evolution to the historical development of human societies which lays particular emphasis on ‘the struggle for existence’ and ‘the survival of the fittest’.” (R. Fletcher, “Social Darwinism,” in Alan Bullock, Stephen Trombley, eds., *The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, p. 800).

This theory contended that “societies, like species are subject to the law of natural selection,”⁹⁴ which inexorably operated on the principle of ‘survival of the fittest,’ so that only the latter among the peoples of the world would continue to exist.⁹⁵ Further, based on its premise of ‘survival of the fittest’ social Darwinist reasoning ineluctably inferred a ‘superior race,’⁹⁶ claimed in particular for ‘Anglo-Saxons.’⁹⁷ Thus, social Darwinism

Regarding the broader implications of Darwin’s theory of evolution Peter J. Bowler notes: “Because Darwin openly extended his evolutionism to include the human race, it was necessary to re-examine the foundations of psychology, ethics and social theory. Moral values might be merely the rationalization of instinctive behaviour patterns. (P. Bowler, “Charles Robert Darwin,” in *Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, p. 192).

With respect to social Darwinism other scholars point out that:

Darwin’s theory has been used to support the belief that nature does well by the process of natural selection, a competition in which the fittest survive. This process is not disturbed by extraneous interference since, as far as the theory is concerned, there is nothing extraneous. The view known as Social Darwinism holds a similar view of human society; it too does well by competitive processes in which the fittest survive, and which are not disturbed by extraneous interference aimed to help the less fit.

Views of this kind emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century. They were advocated by a number of writers in the social sciences, and by many politicians and captains of industry. (“Social Darwinism,” in Thomas Mautner, ed., *The Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy*, p. 526).

J. Burrow proposes that:

Attempts by social and political thinkers to borrow the authority of Darwinian biology for their own theories are conveniently referred to as ‘social Darwinism’; in this sense the heyday of social Darwinist theories was the last quarter of the nineteenth century...

The term ‘social Darwinism’ is most properly applied to attempts to find social analogies for the Darwinian law of natural selection (or, as it came to be called, ‘the survival of the fittest’). [J. Burrow, ‘Social Darwinism,’ in D. Miller, ed., *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, pp. 480-481].

⁹⁴ Roger Scruton, “Darwinism,” in R. Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought*, p. 125).

⁹⁵ With regard to the subsequent influence of Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species*, Jeff Lewis remarks: “When translated into human terms, Darwin’s concept of ‘survival of the fittest’ became an equally forceful principle for the organization of human civilizations. Humans could be treated as competing organisms; human societies could be treated as competing civilizations. These competitive systems underpin the advance of human civilizations whereby superior biological and social groups would necessarily rule over and perhaps eradicate inferior groups.” (J. Lewis, *Cultural Studies: The Basics*, p. 301).

⁹⁶ See M. Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945*, p. 139. See also E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914*, pp. 252-254; M. Perry, M. Chase, J. R. Jacob, M. C. Jacob, R. H. Von Laue, *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics and Society*, v. 2, p. 671, which states with regard to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century: “In the popular mind, the concepts of evolution justified the exploitation of ‘lesser breeds without the law’ by superior races. This language of race and conflict, of superior and inferior people, had wide currency in the Western states.”

See also Michael D. Biddiss, Howard McGary, “Racism,” in A. Bullock, S. Trombley, eds., *The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, p. 720:

Race was a major—and still underestimated—theme in the rest of the Western world from at least 1850 until 1945. The term *racism* applies to the doctrines about the

“expressed the need for scientific explanations and utilitarian rationales for actions common in the Victorian era,” specifically those involving imperialism, colonialism, and laissez-faire capitalism.

Against this backdrop one discerns the full portent of the “anglicization” and “evolution of races” to which Groulx’s above letter refers. Social Darwinism subverted the construct of the *survivance* by promulgating the ‘survival of the fittest’ alone, so that far from harboring the “backward-looking, defensive, and insular vision of the nation”⁹⁸ espoused by the *survivance*, the concept itself of survival now assumed an ominous character that offered no quarter to the struggling French Catholic remnant in contemporary Anglo-Saxon, Protestant-dominated North America. Employed as a social

central significance of racial inequality that were developed by Western scientists in that period, which would soon be linked with Social Darwinism.

Robert Leach points out with reference to the latter nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, “The ‘Master Race’ concept fitted closely with the prevailing Social Darwinism of imperialism.” (R. Leach, *Political Ideologies*, p. 31. Leach further observes:

Social Darwinism was the mid-nineteenth century adaptation of Charles Darwin’s theories of nature’s ‘survival of the fittest’ dictum as applied to European imperialism and its attendant racism. As enunciated by such theorists as Herbert Spencer ... it excused imperial exploitation as a natural scientific outcome of the biological superiority of the European races. (R. Leach, *Political Ideologies*, p. 217).

Concerning the relationship between Darwin’s theory of evolution and the social reasoning for racism, Leach adds elsewhere:

The works of Charles Darwin completed this slow historical process of unifying social theory with biologism and providing a scientific rationale for racial domination coinciding with the needs of the age ... Racial superiority was regarded as natural. It was ‘nature’s way of evolving superior man, superior nations and superior races’.” (R. Leach, *Political Ideologies*, pp. 227-228).

⁹⁷ “Darwinian biology was used to promote the belief in Anglo-Saxon (British and American) and Teutonic (German) racial superiority. Social Darwinists attributed to racial qualities the growth of the British Empire, the expansion of the United States to the Pacific, and the extension of German power. The domination of other peoples – American Indians, Africans, Asians, Poles – was seen as the natural right of the superior race.” (M. Perry, M. Chase, J. R. Jacob, M. C. Jacob, T. H. Von Laue, *Western Civilization*, 2: 594-595). See also R. Leach, *Political Ideologies*, p. 37. Mike Hawkins remarks, “Darwin also expressed conventional views on the superiority of the civilized ‘Anglo-Saxon’ nations over other countries.” (M. Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945*, p. 36).

⁹⁸ “une vision passéiste, défensive et repliée de la nation.” (G. Bouchard, *Genèse des nations et cultures du nouveau monde*, p. 105).

model, nature represented a “threat”⁹⁹ because its operative principle of ‘survival of the fittest’ seemingly sounded the death knell of minorities like the French Canadians and Franco-Americans. Indeed such groups stood no chance to survive from the viewpoint of the specious “scientific determinism”¹⁰⁰ that underlay the social Darwinist scheme. This explains the reference in Groulx’s letter to “defeatists” whose determinism he rebuffed by juxtaposing the central Christian belief of providence, “God’s care, provision, foresight and direction of the universe in such a way that the universe as a whole and individual creatures within it fulfil God’s purposes.”¹⁰¹

Nonetheless, the tenet of ‘survival of the fittest’ alone and its corollary of racial superiority, attributed in practice to ‘Anglo-Saxons,’ implicitly consigned the other peoples of North America to a vestigial status and predicated their ultimate demise. After

⁹⁹ Herein lies the significance of the subtitle of Mike Hawkins’, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought 1860-1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat*. See p. 155 where he argues that nature acted as a two-edged social paradigm since it comprised “a tension between the social and the biological, alternating between interpreting social relationships as culturally determined on the one hand, and seeing them as the outcome of the laws of struggle, adaptation and inheritance on the other.”

¹⁰⁰ Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought 1860-1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat*, p. 31. See also J. Burrow, “Social Darwinism,” in D. Miller, ed., *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, p. 481; T. Carver, “Social Darwinism,” in W. Outhwaite, T. Bottomore, eds., *The Blackwell Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Social Thought*, p. 587).

With reference to the elaboration of social Darwinist thought and correlative determinism, Jeff Lewis states:

Theories which emphasized social justice, equality and liberal humanism struggled constantly against deterministic theories which positioned people hierarchically. Darwin’s notions of the evolution of species and ‘survival of the fittest’ were applied as ideological counterparts to competitive capitalism. These social Darwinist theories claimed basically that individuals and groups found themselves in a particular social ‘station’ or position because their personal, class-based or ethnic biologies determined their merit and hence their place on the hierarchy. This biological determinism was also associated with various forms of cultural determinism whereby an individual’s level of civilization was also conditioned by his or her ‘cultural’ context. (J. Lewis, *Cultural Studies*, p. 189).

¹⁰¹ William Hasker, “Providence,” in *Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, p. 722. See also Joseph Blenkinsopp, “Providence in the Bible,” in R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, pp. 1063-1064; Wilhelm Breuning, “Providence,” in Wolfgang Beinert, Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, eds., *Handbook of Catholic Theology*, pp. 559-561; M. John Farrelly, “Providence,” in M. Glazier, M. K. Hellwig, eds., *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, pp. 699-701; John H. Wright, in J. A. Komonchak, M. Collins, D. A. Lane, eds., *The New Dictionary of Theology*, pp. 815-818; J. H. Wright, “Providence,” in R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 1063.

all, did not the full title of Darwin's masterwork affirm the *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*?¹⁰²

Groulx quickly ascertained the sinister nature of social Darwinism and its implications, which he denounced, as evidenced by a further excerpt from his above letter:

The day that French Canadians acquire a firm grasp of their history, take stock of their capabilities and the wonderful future which awaits their efforts, that day they will no longer deem it possible that they do not have as much right to survive in America as other peoples do, and they will realize that the myth of a superior race fundamentally rests on a lie.¹⁰³

This passage, written on April 7, 1908,¹⁰⁴ during his studies in Europe, belies the assertion¹⁰⁵ that at this very time and place Groulx imbibed the doctrine of Aryan supremacy and related teachings from disciples of the theorist of "modern racism,"¹⁰⁶ Arthur Gobineau (1816-1882),¹⁰⁷ who accused Darwin of "plagiarising his ideas."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, v. 8: *Bentham to Russell*, p. 102. See also, Stephen G. Brush, *The History of Modern Science*, p. 74.

Dinesh D'Souza comments on the significance of the title Darwin gave to his work:

Darwin appeared to offer a new and perhaps more powerful ground for belief in the existence of race as a natural category and in the inferiority of the colored races, and that was the concept at the heart of evolution: natural selection. Quite deliberately, Darwin subtitled his *Origin of Species* 'The Survival of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life.' Endurance and success on earth, Darwin suggested, could be attributed to the ability of races to adapt themselves to the threats and challenges of the natural environment. Here, then, was an entirely secular and scientific explanation for the civilizational achievements of Europeans, and for the relative backwardness of other peoples: whites were simply in the evolutionary vanguard, and the backward races were the unfit peoples on their way out. (D. D'Souza, *The End of Racism*, p. 129; see also pp. 130-134).

¹⁰³ "Le jour où les Canadiens français auront acquis une connaissance exacte de leur passé, et auront pris conscience de leur force et du grand avenir qui s'offre à leurs efforts, ce jour-là, ils ne pourront pas ne pas reconnaître des droits égaux aux droits des autres peuples à la survivance en Amérique; ils découvriront ce qu'a de profondément mensonger la légende de la race supérieure." (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, *Correspondance*, 2: 450).

¹⁰⁴ G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 448.

¹⁰⁵ See "Nazism" in *Theological Foundations*.

¹⁰⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, p. 149.

¹⁰⁷ Dinesh D'Souza encapsulates the career, thought, and impact of Gobineau:

Moreover, although penned seven years before he began to teach university history courses, the above excerpt indicates the importance Groulx already attached to history as a means not only to give “depth to nationality,”¹⁰⁹ but correlatively to disprove the dogma of racial superiority contemporarily employed to undermine emergent national

But for the classic expression of European racism we must turn to the French diplomat and scholar Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, who is today unknown or considered the embodiment of wickedness, but who was a friend and respected correspondent of Tocqueville and in some respects one of the most learned exponents of the *Zeitgeist* of the nineteenth century. Nowhere is the racist worldview more comprehensively stated than in Gobineau’s *The Inequality of Human Races*, published in 1853. When Gobineau sent his book to Tocqueville, he received only mild dissent about the soundness of his theories, although Tocqueville strongly protested their demoralizing effect. But such warnings could hardly be expected to deter Gobineau, a deep pessimist, who feared that currents of race-mixing and democratic ideas of equality were diluting Teutonic blood and destroying the greatness of the Aryan aristocracy. Gobineau was also an acquaintance of Josiah Nott, an apologist for slavery who publicized Gobineau’s views in the American South, and of the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and the composer Richard Wagner, both of whom shared Gobineau’s love of aristocracy of birth and his hatred of equality. Gobineau was an elitist and an eccentric, but his racism made him a man of his time, elevated to high posts and widely admired. Even the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* echoed his views. Moreover, his influence would prove lasting: in the twentieth century, Gobineau was one of Adolf Hitler’s favorite authors and his works were popular textbooks in the schools of Nazi Germany. (D. D’Souza, *The End of Racism: Principles for a Multiracial Society*, P. 63; see also pp. 64-65).

Regarding the pivotal role Gobineau played in the articulation of modern racism Zeev Sternhell writes:

The systematization of racist thought in the nineteenth century was the achievement of Arthur de Gobineau who wrote *Essai sur l’inégalité des races humaines* (1853-55), a synthetic, interdisciplinary work based on history, anthropology and linguistics. Gobineau claimed that the principle of race elucidated the past, the present and the future; it determined the fate of civilizations. When a civilization became decadent, this was due to the mixture of races. No race could preserve its purity indefinitely, and the more mixed it became, the more it became degenerate. (Z. Sternhell, “Racism,” in D. Miller, ed., *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, p. 414).

Robert E. Park (1864-1944), one of the founders of the Chicago School of Sociology, noted in 1928 that for those seeking to explain cultural differences among races and peoples in some single dominating cause or condition Gobineau represented the fountainhead of a school of thought that “sought an explanation of divergent cultures in the innate qualities of races biologically inherited.” (R. E. Park, “Human Migration and the Marginal Man,” in Werner Sollors, ed., *Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader*, p. 156).

See also Roger Scruton, “Arthur Gobineau,” in R. Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought*, p. 217; R. Leach, *Political Ideologies*, p. 20, 30; T. R. Young, Bruce A. Arrigo, “Arthur Gobineau,” in T. R. Young, B. A. Arrigo, *The Dictionary of Critical Social Sciences*, p. 136.

¹⁰⁸ Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945*, p. 185.

¹⁰⁹ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 197.

consciousnesses.¹¹⁰ In this vein political historian Benedict Anderson contrasts the ahistorical character of racism with the sense of history essential to the nationalist vision:

The fact of the matter is that nationalism thinks in terms of historical destinies, while racism dreams of eternal contaminations, transmitted from the origins of time through an endless sequence of loathsome copulations: outside history. Niggers are, thanks to the invisible tar-brush, forever niggers; Jews, the seed of Abraham forever Jews, no matter what passports they carry or what languages they speak and read.¹¹¹

Little wonder then that Groulx appealed to history for French Canadians' "right to survive." Further, the above passage indicates that Groulx virtually equated the *survivance* with upholding minority rights in the face of racism. This makes sense when one remembers that Groulx addressed this letter to Franco-Americans who at the turn of the twentieth century largely lived in the "Little Canadas"¹¹² of New England towns

¹¹⁰ With regard to social Darwinism economic historian E. J. Hobsbawm notes: "The survival of the fittest could also be indicated, and indeed ensured, by the conquest of inferior races and people." (E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914*, p. 254).

Robert Leach states that such latter nineteenth-century figures as Herbert Spencer and Arthur Gobineau "were apologists for imperialism and racial differences. They developed the notion of the superiority of the white race as a natural concomitant of the 'survival of the fittest' in a world of cultural clash. Imperialism, with the white man at the top was a *natural* outcome of their mental, physical and cultural achievements." (R. Leach, *Political Ideologies*, p. 20).

¹¹¹ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 149.

¹¹² " 'Petits Canadas' " (Yves Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 32; see also pp. 33-37, 419-425, 486-491).

See also Claire Quintal, "Les institutions franco-américaines: pertes et progrès," in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 64; Robert G. LeBlanc, "A Critical Survey of Recent Geographical Research on la Franco-Américanie," in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 110; C. Stewart Doty, "Franco-American History Projects in the State of Maine," in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 167; Robert B. Perreault, "Nourir son âme ou nourrir son estomac?" in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 259; Jeanne Valois, "Les tisserands du pouvoir: rêve ou réalité," in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 292.

See also Yves Roby, "Émigrés canadiens-français, Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et images de la société américaine," in Y. Lamonde, G. Bouchard, eds., *Québécois et Américains*, pp. 131, 135, 151.

where they constituted “ghettos,”¹¹³ and local inhabitants called Franco-Americans ‘the Jews of New England’¹¹⁴ as well as ‘the Chinese of the eastern States.’¹¹⁵ Persistently subjected to scorn and discrimination¹¹⁶ like their fellows in Canada outside Quebec,

¹¹³ New Hampshire writer Robert B. Perreault thus refers to Gilberte Lesmerises-Ouellette qui, “née à Manchester en 1912, a vécu la majeure partie de sa vie dans le Petit Canada de sa ville natale.” (R. B. Perreault, “Nourrir son âme ou nourrir son estomac?” in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 259-260).

With regard to the Franco-American communities which mushroomed in and around New England manufacturing centers during the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century, Yves Roby observes:

Ces derniers sont suffisamment nombreux dans certaines rues ou pâtés de maisons pour donner une image française à tout le quartier. Ils forment ce que les Américains nomment des ‘quartiers français,’ ce que l’historien Jay P. Dolan appelle des ‘ghettos culturels’ et non des ‘ghettos résidentiels’ et que nous connaissons sous le nom de ‘Petits Canadas.’ (Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 32).

In reference to the urban, industrial centers of New England where Franco-Americans lived geographer Robert G. LeBlanc notes:

As with other ethnic groups, French-Canadian migrants were grafted onto the mass culture of the new industrial city. The ‘Petits Canadas’ of mill towns did, in fact, represent distinctive ethnic space but differed little in general appearance from other ethnic neighborhoods beyond the use of signs and the large number, size and the architectural style of ecclesiastical buildings. (R. G. LeBlanc, “A Critical Survey of Recent Geographical Research on *la Franco-Américanie*,” in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 110).

See also Claire Quintal, “Les institutions franco-américaines: pertes et progrès,” in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 77.

¹¹⁴ Janice Farnham, Bruce Bradley, “French-Canadian Catholics in the United States,” in Michael Glazier, Thomas J. Shelley, eds., *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, p. 550.

¹¹⁵ Janice Farnham, Bruce Bradley, “French-Canadian Catholics in the United States,” in Michael Glazier, Thomas J. Shelley, eds., *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, p. 350. Claire Quintal elaborates on this sobriquet: “Les Franco-Américains se virent affublés de l’épithète ‘Chinois de l’Est’ parce que, comme les Chinois, et mieux que d’autres groupes ethniques, ils gagnèrent, pendant quelques générations, le pari de maintenir leur langue maternelle et leurs valeurs traditionnelles.” (C. Quintal, “Les institutions franco-américaines: pertes et progrès,” in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 78). Franco-Americans in fact often found themselves deprecated on both sides of the border as Yves Roby points out: “Lâches, imprévoyants, traîtres, déserteurs, renégats, Chinois des États de l’est, suppôts du pape, voilà quelques-unes des épithètes que les élites québécoises et américaines attribuent aux Canadiens français émigrés en Nouvelle-Angleterre.” (Y. Roby, *Les Francos-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 39). See also Normand Lafleur, *Les ‘Chinois’ de l’Est ou la vie quotidienne des Québécois émigrés aux Etats-Unis de 1840 à nos jours*. Montréal: Leméac, 1981.

¹¹⁶ Yves Roby summarizes one perspective on the early twentieth-century Franco-American experience of prejudice and its long-term effects:

Un système complexe de discrimination et une politique de désinformation sont mis en place au début du XX^e siècle pour préserver le *statu quo* pour couper les Franco-Américains de leur culture et de leur langue et pour les dépouiller de leur identité. Des milliers et des milliers d’élèves à travers le Maine affirment avoir été punis parce qu’ils osaient parler français en dehors de la classe, avoir été l’objet de moqueries à cause de leur maîtrise imparfaite de l’anglais...

Groulx readily conflated the cause of Franco-Americans with that of French Canadians so that for him their fortunes seemed inextricably tied one to the other, as the above letter illustrates.

Not merely by correspondence, but also through first-hand experience, Groulx acquired a familiarity with Franco-Americans' circumstances. During the summer of 1910 he briefly assumed some pastoral duties at the thriving 'Little Canada' of Central Falls, Rhode Island.¹¹⁷ Here Edmond de Nevers (1862-1906)¹¹⁸ spent his final years after

Les conséquences de cette discrimination systématique sont multiples et dramatiques. Elle a poussé quantité de jeunes à renoncer à leur langue, à désertir leur groupe et même à changer de nom. Pour survivre comme groupe, les Franco-Américains se sont réfugiés dans les Petits Canadas où ils tentent de se faire oublier. (Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 490-491). See also pp. 62-72 concerning discrimination against Franco-Americans in the latter nineteenth century.

With reference to Peter Woolfson's publication *Franco-Americans in Vermont: A Civil Rights Perspective* (1983), sociologist Madeleine Giguère states: "Woolfson's discussion of the invisibility of the French in the history books and their negative stereotyping in Vermont literature as well as their negative image in the eyes of some Vermonters documents what many French believed they had experienced in other parts of New England." (M. Giguère, "Recent and Current Sociological and Anthropological Research on Franco-Americans," in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 92).

In reference to the leadership of the Franco-American community at the turn of the twentieth century geographer Robert G. LeBlanc affirms, "The elite failed to gauge accurately the unwritten agenda of America with respect to its immigrant groups. Occasional charity or indifference was replaced by unmistakable animosity after World War I. (R. G. LeBlanc, "A Critical Survey of Recent Geographical Research on *la Franco-Américanie*," in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 117).

Writing in 1945, against the backdrop of WWII, historian Mason Wade, a native of New Hampshire, obliquely criticized Franco-Americans and French Canadians for long failing to integrate fully into mainstream North American society: "These minority groups, which in the past have shown a tendency to stand apart and preserve their separateness from English-speaking North Americans, are thus of common concern to all Americans, whether citizens of Canada or the United States." (M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 13; see also pp. 14, 179).

Nine years later, Wade signalled the encroachment of French-speaking Catholics from Canada in "New England, a region whose history has many analogies with that of Quebec and one which within the last century has become almost as French as Quebec has become English." (M. Wade, *The French Canadians: 1760-1967*, v. 1: 1760-1911, pp. xiv-xv).

¹¹⁷ See Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 33, 159, 161, 245, 247. See also Armand Chartier, "La situation littéraire chez les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre à la fin du XX^e siècle," in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 47; Yves Frenette, Yves Roby, "Guide du chercheur en études franco-américaines: un projet," in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 156.

¹¹⁸ Adopting the pseudonym Edmond de Nevers in 1893 when he published his first book, Abraham-Edmond Boisvert wrote on economic and political matters as well as translated works by Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) and Henrik Ibsen. Born in 1828, Ibsen died on May 23, 1906, some five weeks after Boisvert who latterly lived with his father and siblings in Central Falls, Rhode Island, where he died on Easter

publishing “one of the foremost essays in contemporary Quebec literature,”¹¹⁹ *L'Âme américaine* (1900),¹²⁰ a two-volume work that Groulx earnestly perused¹²¹ since it addressed the drive to “Americanize, that is to say, Anglicize French-Canadian communities”¹²² in the United States. Boasting “the oldest Franco-American parish, by a few days, in all of Rhode Island,”¹²³ the well-developed French Catholic community of Central Falls offered Groulx the possibility to participate in the activities of lay

Sunday, April 15, 1906. See François Ricard, “Edmond de Nevers: essai de biographie conjecturale,” in Paul Wyczynski, François Gallays, Sylvain Simard, eds., *L'Essai et la prose d'idées au Québec*, pp. 359-363, 366. See also “Edmond de Nevers,” in Réginald Hamel, John Hare, Paul Wyczynski, *Dictionnaire des auteurs de langue française en Amérique du nord*, pp. 1028-1029.

¹¹⁹ “L'un des meilleurs essais de la littérature québécoise de son époque.” (Sylvain Simard, “L'Âme américaine,” in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 33). Regarding the significance of *L'Âme américaine* among de Nevers' works, literary scholar François Ricard affirms: “Il s'agit, à n'en pas douter, de ce que de Nevers considérait comme son maître-livre, l'expression la plus vaste et la plus achevée de sa pensée, l'oeuvre qui donnait son sens à toutes les recherches studieuses auxquelles il avait consacré sa vie.” (F. Ricard, “Edmond de Nevers,” in P. Wyczynski, F. Gallays, S. Simard, eds., *L'Essai et la prose d'idées au Québec*, p. 361).

¹²⁰ Regarding the articulation of de Nevers' thought in relation to that of the historian and literary figure abbé Henri-Raymond Casgrain (1831-1904), Manon Brunet states:

La ‘France américaine’ de Casgrain rencontre en tout point...le rêve américain français d'Edmond de Nevers. Depuis Paris, de Nevers poursuivra dans le même sens sa réflexion, avec son ouvrage sur *L'Âme américaine* publié en 1900...après avoir tout de même séjourné quelque temps aux États-Unis et avant de revenir au Québec après une vie passée essentiellement en dehors de ses frontières. (M. Brunet, “H. R. Casgrain, Français d'Amérique,” in G. Bouchard, Y. Lamonde, eds., *Québécois et Américains*, p. 114).

¹²¹ Groulx's copy of *L'Âme américaine* remains at the CRLG and bears his signature and annotations.

¹²² “d'américaniser, c'est-à-dire d'angliciser les populations canadiennes-françaises.” (S. Simard, “L'Âme américaine,” in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 33). Quoting de Nevers' work with regard to French-Canadian assimilation in American society, Yves Roby observes:

En entrant aux États-Unis, les Canadiens français ne peuvent s'empêcher de constater, comme le souligne Edmond de Nevers dans *L'Âme américaine*, ‘que tout ce qui est américain et de langue anglaise est supérieur et par contre, que tout ce qui n'est pas américain est inférieur.’ Ce constat en amène plusieurs à vouloir se hisser au niveau de leurs hôtes; ils s'assimilent rapidement. (Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 67; see also p. 106).

See also Yves Roby, “Émigrés canadiens-français, Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et images de la société américaine,” in G. Bouchard, Y. Lamonde, eds., *Québécois et Américains*, p. 141.

¹²³ “la plus ancienne paroisse franco-américaine, à quelques jours près de tout le Rhode Island.” (Claire Quintal, “Les institutions franco-américaines,” in D. Louder, ed., *Le Québec et les francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 63)--reference to Notre-Dame-du-Sacré-Coeur in Central Falls. See also p. 64, 82 n. 18, 83 n. 22).

associations such as the *Dames de Sainte-Anne*¹²⁴ for married women and the *Enfants de Marie*¹²⁵ for girls. Groulx's memoirs encapsulate his Rhode Island sojourn as he fondly recalled the word play of transliterating 'Central' into 'Saint-Trelle'¹²⁶:

This marked my first contact with Franco-Americans. They still spoke French in New England, albeit a French starting to deteriorate. Parish priests took a keen interest in French *survivance* and most of the lay leaders showed just as much concern. Yet above all I met workaday people of courage at Central Falls – this little town by then known as *Saint-Trelle* among our compatriots who have a penchant for baptizing everything with a Christian name! I had the opportunity to engage in pastoral ministry: I delivered sermons at a retreat for the *Dames de Sainte-Anne*, and at another for the *Enfants de Marie*. I heartily accepted to do this because it has always seemed to me that the grave misfortune of priests at classical colleges lies in the forced abstention from too many of our priestly tasks.¹²⁷

For Groulx then the *survivance* transcended geopolitical boundaries¹²⁸ and represented a principle of solidarity binding together all North American French Catholics¹²⁹ in such a

¹²⁴ Regarding such associations Janice Farnham and Bruce Bradley note: "Parish organizations for women and men – the *Ligue du Sacré Coeur* and the *Dames de Ste.-Anne*—resembled one another, gave uniformity to parish life throughout New England, and encouraged institutional values." (J. Farnham, B. Bradley, "French-Canadian Catholics in the United States," in M. Glazier, T. J. Shelley, eds., *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, p. 551). See also Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 83, 409, 424.

¹²⁵ See Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 83, 104, 409, 424.

¹²⁶ Groulx paid careful attention to his compatriots' spoken and written French, on which he often published brief remarks in a more positive vein than that of other contemporary commentators. Thus, with regard to Lionel Montal, a pseudonym Groulx employed when writing on such matters, Paul Daoust states: "De rares chroniqueurs se montrent tout de même plus respectueux de la langue de leurs compatriotes: Montal, Daviault, Laurence et de Chantal, notamment." (P. Daoust, "Les chroniques sur la langue," in M. Plourde, ed., *Le français au Québec*, p. 200).

¹²⁷ "Ce fut mon premier contact avec les Franco-Américains. On parlait encore français en Nouvelle-Angleterre, même si ce français commençait à s'abâtardir. Les curés s'intéressaient fort à la survivance française; la plupart des chefs laïques ne se montraient pas moins vigilants. Mais surtout quels braves gens j'ai rencontrés à Central Falls, petite ville qui était devenue, de par la tendance de nos compatriotes à tout baptiser chrétiennement: *Saint-Trelle*! J'eus l'occasion de faire du ministère sacerdotal; je prêchai une retraite aux Dames de Sainte-Anne, une autre aux Enfants de Marie. Je m'y laissai prendre facilement, la grande misère des prêtres de collège m'ayant toujours paru l'abstention forcée de beaucoup trop de nos fonctions de prêtres." (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 341-342).

¹²⁸ Groulx thus exemplified a contemporary perspective because during the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century "le sentiment national et identitaire des Canadiens français recouvre l'ensemble de

way that he not only identified with Franco-Americans but actually considered them “compatriots,” as the above passage evinces.

In this spirit of what the present writer terms ‘*survivance* solidarity,’ Groulx soon turned his attention to Franco-Ontarians, and with good reason. Paralleling French-Canadian emigration to the United States, an influx of francophone Catholics, largely from Quebec,¹³⁰ took place during the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century,¹³¹ so

l’espace canadien et s’étend jusqu’aux États-Unis pour rejoindre la diaspora.” (“Le français: un statut compromis,” in M. Plourde, ed., *Le français au Québec*, p. 137).

¹²⁹ Here too Groulx epitomized some of his contemporaries’ viewpoint. Regarding the cumulative effect of language and education conflicts outside Quebec, coupled at the same time with heavy emigration from it, Fernand Harvey affirms:

Une autre conséquence de ces conflits scolaires a été de repenser les paramètres de l’identité canadienne-française, qui correspondait jusque-là plus ou moins aux limites de la province de Québec. Or, la multiplication des conflits scolaires dans les autres provinces, à laquelle venait s’ajouter la migration des Canadiens français aux États-Unis, en Ontario et dans l’Ouest canadien, a fait prendre conscience aux élites canadiennes-françaises de la fin du XIX^e siècle et du début du XX^e de l’importance des minorités francophones à l’extérieur du Québec ... Un sentiment de solidarité culturelle et linguistique s’est donc développé, lequel a débordé les frontières du Québec pour s’étendre à l’ensemble du Canada français; ce dernier comprenait même tout naturellement les Franco-Américains. (F. Harvey, “Le français menacé,” in M. Plourde, ed., *Le français au Québec*, p. 146).

¹³⁰ See Fernand Ouellet, “L’évolution de la présence francophone en Ontario,” in Cornelius J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 162. In reference to emigration from Québec to Ontario during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Pierre Savard affirms:

Les vagues d’immigration qui déferlent du Québec sur l’Ontario actuel à partir du milieu du siècle, viennent renforcer les établissements francophones. En vingt ans, la population des comtés d’Essex et de Kent double grâce à l’apport démographique du Québec. Les comtés limotrophes du Québec voient aussi leur population francophone augmenter par la natalité, mais plus encore par l’immigration québécoise.” (P. Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 232).

Regarding the preponderance of Quebec-based religious communities which established branches among Franco-Ontarians, Pierre Savard states: “On ne saurait exagérer l’influence des congrégations religieuses originaires du Québec dans la conservation des liens étroits entre les Franco-Ontariens et le Québec. En effet, la plupart des communautés qui ont oeuvré en Ontario étaient d’origine québécoise.” (P. Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 243).

¹³¹ See Fernand Ouellet, “L’évolution de la présence francophone en Ontario: une perspective économique et sociale,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, pp. 133-134, 162-163. Robert Choquette observes: “les Franco-Ontariens commencent à s’afficher nombreux après 1880, alors que comptant plus de 100,000 personnes, ils dépassent 5% de la population de la province. Le nombre de Franco-Ontariens aura doublé trente ans plus tard.” (R. Choquette, “L’Église de l’Ontario français,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 209). Pierre Savard notes that in 1885 historian Benjamin Sulte (1841-1923) called attention to the fact that Franco-Ontarians had come to outnumber Acadians. (See P. Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 233). René Dionne points out the exponential

that by 1910 Franco-Ontarians numbered over 200,000.¹³² Furthermore, their heavy concentration in the eastern part of the province,¹³³ bordering the French Catholic matrix of North America, led some to entertain the notion of a "Franco-Ontarian homeland."¹³⁴ Spurred by their rapidly swelling ranks and emboldened by their proximity to Quebec, as well as their strong presence in the Ottawa Valley which of course included the federal capital, Franco-Ontarians sought the official "recognition of French education in Ontario"¹³⁵ and to this end founded the Association canadienne-française d'éducation de l'Ontario (ACFÉO) in 1910.¹³⁶

growth of the Franco-Ontarian population : "Ils n'étaient que 102,000 en 1881; trente ans plus tard, ils sont plus de 200,000 parmi 2,500,000 Ontariens." (R. Dionne, "La littérature franco-ontarienne: esquisse historique (1610-1987)," in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 356).

¹³² See Fernand Ouellet, "L'évolution de la présence francophone en Ontario," in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 135. See also Gaétan Gervais, "L'Ontario français (1821-1910)," in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 49; Robert Choquette, "L'Église de l'Ontario français," in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 203; Margaret Prang, *N. W. Rowell: Ontario Nationalist*, p. 146.

¹³³ See Fernand Ouellet, "L'évolution de la présence francophone en Ontario," in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 134-135, 159, 162-163. See also Pierre Savard, "Relations avec le Québec," in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 232; Roger Graham, "Through the First World War," in J. M. S. Careless, R. Craig Brown, eds., *The Canadians: 1867-1967*, p. 186.

¹³⁴ "un pays franco-ontarien." The paragraph reads as follows:

S'il existe, comme on l'a prétendu, un pays franco-ontarien, dont les traits pourraient correspondre à ceux diffusés par l'imagerie traditionnelle, c'est d'abord dans l'Est de l'Ontario qu'on devrait pouvoir le reconnaître. Car, dans cette partie de la province adjacente au Québec, les Franco-Ontariens ont pu, avec le temps, sur une portion de ce territoire où le caractère catholique de l'ensemble de la population n'a cessé de se renforcer, jouir d'une certaine suprématie numérique. (Fernand Ouellet, "L'évolution de la présence francophone en Ontario," in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 159).

Regarding the historic aspirations and endeavors of the Franco-Ontarian community Pierre Savard observes: "The great majority of Franco-Ontarians sought to recreate in Ontario their traditional cultural institutions – francophone Catholic parishes and French schools, co-operatives, and *caisses populaires*. (P. Savard, "Franco-Ontarians," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 909).

¹³⁵ "la reconnaissance de l'enseignement français en Ontario." (Gaétan Gervais, "L'Ontario français: 1821-1910," in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 112; see also pp. 103, 111).

¹³⁶ Marilyn Barber writes, "In 1910, after their numbers had grown, Franco-Ontarians organized l'Association canadienne française d'éducation d'Ontario to promote French-language interests." (M. Barber, "Ontario Schools Question," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1721). See also Pierre Savard, "Franco-Ontarians," in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 909; Gaétan Gervais, "L'Ontario français: 1821-1910," in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Francos-Ontariens*, pp. 49, 111-112.

In a similar vein René Dionne notes that Franco-Ontarians "fondent à Ottawa, en 1910, l'Association canadienne-française d'éducation de l'Ontario; elle veillera à la qualité de l'enseignement et à la défense

However, like their fellow French-speaking Catholics in New England, Franco-Ontarians aroused suspicion and hostility in their adopted home. The accelerated arrival of so many francophones assumed the guise of a “‘French invasion’,”¹³⁷ especially because they “showed an alarming disposition to continue speaking French.”¹³⁸ In the eyes of many these newcomers appeared a menace to “Ontario’s vision of itself as an English-speaking province.”¹³⁹ Moreover, contemporary anglophone Protestants by and large equated the spread of the French language with that of Roman Catholic authority.¹⁴⁰ This seemed all the more plausible because the Roman Catholic hierarchy and its clergy played a pivotal role in the establishment, organization, and activities of the ACFÉO.¹⁴¹ Nor did it help matters that Quebec clergy guided and encouraged their charges to set up French-speaking Catholic communities in areas of eastern Ontario first settled by

des droits linguistiques du groupe.” (R. Dionne, “La littérature franco-ontarienne: esquisse historique, 1610-1987,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 357).

¹³⁷ “‘invasion française’.” (Robert Choquette, “L’Église de l’Ontario français,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 212). See also p. 209 where with regard to the Franco-Ontarian endeavor to establish French-language and French-education rights, Choquette states: “Ces efforts de restauration seront perçus par la grande majorité des anglophones, catholiques et protestants, comme synonymes de conquête et d’invasion françaises.” (R. Choquette, “L’Église de l’Ontario français,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 209).

¹³⁸ Charles P. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict: A History of Canadian External Policies*, v. 1: 1867-1921, p. 170. Gaétan Gervais notes that Franco-Ontarians’ continued use of their mother tongue proved particularly vexing and rendered them an “objet de suspicion à cause de sa langue qui l’empêchait de s’assimiler pleinement à la société ontarienne.” (G. Gervais, “L’Ontario français: 1821-1910,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 49).

¹³⁹ Margaret Prang, *N. W. Rowell: Ontario Nationalist*, p. 155. See also p. 147, which quotes Newton Wesley Rowell (1867-1941), leader of the Liberal opposition in the Ontario legislature during the debate over bilingual schools, “‘this is an English-speaking Province and an English-speaking Province it will remain’.”

¹⁴⁰ See Margaret Prang, *N. W. Rowell*, p. 148.

¹⁴¹ Robert Choquette notes: “Quand vient le moment de fonder l’Association canadienne-française d’éducation de l’Ontario (ACFÉO) en 1910, le clergé y occupe plusieurs postes, et ce sont les paroisses qui servent de points de ralliement pour les Franco-Ontariens à la grandeur de la province. La hiérarchie catholique influence le choix tant du président de l’ACFÉO que de ses officiers, lesquels seront souvent des religieux.” (R. Choquette, “L’Église de l’Ontario français,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, pp. 216-217).

predominantly Protestant anglophones, whom they replaced.¹⁴² Little wonder therefore that the “rapid expansion of the Franco-Ontarian population had raised the fears of Ontario Orangemen that their Protestant province was threatened.”¹⁴³ Even those attracted to the ecumenism epitomized by the Edinburgh missionary conference of 1910¹⁴⁴ considered these francophone, Catholic incursions into Ontario an offense to the “‘Protestant conscience’.”¹⁴⁵

Given what historian Margaret Prang calls this “Ontario nationalist”¹⁴⁶ mindset, one understands how “the use of French in public life and in schools was almost completely eliminated”¹⁴⁷ in Ontario by the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, in 1910 when the ACFÉO “demanded improvement”¹⁴⁸ in French-language education so as

¹⁴² Fernand Ouellet observes: “Ainsi, colonisée au début par des immigrants anglophones d’origines diverses, protestants pour la plupart, la portion orientale de l’Est ontarien fut progressivement conquise par les immigrants francophones venus surtout du Québec. Son évolution...reflète donc dans une certaine mesure un mouvement plus large, certainement encouragé par le clergé, qui englobe aussi bien les cantons de l’Est que ceux de l’Ouest québécois. (F. Ouellet, “L’évolution de la présence francophone en Ontario,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 162).

¹⁴³ R. Cook, “The Triumph and Trials of Materialism,” in Craig Brown, ed., *The Illustrated History of Canada*, p. 413.

¹⁴⁴ See Brian Clarke, “English-speaking Canada from 1854,” in Terrence Murphy, Robert Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, p. 342, which notes that the Edinburgh missionary conference of 1910 marked “the beginning of the international ecumenical movement.” See also Owen Chadwick, “Great Britain and Europe,” in John McManners, ed., *The Oxford History of Christianity*, p. 382; Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, p. 908.

¹⁴⁵ Margaret Prang, *N. W. Rowell*, p. 155.

¹⁴⁶ The complete sentence reads as follows: “Like many Ontarians, Rowell possessed an ‘Ontario nationalist’ dream of western Canada in which the public schools and the Protestant churches would Canadianize and Christianize the European immigrants to create beyond the Great Lakes a ‘new Ontario’.” (M. Prang, *N. W. Rowell*, p. 69; see also pp. 47, 56-57, 60-62, 64-67).

¹⁴⁷ Roberto Perin, “French-Speaking Canada from 1840,” in Terrence Murphy, Roberto Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, p. 203. Pierre Savard notes the steps leading up to these measures: “La crise dite du Règlement 17 porte essentiellement sur la langue d’enseignement à l’école primaire publique, et elle a des prodromes au XIX^e siècle. En 1885, l’anglais est décrété langue obligatoire en Ontario. En 1890, l’anglais doit être la langue d’enseignement sauf où la chose est impossible.” (P. Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 234).

¹⁴⁸ John Webster Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era: the First Century of Confederation*, p. 117. With reference to a Franco-Ontarian conference held January 18-20, 1910, and its representations to the premier of Ontario, James Whitney (1843-1914), Gaétan Gervais observes: “Au terme de leur réunion, les délégués créèrent l’Association canadienne-française d’éducation de l’Ontario (ACFÉO), dont l’exécutif rencontra

to redress this state of affairs and the concomitant assimilation of Franco-Ontarians,¹⁴⁹ the Conservative provincial government, “responding more to political than educational considerations,”¹⁵⁰ promulgated Regulation 17 (1912-1927) which imposed further restrictions on the use of French in Ontario schools.¹⁵¹ On one hand anglophone Ontarians deemed such steps necessary to stem the tide of the French “silent invasion”¹⁵² so that “the English language will be preserved,”¹⁵³ as a leading Orangeman put it. On the other hand, Regulation 17 sounded a rallying-cry for many francophones in Quebec because after the setbacks of the Manitoba and North-West Schools Question this measure seemed to signal yet “a new retrenchment of the French language, but this time in the neighboring province.”¹⁵⁴ Indeed, the ensuing culture “war”¹⁵⁵ over Regulation 17 took

Whitney dès le mois suivant pour demander la reconnaissance de l'enseignement français en Ontario.” (G. Gervais, “L’Ontario français,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 112).

¹⁴⁹ Robert Choquette notes with regard to such initiatives as that of the ACFÉO : “Un tel projet équivaut à renverser la vapeur du mouvement assimilateur... Ces efforts de restauration seront perçus par la grande majorité des anglophones, catholiques et protestants, comme synonymes de conquête et d’invasion française... Ainsi ce qui est ‘survivance’ pour les Francos-Ontariens devient ‘invasion française’ aux yeux des anglophones.” (R. Choquette, “L’Église de l’Ontario français,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 209).

¹⁵⁰ Marilyn Barber, “Ontario Schools Question,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1721.

¹⁵¹ Concerning its restrictions Pierre Savard states, “L’adoption en 1912 du Règlement 17 ... limite l’usage du français comme langue d’enseignement et de communication aux deux premières années du primaire.” (P. Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 235). With regard to Regulation 17 René Dionne notes that to all intents and purposes, “Ce règlement, en somme, rendait inefficace, sinon inexistant, l’enseignement du français à l’école primaire.” (R. Dionne, “La littérature franco-ontarienne,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 357).

¹⁵² “‘invasion silencieuse’.” (Pierre Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 233).

¹⁵³ Margaret Prang, *N. W. Rowell*, p. 147. In reference to the growing number of Franco-Ontarians and their developing religious and educational infrastructure at the turn of the twentieth century, René Dionne notes:

Ils régissent quelques diocèses catholiques et président à la direction des écoles séparées d’Ottawa. L’Université d’Ottawa est redevenue bilingue en 1901, après avoir été unilingue anglaise depuis 1874. Le triomphalisme ‘wasp’ de la fin du XIX^e siècle ne peut accepter une telle situation. Les orangistes accusent les francophones d’être plus soumis au pape de Rome qu’aux gouvernants de leur pays. Les anglo-protestants font souvent preuve de francophobie. Les Irlandais catholiques, invoquant l’intérêt de la foi, tentent d’angliciser leurs coreligionnaires. (R. Dionne, “La littérature franco-ontarienne,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 356).

¹⁵⁴ “un nouveau recul du français, cette fois dans la province voisine.” (Pierre Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 234).

place at the door of Quebec due to the substantial Franco-Ontarian population in the Ottawa Valley, which proved an especially bitter battlefield because it lay “under the very nose of a federal government that did not dare to use its power to disallow a provincial law so as to secure justice for the minority.”¹⁵⁶

Groulx kept a close eye on the Ontario Schools Question which largely shaped contemporary French-Canadian nationalism and Groulx’s growing role therein. For while the struggle over Regulation 17 constituted “the founding event of the Franco-Ontarian identity,”¹⁵⁷ it also gave rise to an “unprecedented solidarity movement between Franco-Ontarians and Franco-Québécois.”¹⁵⁸ Thus Bourassa’s newly-established newspaper *Le Devoir* (1910) immediately espoused the cause of the ACFÉO¹⁵⁹ and barely a month after its inaugural issue supplied Groulx with what proved a lifelong vehicle of written expression.¹⁶⁰ At the same time opposition to Regulation 17 achieved a consensus among French-Canadian politicians that transcended party lines, something neither the Manitoba nor North-West Schools Question had succeeded in doing.¹⁶¹ Not coincidentally, the Société du parler français au Canada, under the auspices of Université Laval, held the

¹⁵⁵ The full sentence reads as follows : “La ‘guerre’ éclate; elle durera jusqu’à l’amendement dudit règlement en 1927.” (René Dionne, “La littérature franco-ontarienne,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 357).

¹⁵⁶ “sous les yeux d’un gouvernement fédéral qui n’ose pas utiliser son pouvoir de désaveu d’une loi provinciale pour faire rendre justice à la minorité.” (René Dionne, “La littérature franco-ontarienne,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 357).

¹⁵⁷ “l’événement fondateur de l’identité franco-ontarienne.” (Pierre Savard, “Les Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 234).

¹⁵⁸ “un mouvement de solidarité sans précédent entre Franco-Ontariens et Franco-Québécois.” (Pierre Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 235).

¹⁵⁹ See Robert Lahaise, “ ‘Ce siècle avait dix ans ...’ 1910-1939,” in R. Lahaise, ed., *Le Devoir*, pp. 24-25. Pierre Savard notes in reference to Henri Bourassa : “Son journal, *Le Devoir*, fondé en 1910, épouse aussitôt la cause de l’Association d’éducation française de l’Ontario.” (P. Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, pp. 234-235).

¹⁶⁰ See Robert Lahaise, “ ‘Ce siècle avait dix ans ...’ 1910-1939,” in R. Lahaise, ed., *Le Devoir: reflet du Québec au 20^e siècle*, pp. 20, 51n. 15.

¹⁶¹ See Pierre Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 237.

first Congrès de la langue française at Quebec City in 1912, the same year as the promulgation of Regulation 17. Bringing together “the most prominent figures of the day among intellectuals, politicians, and members of the clergy from Quebec and French Canada,”¹⁶² a public rally of 25,000 capped this convention. Here Groulx delivered an address that in effect launched his career as one of the foremost contemporary French-Canadian orators, and more to the point, a nationalist leader.¹⁶³ On the heels of Regulation 17 the Jesuit priest Joseph-Papin Archambault¹⁶⁴ (1880-1966) founded the Ligue des droits du français in March, 1913, with avowed purpose of promoting the use of French in business, industry, and the public domain at large.¹⁶⁵ From its inception Groulx wrote articles for the *Almanach*¹⁶⁶ of the Ligue des droits du français and its sequel as of 1917, *L’Action française*.

Moreover, in 1917 Groulx published one of his first pieces of fiction, a vignette entitled “Le ‘sou’ des écoles ontariennes,”¹⁶⁷ which dealt with the grass-roots campaign launched that year in Quebec to fund the French-language education of “the persecuted

¹⁶² “des membres du clergé, des intellectuels et les hommes politiques en provenance du Québec et du Canada français parmi les plus en vue de leur époque.” (Fernand Harvey, “Le français menacé,” in M. Plourde, ed., *Le français au Québec*, p. 148).

¹⁶³ See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 191, 197-198. See also Juliette Lalonde-Rémillard, “Chronologie,” in Maurice Filion, ed., *Hommage à Lionel Groulx*, p. 214; Pierre Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 235.

¹⁶⁴ See “Joseph-Papin Archambault,” in Reginal Hamel, John Hare, Paul Wyczynski, *Dictionnaire des auteurs de langue française en Amérique du nord*, p. 29. See also Michael D. Behiels, “Joseph-Papin Archambault,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 101.

¹⁶⁵ See Fernand Harvey, “Le français menacé,” in M. Plourde, ed., *Le français au Québec*, p. 149.

¹⁶⁶ See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 194.

¹⁶⁷ See L. Groulx, *Les rapaillages*, pp. 25-31. Maurice Lemire encapsulates the scenario of this literary cameo: “‘Le Sou des écoles’ rappelle une séance présentée à l’école du rang pour recueillir de l’argent au profit des écoles françaises d’Ontario.” (M. Lemire, “Les rapaillages – récits et nouvelles de l’abbé Lionel Groulx,” in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 940).

children of Ontario”¹⁶⁸ by collecting the “penny for French survivance.”¹⁶⁹ In 1922 Groulx developed this theme at length in his maiden novel, *L'appel de la race*. Appropriately set in the real life flash point of the Ottawa Valley,¹⁷⁰ this book specifically referred to the founding of the ACFÉO,¹⁷¹ the government of premier James Whitney (1843-1914), which issued Regulation 17,¹⁷² and the subsequent “Ontario schools conflict.”¹⁷³ Through this “principal literary work of the period”¹⁷⁴ Groulx articulated a critique of the supposed “Anglo-Saxon superiority”¹⁷⁵ which he believed motivated the drive to circumscribe language and education rights of the francophone Catholic minorities in Ontario and elsewhere in contemporary English Canada. Not content with a fictional account of these matters, Groulx pursued them in a scholarly vein through a detailed study of Franco-Ontarian education.¹⁷⁶ He focused squarely on the Ontario Schools Question and tellingly

¹⁶⁸ “les enfants persécutés de l’Ontario.” (L. Groulx, *Les rapaillages*, p. 29). Gaétan Gervais mentions another contemporary expression commonly employed for the Franco-Ontarian cause in the wake of Regulation 17: “They participated in the campaign for the ‘wounded of Ontario’.” – “ils participèrent à la campagne pour les ‘blessés de l’Ontario’.” (G. Gervais, “L’Ontario français,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 111).

¹⁶⁹ “sou de la survivance française” (“Chronologie,” in M. Plourde, ed., *Le français au Québec*, p. 511).

¹⁷⁰ Groulx opens *L'appel de la race* with this geographical description for the controversy surrounding Regulation 17: “De la fenêtre de son couvent de Hull, n’avait-il pas, là-bas, sur l’autre rive de l’Outaouais, comme horizon persistant, la colline parlementaire? Ajoutons qu’en ces derniers temps, les circonstances avaient mêlé l’oblat, de façon très active, au conflit scolaire ontarien.” (Alonié de Lestres, pseudonym of Lionel Groulx, *L'appel de la race*, p. 10).

¹⁷¹ “ils se disaient ‘alarmés’ pour l’avenir du système scolaire catholique, en Ontario, ‘à cause de l’agitation dont la point culminant a été le congrès des Canadiens français tenu à Ottawa en janvier 1910’,” (L. Groulx, *L'appel de la race*, p. 73).

¹⁷² “Après cette singulière déformation des faits, ces personnages se livraient à une démarche non moins singulière: ils déléguaient l’un d’eux auprès de sir James Whitney, premier ministre de l’Ontario, pour lui faire part ‘de leur entière opposition’ aux vœux des congressistes canadiens-français d’Ottawa en manière d’éducation.” (L. Groulx, *L'appel de la race*, p. 73). See also Charles W. Humphries, “Sir James Pliny Whitney,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 2506.

¹⁷³ “la bataille scolaire ontarienne.” (L. Groulx, *L'appel de la race*, p. 73).

¹⁷⁴ “L’oeuvre principale de la période” (René Dionne, “La littérature franco-ontarienne,” in C. J. Jaenen, ed., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 358).

¹⁷⁵ “la supériorité anglo-saxonne.” (L. Groulx, *L'appel de la race*, p. 41).

¹⁷⁶ See L. Groulx, *L’enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2: *les écoles des minorités*, pp. 194-239.

concluded his analysis at the point in 1927 that “the notorious Regulation 17 officially fell null and void.”¹⁷⁷

After addressing the fifth annual assembly of the Fédération catholique franco-américaine¹⁷⁸ in Lowell, Massachusetts and visiting other ‘Little Canadas’ in New England,¹⁷⁹ Groulx penned an article on the state of francophone Catholics in North America. It seemed to him that a demographic centrifugal force inexorably pulled them from the religious, cultural and linguistic axis of Quebec, to the four corners of the North American continent. Writing about Saint John the Baptist Day in June 1922, the year of its first observance as a legal holiday in Quebec,¹⁸⁰ Groulx lamented:

Amidst so many painful truths, this commemoration serves as a profound reminder of the grievous fact that the majority of French Canada’s children live outside their traditional homeland. Emigration has not only decimated us, it has dismembered us. The recent appeal by Franco-Americans reminds us yet again that the children of the diaspora outnumber those at home. Almost two million of our brethren live on the other side of the forty-fifth parallel. This alone provides ample evidence of the irreparable harm

¹⁷⁷ “le fameux Règlement XVII se voyait proprement abrogé.” (L. Groulx, *L’enseignement français au Canada*, v. 2, p. 238).

¹⁷⁸ See Jacques Bassier (pseudonym of Lionel Groulx), “La vie de l’Action française,” in *AF* 8/12 (décembre, 1922): 381.

¹⁷⁹ As editor of *L’Action française* Groulx in fact made a number of trips to the Franco-American ‘Little Canadas’ of New England:

Je fais plusieurs courses en Nouvelle-Angleterre. En 1922 je prononce à Lowell, au Congrès de la Fédération catholique des Sociétés franco-américaines, un discours sur *l’Amitié française en Amérique*, discours mis en brochure et dont les Franco-Américains retiennent 10,000 exemplaires. Je parle une couple de fois à Boston, devant la Société historique franco-américaine, puis à Worcester, à Manchester, Woonsocket. Les chefs de la résistance en Nouvelle-Angleterre me convoquent; ils veulent se renseigner sur le réveil de la province de Québec et sur des moyens d’action d’emprunt possible. (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 2: 75).

Concerning the Fédération catholique franco-américaine see Yves Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 227, 234, 243-246, 248-251, 416 and p. 279n. 298, which refers to Groulx’s address to the Fédération in 1922.

¹⁸⁰ See Richard Jones, “St-Jean-Baptiste Society,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 2077.

of our dismemberment and the weighty responsibilities
incumbent on the French fraternity.¹⁸¹

Unable to deny these demographic realities and unwilling to renounce the myriad French-speaking Catholics outside the fold of Quebec Groulx, following the thought of Edmund de Nevers whom he quoted on the cover page of *L'appel de la race*,¹⁸² enlarged the concept of the French-Canadian nation¹⁸³ from a strictly delineated geopolitical entity to a more fluidly cultural, religious, indeed spiritual fellowship. Groulx in effect reconfigured the nation as an 'imagined community,' to employ the paradigm of scholar Benedict Anderson; 'imagined' because for nationalists such as Groulx "in the minds of each lives the image of their communion;"¹⁸⁴ and a 'community' because for him "the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship."¹⁸⁵

Moreover, Canada's participation in the Boer War (1899-1902), the Naval Bill of 1910, and the conscription crisis of World War I (1917-1918) exacerbated the turmoil.

¹⁸¹ "Entre tant de vérités pénibles, la fête nous remet à l'esprit cette donnée grave que la majorité des fils du Canada français vivent en dehors de l'ancien foyer. L'émigration ne nous a pas seulement décimés, elle nous a démembres. L'appel récent des Franco-Américains est venu après tant de fois nous le rappeler: les fils de la dispersion sont plus nombreux que les fils de la maison. Près de deux millions de nos frères vivent au-delà de la ligne quarante-cinquième. Et cela suffit à marquer le malheur irréparable de nos démembrements et les devoirs rigoureux de notre fraternité française." (L. Groulx, "Les Franco-Américains et Nous," *AF*, June 1922, 7: 362).

Historian Mason Wade, a native of New England, concurred with Groulx's figure: "While there are three and a half million French Canadians in Canada, there are also two million Franco-Americans of Quebec and Acadian stock in the United States." (M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 13; see also p. 179).

Recent scholarship puts the figure one million higher. With regard to the northeastern United States alone, Yves Roby spoke in 2000 of "les quelques trois millions d'Américains d'origine canadienne-française qu'on trouve dans les États du nord-est des États-Unis." (Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 493).

¹⁸² "Chacun des descendants des 65,000 vaincus de 1760 doit compter pour un." Edmond de Nevers." (L. Groulx, *L'appel de la race*, cover page).

¹⁸³ Echoing Edmond de Nevers' *L'avenir du peuple canadien-français* (1896), Yves Roby writes with regard to those French Canadians who left their compatriots for New England: "Ils verront que les émigrés sont des patriotes plus ardents, plus actifs qu'eux-mêmes, qu'ils n'ont pas quitté la patrie, mais l'ont agrandie." (Y. Roby, "Émigrés canadiens-français, Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et images de la société américaine," in G. Bouchard, Y. Lamonde, eds., *Québécois et Américains*, pp. 142-143).

¹⁸⁴ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 6.

¹⁸⁵ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 7.

These were manifestations of larger issues, including the constitutional praxis of Confederation, the clash of imperialism and nationalism, as well as matters of race and religion in latter nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada. Internally, Quebec was hard pressed by aggressive, pervasive industrialism, along with attendant urbanism, which together rent its social fabric. Furthermore, while it demographically hemorrhaged through large scale emigration to the United States, there was an insidious influx of Americana into French-Canadian culture. Indeed writing in 1945 historian Mason Wade noted with reason that “the continental influence of press, radio, movies, and sports, and the special factor of the two million Franco-Americans, have Americanized Quebec more than some of its spokesmen are aware.”¹⁸⁶ Recent scholarship bears out the fact that due to the prolonged flow of French Canadians between their homeland and the northeastern United States, as well as their substantial numbers, they did exercise a strong influence on their compatriots and acted as the thin edge of the wedge for their Americanization.¹⁸⁷ As a result, materialism and secularism loomed larger than ever before. Moreover, Quebec like the rest of the contemporary Western world, was subject to the ideological currents of liberalism, modernism, and socialism. The prominence of Roman Catholicism in French-Canadian society called forth its creative and dynamic, yet orthodox response to French Canada in transition.

1.4 The Primacy of Catholicism

The work of Lionel Groulx attempted to provide a response to these developments through the elaboration of a predominantly religious concept of French-Canadian

¹⁸⁶ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 13.

¹⁸⁷ See Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 21ff; see also Y. Roby, “Émigrés canadiens français, franco-américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et images de la société américaine,” in G. Bouchard, Y. Lamonde, eds., *Québécois et Américains*, pp. 132ff.

nationalism. There were definite reasons for the primacy of Catholicism in Groulx's work. The most obvious explanation, but one not to be taken too lightly, was Groulx's role as a Catholic priest. In 1897 young Groulx wrote in his journal:

Joy must flood the soul and satisfaction fill the heart of soldiers of Truth and defenders of the oppressed. Love only grows stronger as the object of its affection endures pain and suffering. A Pole once cried out '*ubi male, ubi patria*' and with reason, since we never cherish our country more than when it faces misery and hardship. In today's world where ignorance and abuse assail the Truth from all sides while oppression holds captive most human beings, how noble to dedicate one's life to their defense. Many difficulties and disappointments lie ahead but the cause of Truth and the oppressed represents that of God, in whose almighty name one can surely find all the spiritual strength, moral courage, and ardent faith they need. When I see my beloved Canada increasingly engulfed by this torrent called modern liberalism, and witness the blatant persecution carried out against the Church in Canada, I wish I had enough daring to go into the ring and join those few fighting to secure the sacred rights of my nation and religion.¹⁸⁸

Groulx never departed from this resolution as a nineteen year old idealist. In his last years, when interviewed by *Aujourd'hui Québec*, Groulx boldly stated the religious *raison d'être* of his endeavors:

I am a nationalist, I told them – and I can still see the consternation on their faces – I am a nationalist not despite my priesthood, but because of the priesthood, since my nationalism serves a spiritual end....

¹⁸⁸ "Qu'il doit y avoir de la joie pour l'âme, du contentement pour le coeur du soldat de la Vérité, ou pour le défenseur de l'opprimé. On aime d'autant plus l'objet aimé qu'il est dans la peine ou dans la souffrance. Un Polonais s'est écrié: '*ubi male, ubi patria*.' Jamais en effet l'on est tant attaché à son pays que quand il est dans la misère et la détresse. Et de nos jours où la Vérité est partout méconnue et outragée, où l'opprimé comprend la plus grande partie des hommes, n'est-ce pas qu'il est sublime de se vouer à leur défense? Les difficultés, les déboires ne sauraient manquer. Mais la cause de la Vérité et de l'opprimé, c'est celle de Dieu; ce nom n'est-il pas assez grand pour soutenir une âme, relever un courage, enflammer un zèle? Quand je vois mon cher Canada envahi de plus en plus par ce torrent qu'on appelle le libéralisme moderne; quand je vois la persécution menée sans masque contre l'Église canadienne, je me voudrais assez fort pour descendre dans l'arène, me joindre au petit nombre des lutteurs et faire respecter les choses saintes de ma nationalité et de ma religion" (G. Huot and R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 293-294).

I am a nationalist for one reason and one reason alone, because I consider it a worthy endeavor to dedicate one's life to keeping a people truly Christian and Catholic for God as well as the Church. Moreover, if I seemed interested, and sometimes markedly, in political, economic, social, and cultural matters, I did so because history and my own observations taught me that the life of a people comprises all of this, and thus requires the supernatural to work side by side with the temporal and the natural.¹⁸⁹

Groulx intended to provide an apologetic for Catholicism in French Canada, and their place in twentieth-century North America and the world. Throughout his long life Groulx avowedly worked to this end. François-Albert Angers, a noted economist and associate of Lionel Groulx in the nationalist periodical *l'Action nationale*, observed:

Above all, due to the mentality in those days he knew full well that as a priest he could not throw himself into the fray...Indeed his conception of the priesthood itself caused him to see his role as that of carrying out a ministry, rather than participating personally in an immediate course of action which would compel him to choose one among many possible means to attain the same objective. Like the prophets of the Old Testament he thus fulfilled his role as a leader and guide by denouncing compromising, cowardly acts, as well as distortions of a clear-eyed historical vision which shows the direction to take, though he did not meddle in the choice of paths.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ "Je suis nationaliste, leur dis-je, - et je vois encore leur effarement – non point quoique prêtre – mais parce que prêtre, parce que mon nationalisme débouche sur le spirituel...Et parce qu'il m'apparaît que cette tâche, garder à Dieu, à l'Église, un peuple authentique chrétien et catholique, vaut la peine d'y donner une vie, je suis nationaliste. Je ne le suis point pour d'autres motifs. Si j'ai paru m'intéresser et fortement parfois à des intérêts politiques, économiques, sociaux et culturels, c'est que l'observation de l'histoire m'ont aussi appris de quoi est faite la vie d'un peuple et que la surnature a besoin de compter avec le temporel et le naturel" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 329).

¹⁹⁰ "En tant que prêtre tout particulièrement dans l'esprit du temps, il se savait incapable de se jeter dans la mêlée;...Mais sa conception même de prêtre lui faisait percevoir son rôle comme étant l'exercice d'un ministère, plutôt qu'une action d'engagement direct qui oblige à prendre parti entre plusieurs solutions possibles pour atteindre le même objectif. Son rôle de leader et de guide, il l'accomplit donc à la façon des prophètes de l'Ancien Testament, dénonçant les déviations de la saine vision des choses (historiques), les compromissions, les lâchetés, indiquant la direction à prendre sans intervenir dans le choix des routes" (F.-A. Angers, "Lionel Groulx et le nationalisme canadien-français," in Maurice Filion, ed., *Hommage à Lionel Groulx*, p. 27).

However, it was by design and not primarily by current conventionality that the priesthood was determinative in Groulx's work. He fully gave himself to his ecclesiastical vocation likewise accepting its manifold implications. Biographer Georges-Émile Giguère remarks in this respect: "He never stopped questioning his faithfulness to the priesthood although it was never in doubt, unless one had a narrow-minded view of priests and their role in society."¹⁹¹

Undoubtedly the clerical influence on Groulx's thought was significantly augmented by his own strong view of sacerdotalism and a concomitant sacramentalism as evident in his reproach of a diminished, more popular concept of the former. Groulx protested, "as if a priest, the guide and teacher of souls, does not bring to his ministry resources unavailable to a layperson, namely the sacraments, that wellspring of divine forces which he alone can tap by virtue of his priesthood."¹⁹² So it is that he deliberately engaged in a dialectic commensurate with his priestly calling and pursuant to an ecclesiastical end. Groulx squarely affirmed this in relation to the historical pursuits which made him known as the second 'national historian' of French Canada:

Is it Claudel? Is it Henri Massis? Is it Barrès? Yes, I believe it is Barrès who somewhere set down in writing the inner conflict, indeed the anguish of a priest compelled to choose one way or another between his intellectual field and his priestly occupation. I readily admit that to a certain degree I experienced such anguish. My only solace lies in the fact that I scrupulously carried out the duties of my position, one that I did not choose but which my ecclesiastical superiors assigned me. Upon assuming my new responsibilities I attempted to the best of my ability, and

¹⁹¹ "Il n'a jamais cessé de s'interroger sur sa fidélité à son sacerdoce qui ne faisait pourtant pas de doute, à moins qu'on ait eu une conception étroite du prêtre et de son rôle dans la société" (G.-É. Giguère, *Lionel Groulx*, p. 60).

¹⁹² "...comme si le prêtre, enseignant et directeur d'âmes, n'apportait point à son ministère des moyens non dispensés au laïc: les sacrements, ces sources d'énergie divine dont il est le seul dispensateur de par son sacerdoce" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 360).

occasionally received grateful acknowledgement, that I never forgot my role as a priest. I did not forget it even in my historical works since I firmly believed that this role did not in the least compromise my historiographical objectivity or impartiality, despite the recent musings of a cleric who wishes to exclude priests from this profession so that they will not gravely twist history, as if laypeople, agnostics, and atheists could not do the same!¹⁹³

The sacerdotal dimension in many ways defined the nature of Groulx's work. Another principle, the messianic-mission motif, similarly delimited Groulx's self-perception and the character of his labors. Groulx professed his belief that he became an historian through the counsel of God, what he referred to as the "the mysterious yet ever so merciful ways of Providence."¹⁹⁴ Lacroix speaks of Groulx's sense of "messianic vocation."¹⁹⁵ This personal messianism paralleled Groulx's own acute conviction of the messianic destiny of French Canada, with which he so completely identified. Integral to this theme was the correspondent idea of divine mission. This element is not to be underestimated in the religio-political evolution of French Canada as church historian John Webster Grant warns: "No one can understand the separatist movements that have appeared recently in Quebec who has not learned to appreciate the intimate connection between the ethnic self-assurance of today and the awareness of a supernatural mission

¹⁹³ "Est-ce Claudel? Est-ce Henri Massis? Est-ce Barrès? – C'est plutôt Barrès, je crois, - qui nous a décrit quelque part les tiraillements intérieurs et même l'angoisse d'un prêtre contraint à choisir ou à ne pas choisir entre son métier d'intellectuel et son activité sacerdotale. Je le confesse sans pudeur: j'ai connu quelque chose de cette angoisse... Ma seule consolation fut de m'acquitter en définitive d'un devoir d'état que je n'avais pas choisi: celui-là que m'avaient imposé mes chefs ecclésiastiques. Autant que je l'ai pu, dans mes nouvelles fonctions, je me suis efforcé de ne jamais oublier – hommage qu'on m'a quelquefois rendu--ma qualité de prêtre. Je ne l'ai pas oubliée, même en mes travaux d'historien, bien persuadé que cette qualité n'entrave en rien ni l'objectivité, ni l'impartialité historiques, quoi qu'en ait pensé récemment un religieux qui voudrait bannir les prêtres de ce métier où ils ne pourraient qu'infléchir dangereusement l'histoire, comme si le laïc, l'agnostique, l'athée n'en pourraient faire autant!" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 195).

¹⁹⁴ G. Frégault, *Lionel Groulx tel qu'en lui-même*, p. 54.

¹⁹⁵ "Vocation messianique." (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: xi).

that was built into the fabric of New France centuries ago.”¹⁹⁶ Significantly, Groulx’s last major scholarly work, *Le Canada français missionnaire* (1962), intended to substantiate historically French Canada’s messianic mission. Guy Frégault succinctly concludes:

Not coincidentally, then, *Le Canada français missionnaire: une autre grande aventure* represents his last major historical work and the culmination of his labors during his old age. Right to the end he taught his people that their great distinction lay in their role as ‘those through whom divine purposes seek their fulfillment.’

As a writer this messianism not only profoundly informed his convictions, but it permeated his milieu, so that it constituted both an axiom and the warp and woof of tradition...¹⁹⁷

The sense of the apocalyptic which characterized Groulx’s generation was dualistic, since it thought of current civilization in alternately cataclysmic or utopian terms. Hence the interpretation given to World War I considered it to be Armageddon and ‘the war to end all wars.’ Marxism propagandized this era as a materialistic utopia. The Student Volunteer Movement proclaimed ‘The evangelization of the world in this generation.’ The American premillennial movement preached the coming of the millennium, while Groulx promoted the parallel Catholic concept of a cultural theocracy. The idea of a soon-to-be-realized eschaton as posited in the notion of the kingdom of God, whether in a premillennial schema or through French-Canadian theocratic nationalism, was basically the recourse of fundamentalism, both Catholic and Protestant, to the ideal of a religio-

¹⁹⁶ John S. Moir, ed., *The Cross in Canada*, p. viii.

¹⁹⁷ “Ce n’est pas un hasard si son dernier grand ouvrage d’histoire, fruit des travaux de sa vieillesse... se trouve être *Le Canada français missionnaire: une autre grande aventure*. Jusqu’à la fin, il aura enseigné à son peuple que sa grande dignité consiste à être ‘de ceux par qui veulent s’accomplir les gestes divins.’

Ce messianisme, l’écrivain ne le trouve pas seulement au fond de ses convictions. Il le respire avec l’air de son temps. C’est exactement une idée reçue. Elle fait partie de la tradition...” (G. Frégault, *Lionel Groulx tel qu’en lui-même*, p. 88).

cultural bulwark in face of the contemporary socio-ideological crisis in Western civilization.

Groulx's work undertook this mission perspective. He was persuaded that Quebec had remained French and Catholic against all odds, because God had preserved this nation specifically for a mission to secular, defiled, apostate North America, and to the depraved twentieth-century world in general. In sum, Quebec's mission was to be a national paragon of Catholicism for modern civilization through French-Canadian culture. Groulx could not conceive a sane, moral, viable culture of which Christianity was not the cornerstone. He found it inconceivable that French-Canadian nationalism could survive, let alone be fully realized, in a secular society. Contemporary, secular, *québécois* separatism constituted a major stumbling block in Groulx's nationalist theory.

1.5 Mission and Culture

At the same time one notes the organic relationship in Groulx's work between mission and culture; hence between Christianity and culture. This too reveals Groulx's roots in the Church of the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century, for by and large it did not distinguish between Christianizing and civilizing, a matter for which it has often been severely criticized. However, to understand Groulx's perspective in this regard, as well as that of many of his contemporaries, it must be realized that as he could not imagine culture without Christianity, neither could he visualize Christianity apart from culture. Culture provided the environment conducive to Christianity and assured its development to the extent that culture was consistent with Christian teachings. In *Mes mémoires* Groulx, a contemporary Christian humanist, articulated his philosophy of education and his cultural understanding of nationalism: "...I embraced a fully elaborated

humanism ... which not only complements, but integrates, rectifies, and transforms secular humanism, investing it with the supernatural by bringing it in line with the Incarnation...¹⁹⁸

Following this logic of culture as complementary to Christianity, Groulx concluded that society in New France provided the model expression of Christianity. Groulx's work then inevitably became an apologetic of French culture, specifically seventeenth-century French culture, manifested in New France as the purest Catholic strain. Moreover, Groulx posited French Canada's legacy from seventeenth-century France as a cultural counterweight to oppose the pervasive influence of American culture in contemporary French Canada. In his view French language and culture could not be separated. The natural dimension was French culture and the supernatural dimension was Catholicism. The natural and the supernatural complemented one another, forming an organic whole which produced a spiritual and cultural entity.

In his insistence on the whole of French culture and not simply on the French language, Groulx supplied a more expansive base for French-Canadian nationalism. Rather than a narrow rhetoric for the retention of the French language, Groulx presented a positive, complete cultural alternative to that of White Anglo-Saxon Protestant North America. Somewhat of a cultural clairvoyant, Groulx saw the day fast approaching when invasive American culture like a neutron bomb would insidiously destroy the substance of French-Canadian culture, though it left its people speaking French. While the voice would be the voice of French Canada the hand would be the hand of hedonistic, infidel

¹⁹⁸ "...j'en tenais pour un humanisme intégral ...complément de l'humanisme profane, et qui, en imprégnant ce dernier de surnaturel, le met dans la ligne de l'Incarnation..." (G. Huot and R. Bergeron, eds, *Journal*, 4 : 89).

America. Long before there was any talk of Canadian content in the media, Groulx lamented, “Alas!...the dubious value of this American ideal may yet satisfy us. Who then shall denounce the agent which is distorting our Christian and French soul, attacking our youth, invading even our rural areas to corrupt us to the core? I refer to the cinema, the ‘movies’!”¹⁹⁹ This very contemporary criticism of the media seems somewhat prophetic as well as reactionary when it is realized that Groulx delivered this speech on April 10, 1918 and that the films were about as risqué as Canadian Mary Pickford and Charlie Chaplain.

More importantly, Groulx’s cultural critique of the United States provided a building block to develop his own French-Canadian cultural construct. Groulx believed French culture to be the chosen vessel of Christianity by virtue of its universally recognized standards and preeminence, while the universality of its language made it the most appropriate vehicle for Catholicism. One must remember that these concepts seemed much more feasible in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries than they do now in the significantly more Anglicized and Americanized global community. At the same time, Groulx associated the dehumanization of Western society through industrialism, urbanism and materialist consumerism with attendant North American culture, while French culture’s emphasis on the aesthetic, hence the spiritual, coincided with this Christian humanist view.

The Christian vision of the human condition logically implied that the kingdom of God is immediately realizable. Indeed, since human beings are perceived as fundamentally spiritual creatures with the ability and responsibility to orchestrate all

¹⁹⁹ S. M. Trofimenkoff, ed., *Abbé Groulx. Variations On A Nationalist Theme*, p. 73.

dimensions of their milieu, that is to say, cultural, social, political, economic, the 'Kingdom' is their natural environment. This is not surprising when one considers that originally Utopia was the subject and title of a book written by the Christian humanist Thomas More (1478-1535). So Groulx's thought is fraught with the utopian implication of the kingdom of God ready to be realized in Quebec.

Groulx reinforced this notion in his approach to history which was influenced, through the work of Henri-Irénée Marrou, by Augustine's central historical concept of the 'city of God' wherein Augustine interpreted history theologically and thus eschatologically. As a result, Groulx's understanding of the history of French Canada is necessarily teleological, namely leading to the realization of the kingdom of God. Referring to the development of Groulx's historical methodology in the 1930's, Frégault points out, "At the end of this decade Lionel Groulx began to peruse Henri-Irénée Marrou's excellent book, *De la connaissance historique*. He took the greatest interest in this work by a scholar versed in Saint Augustine."²⁰⁰

Groulx's work, as we shall see, is replete with references, both explicit and implicit, to the 'city of God' and the 'earthly city'--a synthesis of Augustine's conception of the interwoven earthly fortunes of the two 'cities.' Groulx enunciated these principles when he picked up on the word and idea of the secular, anti-nationalist review *Cité Libre*:

²⁰⁰ "C'est à la fin de cette décennie que Lionel Groulx aborde le beau livre d'Henri-Irénée Marrou, *De la connaissance historique*; il porte le plus vif intérêt à l'oeuvre de ce sage nourri de saint Augustin" (G. Frégault, *Lionel Groulx tel qu'en lui-même*, p. 96).

“Moreover, one still works for God when striving to improve order, justice, charity and all other real values in this earthly city.”²⁰¹

Augustinian theology emphasizes God’s election and divine destiny which were integral to Groulx’s schema. These concepts are essential to understand the messianic mission motif in his thought. It is not surprising therefore to find Groulx conceptualizing the French-Canadian people in terms of covenant theology, as the new Israel, God’s nation, a ‘peculiar people,’ and calling them to live in accord with God’s moral, ethical principles. Following the model of New France as the kingdom of God, he responded with religious rigor to what he perceived to be the moral decadence of his time. All the more so, as an historian he believed firmly that the past provided the present with solutions to its problems and pointed the path to the future which a people must follow in order to fulfill its destiny. He often castigated French Canadians for not living up to these standards, which he held to be the norm for God’s people. More than once he rebuked the youth of his latter days:

They have a cavalier, American attitude. Sports, money, comfort, premature sex, rash relationships with women, cheap thrills and traveling comprise its philosophy of life. They no longer possess even a passion for politics and the myth of leaders has died. Or rather, youth only indulge in the latter so as to satisfy their base desires, their unscrupulous ambition to get ahead, to advance their fortunes, to lay their hands as soon as possible on some money-making job or position.²⁰²

²⁰¹ “Et c’est encore travailler pour Dieu que de travailler pour l’amélioration de la cité terrestre dans l’ordre, la justice, la charité et pour tout ce qui en constitue les valeurs réelles.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 4: 302).

²⁰² “Elle est d’esprit américain, *matter of fact*. Sport, argent, confort, sexualité précoce, liaisons féminines hâtives, amusements faciles, voyages composent sa philosophie de la vie. Elle ne connaît plus même la passion politique; le mythe des chefs est mort. Ou elle ne s’y adonne que pour des ambitions sordides : soif d’arrivisme, d’avancement, de se faire pousser dans la vie, de mettre tôt la main sur quelque emploi, quelque *job lucrative*” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 192).

A corollary of Groulx's rigorous moralism was his acute reaction to materialism, because he perceived the latter as sapping the moral vigor of the French-Canadian nation by tempting them to sell their religio-cultural birthright for a mess of materialism 'made in America.' This analogy, evoked in one of his best-known novels, *L'appel de la race*, portrays the theme of culturally complacent French Canadians engaging in socio-spiritual promiscuity, flirting with their self-indulgent, North American neighbor. They thereby bartered away the eternal values of Catholic, French-Canadian culture for the cheap, materialistic trinkets of the former society. Materialism, as Groulx saw it, leads to the perversion of priorities and ultimately to the subversion of morality in society. Interestingly, though Groulx rejected Marxism and the Soviet Union in no uncertain terms, his critique of materialism and the United States had definite affinities with Marxism's invective against capitalism. This is to be more or less expected, for Groulx's thought and Marxism were somewhat contemporary, parallel ideological developments shaped largely in response to the massive industrialism, capitalism and urbanism which typified the latter nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Groulx considered materialism to be the insidiously corrupting principle in the life of a nation, and posited as a social axiom that "'Riches and opulence are almost always the seeds of death for a people'."

Groulx must be understood in his own context. For the purposes of this discussion the present writer adopts the following definition of praxis, "Self-critical activity which is not satisfied with a merely theoretical vindication of truth but aims to verify truth by transforming society."

²⁰³ "'Presque toujours, les richesses, l'opulence furent pour les peuples les germes de mort'." (J.-P. Gaboury, *Le Nationalisme de Lionel Groulx. Aspects Idéologiques*, p. 162).

²⁰⁴ "Praxis," in Gerald O' Collins, Edward G. Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, p. 189.

entailed a social vision, a project to transform society. To do so goes hand in hand with praxis as:

maintaining that the content of faith must be formed not only by acts of worship and intellectual assent to a body of truth-claims but also by participation in efforts aimed at transforming human persons and communities.²⁰⁵

We thus argue that one cannot understand Groulx's nationalism apart from his fundamental conviction that the theological enterprise necessarily involves transformative social praxis. In order to better understand Groulx's perspective, we must necessarily identify the factors which contributed to the formation of his worldview, first of all, his educational and theological foundations.

²⁰⁵ "Praxis," in R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 1036.

2 -- THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Theology formed the cornerstone of Groulx's learning. From elementary school to graduate school he studied exclusively at ecclesiastical institutions whose clerical instructors consistently presented knowledge within the epistemological framework of theology. After completing his formal theological education (D. Th., 1908), Groulx, an insatiable reader¹ and autodidact,² pursued theology on his own through systematic reading, a lifelong practice which came naturally to such a methodical, highly disciplined individual.³ For decades, year in, year out, this avid bibliophile procured many of the latest books on theology and related subjects, as evidenced by over 900 theo-philosophical works in Groulx's library.⁴ Yet Groulx had more than a bookish interest in theology. Ever conscious of his sacerdotal vocation, which he fully embraced,⁵ Groulx considered theology indispensable to live out the priesthood in the course of day-to-day existence.⁶ Accordingly he read theology as the mainstay of his

¹L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 34-35 vividly recollects Groulx's eagerness to read everything he could lay his hands on during his childhood in rural, late nineteenth-century French Canada where reading materials often proved scarce in school and at home, particularly among poor farming families such as Groulx's. See Patrick Allen, "La bibliothèque de Monsieur Groulx," *AN* 57/10 (juin 1968): 902-3. See also André Laurendeau, *Nos maîtres de l'heure*, pp. 19, 21; Georges-Émile Giguère, *Lionel Groulx: biographie*, p. 53. Jean-Éthier-Blais, *Le siècle de l'abbé Groulx*, p. 23, refers to Groulx as a "lecteur vorace."

²Benoît Lacroix, "Lionel Groulx cet inconnu?" *RHAF* 32/3 (décembre 1978): 336, presents Groulx as an essentially self-made scholar: "Lionel Groulx, autodidacte? Presque. Car c'est plutôt une formation personnelle continue, couplée d'une grande capacité de travail, qui fera de Lionel Groulx un vrai chercheur."

³Juliette Lalonde-Rémillard, "Lionel Groulx intime," *AN* 57/10 (juin 1968): 868-69, et aussi Madeleine Dionne, "Notre chanoine," *AN* 57/10 (juin 1968): 1032.

⁴Jean-Pierre Chalifoux, former librarian at the CRLG, made this estimate a few years ago based on the computer data bank of Groulx's library. See Patrick Allen, "La bibliothèque de Monsieur Groulx," p. 908.

⁵Jacques Genest aptly remarks: "Groulx a été avant tout et surtout un prêtre, et toute son action a été centrée sur son idéal sacerdotal" (J. Genest, "Lionel Groulx," in Maurice Filion, ed., *Hommage à Lionel Groulx*, p. 136).

⁶L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 2: 344, typifies the profound concern which runs like a leitmotif through Groulx's writings about his sacerdotal vocation: "Le directeur de L'Action française est-il resté prêtre? Il ne m'appartient pas d'en décider. Mes amis ont bien voulu m'en donner parfois l'assurance. Ils ne m'ont pas enlevé la nostalgie que j'ai toujours gardée d'un état de vie où j'aurais vécu davantage dans le sacré."

daily spiritual exercises. More to the point, by making it an integral part of his everyday routine, which he always followed like clockwork,⁷ Groulx wove theology into the warp and woof of his life, so that it became second nature to him. Not surprisingly then, on May 23, 1967, death found the nearly ninety-year old Groulx diligently perusing, as usual, several books pertaining to religious studies in general and theology in particular. These included some of his most recent acquisitions, along with a couple of his perennial favorites: Ch-H. Schelkle's *Introduction au Nouveau Testament: histoire littéraire et théologique* (1965), Jacques Maritain's *Les Carnets de Notes* (1965), Salvador Schwalm's, *Le Christ d'après Saint Thomas d'Aquin* (1939), Charles Péguy's *Le mystère de la charité de Jeanne d'Arc* (n.d.), and Bernard Rey's *Créés dans le Christ Jésus: la création nouvelle selon saint Paul* (1966), where Groulx's last notations concerning "the first principles of doctrine"⁸ appear on page 18. The titles of these

⁷ J. Lalonde-Rémillard, Groulx's niece and private secretary for thirty years notes: "Sa vie, comme la mienne, est alors réglée selon un plan de travail: un horaire de la journée bien précis. Lever, pour lui-même, à 6 heures 30, messe à 7 heures dans son oratoire privés, déjeuner, court repos, lecture du bréviaire et au bureau à 9 heures précises, même avant ... La matinée est déjà coupée par une promenade de dix minutes dans le parc Outremont ... L'on doit dîner à *midi tapant* ... Il est l'exactitude même ... le chanoine travaillait à son bureau, après le repas du soir, jusqu'à 9 heures 30 tout près. Et il regagnait sa chambre à 10 heures ..." (Juliette Lalonde-Rémillard, *Lionel Groulx: l'homme que j'ai connu*, pp. 30-31). See also J. Lalonde-Rémillard, "Lionel Groulx intime," *AN* 57/10 (June 1968): 858, 860, 869. Madeleine Dionne, who worked with L. Groulx for years, confirms: "Son rythme de travail était réglé sur l'horloge. Bon an mal an, tous les jours, sa messe dite, il descendait à son bureau. Il y oeuvrait de 9 heures à 11 heures 30 puis de 2 heures 30 à 5 heures. Le matin, une promenade au parc et l'après-midi, une visite à l'église faisaient habituellement diversion à cet astreignant horaire ... Sa régularité au labeur n'avait d'égale que sa célérité." (Madeleine Dionne, "Notre 'Chanoine'," *AN* 57/10 [June 1968]: 1014-1015. In the same vein Hélène Pelletier-Baillargeon, Groulx's neighbor during her childhood, attests, "L'abbé Groulx y habitait déjà le numéro 261. Aussitôt, nos journées se trouvèrent chronométrées par ses promenades quotidiennes qui le conduisaient, matin et soir, sous les grands érables du parc Outremont." (H. Pelletier-Baillargeon, "Le voisin et l'ami," in Maurice Filion, eds., *Hommage à Lionel Groulx*, p. 153).

⁸ Bernard Rey, *Créés dans le Christ Jésus*, p. 18; "les grands axes de la doctrine." Regarding Groulx's copy Juliette Lalonde-Rémillard observes "lecture inachevée, annotée de façon systématique." (J. Lalonde-Rémillard, "Lionel Groulx intime," *AN* 57/10 (June 1968): 858). Groulx's copy of *Créés dans le Christ Jésus* is at the CRLG. A Dominican theologian, Christology constitutes the focus of Bernard Rey's works. See also Bernard Rey, *Jésus le Christ: Dieu se donne un visage*. Even in old age L. Groulx continued his quest to grasp the historical reality of Christ which seemed to elude him early in life. Thus, looking back on his youth, Groulx wrote: "Hélas, je dois le dire, ni l'enseignement religieux, ni même la direction spirituelle qu'on m'avait libéralement dispensés n'avaient réussi à me dévoiler Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ comme l'être historique et vivant ... Le Christ restait pour moi un Dieu, un ami lointain et flou ... Combien alors j'ai

books suggest the depth of the private theological inquiry that Groulx conducted throughout his scholarly career.

His daily study of theology for sixty consecutive years means that, in an almost literal sense, theology established the rhythm of Groulx's life. At the same time, through such sustained, disciplined study, Groulx maintained theology as the prism of his intellectual vision, so that theology continuously colored the spectrum of his thought. Furthermore, by expressly beginning his everyday pursuits with its study, Groulx sought to ensure that theology would inform his manifold endeavors. Indeed, although his long, variegated career took him well beyond the traditional confines of theology, Groulx nonetheless considered his lifework the fulfillment of a primordially theological duty. His last will and testament confirms this, "As a young seminarian studying that page of theology which pertains to it, I made the 'heroic vow.' I did so conscientiously. I never renounced it. Perhaps this will give others cause not to forget me too soon."⁹ Written over a half-century after his last, formal theological studies, this passage indicates the extent to which theology shaped Groulx's identity since he still perceived himself as its student.

Like generations of Christian scholars before him, Groulx considered theology the "Queen of the Sciences."¹⁰ Groulx therefore maintained that it held the key to resolving contemporary social issues, as he indicated in a letter to French Canada's

désiré trouver le livre qui me révélerait l'unique Visage et qui mettrait le suprême Ami tout près de moi!" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 65-66). In this same quest Groulx also turned to the works of French Catholic church historian Daniel-Rops. Groulx declared: "Cette image vivante, historique du Christ, j'avais cru la trouver dans la *Vie de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ*, de cet homme de foi si vive que fut Louis Veuillot. Je ne l'y trouvais point. Heureux moi-même et heureux mes petits collégiens, si j'avais pu leur mettre sous les yeux, en ce temps-là, *Jésus en son temps* de Daniel-Rops." (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 340).

⁹"Jeune séminariste, étudiant la page de théologie qui y a trait, j'ai fait le 'vœu héroïque.' Je l'ai émis en bonne et due forme. Je ne l'ai jamais répudié. On verra peut-être là une raison de ne pas m'oublier trop vite" (L. Groulx, "Extrait du testament," *AN* 57/10 [juin 1968]: 889).

“national theologian,”¹¹ Mgr. Louis-Adolphe Pâquet (1859-1942). Written on May 13, 1933, at the nadir of the Great Depression,¹² Groulx’s letter suggested that the counsel of a practical theologian¹³ such as Pâquet could help guide French-Canadian society through its current difficulties, just as Pâquet had previously done at other junctures in the affairs of French Canada, whether the Manitoba Schools Question,¹⁴ Regulation 17

¹⁰James A. Weisheipl, “Scholasticism” In Mircea Eliade, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 13 (1987): 117.

¹¹Yvan Lamonde, *Louis-Adolphe Pâquet*, p. 10.

¹²James Struthers, “Two Depressions: Bennett, Trudeau and the Unemployed,” in A. I. Silver, ed., *An Introduction to Canadian History*, p. 657. See Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991*, pp. 92-93ff. See also John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Great Crash 1929*, p. 168.

¹³Y. Lamonde posits the “systematic” character of Pâquet’s thought and therein discerns a pattern which “devient sans cesse la nécessité de rapporter la théorie à l’application, les ‘principes’ à ‘l’action’.” (Y. Lamonde, “Un almanach idéologique des années 1900-1929: l’oeuvre de Monseigneur L.-A. Pâquet, théologien nationaliste.” In Fernand Dumont, Jean Hamelin, Fernand Harvey, Jean-Paul Montminy, eds., *Idéologies au Canada français: 1900-1929*, p. 255). Y. Lamonde notes elsewhere that as “‘Théologien national,’ Paquet [sic] intervint souvent dans l’actualité pour expliquer la doctrine à propos d’un événement.” (Y. Lamonde, *Louis-Adolphe Pâquet*, p. 65) Such interventions concur with the nature of practical theology which Francis Schüssler Fiorenza defines thus: “Theological disciplines can be related to distinct publics with their corresponding modes of argumentation and ethical and religious stances. Systematic theology relates to the social reality of the church and seeks to reinterpret the transformative potential of its religious texts and traditions. Practical theology relates to the public of particular social and political movements and displays its religious aspect.” (F. Schüssler, Fiorenza, “Foundations of Theology,” in Wolfgang Beinert, F. Schüssler Fiorenza, eds., *Handbook of Catholic Theology*, p. 261). In this regard William J. Hill adds: “Practical theology concerns itself with practice informed by theory on the social, political, cultural and pastoral level on the basis of personal involvement in and commitment to ethical goals not exclusive to any one religious tradition.” (W. J. Hill, “Theology,” in Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, Dermot A. Lane, eds., *The New Dictionary of Theology*, p. 1019). Meanwhile Aidan Nichols suggests a more expansive conception of practical theology: “Such theology would look at the consequences that faith has for our practice of a variety of human disciplines (anything from parapsychology to poetry), the manifold ways that we have of moving intelligently about the world. And certainly we could include here such disciplines as sociology, economics, and politics, thus making a connection with an increasingly widespread use of the term ‘practical theology’ in writers influenced by the political and liberation schools of theological thought. However, to reduce practical theology to the concerns of social politics or social economics would mean a grave impoverishment of its human material.” (A. Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic Theology*, pp. 24-25). See also Duncan Forrester, “Practical Theology,” in Alan Richardson, John Bowden, eds., *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology*, pp. 455-456; G. F. Van Ackeren, “Theology,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 14: 39-48.

¹⁴With regard to the Manitoba Schools Question Y. Lamonde observes: “Dans sa première intervention publique comme voix de l’épiscopat, le jeune théologien Louis-Adolphe Pâquet énonce les principes directeurs de la position de l’autorité catholique.” (Y. Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec: 1760-1896*, p. 450). See also Y. Lamonde, *Louis-Adolphe Pâquet*, pp. 8-9, 13, 49-56; Y. Lamonde, “Un almanach idéologique des années 1900-1929,” in F. Dumont, J. Hamelin, F. Harvey, J.-P. Montminy, eds., *Idéologies au Canada français: 1900-1929*, pp. 251-252; Paul E. Crucian, “Manitoba Schools Question,” in James H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1426; W. L. Morton, “Manitoba School Question,” in Kenneth H. Pearson, ed., *Encyclopedia Canadiana*, 6: 357-59; Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada: The Vatican and Canadian Affairs in the Late Victorian Age*, pp. 53-57; Gerald Friesen, *River Road: Essays*

in Ontario,¹⁵ or the World War I conscription crisis in Quebec.¹⁶ By cogently addressing such matters, Groulx believed that Pâquet had consistently demonstrated the relevance of theology to the pressing concerns of French Canadians. In this vein Groulx avowed to Pâquet on the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination,¹⁷ “we are indebted to you for...the example of what profound philosophical and theological studies can bring to all problems in the public domain.”¹⁸

To the end of his life Groulx remained convinced that theologians play a pivotal role in society, particularly at critical moments in its development. Thus, in the flurry of the Quiet Revolution, Groulx called for solid theologians who could give Quebec a sure sense of direction to fulfill its divine destiny as a nation. Indeed for Groulx the lack of dynamic theological leadership at this critical period largely explained the sharp decline of the church in contemporary Quebec. His dismay over this state of affairs prompted Groulx to write to a fellow priest on May 19, 1962, “We woefully lack leaders,

on *Manitoba and Prairie History*, pp. 25-26; Y. Lamonde, Claude Corbo, *Le rouge et le bleu: une anthologie de la pensée politique au Québec de la Conquête à la Révolution tranquille*, pp. 291-297.

¹⁵See Robert Choquette, *Langue et religion: histoire des conflits anglo-français en Ontario*, p. 167. See also R. Choquette, *La foi gardienne de la langue en Ontario, 1900-1950*, pp. 117-131; Y. Lamonde, *Louis-Adolphe Pâquet*, pp. 14, 60-65. Concerning Pâquet's position on Regulation 17, Y. Lamonde remarks: “La lutte pour le ‘droit naturel à la langue’ et les fondements et avantages historiques du ‘bilinguisme canadien’ ne garantissent pas pour autant le respect des droits scolaires des minorités à l’extérieur du Québec, comme l’atteste la réaction énergique de Paquet [sic] au Règlement XVII. Encore une fois, Paquet se fit l’interprète de directives pontificales.” (Y. Lamonde, “Un almanach idéologique des années 1900-1929,” in F. Dumont, J. Hamelin, F. Harvey, J-P Montminy, eds., *Idéologies au Canada français 1900-1929*, p. 260). See Marilyn Barber, “Ontario Schools Question,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1721.

¹⁶See Desmond Morton, “French Canada and War, 1868-1917: The Military Background to the Conscription Crisis of 1917,” in A. I. Silver, ed., *An Introduction to Canadian History*, pp. 596-597, 609-610. See also P.-A. Linteau, R. Durocher, J.-C. Robert, *Quebec: A History, 1867-1929*, pp. 522-526; Y. Lamonde, *Louis-Adolphe Pâquet*, pp. 9-10, 15, 65-71; Y. Lamonde, “Un almanach idéologique des années 1900-1929,” in F. Dumont, J. Hamelin, F. Harvey, J-P Montminy, eds., *Idéologies au Canada français 1900-1929*, p. 261.

¹⁷Y. Lamonde, *Louis-Adolphe Pâquet*, pp. 11, 32-36.

¹⁸“Nous vous devons ... l'exemple ... de ce que peuvent apporter à tous les problèmes de la vie publique, de fortes études philosophiques et théologiques.” (CRLG L. Groulx's papers, L. Groulx to Louis-Adolphe Pâquet, 13 May 1933).

outstanding theologians who can speak with authority.”¹⁹ Since Groulx attached such importance to theology we cannot understand his thought without examining it in the light of his own essentially theological education, to which we now turn.

2.1 Primary Education – Catechism

The decidedly theological character of Groulx’s learning environment comes as no surprise when one remembers that through its extensive educational network the clergy of the Catholic Church dispensed most teaching in latter nineteenth and early twentieth-century Quebec.²⁰ In this vein Frégault notes that the clergy constituted the matrix of Groulx’s mental universe:

Raised (in every sense of the word) at the heart of a milieu where the clergy was the supreme educator, Lionel Groulx naturally insisted that this large body should maintain its position by perfecting its teaching, and he did so not out of class interests, nor from a clannish spirit, but, much more profoundly, because such was his innermost conviction, the tradition to which he belonged, and the culture of which he was a product.²¹

Groulx received his education in the wake of the Catholic renewal movement which began in mid-nineteenth-century Quebec²² and resulted in the preponderant role of the

¹⁹“Nous manquons malheureusement de chefs, de grands théologiens en état de parler avec autorité” (CRLG, L. Groulx’s papers, L. Groulx to Joseph Guiho, May 19, 1962).

²⁰Roberto Perin, “French-Speaking Canada from 1840,” in Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, pp. 204-205.

²¹“Élevé (dans tous les sens du mot) au sein d’un milieu où le clergé est le grand éducateur, Lionel Groulx tiendra naturellement à ce que ce grand corps continue son oeuvre en perfectionnant son magistère, et cela, non pas par intérêt de classe, non pas par esprit de caste, mais, beaucoup plus profondément, parce que telles sont et sa conviction intime, et la tradition à laquelle il participe, et la culture dont il est le produit.” (G. Frégault, *Lionel Groulx tel qu’en lui-même*, p. 28).

²²For an historical overview of this renewal movement see Philippe Sylvain, Nive Voisine, *Histoire du catholicisme québécois*, t. 2: *les XVIII^e et XIX^e*, v. 2: *Réveil et consolidation. (1840-1898)*. See also Roberto Perin, “French-Speaking Canada from 1840,” in T. Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, pp. 190-191, 196-228; Raymond Lemieux, Jean-Paul Montminy, *Le catholicisme québécois*, pp. 28-32; Guy Laperrière, *Les congrégations religieuses: de la France au Québec, 1880-1914*, v. 1: *Premières bourrasques, 1880-1900*, pp. 25-48.

Church in education.²³ In this context Groulx first came under the instruction of the Clerics de Saint-Viateur, a religious order established in Quebec in 1847 and comprised mostly of teaching brothers.²⁴ From 1884 to 1891 young Lionel attended the Académie des Clercs de Saint-Viateur located in his hometown Vaudreuil, Quebec.²⁵ At this parochial school he learned the rudiments of Catholic teaching thanks to a curriculum which consisted primarily of “French grammar and catechism.”²⁶ He also received religious instruction at church where the parish priest prepared the children of the village for their ‘communion solennelle’. Groulx romanticized this childhood rite of passage in his loosely autobiographical *Les rapaillages*, that features a piece entitled *Quand nous marchions au catéchisme*. Here Groulx glowingly recalled the childlike sense of wonder he felt when, “For seven to eight weeks we hung on to the priest’s every word, avidly drinking in the formulae which contained the essence of sacred doctrine.”²⁷ Despite its intentional naïveté, *Les rapaillages* reveals Groulx’s theological savvy through the use of technical, theological terms like *formules*, which denotes a

²³ In this regard historian Guy Laperrière notes : “C’est dans les années qui suivent la Confédération, entre 1869 et 1875, que le système d’instruction publique au primaire devient entièrement confessionnel et contrôlé par les évêques: il l’est resté jusqu’en 1964.” (G. Laperrière, *Les congrégations religieuses*, 1: 34). See also Jean Hamelin, Nicole Gagnon, *Histoire du catholicisme québécois: le XX^e siècle*, 1: 1898-1940, 1: 43-46.

²⁴ See G. Laperrière, *Les congrégations religieuses*, 1: 30, 44, 46. With regard to this religious order first founded in France (1828) by Louis Querbes, Philippe Sylvain and Nive Voisine note: “Cette congrégation fut celle qui envoya le moins de religieux au Canada. Si on fait abstraction du contingent de 1847, elle ne devait fournir que cinq religieux en 29 ans! D’où la rapide canadianisation de cet institut de frères enseignants, sa ‘cléricalisation’ et son orientation vers l’enseignement classique pour des raisons d’ordre économique.” (P. Sylvain, N. Voisine, *Histoire du catholicisme québécois*, v. 2: *Réveil et consolidation*. (1840-1898), pp. 75, 73, 76. See Michel Thériault, “Clerics of Saint-Viateur,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 482).

²⁵ Regarding the teaching role of religious orders in Quebec rural communities during the second half of the nineteenth century, historian Andrée Dufour observes: “Dans les campagnes, on apprécie les frères et les soeurs. Ils sont souvent mieux formés que les laïcs, moins exigeants qu’eux pour ce qui est du salaire, et ils secondent les curés dans l’exercice de leur ministère en plus d’entretenir les établissements mis à leur disposition.” (A. Dufour, *Histoire de l’éducation au Québec*, p. 47).

²⁶ “...de la grammaire française et du catéchisme” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 34).

²⁷ “Pendant sept à huit semaines, suspendus aux lèvres du prêtre, nous buvions avidement, sous les formules, la moëlle de la doctrine sacrée” (L. Groulx, *Les rapaillages*, p. 64).

creed or formal statement of religious doctrine. Although Groulx fictionalized his introduction to the faith, he realized that during his youth catechism often boiled down to drilling hapless children in the recitation of doctrinal mantras whose meaning largely escaped them. Groulx criticized this rote pedagogy when he reflected on his childhood in *Mes mémoires*: “Both at school and at church we received a mechanical catechistic teaching which emphasized word for word memorization much more than comprehension of the text.”²⁸

2.2 Secondary Education - Scriptures

At age thirteen Groulx left home²⁹ to begin his secondary education at the Petit Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse-de-Blainville, which people in his rural community ironically called a “grand collège”³⁰ since at the time few children from this farming community went beyond primary school.³¹ Indeed Groulx’s memoirs vividly recount his grandfather’s reaction to further studies: “When my maternal grandfather, a complete

²⁸ “Et tant à l’école qu’à l’église, nous recevions un enseignement catéchistique si formaliste où le mot à mot, l’effort de mémoire comptaient tellement plus que l’intelligence du texte” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 37).

²⁹ Although located less than fifty miles from one another, Vaudreuil and Sainte-Thérèse seemed worlds apart in the horse-and-buggy days of Groulx’s youth. This avowed farm boy never forgot how homesick he first felt at Sainte-Thérèse. His memoirs recount: “Pendant les quatre premiers mois, j’ai cru mourir d’ennuyance ... Peu de jours passeront que je ne pleurniche comme une Madeleine” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 42). Young Groulx’s diary confirms that his thoughts often drifted dreamily homeward while he studied at Sainte-Thérèse. His journal entry for May 11, 1895, typically records: “Il est six heures du soir. Je suis à l’étude passablement ennuyé, ne sachant trop que faire. De ma fenêtre, j’aperçois au loin la forêt ... et je porte mes yeux plus loin. Dans la brume du soir, à sept lieues environ, je distingue encore la crête des monts d’Oka. Longtemps mes yeux s’y arrêtent. Je voudrais pouvoir regarder au delà. Car les monts d’Oka, ce sont presque les montagnes de mon pays. A leurs pieds dort un lac ... Sur la rive ouest de ce lac, autour d’une baie formée par les eaux de l’Outaouais, est assis le village de Vaudreuil ... Déjà les souvenirs et les affections se pressent en foule dans mon coeur: Vaudreuil c’est mon village, mon foyer ... et pourtant j’en suis bien loin.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 117-118). Groulx regularly corresponded with his family and visited them whenever possible, but he never again lived at home, so that Sainte-Thérèse marked a watershed in his personal life.

³⁰ For an historical survey of classical colleges in Quebec and beyond see Claude Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français: 1620-1970*.

³¹ “En septembre 1891, je partis donc pour ce que l’on appelait par chez nous le ‘grand collège’.” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 40-41). In 1967 the Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse became a Cégep named “Collège Lionel-Groulx” which continues today.

illiterate like so many in his day, heard the news, he found nothing with which to encourage me, except this unnerving prediction: 'Are you going to the big college? You will end up a paper-pusher and a thief!'"³² Nevertheless, Groulx's parents purposely sent him to Sainte-Thérèse to prepare him for a religious vocation, which represented a status symbol for country folk in turn-of-the century French Canada,³³ as Groulx's memoirs state: "What peasant family, even in those days, did not cherish this hope?"³⁴ Groulx's own family proved no exception. He confessed: "I was born of Christian parents, people from the countryside who worked the land, and for whom the call to the priesthood stood as a family's highest ambition."³⁵ The eight years (1891-1899) Groulx spent at the Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse³⁶ - a classical college³⁷ - spanned the formative period of his development from adolescence to adulthood. His diary³⁸ and correspondence³⁹ from those years, along with his memoirs⁴⁰ more than half a century later, make it clear that Sainte-Thérèse marked a watershed in Groulx's life. This partly

³²"Parfait illettré comme tant d'autres de son temps, mon grand-père maternel, apprenant la nouvelle, ne trouva, pour m'encourager, que cet horoscope peu rassurant: 'Tu vas au grand collège? Tu vas faire un gratte-papier et un voleur!'" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires* 1: 68).

³³L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 40, "Non, la chose était d'ores et déjà décidée dans ma famille. Le niveau social y était modeste; mais il y avait l'ambition de le dépasser: l'ambition de ... pousser si possible un fils aux grandes études, faire de lui un prêtre...!"

³⁴"Quelle famille paysanne, même de ce temps-là, ne nourrit pas cette aspiration?" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires* 1: 40).

³⁵"Je suis né de parents chrétiens, gens de la campagne et de la terre, pour qui l'appel au sacerdoce, restait la suprême ambition familiale." (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 67).

³⁶See Émile Dubois' commemorative monograph, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse: 1825-1925*. See also Yvan Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec: 1665-1920*, pp. 136-137, 150-151; C. Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, pp. 19-20.

³⁷Claude Corbo states that in Quebec at the beginning of the twentieth century both the terms "collège" and "séminaire" designated secondary institutions which followed a classical curriculum for educating male students. See C. Corbo, *La mémoire du cours classique: les années aigres-douces des récits autobiographiques*, p. 27. A. Dufour adds: "Ces collèges sont en majorité de petits séminaires destinés à la formation des futurs prêtres ou à l'élite intellectuelle laïque." (A. Dufour, *Histoire de l'éducation au Québec*, p. 48).

³⁸The entire first volume of Groulx's two-volume journal deals with his studies at Sainte-Thérèse during his last four years there, 1895-1899. More to this point, this diary chronicles the birth and early development of his intellectual consciousness. See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, v. 1.

³⁹See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 5-92.

resulted from his immersion in an almost exclusively clerical academic ambience⁴¹ since, as political scientist Claude Corbo points out:

The college or seminary at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century was an essentially clerical milieu, either secular clergy or members of religious orders. Lay persons did not hold more than 10% of teaching positions until after 1950, up to that point members of the clergy both taught and directed these institutions.⁴²

In keeping with the curriculum of contemporary French-Canadian classical colleges,⁴³ at Sainte-Thérèse Groulx studied extensively Greek, Latin, and the classics,⁴⁴ so that, as historians Giselle Huot and Réjean Bergeron observe, Groulx's journal during this time abundantly evidences the "influence of authors from antiquity (Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Horace)."⁴⁵ In the pedagogic scheme of Sainte-Thérèse – a preparatory school for

⁴⁰ See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 41-66.

⁴¹ R. Perin describes this vigorously controlled environment: "The regimen in the *collèges classiques* was even more exacting ... Students spent eight years under the constant surveillance of teachers who throughout the nineteenth century tended to be young ecclesiastics preparing for ordination ... The *collèges* discouraged contact with the outside world: students were allowed to see their parents only once a week; correspondence was received and read by the superior of the *collège*; newspapers were generally forbidden; and relationships with the opposite sex were limited to the immediate family." (R. Perin, "French-Speaking Canada from 1840," in T. Murphy, R. Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, p. 205). Against this backdrop one understands why young Groulx retreated frequently to his journal – a realm seemingly outside the pale of this strictly supervised existence. By the same token, one understands why he experienced such a shear from his former way of life and family, especially since they apparently could not often visit him due to their modest finances.

⁴² "Le collège ou le séminaire à la fin du XIX^e et au début du XX^e siècle est un milieu essentiellement cléricale: clergé séculier ou membres de communautés religieuses. Dans le personnel enseignant, les laïcs n'occuperont plus de 10% des postes qu'après 1950; jusqu'alors, ce sont des membres du clergé qui enseignent et qui dirigent les établissements." (C. Corbo, *La mémoire du cours classique*, p. 29). Regarding Quebec classical colleges in the late nineteenth century Corbo adds: "Dans les collèges de la fin du dernier siècle, il se trouve des professeurs qui appartiennent, dans leur immense majorité, au clergé. Mais il faut les partager en deux catégories bien distinctes: les prêtres séculiers (dont un certain nombre de séminaristes) et les membres de congrégations religieuses." (C. Corbo, *La mémoire du cours classique*, p. 41). In fact Groulx's diary, correspondence, and memoirs, as well as É. Dubois' monograph, indicate that all of Groulx's instructors at Sainte-Thérèse were secular clergy. See É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, pp. 239-260.

⁴³ See C. Corbo, *La mémoire du cours classique*, pp. 223, 50-51, 74.

⁴⁴ For the program of study at Sainte-Thérèse see É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, pp. 367-369.

⁴⁵ "L'influence des auteurs de l'Antiquité (Virgile, Ovide, Homère, Horace)." (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 8). See also 1: 141n. 82, where G. Huot and R. Bergeron note that the writings of Homer, Virgil, Cicero and Xenophon "constituaient l'essentiel du programme des cours de latin, de grec"

clerics⁴⁶ - classical studies did not represent an end unto themselves but rather the means to study the original Greek New Testament⁴⁷ and above all the ‘Vulgate’ or ‘common’ Latin text of the Bible which lay at the heart of Catholicism and “shaped the history of Western Christianity.”⁴⁸ Little wonder then that young Groulx viewed the classics as the prolegomena of the scriptures. Indeed for him the two comprised the warp and the woof of God-given literature, as he indicated in his journal entry for May 24, 1897. Reflecting on parallels between the Homeric and biblical epics Groulx declared: “How extraordinary literature is! It has linked the centuries and the nations together by imparting immortality to masterpieces. Over three thousand years ago it [literature] assured Homer a place well into the nineteenth century. It will also bring the course of time full circle, to the glory of the author of Genesis.”⁴⁹ However, as a student Groulx did not always harbor such generous feelings towards the reputed author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Before an examination he confided to his diary, “this damned Homer ... gets on my nerves.”⁵⁰

⁴⁶Regarding the system of classical colleges in general of nineteenth-century Quebec, A. Dufour observes: “Le programme d’études y demeure calqué sur celui qui a été implanté par les Jésuites au Collège de Québec.” (A. Dufour, *Histoire de l’éducation au Québec*, p. 48). What held true for classical colleges in general specifically applied to Sainte-Thérèse since by virtue of episcopal mandate it ecclesiastically constituted a *petit séminaire*, “Le même article signale que Mgr. de Montréal ... a décidé de faire de cet établissement un Petit Séminaire. On n’y recevra à l’avenir que les enfants qui auront de l’inclination pour l’état ecclésiastique et que les parents feront étudier pour cette fin” (É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, p. 77). É. Dubois adds: “Le document épiscopal établit à Sainte-Thérèse-de-Blainville un Petit Séminaire ... Seront reçus dans ce Séminaire les enfants d’au moins douze ans, ceux des pauvres de préférence à tout autre, qui montrent de bonnes dispositions pour le sacerdoce” (É. Dubois, *Le Petit Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, pp. 81-82).

⁴⁷É. Dubois, *Le Petit Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, p. 368, refers to the study of the “Actes des Apôtres (texte grec)” and “St. Luc (texte grec).”

⁴⁸Bernard McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, p. 61.

⁴⁹“Quelle douce chose que la littérature! C’est elle qui a rapproché les siècles et les peuples en donnant l’immortalité aux oeuvres de génie. C’est elle qui dès il y a trois mille ans marquait la place d’Homère en plein XIX^{me} siècle; c’est elle qui fera embrasser à la gloire de l’écrivain de la Genèse les deux extrémités du temps” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 304).

⁵⁰“ce damné d’Homère ... m’agace les nerfs.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 135). On January 20, 1896, the day before another examination, Groulx humorously wrote in his journal, “mais à demain mon vieil Homère et tu verras beau jeu si tu fais le récalcitrant.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 143).

Other writings by young Groulx manifest the extent to which the Bible and the classics went hand in hand in his early thought. Take for instance his letter to the editor of *La Vérité*, Jules-Paul Tardivel (1851-1905). Out of respect for this elder spokesman of French-Canadian religious nationalism Groulx opened his address with phrases drawn from the Vulgate version of the gospels and Horace's treatise on literary criticism, *Ars poetica*, "We would like this letter ... to stand as proof that your newspaper has not been the *vox clamantis in deserto*... We know that there is no lack of sententious critics who - imitating Horace's gloomy old man, *laudator temporis acti* -- predict the younger generation will come to no good."⁵¹ Elsewhere, in a letter relating his unsuccessful efforts to recruit students for the nascent Catholic Action movement, Groulx voiced his concurrent frustration and resolve by juxtaposing an idiomatic expression from Horace's *Epistles*⁵² with key words from the Latin version of Matt. 9:37/Luke 10:2, "Nevertheless, I pray God guide me to souls I can win for our cause, «*Pauci operarii!*» What do you expect? «*Non licet omnibus adire Corinthum*»."⁵³ Horace's *Odes* (23, 20-19 B.C.) also proved a source of inspiration and teaching for young Groulx.⁵⁴

Such interweaving of the classics and the Bible constituted a literary device whereby Groulx appropriated classical literature for Christianity, a practice since the

⁵¹"Nous souhaiterions que cette lettre ... vous prouvât que votre journal n'a pas été la in *vox clamantis in deserto* ... Nous savons qu'il ne manque point de censeurs rigides-imitateurs du vieillard chagrin d'Horace, *laudator temporis acti* - qui n'attendent rien de bon des jeunes générations." (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 195). See also G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 712). Five years earlier, in 1897, Groulx referred to the literary criticism of Horace (65-8 B.C.) in a similar vein: "loin d'imiter le vieillard chagrin d'Horace, on n'est point tenté de dénigrer le présent au profit du passé." (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 360).

⁵²Groulx's reference to Horace's *Epistles* comes as no surprise when one remembers that their moralistic tenor has long earned them a Christian readership.

⁵³"Je prie Dieu toutefois de m'inspirer des âmes à gagner à notre cause. «*Pauci operarii!*» Que voulez-vous? «*Non licet omnibus adire Corinthum*»." (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds. *Correspondance*, 1: 304).

early church, as historian of theology Jaroslav Pelikan demonstrates in *Christianity and Classical Culture*.⁵⁵ Thus with regard to the ‘Three Cappadocians’ Pelikan notes that, “When Homer spoke of ‘all things being divided thrice,’ this, too could perhaps be seen as an anticipation, albeit dim, of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.”⁵⁶ In this time-honored vein Groulx extrapolated Christian teachings from the epic poem the *Iliad*. He analogized that just as its hero Achilles courted death by leaving unprotected the only vulnerable part of his body, so too the Christian invites spiritual ruin if they do not take measures to preserve the integrity of their faith. In his journal young Groulx duly noted the moral he discerned in the tale of Achilles’ heel: “Let us put on a full suit of armor without chinks, which will render our virtue unassailable. Let us not follow in the footsteps of the immature who outwardly appear courageous and estimable when they pose for the public but who, like Achilles’ heel, inwardly carry the seeds of their imminent destruction.”⁵⁷ Here Groulx echoed Ephesians 6: 11-17 in the New Testament,⁵⁸ which comes as no surprise when one remembers that from adolescence he

⁵⁴See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 669.

⁵⁵For example in reference to Basil of Caesarea (330-379), Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 329-390), and Gregory of Nyssa (331/40 – c. 395), known as the ‘three great Cappadocians,’ J. Pelikan observes: “Trained as the Cappadocians were in the literary, rhetorical and grammatical methodologies of the post-Hellenistic Classical schools, they were functioning as Greek philologists whether the texts before them happened to come from Homer or from the Holy Spirit. Many of the principles and procedures of a sound philology, originally developed for the textual criticism of Homer by pagan classical scholars, were now adapted by Christian scholars for the textual criticism of scripture.” (J. Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, p. 221).

⁵⁶J. Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, p. 33.

⁵⁷“Revêtons-nous de l’armure complète et sans points faibles qui nous rende inattaquables dans notre vertu. Ne soyons pas de ces incomplets qui ont toutes les apparences du courage et de l’honneur quand ils posent pour le public, mais qui portent comme une menace perpétuelle de déchéance, le talon vulnérable d’Achille” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 707).

⁵⁸“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girded about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, with which ye shall be able to

studied the Bible and the classics side by side. More to the point, this biblical passage portrays the archetypal Christian as a warrior engaged in a titanic spiritual conflict, an image that blends easily with the legend of Achilles' heel. This is particularly so since these verses of scripture twice exhort Christians to put on "the whole armor of God" (v. 11, 13) lest they succumb to "the fiery darts of the wicked" (v. 16). Such military metaphors fueled the religious ardor of young Groulx who called for "militant Christians."⁵⁹ With this mindset is it any wonder that Groulx conceived Achilles, the greatest warrior of the *Illiad*, as a prototype of the Christian soldier in Ephesians 6:11-17? Or that he interpreted the fable of Achilles' heel as an allegory for original sin and the consequent weakness inherent in even the strongest Christians? Despite his heroic perception of the religious figures he admired, Groulx's extensive reading about them convinced him that shortcomings inevitably tarnish the best of Christian lives. Regarding the latter he acknowledged: "Nonetheless how few whose foreheads do not bare the mark of a grave failing or fault which keeps us from admiring them without reserve. All or nearly all were not dipped to the tip of their heel in the waters of the fabled river."⁶⁰ Groulx thus conceptualized fallen human nature in terms of the Achillean myth according to which his mother immersed Achilles in the river Styx to make him invulnerable. Only the heel by which she held him remained vulnerable.

quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Ephesians 6: 11-17).

⁵⁹"des chrétiens militants" (F. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 303).

⁶⁰"Combien peu pourtant qui ne portent pas au front la tare regrettable d'une erreur ou d'un défaut nous privant du plaisir de l'admiration entière. À tous ou presque tous il a manqué d'être plongés jusque par-dessus le talon dans les flots du fleuve fameux." (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 522).

Convinced that the classics contain sterling moral, ethical, and religious works, such as those of the “noble pagan” Cicero,⁶¹ Groulx gleaned liberally from classical literature to elucidate the teachings of Christianity. His early correspondence accordingly displays a frequent recourse to the classics in order to exhort, instruct, or inspire the faithful. Three examples will suffice to indicate the extent to which classical literature informed young Groulx’s articulation of the Christian faith. First, in a letter to an underclassman, Groulx admonished him to stop dabbling with novels⁶² proscribed⁶³ by the church⁶⁴ and instead to read only books that elevate the soul to that higher plane

⁶¹ “ce noble païen que fut Cicéron.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 833). His knowledge of the Ciceronian corpus exemplifies young Groulx’s familiarity with classical literature. Groulx’s journal entry for January 20, 1896, quotes Cicero’s *First Oration Against Catiline* to describe Groulx’s panic during final exams: “Tout nous arrive à la fois, tout nous presse en même temps ... Comment faire? *O Tempora ! o mores !*” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 143). A year later, January 25, 1897, Groulx reflected on the day’s lesson in rhetoric by weighing the superficial value of a new classroom against the lasting worth of Cicero’s speech in defense of Marcus Marcellus: “Notre nouveau local était si riche, si spacieux! Nous ignorions, pauvres insensés, que nous portions avec nous le plus riche des trésors. La classe commença. Cicéron monte à la tribune et nous redit son magnifique *Pro Marcello*.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 282-283). Groulx’s diary also reveals his acquaintance with Cicero’s harangues, *In Verrem* and the *Philippics*. (See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 805, 833). Meanwhile, young Groulx’s correspondence evidences his awareness of Cicero’s philosophical dialogue on friendship *De Hamicitia*, as well as the *Dream of Scipio* from Cicero’s philosophical treatise *De republica*. (See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondence*, 1: 643; 2: 253). Groulx’s memoirs indicate that in his youth he also knew Cicero’s apology *Pro Milone*. (See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 114). For someone who later became a professor of rhetoric and a noted speaker, it comes as no surprise that young Groulx admired Cicero’s rhetorical skill.

⁶² With regard to the attitude of the church and classical colleges towards novels in nineteenth-century Quebec, Fernande Roy aptly observes: “Bien que les professeurs des collèges classiques et l’Église catholique soient généralement plutôt prévenus contre le roman, la ferveur de ce genre littéraire ira en s’accroissant jusqu’au XX^e siècle.” (F. Roy, *Histoire de la librairie au Québec*, pp. 28-29). On p. 147 Roy adds that at the turn of the twentieth century the novel in Quebec remained “un genre littéraire suspect pour le clergé.”

⁶³ Regarding the *Index librorum prohibitorum* (Index of Forbidden Books) and its impact on literature in Quebec during the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Pierre Hébert, *Censure et littérature au Québec: le livre crucifié, 1625-1919*, pp. 12-14, 63-136.

⁶⁴ Groulx’s letter deals specifically with *Les misérables* (1862) by Victor Hugo (1802-1885). Groulx wrote: “Ces *Misérables*, de V. Hugo, sont un livre *misérable*; c’est en résumé un cri de haine et de révolte contre Dieu et la société, et de plus – ce qui est plus sérieux, c’est un livre condamné par l’Église que vous ne pouvez conserver” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 259). For an example of controversy, in fact litigation in late nineteenth-century Quebec, due to the placement of some of Hugo’s works on the *Index* see F. Roy, *Histoire de la librairie au Québec*, pp. 116-117, 176; see also P. Hébert, *Censure et littérature au Québec*, p. 120. Despite warning his correspondent not to read Hugo, and admonitions he himself received not to do so, young Groulx found Hugo’s poetry irresistible, as evident in Groulx’s journal entry on August 2, 1897: “Malgré toute l’aversion qu’on a toujours voulu me mettre au coeur à l’égard de Victor Hugo, je vais malgré moi à ce grand poète, le plus grand poète lyrique des nations

of which Virgil⁶⁵ wrote in the *Aeneid*, “«*Largior hic compos aether et lumine vestit purpureo*».”⁶⁶ Second, in order to encourage a newly founded chapter of Catholic Action encountering some difficulties, Groulx employed a saying from Horace as confirmation that adversity strengthens Christian endeavors, “We have learned here to regard obstacles and persistent problems as the bitter medicine whereby the works of God acquire the resilience and durability of bronze, «*monumentum aere perennius*».”⁶⁷

Third, in this same letter Groulx, already a keen religio-nationalist, analogized the

anciennes et modernes, a soutenu un critique éminent. Je l'aime pour ses qualités poétiques éminemment supérieures à celles de tous nos poètes français ... Victor Hugo, voilà mon poète. Et quel est celui qui n'admirerait point le poète de Waterloo, de Mille huit cent onze, de 'Dieu est toujours là,' d' Aymerillot, poésies souverainement belles, mets exquis que l'on déguste tous les jours en leur trouvant chaque fois une nouvelle saveur? Où trouver d'aussi étonnantes conceptions que dans les oeuvres de Hugo? C'est là qu'on palpe le génie, le génie à nu. Celui qui m'a fait prendre d'admiration pour Hugo, est précisément mon professeur de Rhétorique, l'homme assurément qui avait le plus à coeur de nous le voir détester et qui n'épargnait ni son temps, ni son zèle pour arriver à son but.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 326-327).

⁶⁵The works of Virgil (70-19 BC) early bridged classical culture and Christianity in western society. Virgil's masterpiece the *Aeneid* (begun 29 BC) earned the respect, if not the reverence of Christian thinkers by virtue of its “deep religio-philosophical reflection.” (Martin R. P. McGuire, “Vergil,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 14: 613). Furthermore, among Virgil's ten pastoral *Bucolics* or *Eclogues* (42-37 BC), “the fourth *Eclogue* was important, because the mysterious reference to the birth of a child who would begin a new age was interpreted early as a pagan witness to the coming birth of Christ.” (M. R. P. McGuire, “Vergil,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 14: 614). Indeed the fourth *Eclogue*, the best known of the ten, was often referred to as “the Messianic *Eclogue*.” (Lillian Fedder, *The Handbook of Classical Literature*, p. 124). See also James H. Mantinband, *Dictionary of Latin Literature*, p. 294. Young nationalistic Groulx could not fail to draw inspiration from the *Aeneid*, a patriotic work and a national epic. Meanwhile, Virgil's poetic treatment of agricultural subjects in the *Georgics* (37-30 BC), and of the life of shepherds in the *Eclogues*, held strong appeal for Groulx, who fully embraced his peasant roots and continually expressed his love of the land and country living. Not surprisingly then references to Virgil's works pepper young Groulx's writings. On the *Eclogues*, see G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 263, 290, 296, 333, 398; 2: 600, 702, 798, 831; G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 162. On the *Georgics*, see G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 141, 173, 230, 245, 313; G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 19. On the *Aeneid*, see G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 127, 216, 261, 309; G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 259, 302-303, 410, 598. Some sixty years later, with discernible bravado, Groulx affirmed: “Ce sera un jeu pour moi d'apprendre, de mémoire, en quelques heures, le deuxième livre de l'*Enéide*.” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 49-50). C. Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 171, refers to the study of the *Aeneid*. On the place of Virgil in Latin courses at classical colleges C. Galarneau notes: “On alterne les thèmes et les versions latines, introduisant les textes de plus en plus difficiles: César, Ovide, des élogues de Virgile.” (C. Corbo, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 169). See also É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, pp. 368-369.

⁶⁶G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 259.

⁶⁷“Les obstacles, les épreuves opiniâtres, nous avons appris ici à les regarder comme les toniques amers où les oeuvres de Dieu vont prendre la résistance et la durée de l'airain, «*monumentum aere perennius*” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 363).

struggles of this fledgling Catholic Action chapter with the birth pangs which gave rise to the Roman nation, as immortalized by Virgil in the *Aeneid*. Young Groulx wrote: « If the beginning proves painstaking we will interpret this as a token of success and life : *'Tantae moralis erat ... !'* »⁶⁸

This interfacing of the classics and Christian teachings came readily to young Groulx who at Sainte-Thérèse, like students at other classical colleges, received instruction in Greek and Latin literature from clerics who possessed an “essentially theological and moral”⁶⁹ education. Is it any wonder then that Groulx interpreted the classics in the light of Christian precepts? With regard to Groulx, B. Lacroix remarks: “At the college he received the standard classical training: study of the Greco-Roman heritage, general culture, the history of Europe, and all of it filtered through Catholic morality and a type of apologetics which sought to resolve problems before stating them.”⁷⁰ Nonetheless, young Groulx thought through the relations between these subjects, as his diary amply demonstrates, and his consistent integration of classical literature, the scriptures, and Christian teachings, laid the groundwork for his later characteristic synthesis of the sacred and the profane. Indeed their symbiotic relationship in his mature thought likely had roots in his fledgling intellectual endeavor

⁶⁸“Si les débuts sont laborieux, nous y verrons un gage de succès et de vie: *'Tantae moralis erat...!'*” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 303; see also p. 305n. 8, for the complete sentence and its place in the *Aeneid*. In this letter, as elsewhere throughout his early correspondence, young Groulx clearly took it for granted that his readers, often classical college students or recent graduates, as in this case, were quite familiar with the works Groulx quoted; in other words, Groulx assumed that his readership shared a common body of knowledge comprised of the classics.

⁶⁹“la préparation essentiellement théologique et morale” (C. Corbo, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 165).

⁷⁰“Au collège, il reçoit la formation classique que l'on sait: étude de l'héritage gréco-romain, culture générale, histoire de l'Europe, le tout filtré par la morale catholique et une apologétique qui invitent à résoudre les problèmes avant de les poser.” (B. Lacroix, “Lionel Groulx cet inconnu?” *RHAF* 32/3 [décembre 1978]: 333).

to relate the two sources of his classical education, which centered on the Greco-Latin humanities,⁷¹ and the Christian religion, specifically Roman Catholicism.⁷²

The curricular emphasis on classical languages⁷³ at colleges such as Sainte-Thérèse⁷⁴ offered an essential link to the study of early Christianity through the writings of the Greek and Latin church ‘fathers,’⁷⁵ whose texts “served to teach the ancient languages.”⁷⁶ Groulx apparently excelled in Greek⁷⁷ which he himself later taught⁷⁸ and

⁷¹ Regarding the development and standardization of the curriculum in nineteenth-century Quebec classical colleges, C. Corbo notes: “Progressivement, toutefois, s’impose le modèle des cours secondaire classique conçu et développé par les jésuites, nourri d’humanités gréco-latines et dans lequel se font durablement sentir les enthousiasmes des érudits de la Renaissance éblouis par la redécouverte de l’Antiquité classique. C’est ainsi que les collèges et séminaires du Québec feront leur un modèle d’éducation secondaire qui est particulièrement inspiré par la compagnie de Jésus et qui sera la voie unique vers les études universitaires, jusqu’à la mise en place de l’école secondaire polyvalente imaginée par la Commission Parent.” (C. Corbo, *La mémoire du cours classique*, pp. 28-29).

⁷² The curriculum outlined for prospective students at Sainte-Thérèse put religion at the top of its list of courses. See É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, p. 367. With regard to the place of religion in the program of studies followed by students in latter nineteenth-century Quebec classical colleges, C. Galarneau notes: “C’est après 1850 que l’on voit apparaître les cours de religion dans toutes les classes, depuis la huitième jusqu’à la philosophie.” (C. Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 192). Concerning the religious practices and environment in Quebec classical colleges at the turn of the twentieth century, C. Corbo observes: “Certes, toute la vie du collège était empreinte de pratiques religieuses ... A quoi s’ajoutaient messe quotidienne à l’aube, grand-messe et vêpres le dimanche, communion fréquente, obligation de fournir régulièrement un billet de confession, et autres pratiques dévotes.” (C. Corbo, *La mémoire du cours classique*, p. 39). Elsewhere C. Corbo adds: “La pratique religieuse est quotidienne et très présente dans la vie des collégiens; cela explique qu’elle semble se fondre dans la routine des activités de chaque jour et prenne davantage figure de composante du décor et du rythme de vie que celle d’expérience profonde et déterminante.” (C. Corbo, *La mémoire du cours classique*, p. 41). Regarding religious practices at Sainte-Thérèse in the late nineteenth century see É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, pp. 250-251.

⁷³ The curriculum at contemporary Quebec classical colleges amounted first and foremost to the study of languages, namely Greek, Latin, French, along with their respective literatures. C. Corbo observes: “Les mêmes matières se retrouvent en substance dans les différents établissements aux mêmes degrés... ‘la part du lion allait aux langues’: français, latin et grec.” (C. Corbo, *La Mémoire du cours classique*, p. 51). C. Galarneau notes that instruction in classical colleges was “essentiellement littéraire fondé sur l’étude des auteurs.” (C. Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 166). Elsewhere C. Galarneau points out: “Les études classiques sont avant tout un enseignement littéraire qui comprend les langues anciennes, française et anglaise.” (C. Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 169).

⁷⁴ The program of study for prospective students at Sainte-Thérèse placed languages second on its list after religion. See É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, p. 367. The study of Latin began the first year and Greek the second year at Sainte-Thérèse. Students concurrently pursued both thereafter until the last of their eight years at Sainte-Thérèse. See É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, pp. 368-369.

⁷⁵ See Lloyd G. Patterson, “Fathers of the Church,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, pp. 424-425. For a book-length introduction, see Boniface Ramsey, *Beginning to Read the Fathers*.

⁷⁶ “Les textes des Pères de l’Église servaient à l’apprentissage des langues anciennes.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 197n. 272).

for which he expressed a preference over Latin.⁷⁹ Since the curriculum at Sainte-Thérèse included the study of “selected discourses from the Greek fathers,”⁸⁰ young Groulx’s diary matter-of-factly mentions translating works⁸¹ by Gregory of Nazianzus⁸² (c. 329-

⁷⁷By his third year at Sainte-Thérèse Groulx rose to the top of the class in translating the classical languages. See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 81. Nevertheless, his journal entry for January 20, 1896, conveys the apprehension he experienced in studying Greek: “Tout est fini, à part la version grecque, ‘the last but not the least’ et qui m’est au-dessus de la tête, comme une épée de Damoclès. On l’a réservée sans doute pour le dessert.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 143). He subsequently recorded a class assignment that apparently dealt with the *Third Philippic* (341BC) which the great Greek orator Demosthenes (384-322 BC) delivered to persuade his fellow Athenians to continue to defend the Chersonese – the peninsula of Gallipoli on the western Hellespont, now called the Dardanelles – against the advances of Philip of Macedonia (382-336 BC), “Nous avons une rêverie charmante à faire, des plus poétiques. Jugez vous-même: “Démosthène la veille au soir de la bataille de Chéronée, contemplant les deux armées en présence.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 233). See also Lillian Feder, *The Handbook of Classical Literature*, p. 114. Elsewhere Groulx draws on the *Philippics* and Demosthenes to caricature the somnolence of students during a Greek class. See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 277-278. Groulx’s journal indicates his knowledge of distinctions within Greek literature and language, as well as its historical dialects. In keeping with traditional views he thus associated the characteristic literary style of Attic Greek with refinement and elegance, whereas he equated Boeotian with the rustic and crude. Referring to a composition required for an impending celebration of the literary society at Sainte-Thérèse, eighteen-year old Groulx paraphrased the guidelines given by his instructor, “Je ne demande, a-t-il dit, qu’un seul tableau, mais que ce soit de l’attique, du fin, du ciselé, pas du ‘Béotien’.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 251). Indeed, within the history of Greek literature the district of Boeotia, which included Thebes among its chief cities, was “supposedly famous for producing stupid, slow, uncreative people (‘Boeotian pig’ was a familiar epithet).” (J. H. Mantinband, *Dictionary of Greek Literature*, p. 78). On the other hand, Attic, the dialect of Attica, a district which included Athens, represented ancient Greek at a high point in the works of the tragic playwright Aeschylus (525/524-456/455 BC), the tragedian Sophocles (c. 496-406 BC), the tragic dramatist Euripides (c. 484-406 BC), and many other writers.

⁷⁸See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 85-86; 2: 648, 669.

⁷⁹Some sixty years later Groulx looked back on his study of the classical languages at Sainte-Thérèse and stated: “Entre le latin et le grec, je me souviens que mes préférences vont au grec.” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 50). Despite this profession neither Groulx’s diary, correspondence, nor memoirs seem to contain any quotations in Greek whereas those in Latin abound.

⁸⁰“discours choisis des Pères grecs” (É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, p. 369).

⁸¹“Notre commun ami Fred Emery en avait fait le lieu de ses promenades autrefois, en Seconde, et comme on traduisait du st. Grégoire de Nazianze et qu’on y parlait de la Tibérine du st. Père Grec, le nom de la petite retraite de Ste-Thérèse était tout trouvé” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 546).

⁸²For an introductory monograph see Rosemary Radford Ruether; *Gregory of Nazianzus: Rhetor and Philosopher*. Radford Ruether indicates the literary and religious significance of Gregory Nazianzen’s work for Christian students: “We have numerous short meditative poems as well as longer didactic poems on theological and ascetic themes. The purpose of this didactic poetry, such as his epic on the Trinity written in stately hexameters, may have been similar to the reworking of Biblical books in classical genres undertaken by the Apollinari, to create an *ersatz* Christian literature to replace the study of the classics for Christian youth.” (R. Radford Ruether, *Gregory of Nazianzus*, p. 51). Meantime, Christoph Hartman points out Gregory of Nazianzus’ seminal contribution to Christian literature and his role as a bridge between classical culture and Christianity: “He is the first Chr. writer to have made a collection of his own letters (*ep.* 51-55) and to have offered a stylistic theory of letter writing (*ep.* 51: ideal: brevity, clarity, elegance). It is in this ideologically neutral genre that G. best demonstrates his familiarity with the Gr. heritage (*ep.* 32, 188, ‘We and the Attics!’).” (C. Hartman, “Gregory of Nazianzus,” in Siegmar Dopp Wilhelm Geerlings, eds., *Dictionary of Early Christian Literature*, p. 261).

390),⁸³ whose feast day Groulx, as a student in the humanities, took double care to note⁸⁴ because “Gregory of Nazianzus is the patron saint of humanists.”⁸⁵ Known as “The Theologian,”⁸⁶ Gregory of Nazianzus (c.329-390),⁸⁷ along with Basil of Caesarea (330-379) and Gregory of Nyssa (331/40-c.395), constituted the ‘three great Cappadocians.’⁸⁸

⁸³ Groulx’s translations at Sainte-Thérèse of Gregory of Nazianzus come as no surprise since his most important discourses, the *Orations* and the five *Theological Orations*, were literary as well as theological works, so that they doubly suited the curriculum at Sainte-Thérèse. A. Meredith notes “Gregory’s elegance in formulating theological statements” (A. Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, p. 44). A. Meredith adds that Gregory “was a literary man and a poet rather than an Athanasius or a Basil” (A. Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, p. 46). Regarding the *Orations*, F. W. Norris points out their “beauty and cadence” (F. W. Norris, “Gregory of Nazianzus,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 493). Elsewhere F. W. Norris observes: “Gregory contended that theology was more a discipline of probabilities, even poetic in nature” (F. W. Norris, “Gregory of Nazianzus,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 494). Meanwhile Bernard McGinn affirms that Gregory of Nazianzus “left about 400 poems, including a number on doctrinal topics” (B. McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, p. 50). J. H. Manton affirms that Gregory of Nazianzus’ “letters to his friends are masterpieces of epistolary style.” (J. H. Manton, *Dictionary of Greek Literature*, p. 180). See also J. Pelikan, *Christianity of Classical Culture*, pp. 7-8; A. Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic Theology*, p. 279.

⁸⁴ On May 6, 1896 Groulx wrote in his diary: “La Saint-Grégoire de Nazianze approche c’est le neuf, samedi prochain.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 196). On May 9, 1896, Groulx’s uncharacteristically brief journal entry for the entire day read: “La Saint-Grégoire de Nazianze! Conventum après bien des pourparlers. Mais je suis harassé de fatigue, à demain.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 196). Groulx correctly associates May 9 with the feast of Gregory of Nazianzus – in the West – but in the East it falls on January 25. See J. T. Cummings, “Gregory of Nazianzus,” in W. J. MacDonald, ed., *NCE*, 6: 791.

⁸⁵ “Saint-Grégoire de Nazianze est le patron des humanistes” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 196). Indeed by virtue of the emphasis on rhetoric in the classical colleges Gregory of Nazianzus particularly suited the curriculum because, as J. T. Cummings points out, “In all the orations, whether acting as dogmatic theologian, exegete, moralist, spiritual director, or pastor, he remains always the rhetorician” (J. T. Cummings, “Gregory of Nazianzus,” in W. J. MacDonald, ed., *NCE*, 6: 793).

⁸⁶ Only the apostle John also bears the title “The Theologian.” See F. W. Norris, “Gregory of Nazianzus,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 491. See also Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, p. 9; A. Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic Theology*, p. 17. A. Meredith notes that “to later generations he was always ‘the Theologian,’ and it is largely because of his *Theological Orations* that he is known” (A. Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, p. 42). Geoffrey W. Bromiley adds that the *Theological Orations* won Gregory of Nazianzus “the title of Theologos and ... are his chief claim to theological distinction” (G. W. Bromiley, *Historical Theology*, p. 138). Elsewhere F. W. Norris notes in reference to Cappadocian theology: “The final achievement of full Trinitarian thought, however, appeared in the *Theological Orations* of Gregory Nazianzen, affectionately and penetratingly called ‘The Theologian’” (F. W. Norris, “Cappadocian Fathers,” in Trevor A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 113). With regard to Nazianzen, F. W. Norris concludes: “His poetic power shapes his theology and dares new formulations. His poetry can be mined for faith which gives fullness to reasoning” (F. W. Norris, “Cappadocian Fathers,” in T. A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 115).

⁸⁷ Concerning their theological significance in the history of Christianity see F. W. Norris, “Cappadocian Fathers,” in T. A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, pp. 111-115. See also E. Glenn Hinson, *The Early Church*, pp. 237-238, 262-263.

⁸⁸ See Anthony Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, pp. 39-51. See also B. McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, pp. 48-51; F. W. Norris, “Gregory of Nazianzus,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, pp. 491-494; F. W. Norris, “Cappadocian Fathers,” in Trevor A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, pp. 111-115. For a detailed study of Gregory of Nazianzus within the context of the ‘Three

Nor did this represent a mere coincidence in the program at Sainte-Thérèse because the Cappadocians stood at the juncture of classical culture and Christianity. In fact their “encounter and ... synthesis were embodied in the thought of the so-called Three Cappadocians,” according to Pelikan.⁸⁹ At the same time they proved a common wellspring for eastern and western Christianity, indeed they served as a bridge between the two. Pierre Hadot affirms: “Gregory of Nazianzus ... is, with Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa, one of the three Cappadocians who gave both eastern and western theological orthodoxy its first systematization along with its first classic formulation.”⁹⁰

They in turn owed not a little to one of the most learned and prolific authors of the early church, Origen⁹¹ (c. 185-254),⁹² the Alexandrian Bible critic, exegete,

Cappadocians’ and the classics see J. Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture*. For an overall treatment of Gregory of Nazianzus within a theological survey of the church ‘fathers’ see Boniface Ramsey, *Beginning to Read the Fathers*.

⁸⁹ J. Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, p. ix.

⁹⁰ “Grégoire ... de Nazianze ... est, avec Basile de Césarée et Grégoire de Nysse, l’un des trois Cappadociens qui ont donné à la théologie orthodoxe, aussi bien orientale qu’occidentale, sa première systématisation et sa première formulation classique” (P. Hadot, “Grégoire de Nazianze,” in *Dictionnaire de la théologie chrétienne*, p. 384).

⁹¹ For a synopsis of Origen and his corpus see Hermann Josef Vogt, “Origen,” in S. Dopp, Wilhelm Geerlings, eds., *Dictionary of Early Christian Literature*, pp. 444-451. H. J. Vogt underscores the lasting impact of Origen on Christian thinkers and hermeneutics: “Even western church fathers (Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine) learned allegorism from O. and passed it on to the Middle Ages” (H. J. Vogt, “Origen,” in S. Dopp, Wilhelm Geerlings, eds., *Dictionary of Early Christian Literature*, p. 451).

⁹² In response to the notion that the intellectual history of eastern Christianity has no Greek thinker to compare with Augustine (354-430) in Latin, western Christianity, J. Pelikan declares: “For if it means that there has never been in the Christian East a theological – philosophical genius worthy of being placed alongside Augustine for sheer creativity and power as an individual intellectual virtuoso (whether heretical or orthodox), it is mistaken, because Origen of Alexandria ... does deserve to be counted as his peer.” (J. Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, p. 6). Elsewhere he adds in reference to the history of early Christianity: “Yet by any standard, the ‘first’ among all Christian scholars in these first four centuries, first both in eminence and in the ability to evoke controversy, had been the third-century theologian Origen of Alexandria” (J. Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, p. 29). Robert J. Daly does not hesitate to affirm that Origen “has exerted an influence on Christian thought, exceeded perhaps by no one except the apostle Paul himself” (R. J. Daly, “Origen,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 836). With regard to the primordial role of Origen in the history of biblical exegesis in both eastern and western Christianity, Pierre Hadot observes: “Dans ce domaine, il a été un initiateur en créant la critique textuelle de l’Ancien Testament et en rédigeant une masse de commentaires si importante que tous les exégètes postérieurs, grecs et latins, en seront tributaires” (P. Hadot, “Origène et Origénisme,” in *Dictionnaire de la théologie chrétienne*, p. 605). Boniface Ramsey concurs, stating that “Origen himself was the foremost biblical scholar of antiquity” (B. Ramsey, *Beginning to Read the Fathers*, p. 36). This reputation largely rested on Origen’s commentaries which covered almost every book of the Bible and his

theologian, and spiritual writer, whom the Cappadocians “deeply revered.”⁹³ During his third year at Sainte-Thérèse Groulx studied Origen and his writings to prepare for an examination on them, as indicated by his class assignment for February 12, 1894, “Who was Origen – and say something about his works.”⁹⁴

Young Groulx also studied Gregory of Nazianzus⁹⁵ contemporary, John Chrysostom⁹⁶ (c. 347-407), “the greatest preacher in the early church,”⁹⁷ who along with

massive, six-version text of the Old Testament, the *Hexapla*, “whose philological sophistication was not approached again until the sixteenth century” (R. J. Daly, “Origen,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 835). P. Hadot also notes that Origen’s *On First Principles*, represents the first endeavor to formulate a systematic Christian theology. (P. Hadot, “Origène et Origénisme,” in *Dictionnaire de la Théologie chrétienne*, p. 605). In this vein Aidan Nichols points out: “While Origen is willing to speak of Greek or Persian writers who dealt with the divine as ‘theologians,’ he possesses as well a properly Christian sense of the word. Thus *theologeîn*, to ‘theologize,’ is in particular to recognize and confess God in Jesus Christ. Origen’s career was at its height in the 230s, but it was another eighty years or thereabouts before we come across a writer who uses the word ‘theology’ exclusively of an activity to do with Christian believing” (A. Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic Theology*, p. 265). Henri Crouzel notes that Origen’s *Against Celsus* constitutes “the most important apologetic work of the ante-Nicene period” (H. Crouzel, “Origen,” in René Latourelle, Rino Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 743). Boniface Ramsey sums up the role of Origen in early Christianity by stating that he “was the foremost biblical scholar of antiquity” (B. Ramsey, *Beginning to Read the Fathers*, p. 36). See also, James B. Walker, “Origen,” in T. A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, pp. 406-407; G. W. Bromiley, *Historical Theology*, pp. 42-49; E. Glenn Hinson, *The Church Triumphant*, pp. 143-144.

⁹³R. J. Daly, “Origen,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 836. Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil of Caesarea compiled the *Philocalia*, an anthology of Origen’s writings. See R. J. Daly, “Origen,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 836. On this literary genre which bridged classical culture and Christianity, A. Nichols notes, in reference to the *Philocalia*: “There were the *florilegia*, literally ‘bouquet of flowers,’ an ancient literary form now turned to Christian use. Christians produced *florilegia* of biblical testimonies, like that by Cyprian, but also of patristic extracts, such as the pieces of Origen gathered together by Basil and Gregory Nazianzen.” (A. Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic Theology*, p. 284). A. Meredith adds: “The enthusiasm felt by Basil and Gregory Nazianzen for Origen found expression in a collection of extracts from the writings of Origen, published around 358 under the title of *Philocalia*” (A. Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, p. 10). For a survey of Origen’s influence on Gregory of Nyssa, Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory of Nazianzus, see A. Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, pp. 4-5, 10-17ff.

⁹⁴“Qui était Origène et dites un mot de ses écrits.” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, “Questions,” Devoirs des élèves, v. 2, Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse-de-Blainville, *Spicilèges*, 12 February 1894).

⁹⁵Eastern Orthodoxy considers John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil of Caesarea the three hierarchs of the faith. See F. W. Norris, “Basil of Caesarea,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 171.

⁹⁶For a summary of Chrysostom’s works and their significance see Rainer Kaczynski, “John Chrysostom,” in S. Döpp, W. Geerlings, eds., *Dictionary of Early Christian Literature*, pp. 330-336. Groulx considered Chrysostom’s corpus a treasure trove and with reason as R. Kaczynski notes: “No Gr. father of the church has left behind such an extensive body of work as J. Seventeen treatises, over seven hundred certainly authentic sermons, and four commentaries on books of the scriptures, as well as 241 letters have come down from him” (R. Kaczynski, “John Chrysostom,” in S. Döpp, W. Geerlings, eds., *Dictionary of Early Christian Literature*, p. 332).

the Cappadocians contributed to the cultural, spiritual, and theological flowering of Christianity in the later fourth century.⁹⁸ Groulx counted Chrysostom's discourses a continuing source of inspiration, as he confided to his diary: "One can still find nourishment for the heart and the imagination in Horace's odes and an oration by saint John Chrysostom."⁹⁹ Indeed Groulx later fondly recalled that at Sainte-Thérèse: "After translating it in class I memorized saint John Chrysostom's homily on the *Spectacles*."¹⁰⁰ Herein lay a key to the significance of Chrysostom for the program of study at Sainte-Thérèse. Named *Chrysostomos* ("golden-mouthed")¹⁰¹ due to his oratorical skills, John, like Gregory of Nazianzus,¹⁰² provided the curriculum with Christian models of rhetoric

⁹⁷ Robert Wilken, "John Chrysostom," in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 622. Geoffrey W. Bromiley points out: "Among the activities which gave rise to literary production, preaching figures prominently. Indeed, the late fourth century produced one of the most eminent preachers of Christian history in John Chrysostom of Antioch." (G. W. Bromiley, *Historical Theology*, p. 96).

⁹⁸ R. Wilken observes: "John lived during the golden age of early Christian literature, like others who were part of the blossoming of Christian cultural and spiritual life in this period – Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus – he was thoroughly educated in the rhetorical and literary traditions of Greek culture, while surpassing all his contemporaries in the purity and elegance of his style." (R. Wilken, "John Chrysostom," in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 622). Jean-Marie Leroux notes: "Avec Basile et Grégoire de Nazianze, ses aînés de quelques années, Jean Chrysostome (Jean 'Bouche d'or') appartient à la génération de ceux qui édifièrent l'Église après les bouleversements doctrinaux et politiques qui suivirent l'avènement de l'Empire chrétien" (J. M. Leroux, "Jean Chrysostome," in *Dictionnaire de la théologie chrétienne*, p. 443).

⁹⁹ "On peut encore trouver des aliments pour le coeur et l'imagination dans les odes d'Horace et un discours de saint Jean Chrysostôme" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 669).

¹⁰⁰ "Après traduction en classe, j'apprends de même l'homélie de saint Jean Chrysostome sur les *Spectacles*" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 50). John Chrysostom authored over one hundred non-exegetical homilies, that is to say sermons which did not expound biblical texts. Most of these dealt with moral or ascetic themes, including, as C. Bardy points out, these "contre les jeux et les théâtres," to which Groulx seems to refer here (See C. Bardy, "Jean Chrysostome," in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, E. Amann, eds., *Dictionnaire de la théologie chrétienne*, 8: 670). On Chrysostom's practical and moral sermons, including those "Against the Circus Games," see also F. van Ommeslaeghe, "Chrysostom," in Mircea Eliade, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 3: 466.

¹⁰¹ R. Wilken, "John Chrysostom," in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 622.

¹⁰² Concerning the relationship between theology, literature, and rhetoric in early Christianity A. Nichols notes with specific reference to Gregory of Nazianzus: "... a Christian rhetoric emerges as the vehicle of theological persuasion in doctrine and discipline. Its two most common genres were the oration and the letter. The fourth century is the high point in the appearance of such theological forms: Gregory Nazianzen's *Theological Orations* is perhaps our best example of the first of these rhetorical genres, while his letters were 'carefully polished to be little gems of language.' In his oration on his friend Basil, Gregory implicitly defends his use of these vehicles for theology by attacking Christians who are anticulture and make boorishness a virtue ... For Gregory, *logos*, the use of language, is the most fitting offering there can be to a God who is himself Logos, the Word. As he put it in his festal oration on Pentecost, though different

just as Demosthenes (384-322 BC), the pre-eminent orator of ancient Greece,¹⁰³ and Cicero (106-43 BC), the foremost Roman orator,¹⁰⁴ offered colleges the outstanding examples of classical rhetoric. More to the point, rhetoric, the art of the spoken and written word, stood at the summit of the educational scheme,¹⁰⁵ as C. Galarneau explains:

people have different ways of keeping a festival, 'to the worshipper of the Word, a discourse seems best.' Christian rhetoric was an offering of sacred eloquence, and by teaching others about doctrine and morals, it honored God and served him" (A. Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic Theology*, p. 279).

¹⁰³ See J. H. Mantinband, *Dictionary of Greek Literature*, p. 122. On the place of Demosthenes in the program of study see C. Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 170.

¹⁰⁴ See J. H. Mantinband, *Dictionary of Latin Literature*, pp. 67-69. See also, "Cicero," in Kathleen Kuiper, ed., *Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature*, p. 244. On the place of Cicero in the program of study C. Galarneau notes: "Salluste et Cicéron couronnent les classes de grammaire, tandis que Tite-Live, Horace et Cicéron sont les auteurs des classes de seconde et de rhétorique" (C. Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 169).

¹⁰⁵ In fact not only the program of study but extracurricular activities at classical colleges sought to develop eloquence in students. C. Corbo observes: "À mi-chemin entre la cour de récréation et la salle de cours, un certain nombre d'activités viennent modifier le rythme des journées et ouvrir à des réalités qui dépassent l'apprentissage austère de la salle de cours. Il en va ainsi des séances de classes, marquées de 'concertations', au combats d'équipes en matière de grammaire ou de connaissance de vocabulaire, de combats singuliers sur les mêmes objets, de monologues, etc..." (C. Corbo, *La mémoire du cours classique*, p. 62). C. Galarneau adds: "L'étude des préceptes de rhétorique et les exercices en latin et en français devaient sortir de la classe pour être pratiqués dans un cadre moins artificiel. C'est ainsi que sont nés les académies et les autres sociétés ou cercles littéraires, historiques, scientifiques, philosophiques ou patriotiques. Essentiellement fondés comme milieux de discussion, ces cercles servaient à parler, à déclamer, à argumenter ou à plaider sur des sujets divers" (C. Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 204).

This certainly applied to Sainte-Thérèse, as É. Dubois attests: "Les éducateurs thérésiens fondent des sociétés écolières. On comprend l'avantage de telles associations. C'est un stimulant au travail que le titre de membre d'une société en renom; c'est une discipline qui empêche les énergies de se disperser et de se gaspiller; c'est un complément nécessaire aux études classiques; une élite consciente de ses devoirs futurs se prépare, dans ces cénacles, à la défense des causes patriotiques et religieuses. Former des jeunes gens capables de tenir la plume et de parler correctement en public" (É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, p. 144).

Against this backdrop É. Dubois speaks of the *Académie Saint-Charles*, a literary society in which Groulx figured prominently during his latter years at Sainte-Thérèse: "De la *Société littéraire* fondée par M. Tassé, va sortir, en 1862, comme le fruit de la fleur, sous l'habile main de M. Nantel, l'Académie Saint-Charles... Ses membres actifs sont les élèves des classes supérieures qui ont obtenu des succès en littérature. L'Académie récompense aussi les mieux doués des élèves des classes inférieures par les titres et les insignes d'aspirants ou de candidats. C'est une belle et noble société, une école de distinction, un cénacle littéraire. Les Académiciens figurent en public avec leurs médailles aux grands jours de fête ou de réception, et portent avec fierté le nom d'immortels" (É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, p. 144. See also pp. 121, 248-249).

This explains Groulx's reference to the "immortals" in his letter on October 24, 1896, when, quoting Virgil's *Georgics*, he requested admittance into the seemingly exclusive circle of the *Académie Saint-Charles*, "Ma plume, si je la compare à celle de nos quinze immortels, (*Si parva licet componere magnis*) est loin, certes, d'être des plus finement taillées, mais en retour elle promet bien d'être diligente" (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 18-19). The next day October 25, 1896, in a

Our preceptors therefore much admired good public speakers and everyone venerated the 'orator,' whether an electoral candidate, a member of parliament, a preacher, or the president of a deliberating assembly. They also enjoyed frequenting people who in times past brightened living-room parlours, as well as individuals whose conversation glistened. Those who completed the classical curriculum had a reputation for their speaking ability. This comes as no surprise since the humanities program, founded on learning

humorous, indeed a consciously farcical vein, Groulx recorded his acceptance into the privileged ranks of this student literary association. Elated with the status symbol which membership in this society conferred, Groulx jubilantly wrote in his diary: "Holà! place! place! écartez-vous mortels, prosternez vos fronts dans la poussière: Je suis Immortel! oui immortel! Bientôt j'irai en compagnie des dieux boire le nectar: Je suis académicien!!! (J'écris parfois dans le genre burlesque) Oui c'est bien vrai, je suis académicien, s'il vous plaît; ce qui rehausse bien ma petite taille d'une coudée au moins et dans la société écolière me range dans l'aristocratie. Dire que je suis un aristocrate! et déjà! Hier soir donc j'écrivais à Monsieur le Président de l'*Académie Saint-Charles*... Et ce soir la réponse à ma lettre m'est arrivée conçue en termes des plus flatteurs – et je ne suis pas bien certain s'ils n'ont pas blessé ma modestie – Me voici donc pour en finir 'Académicien'" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 245-247). In keeping with its goal to develop the rhetorical skills of students, Groulx's admission into this club required him to give a speech at his induction: "Et parmi mes devoirs, un franchement un [sic] qui ne me sourit pas beaucoup, c'est un discours à composer pour la Saint-Charles, la semaine prochaine, un discours de réception" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 246).

Groulx later served as president of the *Académie Saint-Charles* and in this capacity delivered an address on November 8, 1898, at a formal reception for the new archbishop of Montréal, Napoléon-Paul Bruchési (1855-1939): "L'après-midi amène les visiteurs à la salle académique où Mgr Bruchési répond à l'adresse du président de l'Académie, Lionel Groulx" (É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, p. 244. See also p. 375). Young Groulx's journal often alludes to the *Académie Saint-Charles* and the presentations he made to it with characteristic literary flare (See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 132, 193, 335, 356-358, 399-401). Even in old age Groulx remembered the significance the *Académie Saint-Charles* held for him at Sainte-Thérèse. Referring to its student societies Groulx stated: "Au sommet de toutes, j'aperçois l'Académie Saint-Charles, cénacle d'accès difficile, où dix tout au plus des hautes classes prenaient place, après aptitudes littéraires dûment constatées: académiciens solennels qui, en nos jeunes années, nous impressionnaient fortement avec leur étoile d'or ou d'argent sur la poitrine" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 57-58).

While the *Académie Saint-Charles* concentrated on developing writing skills, another student association focused on public speaking and debate, the *Société Ducharme*, which succeeded its predecessor at Sainte-Thérèse, the tellingly titled *Société de Bon Langage et de Déclamation*. In reference to the year 1880 É. Dubois writes: "En ce temps-là, voit le jour notre belle et florissante société de discussion, appelée Société Ducharme. Elle remplace la Société de Déclamation et de Bon Langage [sic] ... La nouvelle société est un parlement-école dont le premier but est d'exercer les enfants à la parole publique et à l'improvisation" (É. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse*, p. 177). See also pp. 144-145, 376-377; G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 164n. 163.

Groulx honed his speaking skills by participating extensively in the *Société Ducharme* for which he composed a poem (see G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 164-165). His diary abounds with allusions to the debates of the *Société Ducharme*, and Groulx served as its vice-president during his last year at Sainte-Thérèse (see G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 81-85, 148n. 3, 224-225n. 232, 241-242n. 370, 308n. 123, 329-330n. 172, 335-336, 343, 358n. 31, 547). Over half a century later Groulx recalled the role this forensic club played in his life and that of his fellow students at Sainte-Thérèse: "Il y avait aussi la Société Ducharme, sorte de parlement-école. À cette société-là, dans un décorum impeccable, l'on s'exerçait à l'art de la parole, à l'improvisation, tout en débattant des sujets d'histoire ou autres. Toutes oratoires qui faisaient parler d'elles dans tout le collège, et où se fondaient de jeunes renommées. On s'y passionnait au possible. Souvent la discussion commencée à la salle académique se continuaient chaudement au réfectoire, à la récréation" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 58; see also p. 60).

ancient and modern languages, followed a rigorous, progressive method. Everyday they had assignments and exercises which went from declensions, to the study of authors, all the way to Latin or French discourses. These literary studies sought to develop eloquence to the utmost.¹⁰⁶

Groulx learned well this lesson and proved one of the foremost contemporary French-Canadian orators and writers; in fact most of his books first took the form of speeches,¹⁰⁷ so that he consistently harnessed the dynamics operative between the spoken and written word. Concerning their intrinsic relationship in Groulx's works his former student, Frégault, notes in reference to reading the opening lines of Groulx's memoirs:

The rhythm of the phrase rings in one's ear like the sound of his voice. From the very first words it all came back to

¹⁰⁶ "C'est ainsi que nos maîtres admiraient tant ceux qui parlaient bien en public et que tous et chacun vénéraient 'l'orateur,' qu'il soit candidat à une élection ou membre du parlement, prédicateur, plaideur ou président d'assemblée délibérante. On aimait encore le commerce de celui ou celle qui ornait les salons d'autrefois et la compagnie des gens qui brillaient par leurs propos. Ceux qui avaient fait le cours classique étaient réputés pour leur savoir-parler. On le percevait aisément puisque l'enseignement humaniste, fondé sur l'apprentissage des langues anciennes et modernes, est mené selon un ordre rigoureux et progressif. On fait tous les jours des leçons et des exercices, depuis les déclinaisons, l'explication des auteurs jusqu'au discours latin ou français. Ces études littéraires tendent à la perfection de l'éloquence" (C. Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 175; see also p. 204). Groulx's memoirs repeatedly confirm oratorical eloquence as a status symbol in French-Canadian society at the turn of the twentieth century. In fact he maintained that his precocious ability to speak well in public earned him the opportunity to attend a classical college despite his parents' meagre finances (see L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 38-40).

¹⁰⁷ Thus *Nos luttes constitutionnelles* originated as a series of five addresses Groulx delivered from November 3, 1915 to April 12, 1916, during his first academic year as professor of Canadian history at the Université Laval de Montréal. See Pierre L'Hérault, "Nos luttes constitutionnelles," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 769. See also, V. Barbeau, *L'oeuvre du Chanoine Lionel Groulx*, pp. 24, 58, 143. Not merely academic lectures, Groulx purposely crafted these speeches so that they appealed to the public at large, as he later acknowledged: "Je ne puis compter sur des étudiants attirés et assidus. J'aurai devant moi un auditoire de grand public, auditoire capricieux, dont l'on sait l'inconstance. Encore me faut-il réussir à l'attirer" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 253; see also 1: 252, 254, 305).

La confédération canadienne similarly first took the form of public discourses given during the 1917-1918 academic year at the Université Laval de Montréal. See P. L'Hérault, "La Confédération canadienne," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 767. See also, V. Barbeau, *L'oeuvre du Chanoine Lionel Groulx*, pp. 27, 56; L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 298-300, 313-314.

Following the same pattern, *La naissance d'une race* constituted a five-part series presented at the Université Laval de Montréal during the 1918-1919 academic year. See P. L'Hérault, "La Naissance d'une race," in M. Lemire, ed., *DOLQ*, 2: 740. See also, V. Barbeau, *L'oeuvre du Chanoine Lionel Groulx*, p. 25; L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 302. In their printed form these speeches enjoyed a singular success among Groulx's public university lecture series, since *La naissance d'une race* appeared in three editions – 1919, 1930, 1938. See V. Barbeau, *L'oeuvre du Chanoine Lionel Groulx*, p. 25; L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 327-328; 3: 51-53.

To further examine the correlation between Groulx's oral and written rhetoric, see Robert Desaulniers, *Catalogue des manuscrits de Lionel Groulx (1892-1922)*, and Stéphanie Stapinsky, Lucy Sicard, *Inventaire analytique de la série des manuscrits (1923-1935) du fonds Lionel-Groulx*.

me, even his accented stress on the first syllable and the end of his sentences sliding into a sigh.¹⁰⁸

Yet his early study of the Greek church ‘fathers’ had much more than a rhetorical effect on Groulx. His familiarity with the works of foundational figures in the history of eastern Christianity, such as Chrysostom, Origen, and Gregory of Nazianzus, imparted to Groulx a lasting appreciation for their unique understanding of the Christian faith. Indeed in 1964, eighty-six year-old Groulx unequivocally validated the theology of eastern Christianity to which Sainte-Thérèse had introduced him:

Since the earliest centuries of the Church East and West have constituted widely divergent cultural spaces. Each has elaborated its own theology and spirituality. The Church readily accepts these theologies as long as they respect the unity of the faith.¹⁰⁹

Since the Roman Catholic Church founded and operated the college at Sainte-Thérèse it naturally emphasized the intellectual heritage of western Christianity so that through the curriculum, particularly in Latin and rhetoric, young Groulx studied the writings of the doctors of the western church.¹¹⁰ His diary accordingly makes early mention¹¹¹ of Ambrose¹¹² (c. 339-397) bishop of Milan and “an important link between eastern

¹⁰⁸“Le rythme de la phrase apporte à l’oreille comme le son de la voix. Dès les premiers mots, pour ma part, j’ai tout reconnu, et jusqu’à l’accent tonique posé sur la première syllable, la fin des phrases glissant dans un souffle” (G. Frégault, *Lionel Groulx tel qu’en lui-même*, p. 8).

¹⁰⁹L. Groulx, book review of André Dagenais, *Vingt-quatre défauts thomistes*, *RHAF* 18/2 (septembre 1964): 310-311.

¹¹⁰“doctor ecclesiae” – A title given to certain saints for their outstanding, orthodox teaching; from the eighth century the west recognized four ‘doctors of the church’: Ambrose of Milan (c. 339-397), Jerome (c. 342-420), Augustine of Hippo (354-430), Pope Gregory the Great (c. 540-604). A century later in the east, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil the Great, and John Chrysostom, came to be known as ‘the Three Hierarchs and Ecumenical Teachers.’ For an extensive definition of this term see, B. McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, pp. 1-21. As a corollary to the early doctors of the western church see Hans von Campenhausen’s survey of Latin patristic literature, *The Fathers of the Latin Church*. Regarding the rationale behind naming the first doctors of the church J. N. D. Kelly notes: “The original number four (the list was later to be greatly expanded) was chosen so that the Doctors could match the Evangelists” (J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 333n. 1).

¹¹¹See his journal entry on May 11, 1896; G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 197.

¹¹²For a thorough introduction to Ambrose see Angelo Paredi, *Saint Ambrose: His Life and Times*. Regarding Ambrose’s preaching in particular see A. Paredi, *Saint Ambrose*, pp. 257-277. For a brief

Christianity¹¹³ and the western church,”¹¹⁴ due to his untypical knowledge of Greek and consequent familiarity with writers such as Basil¹¹⁵ and in particular Origen.¹¹⁶ Groulx’s journal specifically refers to the “sermons of Saint Ambrose,”¹¹⁷ and with good reason since he stood as one of “the greatest orators of the patristic period,”¹¹⁸ and achieved this stature by drawing extensively on classical sources and rhetorical traditions.¹¹⁹

overview of Ambrose’s works see Christoph Marksches, “Ambrose of Milan,” in S. Döpp, W. Geerlings, eds., *Dictionary of Early Christian Literature*, pp. 12-20.

¹¹³Regarding this L. J. Swift notes: “In contrast to many contemporary Christian bishops in the West, Ambrose knew Greek well” (L. J. Swift, “Ambrose,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 42).

¹¹⁴Louis J. Swift, “Ambrose,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 42. Ivor Davidson pithily explains how Ambrose served as a bridge between Christianity in the east and west because to all intents and purposes he “repackaged the theology of the eastern Nicenes in forceful Latin” (I. Davidson, “Ambrose,” in T. A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 10). Indeed I. Davidson characterizes Ambrose as a “pioneer of Greek ideas in a Latin context” (I. Davidson, “Ambrose,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 11). On Ambrose’s theological debt to the Cappadocians P. Hadot states: “Ambroise doit presque tout à ses collègues grecs contemporains: le groupe des ‘Cappadociens’ tout d’abord, c’est-à-dire Basile de Césarée, Grégoire de Nazianze, Grégoire de Nysse ... La plupart du temps, Ambroise s’est contenté de traduire leurs oeuvres en latin, en les adaptant” (P. Hadot, “Ambroise de Milan,” in *Dictionnaire de théologie chrétienne*, p. 32). Regarding the pivotal part which Ambrose played in transmitting to Latin Christianity the intellectual heritage of Origen and other Greek theologians, P. Hadot remarks: “Ambroise n’a joué dans l’histoire de la pensée qu’un rôle intermédiaire: il a transmis à Augustin et au Moyen Âge, sous une forme anonyme, de nombreux textes de Philon, d’Origène et des Pères grecs. Mais ce fait a été décisif pour l’évolution de la pensée chrétienne en Occident” (P. Hadot, “Ambroise de Milan,” in *Dictionnaire de théologie chrétienne*, p. 33). B. McGinn points out that Ambrose’s originality as a theologian has in fact “been underestimated due to his dependence on Greek thought” (B. McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, p. 53).

¹¹⁵With regard to Ambrose, Hans von Campenhausen notes: “The study of the most important writings did not cause him any difficulties, owing, as we know, to his knowledge of Greek ... Moreover, he also got personally in touch with Basil the Great” (H. von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Latin Church*, p. 97).

¹¹⁶B. McGinn affirms that Ambrose achieved mastery of the “Greek fathers (especially Origen)” (B. McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, p. 52). Meanwhile, I. Davidson observes that Ambrose was an “assiduous student of Greek authorities” (I. Davidson, “Ambrose,” in T. A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 10). Ambrose’s exegesis owed not a little to Origen. See I. Davidson, “Ambrose,” in T. A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 10; see also P. Hadot, “Ambroise de Milan,” in *Dictionnaire de théologie chrétienne*, p. 32. Indeed with regard to Origen’s influence on Ambrose’s works, P. Hadot notes that “À partir de 385, l’influence d’Origène va prédominer” (P. Hadot, “Ambroise de Milan,” in *Dictionnaire de théologie chrétienne*, p. 32).

¹¹⁷“sermons de Saint Ambroise” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 197).

¹¹⁸I. Davidson, “Ambrose,” in T. A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 10. With regard to Ambrose, P. Hadot affirms: “Cet homme d’action est un orateur dont l’éloquence, parée de tous les prestiges de la rhétorique, séduira tout spécialement Augustin.” (P. Hadot, “Ambroise de Milan,” in *Dictionnaire de théologie chrétienne*, p. 31). Indeed, due in no small part to Ambrose’s sermons which “he found remarkable for their philosophical acumen and religious insight,” as Margaret R. Miles notes, Augustine of Hippo (354-430) converted to Christianity (M. R. Miles, “Augustine,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 149). Referring to Ambrose’s multifaceted ecclesiastical career B. McGinn cautions: “But it is not the political Ambrose, reflected in his letters and some of his treatises, that marks his greatest impact on the church; it is rather Ambrose the preacher and biblical interpreter” (B.

Along with Ambrose Groulx also studied Jerome (c. 347-419/420),¹²⁰ polemicist, one of the foremost biblical scholars in the history of the church, and correlatively its first outstanding *vir trilinguis*: master of Latin, Greek and Hebrew,¹²¹ as pre-eminently demonstrated by his translations and revisions of the biblical books – the Vulgate – which became the accepted text in the Latin west. On this basis alone Jerome earned a place in the program of study at a religious educational institution such as the “petit séminaire” of Sainte-Thérèse; all the more so seeing that Jerome, like Gregory of Nazianzus with whom he studied,¹²² also bridged classical culture and Christianity,¹²³ as

McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, p. 53). Not surprisingly many of Ambrose’s literary works originated in the form of homilies, indeed “exegetical sermons hastily reworked for publication” (L. J. Swift, “Ambrose,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 42). In this regard A. Paredi notes: “The majority of his sermons contain comments on passages from Sacred Scripture read in church. Confronted with the size of this collection, one wonders how the bishop found time to write so incessantly. The answer is that the majority of these writings are simply reproductions of sermons and instructions. This is so true that it can often be seen where one sermon ended and another began” (A. Paredi, *Saint Ambrose*, p. 259). C. Marksches adds: “About half of A.’s writings are exegetical in kind and originated as edited and expanded sermons on bibl. texts as recorded by stenographers” (C. Marksches, “Ambrose of Milan,” in S. Döpp, W. Geerlings, eds., *Dictionary of Early Christian Literature*, p. 15).

¹¹⁹ L. J. Swift states that Ambrose’s “rhetorical style ... was rich in imagery derived from nature, Scripture, and classical sources, such as Virgil and Cicero” (L. J. Swift, “Ambrose,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 42). I. Davidson points out that in Ambrose’s sermons “allusions to classical literature abound” (I. Davidson, “Ambrose,” in *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 10). With regard to Greek philosophical sources, P. Hadot observes: “Comme Cicéron et Sénèque, Ambroise sait adapter rapidement à des fins d’exhortation et d’édification les oeuvres spéculatives des Grecs” (P. Hadot, “Ambroise de Milan,” in *Dictionnaire de la théologie chrétienne*, p. 31).

¹²⁰ For an introduction to Jerome, see J. N. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies*.

¹²¹ Regarding the pivotal part which Jerome’s linguistic expertise permitted him to play between eastern and western culture through his many crucial translations from their respective literatures, Pierre Lardet remarks: “En se consacrant par priorité à de telles tâches, Jérôme répondait aux urgences d’un temps où la postérité d’une triple culture latine, grecque et hébraïque constituait un privilège rarissime et où commençaient à se distendre pour longtemps les liens entre Orient et Occident” (P. Lardet, “Jérôme,” in *Dictionnaire de la théologie chrétienne*, p. 465).

¹²² Regarding Jerome’s development in exegesis, P. Lardet notes: “À Antioche, puis à Constantinople, il parachève sa formation exégétique auprès d’Apollinaire de Laodicée et surtout de Grégoire de Nazianze” (P. Lardet, “Jérôme,” in *Dictionnaire de la théologie chrétienne*, p. 462). See also Michael P. McHugh, “Jerome,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 607).

¹²³ Jerome’s correspondence recounts a dream which epitomized the profound attachment of this Christian man of letters to classical literature, as B. McGinn relates: “In his letter 22 ... Jerome tells the story of what happened to him during Lent of 376 ... The young scholar had already begun his intensive study of the Bible, but he kept getting pulled back to reading the more elegant classical writers he loved so well: Cicero, Plautus, and Vergil. In the midst of a severe fever that threatened his life, suddenly he felt himself caught up before the heavenly judgment seat, where God asked him to state who he was. When he responded that he was a Christian, the Judge thundered: ‘You’re lying; you’re a Ciceronian, not a Christian. Where your treasure is, there also is your heart’ (Mt. 6:21). Jerome was ordered to be flogged, but as he begged for

well as the increasingly divergent Christian traditions taking shape in the east and the west.¹²⁴

Following a literary tradition inherited from classical culture,¹²⁵ Jerome's extensive body of writings¹²⁶ included those of an epistolary genre,¹²⁷ which particularly appealed to young Groulx, as evidenced by his diary in which he expressed his heartfelt

forgiveness during this beating the celestial court interceded for him and he was allowed to take an oath that if he ever again possessed or read 'worldly books' it would be equivalent to denying God ... Of course, Jerome didn't keep his oath (as his enemies pointed out with glee)" (B. McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, p. 60). I. Davidson notes Jerome's erudition in the classics and the extent to which he co-opted them for Christian ends: "The Jerome who had a dream that he was excluded from home for being a Ciceronian rather than a Christian and who consequently vowed not to read pagan authors, was the Jerome who was steeped in classical literature and who later came to an accommodation whereby the best of secular learning could be sanctified to the Christian's benefit" (I. Davidson, "Jerome," in T. A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, pp. 281-282). P. Lardet speaks of tensions and pitfalls inherent in Jerome's position as a Christian scholar in the early church who found himself inexorably drawn to classical culture "Non sans conflits, relatifs notamment à l'élucidation des rapports entre technique littéraire et orthodoxie religieuse, entre esthétique profane et éthique chrétienne, ainsi qu'à l'affrontement de cette triple altérité que représentaient pour un chrétien latin de ce temps une culture païenne aux séductions suspectes [Cicéron, Virgile, Horace – que Rufin accuse Jérôme de citer 'à chaque page']" (P. Lardet, "Jérôme," in *Dictionnaire de théologie chrétienne*, p. 465).

¹²⁴With regard to Jerome's mediating role between eastern and western culture and languages P. Lardet speaks of "la jonction qu'aura opérée toute sa vie entre Orient et Occident: outre les voyages et les échanges épistolaires qui la scandent, les fonctions de traducteur et de commentateur – transferts de langue à langue et de culture à culture – y occupent une place remarquable" (P. Lardet, "Jérôme," in *Dictionnaire de théologie chrétienne*, p. 462).

¹²⁵In reference to one facet of Jerome's correspondence during the years 397 to 400, J. N. D. Kelly observes: "Several consolatory letters which Jerome wrote during these years merit special consideration, both because of their intrinsic interest and because they were literary efforts over which he took great care and on which he prided himself. Such compositions, usually concerned with death but also with exile and other misfortunes, were much in vogue in Greek and Roman antiquity. They were an accepted genre, with its distinctive plan, rules, and stock arguments and reflections. Jerome was very conscious of standing in the great tradition, and when he and other cultivated Christians (e.g. Augustine and Paulinus of Nola) took it over from their school training, they modified it very freely in the light of the Christian attitude to death and the illustrations provided by the Bible" (J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 214).

¹²⁶P. Lardet sketches the contours of Jerome's corpus when he refers to "la gamme très large des registres qu'il aura pratiqués: épistolaire, polémique, exégétique, hagiographique, homilétique, historiographique (et avec toutes les variations et interférences dont ils sont susceptibles), ainsi que le volume considérable de sa production littéraire" (P. Lardet, "Jérôme," in *Dictionnaire de la théologie chrétienne*, p. 465). For an overview of Jerome's writings see M. P. McHugh, "Jerome," in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, pp. 607-608. As to Jerome's literary significance J. N. D. Kelly affirms: "Whatever genre he took in hand – satire, letter-writing, polemical pamphlets, romantic lives of desert heroes, even Scripture commentaries – he was supreme as a literary craftsman, deploying the Latin language with an expertise and a flexibility, and a sense of color and cadence, which recalled, and sometimes surpassed, the giants of the classical era. The renaissance humanists were quick to recognise this" (J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 335).

¹²⁷Alfons Fürst notes: "J.'s correspondence (*ep.*), of which he himself published parts (*vir. ill.* 135), is a rich source for the history of culture and is a mirror of his activity. Here, translations and attacks stand side by side with ascetical and exegetical treatises" (A. Fürst, "Jerome," in S. Döpp, W. Geerlings, eds., *Dictionary of Early Christianity*, p. 321).

appreciation for “the utterly captivating and refined letters of Father Jerome.”¹²⁸ Groulx did not err in this assessment for, as historical theologian Bernard McGinn points out, “it is Jerome’s correspondence of about 150 letters, some of them really treatises in letter form, that show the man at his best.”¹²⁹ Indeed by virtue of its variegated nature¹³⁰ and frequently profound subject matter,¹³¹ Jerome’s epistolary corpus offered young Groulx a theological as well as a literary model.¹³² In this vein historical theologian Geoffrey W. Bromiley notes that “Jerome found time to write many important letters to various people on various themes. Apart from their historical value, these often have material theological significance too.”¹³³

¹²⁸“aux lettres pleines de charme et de délicatesse du Père Jérôme” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 197).

¹²⁹B. McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, p. 63. He further notes that “The letters, precisely because they are so different in style from the Vulgate, prove that Jerome was a great writer before he was a great translator.” (B. McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, p. 63). With regard to the place of Jerome’s epistolary writings in the Christian literary tradition, H. von Campenhausen affirms: “In their formal skill his letters remain a model of the elegant art of correspondence, such as the older Christian literature did not yet possess” (H. von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Latin Church*, pp. 181-182).

¹³⁰With reference to the diversity of subjects which Jerome addressed in his letters, M. P. McHugh states: “The correspondence of Jerome includes the prefaces to his translations, letters relating to scriptural interpretation, the monastic life, the clergy, virgins, widows, and a defense (Ep. 57) of his own translation practices, as well as a number of funeral eulogies. This material has considerable historical importance in addition to its innate interest” (M. P. McHugh, “Jerome,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 608). Jerome’s correspondence also preserved some otherwise lost works of early Christianity, as M. P. McHugh notes: “Scattered throughout Jerome’s correspondence are translations of writings of Epiphanius of Salamis and Theophilus of Alexandria among others” (M. P. McHugh, “Jerome,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 608).

B. McGinn offers an overview of the subjects covered by Jerome’s correspondence and remarks that “These missives are alive with personality, engaging in style, and crackling with satiric wit. Among the important topics that Jerome discusses are scriptural interpretation (Letters 20-21), education (Letters 107 and 128), the art of translation (Letter 57), the priesthood (Letter 52), the sack of Rome (Letter 127), the monastic life (Letters 14, 58, 122, and 125), and, of course, women and the superiority of virginity (Letters 22 and 130)” (B. McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, pp. 63-64). For a more detailed account of Jerome’s correspondence see J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 210-226.

¹³¹See for example three letters where Jerome deals respectively with doctrine, ministry, and church government in G. W. Bromiley, *Historical Theology*, pp. 102-108.

¹³²With regard to the literary qualities of his correspondence, I. Davidson observes that Jerome’s “extensive collection of epistles ... contain some of the most brilliant satire to be found in late antiquity” (I. Davidson, “Jerome,” in T. A. Hart, *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 281). Speaking of Jerome, I. Davidson adds that as “a scholar, literary artist, and practitioner of holy wit, he was a giant” (I. Davidson, “Jerome,” in T. A. Hart, *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 282).

¹³³G. W. Bromiley, *Historical Theology*, p. 102. See also P. Lardet, “Jérôme,” in *Dictionnaire de la théologie chrétienne*, p. 463.

However, both literarily and theologically none of Jerome's works exercised more pervasive and lasting influence on Groulx than the Vulgate since through it he acquired the biblical vocabulary and learned the Scriptures, so that Jerome's masterpiece in a quotidian yet profound sense served as the language whereby Groulx articulated his understanding of the Christian faith. Thus, during his last year at Sainte-Thérèse, having resolved to enter the priesthood after graduation, young Groulx turned to the Vulgate to voice his innermost thoughts concerning this personally momentous decision. On April 5, 1899, he wrote in his journal:

I will therefore belong to God, to Him alone. By graciously calling me to His altar God once again demonstrates that He always knows how to overlook the unworthiness of the sinner. '*Quid retribuam Domino, pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi? Calicem salutaris accipiam et nomen Domini invocabo.*' The confusion in my soul has come to an end.¹³⁴

Young Groulx also drew on the Vulgate to convey the depth of his appreciation for the faith and friendship of a classical college student with whom he felt a special bond. The first sentence of his letter to Émile Léger¹³⁵ exemplifies this:

¹³⁴"Je serai donc à Dieu et tout à lui. Il daigne m'appeler à ses autels prouvant une fois de plus que Dieu sait toujours oublier l'indignité du pécheur. '*Quid retribuam Domino, pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi? Calicem salutaris accipiam et nomen Domini invocabo.*' Les perplexités de mon âme sont finies" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 424-425). Here young Groulx quotes Psalm 116:12-13, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." With regard to Jerome's translations of the Old Testament, J. N. D. Kelly notes: "The Psalter was the first book he tackled. He had already prepared a revision of the Old Latin Psalter at Rome, but the discovery of Origen's more scientific text and his own advance in critical skill had opened his eyes to its defects. Little though he could have guessed it, this second revision had a dazzlingly future in store for it. Introduced into Gaul and thus designated the Gallican Psalter, it gradually triumphed over his later translation of the Psalms from the Hebrew, and became the Psalter both of the Vulgate and of the Roman Breviary (only to be superseded by the New Latin Psalter in 1945)" (J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 158. See also pp. 157, 159). On Jerome's translations of the Psalms see also, B. McGinn, *The Doctors of the Church*, p. 62; I. Davidson, "Jerome," in T. A. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 281; G. W. Bromiley, *Historical Theology*, p. 102; H. von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Latin Church*, p. 159.

¹³⁵Émile Léger (1883-1908) formed part of the inner circle of friends and followers of Groulx at the Séminaire de Valleyfield, a classical college where Groulx taught immediately after graduating from Sainte-Thérèse. Although he died young Léger remained a vivid figure for Groulx as evidenced in his memoirs when half a century later he wrote: "Émile Léger, devenu prêtre et secrétaire de Mgr Emard, s'est noyé à la

In addressing to you these beautifully sublime words of Saint Paul to his cherished Timothy, I do not believe that I profane them ... '*Gratias ago Deo, cui servio in conscientia pura, quod sine intermissione habeam tui memoriam in orationibus meis, nocte ac die; desiderans te videre, memor lacrymarum tuarum, ut gaudio implear, recordationem accipiens ejus fidei quae est in te non ficta.*'¹³⁶

Beyond the not negligible fact that as “the classical Latin Bible”¹³⁷ the Vulgate constituted the Scriptures of students at a “petit séminaire” like Sainte-Thérèse, Jerome filled another role in the classical college curriculum, namely that of establishing a liaison between early and medieval western Christianity, since Jerome stands as “a major bridge figure in the transition to the Middle Ages in the west.”¹³⁸

His memoirs make it quite clear that he considered the education he received at Ste. Thérèse to be the most important for his intellectual outlook. The curriculum emphasized sacred history and religious instruction, in which Groulx repeatedly won top honors. The following homework assignment for fifteen-year old Groulx and his classmates indicates the level of biblical instruction they received: “1st question:

maison de vacances de l'évêque, à Port-Lewis, l'année précédente, quelques jours à peine après une lettre où il m'annonçait sa venue prochaine à Rome pour y faire des études. Douleoureuse nouvelle qui me porte au coeur un coup droit. J'avais tant aimé ce jeune homme. J'espérais tant de son avenir” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 175). On É. Léger, uncle of the future cardinal Paul-Émile Léger (1904-1991), see G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 751-752. See also G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 995.

¹³⁶“Je ne crois pas profaner ces belles et grandes paroles de Saint Paul à son cher Timothée, en vous les adressant à vous... '*Gratias ago Deo, cui servio in conscientia pura, quod sine intermissione habeam tui memoriam in orationibus meis, nocte ac die; desiderans te videre, memor lacrymarum tuarum, ut gaudio implear, recordationem accipiens ejus fidei quae est in te non ficta.*'” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondence*, 1: 305-306). Here young Groulx quotes II Timothy 1: 3-5, “I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of the tears, that I may be filled with joy, when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee.”

¹³⁷H. von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Latin Church*, p. 160.

¹³⁸M. P. McHugh, “Jerome,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 608. Speaking about Jerome, M. P. McHugh continues: “Although his reputation grew above all from his work on the Vulgate, his scriptural commentaries and his translation and expansion of Eusebius’ *Chronicle* would also prove to have a substantial influence. His views on monasticism, celibacy, the virginity of Mary, and the cult of saints prevailed in medieval Catholic piety.” (M. P. McHugh, “Jerome,” in E. Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 608). In a similar vein P. Lardet succinctly notes: “Mais l’oeuvre

‘Describe the history of the first Assyrian empire.’ 2nd question: ‘Describe the history of the Babylonian empire.’”¹³⁹ Groulx’s compositions on these subjects manifest his precocious knowledge of the Old Testament, especially the ‘Prophets.’

From his adolescence, young Groulx gave himself to theological reflection. The reader of his journal may find young Groulx contemplating the attributes of God manifest in creation,¹⁴⁰ examining current socio-political notions in the light of the divine economy,¹⁴¹ comparing the spirit of religious observance under the old covenant and the new,¹⁴² or weighing the rule of earthly monarchs against the sovereignty of Christ the King.¹⁴³ Such topics abound in Groulx’s diary and indicate not only the extent but also the depth of his theological concerns as a youth. His journal entry on January 28, 1897, exemplifies this. After studying that section of his catechism that deals with “the nature and purpose of humankind,”¹⁴⁴ Groulx pondered the doctrine of original sin and its implications for the human condition. Referring to the fall of Adam he wrote: “Oh God, what an abyss, what desolation. Iniquitous humankind still bears the burden of its sin; this sin has in effect become integral to its nature.”¹⁴⁵ Penned barely two weeks after his nineteenth birthday, this reflection on the human condition indicates the theological tenor of Groulx’s thinking even as a youth. Over the next few years his

entière de Jérôme ... occupe une position clé dans la transmission de la culture que le Moyen Âge héritera de l’Antiquité” (P. Lardet, “Jerome,” *Dictionnaire de la théologie chrétienne*, p. 462).

¹³⁹ “1^{ère} question: ‘Faites l’histoire du premier empire assyrien.’ 2^{ème} question: ‘Faites l’histoire de l’empire babylonien.’” “Questions,” *devoirs des élèves*, vol. 2, Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse-de-Blainville (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, 22 February 1893; *Spicilèges*, 1878 to August 1893).

¹⁴⁰ G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 558.

¹⁴¹ G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 559-560.

¹⁴² G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 616-618.

¹⁴³ G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 653.

¹⁴⁴ “la nature, et la fin de l’homme” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 283).

¹⁴⁵ “Ô Dieu, quelle chute profonde, quelle misère. L’homme criminel porte encore le poids de son péché; ce péché s’est comme incorporé à sa nature” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 284).

theological vision broadened. He came to see theology as a “vast network of truths which link the pole of the visible world to the pole of the invisible world.”¹⁴⁶

Groulx’s diary and early correspondence abound with allusions to the Bible, which he readily cites in both its Vulgate (Latin) and French translations. Judging from his journal, Groulx read the Scriptures on a daily basis. His diary typically records: “Last evening while reading my Bible ...”¹⁴⁷ or “During my meditation the other day I read this passage from the Gospel of saint John.”¹⁴⁸ Since adolescence Groulx perceived life through the prism of the Scriptures, which led him to adopt biblical language and typology as his own. Since this biblical frame of reference permeated Groulx’s thought early in his life, one cannot fully comprehend it without taking into account the narrative of the Bible. This biblical perception went beyond his own life and encompassed the life of French-Canadian society as he knew it. Even the mundane took on spiritual significance, because biblical images so thoroughly permeated his thought. What Northrop Frye says of Western literature in general, holds true of Groulx in particular, namely that one “who does not know the Bible does not understand a good deal of what is going on in what he reads.”¹⁴⁹

The dimensions of the comprehensive textbook used at Sainte-Thérèse, *Catéchisme du catéchiste ou explication raisonnée de la doctrine chrétienne*, made its study a daunting task for any young teenager. This source book of Catholic theology constituted no mere primer for religious neophytes but rather a summa of Catholic dogmatics which comprises two volumes of thirteen hundred pages. The sheer scope of

¹⁴⁶“imposant enchaînement des vérités qui relient le pôle du monde visible au pôle du monde invisible” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 672).

¹⁴⁷“Hier soir, en lisant ma Bible ...” (G. Huot and Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 652).

its subject matter made young Groulx recoil at the thought of successfully passing an examination on its encyclopedic content. Originally published in 1873, the two volumes represent a systematic effort to reinterpret Catholic doctrine in the wake of Vatican Council I (1869-1870). Indeed this catechism premises that the Scriptures and tradition must be interpreted “Primarily through the Councils, in particular through the First Vatican Council...”¹⁵⁰ Vatican Council I forms the theological frame of reference of this catechism. The second volume amounts to an historical treatise entirely devoted to the historical justification of the development of Catholic doctrine, leading to the formulation of the dogmatic definitions of the universal primacy of the Pope and his infallibility. This catechism exemplifies the movement to bring theological education throughout the world in line with the teachings of Vatican Council I.¹⁵¹

One can appreciate Groulx approaching this work with fear and trembling. His apprehension was evident as he noted in his journal.¹⁵² Despite this daunting task, Groulx mastered the catechism that established the theological parameters which doctrinally defined his faith. Since this constituted Lionel Groulx’s primary introduction to Catholic theology it also served as the foundation of his theological thought. In this light we perceive that Lionel Groulx theologically inherited the legacy

¹⁴⁸“je lisais l’autre jour dans ma méditation ce passage de l’Evangile de st Jean...” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 625).

¹⁴⁹N. Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*, p. xii.

¹⁵⁰“Principalement par les Conciles, en particulier par le Concile général du Vatican ...” (Barthe, É.; Fabre, Abbé. *Catéchisme du catéchiste ou explication raisonnée de la doctrine chrétienne*. 2 vols., 1: 221).

¹⁵¹E. Mangelot, “Catéchisme,” in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* 2 (1910): 1955-6: “Après le concile du Vatican, dans presque tous les diocèses français, on modifie quelques réponses sur l’Église et on ajoute une question sur l’infaillibilité pontificale. Dans plusieurs, on en prit occasion pour opérer des refontes plus complètes.”

¹⁵²“J’entre en lice dans quelques instants où je vais rompre une lance avec le catéchiste Barthe, un adversaire qui n’est pas à dédaigner; si vous parvenez à le terrasser, il lui reste toujours une arme quelconque pour vous tenir en respect” (G. Huot and Bergeron, eds., *Journal* 1: 216).

of Vatican Council I. Marcel Chappin's description of the church at this time suits

Groulx:

The church that held the First Vatican Council was a church in search of certainties, a church that, by 1870, had already for a century been subjected to assaults regarding not only its power but also the basis of its very existence -- namely, the possibility of the revelation of a personal God, Creator and Redeemer.¹⁵³

Although Groulx had the good fortune to live beyond Vatican Council II (1962-1965) one must remember that by virtue of his birth and training in the latter nineteenth century, he remained a child of Vatican Council I.

Groulx surveyed the works of Jacques Bénigne Bossuet (1627-1704), French preacher and bishop of Meaux, who authored such classics of French devotional

¹⁵³ Marcel Chappin, "Vatican I," in René Latourelle and Rino Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 1147. See also M. Chappin, "Vatican I," in *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, pp. 1148-1151; James C. Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought*, v. 1: *The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 339-342; Austin Flannery, "Vatican Council I," in Michael Glazier and Monika K. Hellwig, eds., *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, pp. 887-888; J. A. DiNoia, "Vatican Council I," in Trevor A. Hart, *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, p. 562; John T. Ford, "Vatican Council I," in Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, Dermot A. Lane, eds., *The New Dictionary of Theology*, pp. 1069-1072; James C. Livingston, Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, *Modern Christian Thought*, v. 2: *The Twentieth Century*, pp. 240-241; "Vatican Council, First," in Gerald O'Collins and Edward G. Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, p. 281; Jaroslav Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, pp. 221, 258-259, 283; "Vatican Council, First," in Wendy Doniger, ed., *Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedian of World Religions*, pp. 1127-1128; Bernd Groth, "Agnosticism," in R. Latourelle and R. Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, pp. 4-5; R. Latourelle, "Revelation," in R. Latourelle and R. Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, pp. 924-927; Roger Aubert, "Vatican Councils: Vatican I," in M. Eliade, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 15: 194-199; J. J. Hennesey, "Vatican Council I," in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 14: 559-563; J. Brugerette, É. Amann, "Vatican (Coucile du)," in a. Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 15: 2536-2585; "Vatican Council, First," in F. L. Cross, E. A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. Third edition, pp. 1681-1682; B. L. Marthaler, "Vatican Councils," in Paul Kevin Meagher, Thomas C. O'Brien, Consuelo Maria Aherne, eds., *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion (Volume 0-Z)*, pp. 3642-3643; "Vatican I," in Christopher O'Donnell, *Ecclesia: A Theological Encyclopedia of the Church*, pp. 455-457; René Taveneaux, "Le catholicisme posttridentin," in Henri-Charles Puech, ed., *Histoire des Religions* 2: 1118-1119; Edward J. Yarnold, "Authority," in Alister E. McGrath, ed., *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought*, pp. 23-24; E. Yarnold, "Roman Catholic Theology," in A. E. McGrath, *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought*, p. 562; A. Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic Theology*, pp. 55-56, 120-121, 222-223; Herman J. Pottmeyer, "Vatican Council I," in R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harper Collins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, pp. 1296-1298; Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, pp. 320-324; Werner Loser, "Authority in the Church," in Wolfgang Beinert and Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, eds., *Handbook of Catholic Theology*, p. 40; Wolfgang Beinert, "Dogma/Dogmatic Statement," in W. Beinert

literature as *Élévation sur les mystères* (1727) and *Méditation sur l'Évangile* (1731). At the same time Groulx viewed the gamut of church history, indeed of world history, through the prism of Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1681), a classic statement of the philosophy of history that sees Providence as the key to historical causation. Groulx's journal makes several references to Bossuet.¹⁵⁴ His introduction to history was specifically church history and he perceived world history through Bossuet's historical providentialism. Groulx's study of history and classical languages reinforced his essentially theological education.

His study of literature complemented theology as well. The literature Groulx studied vividly illustrated theological themes. Even the secular literature expanded his theological vision: he read and quoted Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), the Italian poet and author of *Divina commedia*, a poetic theological synthesis to describe the despair of the human condition.¹⁵⁵ He also studied Torquato Tasso (1544-95), the Italian poet whose grave style characterized the Catholic Reformation and who wrote the great epic *Gerusalemme liberata*, a poem infused by Christian morality on the theme of the First Crusade. To a lesser degree Groulx also familiarized himself with John Milton (1608-1674), an English poet and controversialist whose *Paradise Lost* undertook to 'justify the ways of God to man' and is essentially a poetic theodicy. By age eighteen Groulx

and F. Schüssler Fiorenza, eds., *Handbook of Catholic Theology*, p. 186; W. Beinert, "Theology," in W. Beinert and F. Schüssler Fiorenza, eds., *Handbook of Catholic Theology*, p. 700.

¹⁵⁴ See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 157, 408; 2: 625, 655, 705, 769.

¹⁵⁵ "Hélas! c'est alors que leur échappe le cri désespéré de l'immortel Dante: «Oh! que ma parole est faible et reste au-dessous de ma pensée!»" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 659). "«La vile crainte, lisais-je tout à l'heure dans le Dante, souvent détourne l'homme d'une tâche honorable»" (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 336).

had already studied the works of these two authors in class.¹⁵⁶ However, he evidenced a marked preference for Tasso, and during his studies in Rome several years later (1906-8) he made a pilgrimage to the sites associated with Tasso's life and writing.¹⁵⁷ Particularly prevalent in Groulx's early journal entries¹⁵⁸ are references to François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon (1651-1715), archbishop of Cambrai, French ecclesiastic, who wrote *Traité de l'éducation des filles* (1681), which addressed recent converts from Protestantism. Fénelon also wrote the famous educational novel, *Télémaque* (1693). Towering above all the literary figures who addressed theological themes, Groulx particularly spoke about Fénelon in his diary¹⁵⁹ and even sixty years later in his memoirs he lauds the *Télémaque*: "This mysterious book was enchanting, full of irresistible magic."¹⁶⁰ Groulx likened Fénelon to a seventeenth century equivalent of an Old Testament prophet who stood up against the might of temporal powers to claim the rights of religion.

¹⁵⁶"En versification j'avais lu Milton et Le Tasse, mais j'avais cru errer dans le chaos tant tout cela me passait bien haut par-dessus la tête, surtout cela est vrai de Milton. ... Milton et Le Tasse ont su m'intéresser; surtout Le Tasse ..." (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 191, 818).

¹⁵⁷"Une simple pierre tombale marquait la tombe du Chantre de la Jérusalem délivrée ... On peut visiter aussi la chambre occupée par le poète dans les derniers jours de sa vie dans le couvent des moines de Saint-Onuphre ... Sur notre chemin, à quelques pas du couvent de S. Onuphre, nous saluons le chêne du Tasse -- arbre sous lequel le poète, en attendant le laurier du Capitole, repassa les misères de sa vie" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 818).

¹⁵⁸See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 157, 705-706.

¹⁵⁹"Fénelon m'est toujours apparu comme le type du **vrai prêtre** et du parfait gentilhomme au dix-septième siècle ... Fénelon me paraît un des seuls qui aient su, au milieu de l'aplatissement général, passer le front haut et avec toute leur dignité, devant la luxure et le despotisme couronnés. Il ne fut pas de ces évêques courtisans qui adoraient à genoux la fortune royale; il semblait avoir retrouvé la sainte hardiesse des prophètes devant le Nabuchodonosor moderne" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 706). "Fénelon combattait à visage découvert; les voiles du mythe ou de l'allégorie ne suffisaient pas à cacher les attaques de l'apôtre à l'œil vigilant de la tyrannie. Si bien qu'elles ont valu à l'intrépide évêque le plus bel hommage que le despotisme puisse rendre à la vertu et au courage: une disgrâce implacable et sans retour. Tel était donc le Fénelon que je connaissais: noble figure auréolée des éclairs du génie et de cette couronne bien autrement enviable de la renommée sans accrocs et sans tache" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 705).

¹⁶⁰"Ce livre-là, c'était comme l'enchantement, le livre mystérieux, plein d'irrésistibles sortilèges" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 51).

2.3 Le Grand Séminaire de Montréal -- Doctrine

After eight years Groulx graduated from the Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse-de-Blainville, and in 1899 he entered the Grand Séminaire de Montréal where he briefly studied doctrine. It comes as little surprise that his first publication dealt with contemporary theology. Entitled *Le dogme et la pensée catholique au XIX^e siècle*,¹⁶¹ it appeared in the March, 1900, issue of the *Revue Ecclésiastique* of Valleyfield, Québec. This synoptic article sketched an apologia for theology against the backdrop of the intellectual ferment and scientific revolution in contemporary Western society.¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 553-557; See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 85.

¹⁶² Through its references to theology as "passible de progrès d'évolution" (p. 553), "le dogme progressant évoluant" (p. 554), "les évolutions de la pensée catholique" (p. 555), "un progrès, une évolution" (p. 557), this article attests the impact of Darwinian thought on contemporary theology. See L. P. Coonen, "Darwin, Charles Robert," *NCE*, 4: 651; and R. J. Nogar, "Evolutionism," *NCE*, 5: 695-696. Concerning the effects of Darwinism on theological and religious thought in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Canada see Phyllis D. Airhart, *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada*, pp. 54-6; Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-28*, pp. 12, 303-305, 312; Carl Berger, *Science, God, and Nature in Victorian Canada*, pp. 50-76; Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900-1940*, pp. 79-81, 83, 85; Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada*, pp. 4, 9-17, 26, 30, 32, 36, 50-1, 54, 59, 62, 67, 74-5, 78-80, 82, 84, 88, 97-101, 103, 178, 194, 198-9, 209, 222, 231; Brian J. Fraser, *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915*, pp. 13-17, 87, 89, 106, 131; Michael Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century: College and Creed in English Canada from the Great Revival to the Great Depression*, pp. 3-4, 6-7, 65, 71, 125-131, 133-139, 141-144, 146, 149-150, 152-153, 157, 159-161, 167, 171, 173-176, 180-184, 186, 203-204, 209-211, 214-215, 219-320, 230, 234-235, 241, 242, 248-249, 256-257, 265-266, 275-276, 285, 287-288, 291, 295-6n. 15, 324 n.4, 326 n.14, 327-328 n.22, 334-335 n. 82, 337 n. 107; John Webster Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era: The First Century of Confederation*, pp. 11, 61, 123. James E. Greenlee, *Sir Robert Falconer: A Biography*, pp. 26-27, 30-31, 82-83, 196, 244, 337; Robert T. Handy, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada*, pp. 286-288, 290-291; Yvan Lamonde, *Historiographie de la philosophie au Québec (1853-1971)*, pp. 23, 87-89; David B. Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940*, pp. 17, 22, 46, 54-62, 117-118, 121, 199-200; D. C. Masters, *Protestant Church Colleges in Canada: A History*, pp. 89-91, 136-7, 139, 172, 174-175, 209; Mark G. McGowan, David B. Marshall, eds., *Prophets, Priests, and Prodigals: Readings in Canadian Religious History, 1608 to Present*, pp. 19, 263, 293, 297-298, 302-307; A. B. McKillop, ed., *A Critical Spirit: The Thought of William Dawson LeSueur*, pp. ix, xv-xvi, xviii, 3, 6, 13, 17, 22 n. 1, 71-74, 76-77, 79, 81-82, 85-88, 92-93 n. 30, 247; A. B. McKillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era*, pp. 53, 57, 59-60, 63, 83, 91, 100-134, 136-140, 154, 156-158, 165-167, 172, 190-192, 194-195, 202, 205, 215, 218, 221-223, 262 n. 72; A. B. McKillop, *Contours of Canadian Thought*, pp. xi, 5-6, 40, 43, 48-57, 61, 67-69, 74-76, 97-98, 102, 107, 110, 114, 126, 138 n. 21, 154 n. 50; John S. Moir, *Enduring Witness: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada*, p. 175; W. L. Morton, ed., *The Shield of Achilles: Aspects of Canada in the Victorian Age*, pp. 29, 321; Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin, eds., *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, pp. 315-319, 344; Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington, George A. Rawlyk, eds., *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700-1990*,

Because Groulx virtually mirrored the views of the French Jesuit theologian Jean-Vincent Bainvel (1858-1937),¹⁶³ one cannot consider this an original piece but it does testify to his overarching belief that theology stands as the benchmark of higher learning. Thus, looking back over the seemingly irreligious developments in Western thought during the nineteenth century, Groulx contended that “theology nonetheless found itself at the core of all questions in literature, the arts and sciences, and even in politics.”¹⁶⁴

In order to understand why theology occupied the centre of Groulx’s intellectual universe, one must appreciate the pivotal role it plays in his epistemology. He believed theology alone could integrally adapt the limits of reason to the scope of revelation, so that for Groulx theology represented that branch of learning which uniquely bridges the gap between human and divine knowledge. He maintained in effect that theology creates a transitional space between the natural and supernatural realms by virtue of its “vast network of truths that link the pole of the visible world to the pole of the invisible

p. 241; G. A. Rawlyk and Mark A. Noll, ed., *Amazing Grace: Evangelicalism in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States*, pp. 355, 366; G. A. Rawlyk, ed., *Canadian Baptists and Christian Higher Education*, pp. x, 26-27, 36, 38, 58; Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism*, pp. 4, 262-264, 266-268, 274, 345, 349, 351, 376, 448; Susan Sheets-Pyenson, John William Dawson: *Faith, Hope, and Science*, pp. 75, 103, 106, 111, 114-115, 117, 125-127, 129-136, 151-152, 155, 199, 206; William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario*, pp. 13, 35, 219-220 n. 28; Marguerite Van Die, *An Evangelical Mind: Nathanael Burwash and the Methodist Tradition in Canada, 1839-1918*, pp. 6-8, 12, 57-58, 61, 67, 94-96, 105, 115, 137-38, 150, 170, 225-26 n. 76.

¹⁶³Groulx in fact drew most of the material for this piece from a similarly titled article published by Bainvel in the prominent French Jesuit review *Études*. See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 553n. 128. On Bainvel, professor of fundamental theology at the Institut catholique de Paris for twenty-five years, see H. Rondet, “Jean-Vincent Bainvel,” in Bernard Loth, Albert Michel, eds., *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique: tables générales*, 1: 351. See also G. Mollat, “Jean Vincent Bainvel,” in *NCE*, 2: 18. On the journal *Études* see the articles “Catholic Press, World Survey,” *NCE*, 3: 297; “Religious Orders, Literary Influence of,” 12 (1967): 302; “Études,” *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique: tables générales*, 1 (1951): 1302-1303. A copy of Bainvel’s classic work *La foi et l’acte de foi* (Paris, 1908) is at the CRLG; it bears Groulx’s signature and notations.

¹⁶⁴“La théologie ne s’en est pas moins trouvée au fond de toutes les questions, dans la littérature, dans les arts, dans les sciences et jusque dans la politique” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 555, 557).

world.”¹⁶⁵ Coming from a twenty-five year old, this observation indicates the extent to which theology already served as the axis of his thought. Moreover, this naturo-supernatural conception of theology explains in large part why Groulx regarded its study as both a vital intellectual discipline and a profoundly spiritual pursuit. Is it any wonder then that he quickly came to see graduate theological studies as imperative for his nascent academic career and fledgling religious vocation? In this vein Groulx confided to his diary: “If my dreams should come true ... I would like to go and obtain those teachings without which my life will be lacking.”¹⁶⁶

Groulx's dreams, however, had to wait. In late 1902 his bishop, Joseph-Médard Émard (1853-1927),¹⁶⁷ suddenly called on Groulx to fill an immediate, long-term vacancy at the Collège de Valleyfield. He continued to study theology independently, but his heavy teaching load at the Collège de Valleyfield severely hindered him. The sharp drop in the number and length of his journal entries indicates how busy young Groulx's life became at this time. He recorded nothing in his diary from July 26, 1902 to June 12, 1903. From then until October 11, 1906, his journal contains only seventeen

¹⁶⁵“l'imposant enchaînement des vérités qui relient le pôle du monde visible au pôle du monde invisible” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 672). Groulx seems, in part at least, to have derived this binary worldview from his earlier reading of the renowned French Dominican preacher Jean-Baptiste-Henri Lacordaire (1802-1861). Groulx's journal entry for September 24, 1896, includes the following quote from Lacordaire: “Au jour où le drame se clora ... il sera clair que l'unité régnait du pôle visible au pôle invisible de la création, et qu'elle y régnait par le Christ” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 238). Groulx's above statement clearly echoes that of Lacordaire, yet it differs in one important respect. Lacordaire presents Christ as connecting the spiritual to the material world, whereas Groulx situated theology at their juncture, so that in his scheme theology, like Christ, acts as a liaison between the natural and supernatural realms.

¹⁶⁶“Si mes rêves devaient se réaliser...je voudrais aller chercher les lumières qui sans cela vont manquer à ma vie” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 672).

¹⁶⁷G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Remillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 315. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 91.

entries, which consist largely of quotations and transcriptions.¹⁶⁸ On December 21, 1903, Groulx summed up the state of his journal writing: “I have all but forsaken my diary.”¹⁶⁹

Groulx obviously benefited from a broad theological education whose axis was Thomism. In fact, Groulx already owned a state-of-the-art, French-Latin edition of Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa theologiae*, which he studied avidly during this period, as his memoirs attest.¹⁷⁰ He concurrently read medieval history, which further confirmed his admiration for Thomism’s theo-philosophical development of Christianity.¹⁷¹ Yvan Lamonde’s monograph, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec*, demonstrates unequivocally that the contemporary classical college equated philosophy and theology with Thomism.¹⁷² It constituted the core of Groulx’s formative learning. His main collegiate textbook was the *Summa philosophica* of Tommaso Zigliara, an eminent Neothomist. Thomism also influenced the extracurricular activities of Groulx and his fellow philosophy students. Thomas was their patron saint whose feast day, March 7, was a school holiday. They eulogized Aquinas in poetry readings, debates, theatrical and musical presentations. Groulx participated in these celebrations and personally commemorated the ‘angelic doctor.’ Teachers meantime promoted Thomism to the

¹⁶⁸ See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 768-791.

¹⁶⁹ “J’ai presque délaissé mon journal” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 784).

¹⁷⁰ “Autant que mon état de santé le permet, je me plonge dans la Somme de saint Thomas, une édition Lachat reçue en prix au collège” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 77-78).

¹⁷¹ “Sans doute, le Christianisme n’avait pas créé ses premières oeuvres de toutes pièces: il s’était servi ... de la Méthode d’Aristote pour en faire la Somme, qui est la merveille que nous savons” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 647).

¹⁷² Y. Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec (1665-1920)*, p. 243: “... en 1880 le thomisme rentrera dans les collèges, dans le «magistère» collégial. À ce moment décisif de sa tradition, la philosophie au Québec était marquée par l’Église, par l’uniformisation puis l’uniformité du système d’éducation et contribuait à l’établissement et au maintien de ce consensus idéologique typique du Québec d’avant 1945.”

point that it became a religio-pedagogic phenomenon in Quebec.¹⁷³ This accounts for the awards Groulx received when he graduated from the Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse-de-Blainville, namely, the prix Léon XIII for religious instruction, the prix Turcot for philosophy, and the *Summa theologiae* as a book prize. On October 10, 1899, Groulx recorded in his diary a description of his small room at the Grand Séminaire de Montréal that graphically illustrates his personal devotion to Aquinas:

My window overlooks the flower garden; through the tree branches I see a stream of vehicles and pedestrians on Sherbrooke street, and in the distance I hear the trolley car which goes up and down Guy street. It is now twenty-five minutes to four and I am writing while I wait for dogmatics class, which will begin shortly. The bookshelves of my little library face me, as do some prayers posted on the wall along with my daily regimen. My watch lies before me snug in its red silk case. Closer still, leaning against my copy of St. Thomas' *summa*, sets a photo of the statue of St. Thomas which rises above one of the altars in the chapel at the Séminaire de Ste.-Thérèse. He thus stands before me as the guiding spirit of my theological studies. To the right a small picture of Leo XIII serves as a frequent reminder of the glorious leader to whom we now belong in a more direct way.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³“On assiste de 1879 à 1920 à une prolifération de prix spéciaux et de «médailles» en Philosophie que traduisent encore le culte voué à saint Thomas, au Pape (Léon XIII) du thomisme ou à l’auteur du manuel thomiste” (Y. Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec, 1665-1920*, pp. 222-224).

¹⁷⁴“Ma fenêtre donne sur le parterre; à travers les branches des arbres je vois défiler voitures et passants sur la rue Sherbrooke et j’entends là-bas le tramway qui monte et descend sur la rue Guy. Il est quatre heures moins 25 minutes. J’écris en attendant la classe de dogme qui va bientôt sonner. Devant moi sont les rayons de ma petite bibliothèque avec quelques prières et mon règlement affiché. Ma montre est devant moi couchée sur son coussin de soie rouge; plus près adossée à ma somme de st Thomas, une photographie de la statue de st Thomas qui surmonte un des autels de la chapelle du Séminaire de Ste-Thérèse est là devant moi comme le génie tutélaire de mes études théologiques. À droite un petit portrait de Léon XIII qui me fait penser souvent à quel glorieux chef nous appartenons désormais d’une façon plus immédiate” (L. Groulx, *Journal*, 2: 537). Since Canada first imported single-cylinder automobiles from the USA in 1898 and by 1903 still had fewer than 178 automobiles in the country, I have translated voitures as “vehicles” because Groulx wrote this in 1899. See Karl M. Ruppenthal, “Automobile,” in James H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 166. See also Robert Erb, “Automobile Associations,” in J. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 167.

This veneration of Thomism bridged the gulf which scholars postulate between Groulx's intellectual principles and his pietistic practices. For example, Benoît Lacroix wrote:

Reading over his *Mémoires* and the picturesque stories in *Rapaillages*, his fitfull compunctions strike one less than the seemingly conscious gap which exists between his learned faith as a knowledgeable, cultured priest, and the traditional popular religion of his milieu, which he practices and admires.¹⁷⁵

Nathalie Rogues made a similar observation: "The contrast between his popular Catholicism and his intellectual Catholicism is interesting, for although he held a doctorate in theology, he took quite a simplistic stance on popular religion."¹⁷⁶ To resolve this ostensible dichotomy, one must bear in mind that for Groulx and his fellow priest-educators, Thomism was the object of piety, as well as the subject of Catholic philosophy. To ignore this integration of piety and knowledge results in a polarized notion of Catholicism which divorces faith and reason, contrary to its Thomist ethos. In this vein Trépanier reduces Groulx's belief to romanticism.¹⁷⁷ Yet from the beginning of his educational career, Groulx anchored religious feeling to the moral theology he studied. For example on December 18, 1904, at the Collège de Valleyfield, Groulx lectured on celibacy and virginity. Rather than appeal to his students' emotions, Groulx

¹⁷⁵"En relisant ses *Mémoires* et les récits pittoresques des *Rapaillages*, on est moins étonné de ses scrupules occasionels que de la distance qui existe, et dont il semble conscient, entre sa foi savante, propos de prêtre instruit et cultivé, et la religion populaire traditionnelle de son milieu, qu'il admire et pratique" (B. Lacroix, "Lionel Groulx et ses croyances," in M. Filion, ed., *Hommage à Lionel Groulx*, p. 107).

¹⁷⁶"Il est intéressant d'opposer son catholicisme populaire et son catholicisme savant. Car bien que docteur en théologie, il adopte une attitude bien naïve à l'égard des croyances populaires" (N. Rogues, "L'image de l'Europe dans les écrits de Lionel Groulx (1906-1909)," *RHAF* 46/2 (Fall 1992): 250).

¹⁷⁷"Cela ne signifie pas ... que Groulx boude Thomas d'Aquin, mais plutôt que la rencontre n'a produit nul éclair. Or Groulx est un émotif, un sensitif et un sentimental, assoiffé d'amour ..." (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: lxxix).

argued for their corporeal consecration to God, on the basis of Aquinas' teachings.¹⁷⁸

Moreover, he emphatically warned one of his disciples that faith is not pure emotion but necessitates a disciplined study of theology.¹⁷⁹

As Groulx matured, his interest in theology only grew stronger. Studying it on his own no longer sufficed for him, and the meager theological instruction he received in preparation for the priesthood seemed to him woefully inadequate. Indeed the stark reality of his theological training pales beside Groulx's lofty vision of theology, as is evident in this excerpt from his diary dated January 6, 1902:

Theology takes up most of my study time. Alas! what a poor theologian I shall be! Left totally to fend for myself, without a teacher, or almost, I am like a man who rather than scaling a mountain to know its slopes and summit, instead contents himself with walking around it. And yet the sublimities of dogma fascinate me. I would like to feel less lost in the incomparable temple of Catholic theology; a hurried traveler, I have barely crossed its threshold, but the glance I could cast into its chambers filled with mysteries, shadows, and radiant lights, stirred in me something greater than the allure of the unknown.¹⁸⁰

Such statements belie historian Pierre Trépanier's suggestion that theology per se held only peripheral interest for Groulx during the early, intellectually formative period of

¹⁷⁸“Or, dit donc St. Thomas, la virginité dispose l'âme pour la vie contemplative qui consiste à méditer les choses de Dieu” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, “Le célibat et la virginité,” Entretien à l'Académie Émard, *Spicilèges*, 18 December 1904, p. 14).

¹⁷⁹“La conviction n'est pas affaire de pure sentimentalité, mais une adhésion raisonnée à la Vérité' ... Et, pour cela, vous étudiez ... la science religieuse. Vous avez cet impérieux devoir” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 473).

¹⁸⁰“La théologie prend les plus nombreuses de mes heures d'études. Hélas! quel pauvre théologien je serai! Livré absolument à mes seules ressources, sans professeur ou à peu près, je suis comme un homme qui, au lieu de gravir une montagne pour en connaître les pentes et la hauteur, se contente d'en faire le tour. Et pourtant les sublimités du dogme m'attirent. Je voudrais me sentir moins perdu dans le temple incommensurable de la théologie catholique; voyageur empressé, j'en ai à peine franchi le seuil, mais le regard que j'ai pu plonger sous ses voûtes pleines de mystères, d'ombres et de lumières éblouissantes, a exercé sur moi quelque chose de mieux que la fascination de l'inconnu” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 671-672).

his life.¹⁸¹ On the contrary, the above journal entry goes on to record Groulx's "deep desire"¹⁸² to undertake graduate theological studies, which he had come to see as indispensable for his impending work in the church and education.

However, for the meantime he perused the work of Adolphe-Alfred Tanquerey (1854-1932), a French Sulpician theologian, so that when Groulx prepared to leave the Collège de Valleyfield to resume his aborted priestly education at the Grand Séminaire de Montreal,¹⁸³ he affirmed in a letter dated August 27, 1902, "As for dogmatic theology, I have on my own reviewed in their entirety Tanquerey's three volumes."¹⁸⁴ Here Groulx means Tanquerey's two part *Synopsis theologiae dogmaticae specialis, ad mentem S. Thomas Aquinatis* (1894)¹⁸⁵ and its companion volume *Synopsis theologiae dogmaticae fundamentalis, ad mentem S. Thomae Aquinatis* (1896),¹⁸⁶ which together¹⁸⁷

¹⁸¹"Rien ne permet d'ailleurs de croire que, de 1899 à 1903, l'oeuvre de Thomas d'Aquin l'ait profondément marqué, ni qu'il ait fait des efforts particuliers pour la pénétrer et se l'assimiler, comme nourriture spirituelle autant que comme doctrine." (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: lxxix-lxxx).

¹⁸²"un profond désir" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 672).

¹⁸³ Rolland Litalien's history of the Grand Séminaire de Montréal makes it clear that the works of Tanquerey which "couvre toutes les matières théologiques et spirituelles" (p. 159), long figured prominently in the curriculum. See R. Litalien, *Le Grand Séminaire de Montréal de 1840 à 1990*, pp. 101, 111, 117, 133, 140.

¹⁸⁴"Pour ce qui est du dogme, j'ai vu moi-même en entier les 3 volumes de Tanquerey" (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 275). We have translated the word "dogme" as "dogmatic theology," in keeping with the following definition: "Dogmatic theology has the task of systematically and methodically presenting the meaning of God's activity as disclosed in revelation and in the experience of the church of Christ gained through the ages; further, it has the task of making such revelation and experience applicable to life" (Wolfgang Beinert, "Dogmatic Theology," in W. Beinert and Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, eds., *Handbook of Catholic Theology*, p. 190). This definition seems to suit the systematic nature and methodical character of Tanquerey's theological manual.

¹⁸⁵Groulx autographed and annotated both volumes of his copy of Tanquerey's work which remain at the CRLG. Volume 1 comprises: "De fide, de Deo uno et trino, de Deo creante et elevante, de Verbe incarnato." Volume 2 comprises: "De Deo sanctificante et renumeratore seu de gratia, de sacramentis et de novissimis." The bibliographical information of Groulx's copy reads as follows, "Tornaci: Desclée, Lefebvre et Soc, 1899." Volumes 1 and 2 comprise respectively 642 and 776 pages.

¹⁸⁶Groulx autographed and annotated his copy of Tanquerey's work which bears these words: "Lionel Adolphe Groulx/Collège de Valleyfield/26 sept. 1900." Groulx's copy remains at the CRLG. The bibliographical information of Groulx's copy reads as follows, "Tornaci: Desclée, Lefebvre et Soc, 1899." This work comprises 655 pages.

¹⁸⁷See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 519n. 3. As their respective titles indicate the two parts of Tanquerey's theological manual indicate the distinction Neoscholasticism made between 'fundamental theology' or 'foundational theology', and dogmatic theology. In this regard

comprised a textbook series intended for “four-year courses of systematic theology.”¹⁸⁸

Tanquerey’s publication long proved a standard¹⁸⁹ in the field due to its “clarity, focus on concrete matters, as well as its adaptability to contemporary concerns, and its wealth of documentation.”¹⁹⁰

More to the point, Tanquerey’s source book epitomized a contemporary theological current called “manualist theology,”¹⁹¹ wherein “great value was placed on massive, encyclopedic systematizations of the entire Catholic doctrinal tradition.”¹⁹² Indeed manuals like Tanquerey’s sought to “give pride of place to the amassing of data to support their conclusions.”¹⁹³ This cumulative methodology and the impetus to systematize not only characterized the voluminous *Catéchisme du catéchiste ou*

Francis Schüssler Fiorenza notes: “Fundamental theology is the traditional term that was used in neo-scholastic and neo-Thomist manuals. It was used to refer to a branch of theology sharply distinguished from dogmatic theology. In this neo-scholastic framework, dogmatic theology was based upon the teachings of the Catholic Church, and fundamental theology had as its prior task a threefold demonstration: the demonstration of Christian revelation culminating with Christ as the divine legate, and, finally, the demonstration of the Catholic Church as divinely established.” (F. Schüssler Fiorenza, “Foundations of Theology,” in W. Beinert, F. Schüssler Fiorenza, eds., *Handbook of Catholic Theology*, p. 258).

¹⁸⁸ Jared Wicks, “Manualistic Theology,” in René Latourelle, Rino Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 1102.

¹⁸⁹ By 1940 Tanquerey’s manual had gone through twenty-four editions. See F. Cimetier, “Adolphe-Alfred Tanquerey,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *DTC*, 15: 47. With regard to Tanquerey’s theological works in general J. A. Laubacher notes: “Tanquerey’s textbooks have been widely used in seminaries in the U. S., France, and other countries. The various volumes of his theology have seen many editions, several of which were done by the author himself” (J. A. Laubacher, “Adolphe Alfred Tanquerey,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 13: 934).

¹⁹⁰ “par sa clarté, par son souci de l’information positive, par son adaptation aux besoins du temps, par la richesse de sa documentation” (F. Cimetier, “Adolphe-Alfred Tanquerey,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *DTC*, 15: 47).

The “rich documentation” to which Cimetier refers went hand in hand with the positivist approach of late nineteenth, early twentieth century theological manuals such as Tanquerey’s. J. Wicks thus notes: “The manuals are children of their own time, the age of positivism, and give pride of place to the amassing of data to support their conclusions” (J. Wicks, “Manualistic Theology,” in R. Latourelle, R. Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 1104). With regard to these theological manuals Richard R. Gaillardetz adds: “A great value was placed on massive, encyclopedic systematizations of the entire Catholic doctrinal tradition” (Richard R. Gaillardetz, “Manualists,” in Richard P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 812).

¹⁹¹ J. Wicks, “Manualistic Theology,” in R. Latourelle, R. Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 1103-1104.

¹⁹² Richard R. Gaillardetz, “Manualists,” in Richard P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 812.

explication raisonnée de la doctrine chrétienne (1886), which Groulx had studied at Sainte-Thérèse, but as we shall see, also marked the various other manuals he studied¹⁹⁴ at the Grand Séminaire de Montréal, the Collège de Valleyfield, and in Rome, so that Groulx represented a student¹⁹⁵ of the:

manualists...the authors of the theological manuals, or textbooks, written primarily for seminary instruction that came to constitute a unique theological genre in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁹⁶

Not coincidentally, manualist theology came into its own during the Neothomist revival of this same time period.¹⁹⁷

Similar to systematic theology manuals yet distinct from them, textbooks on moral theology¹⁹⁸ known as “moral manuals”¹⁹⁹ also played a prominent role in

¹⁹³ J. Wicks, “Manualistic Theology,” in R. Latourelle, R. Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 1107.

¹⁹⁴ In view of the fact that Groulx studied such theological manuals from the Grand Séminaire de Montréal through his graduate work at the Minerva in Rome, it seems reasonable to assume that their cumulative methodology and endeavor to achieve the systematization of a body of knowledge fundamentally informed Groulx’s historiography, specifically with regard to the enormous historical research he conducted and his formulation of an historical synthesis, as exemplified by his two-volume *L’Enseignement français au Canada* (v. 1, 1931; v. 2, 1933), his four-volume *Histoire du Canada français* (1950-1952), and his weighty monograph, *Le Canada français missionnaire* (1962).

¹⁹⁵ The comprehensive nature and systematic character of these theological manuals may explain in part why Groulx as a seminary student often found himself theologically left to his own devices since these textbooks series could readily seem thoroughgoing to the point of self-sufficiency.

¹⁹⁶ Richard R. Gaillardetz, “Manualists.” In R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 812.

¹⁹⁷ J. Wicks observes: “The manuals are often termed ‘neoscholastic’ and are at times said to have developed under the influence of Pope XIII’s *Aeterni Patris* (1879), with its endorsement of Thomas Aquinas as the model and norm of Catholic thought” (J. Wicks, “Manualistic Theology,” in R. Latourelle, R. Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 1104). See also R. R. Gaillardetz, “Manualists,” in R. P. McBrien, *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 812).

¹⁹⁸ Moral theology constitutes the theological discipline that deals with the moral life and action of Christians; as such moral theology entails “the development of a reflexive, thematic, and critical study of moral life” (Charles E. Curran, “Moral Theology,” in R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 891). With regard to moral theology, Gerald O’Collins and Edward G. Farrugia state: “This systematic reflection on Christian conduct draws from the Bible (e. g., the decalogue, the sermon on the mount and the parenthesis of Paul), philosophical reason, and the traditional experience and teaching of the church” (“Moral Theology,” in Gerald O’Collins, Edward G. Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, p. 149). In reference to its origins as a distinct theological field J. M. Ramírez notes:

With the other theologians of his time St. Thomas was accustomed to translate this division into the Aristotelian terms of *speculabilia* and *agibilia*, and this provided the basis for the distinction of speculative and practical theology ... The practical

contemporary Catholic theological education, a fact to which Groulx's seminary studies abundantly attest. At the Grand Séminaire de Montréal,²⁰⁰ and at the Collège de Valleyfield,²⁰¹ he studied the work of the French Jesuit moral theologian Jean-Pierre Gury²⁰² (1801-1866) who "exercised a considerable influence on moral theology on into the 20th century."²⁰³ Gury's two-volume *Compendium theologiae moralis* (1850), which endeavored to "apply general moral principles to the needs of the present,"²⁰⁴ earned this manual such a following that innumerable seminaries, including the major ones in Rome²⁰⁵ and Quebec,²⁰⁶ adopted it as a textbook, often in the form of one of its many subsequent editions.²⁰⁷ It comes as no surprise then that in a letter addressed to the Grand Séminaire de Montréal the professor of moral theology at the Collège de

part came to be called moral, the speculative part dogmatic, theology. (J. M. Ramirez, "Moral Theology," in W. J. McDonald, eds., *NCE*, 9: 1111).

¹⁹⁹ See "Moral Manuals," in R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 812.

²⁰⁰ See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 536n. 63.

²⁰¹ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 275-276n. 1.

²⁰² The Grand Séminaire de Montréal adopted Gury's manual, *Compendium theologiae moralis*, in 1863. See R. Litalien, *Le Grand Séminaire de Montréal de 1840 à 1990*, p. 100. In fact during the second half of the nineteenth century the use of Gury's manual in training priests spread throughout Québec. See Nive Voisine, ed., *Histoire du catholicisme québécois : Les XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*; Philippe Sylvain, N. Voisine, v. 2 : *Réveil et consolidation (1840-1898)*, pp. 175-273.

²⁰³ J. H. Campana, "Jean Pierre Gury," in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 6: 866.

²⁰⁴ "appliquât aux besoins des temps présents les principes généraux de la morale" (P. Bernard, "Jean-Pierre Gury," in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, eds., *DTC*, 6: 1994).

²⁰⁵ Regarding the adoption of Gury's manual as a textbook P. Bernard observes:

La clarté de la disposition générale et de la méthode, l'enchaînement des principes généraux, des règles particulières, des questions attenantes aux détails de la pratique, firent admettre bien vite dans presque tous les séminaires cet excellent manuel ... Le Séminaire romain, la Propagande, le Collège romain l'adoptèrent comme livre de cours. (P. Bernard, "Jean-Pierre Gury," in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, eds., *DTC*, 6: 1994)

²⁰⁶ See Y. Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec*, p. 127.

²⁰⁷ In reference to subsequent editions of the *Compendium theologiae moralis* during Gury's lifetime alone, J. H. Campana remarks: "By the time of the author's death, it had reached 17 editions, not to mention adaptations published without his knowledge in Belgium, Germany, Italy, England, Austria, and Spain" (J. H. Campana, "Jean Pierre Gury," *NCE*, 6: 866).

Valleyfield confirmed that during his apprenticeship there Groulx “successfully completed assorted examinations on all Gury’s treatises in moral theology.”²⁰⁸

In fact Groulx, ever the meticulous student, familiarized himself with two of the foremost revised and annotated editions of Gury’s *Compendium theologiae moralis*. First, that of the Italian Jesuit Antonio Ballerini (1805-1881) who contributed “to the restoration and progress of moral theology”²⁰⁹ through the instrumental moral manuals he himself authored,²¹⁰ which helped raise this field of theology to a “high level of scholarship.”²¹¹ Meanwhile, beginning in 1866 with Gury’s own seventeenth edition of the *Compendium theologiae moralis*, Ballerini made “additions that further enhanced the authority of this work.”²¹² Second, the French Jesuit moral theologian Henri Dumas (1819-1902) published his initial revision of Gury’s *Compendium theologiae moralis* in 1874 and continued to revise later editions of this manual.²¹³ Taking stock of Ballerini and Dumas’s²¹⁴ various editions of Gury’s work, Groulx did not fail to note their differences, as evident in his letter on August 18, 1904, to a younger friend preparing

²⁰⁸The complete sentence reads as follows: “Durant son séjour ici, il a subi avec succès différents examens sur tous les traités de théologie morale de Gury” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 276n. 1).

²⁰⁹J. C. Wilke, “Antonio Ballerini,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 2: 31.

²¹⁰See C. Sommervogel, “Antoine Ballerini,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, eds., *DTC*, 2: 130-131. See also J. C. Wilke, “Antonio Ballerini,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 2: 31. Both of these works refer to Ballerini’s 1864 publication, *De moralis systemate S. Alfonsi Mariae De Ligorio dissertatio habita in aula maxima Collegii romani in solempni studiorum inauguratione an. 1863*; as well as Ballerini’s last, monumental undertaking, the seven-volume, posthumously published, *Antonii Ballerini S. J. opus theologicum morale in Busembaum Medullam absolvit et edidit Dominicus Palmieri ex eadem societate* (1889-1893). See also “Moral Manuals,” in R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 812.

²¹¹“atteignait un niveau scientifique élevé” (Antonio Piolanti, “Italie,” in Bernard Loth, Albert Michel, eds., *DTC*: tables générales, 2: 2365).

²¹²The complete sentence reads as follows, “Ces additions ne firent qu’augmenter l’autorité de l’ouvrage” (C. Sommervogel, “Antoine Ballerini,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, eds., *DTC*, 2: 130).

²¹³See J. Brucker, “Henri Dumas,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, eds., *DTC*, 4: 1863.

²¹⁴Groulx autographed and annotated his copy of Dumas’s 1890 edition of Gury which bears these words: “Lionel-Adolphe Groulx/séminariste 1899-1900.” Groulx’s copy remains at the CRLG. The bibliographical information of Groulx’s copy reads as follows “R. P. Henrico Dumas-Editio quinta.-Lugluni: Apud Delhomme et Briquet; Parisiis: Apud Victor Lecoffre, 1890.” Volumes 1 and 2 comprise respectively 564 and 543 pages.

for theological studies: “With regard to Gury you should first ask Mr. Aubin if he will still use Dumas’s old edition. Others have written commentaries on Gury, including Ballerini whom I consider superior to Dumas.”²¹⁵

At the same time Groulx kept abreast of other major moral manuals of the day. In this vein he singled out the work of the German Jesuit moralist, August Lehmkuhl (1834-1918), “a pioneer in attempting an exact and scientific analysis of socio-political problems from the viewpoint of moral theology.”²¹⁶ Lehmkuhl’s masterwork the two-volume *Theologia moralis* (1883),²¹⁷ soon spread to all Catholic centres of study by virtue of its admirably balanced approach which focused on the “exposition of principles drawn from the doctrine of saint Thomas and Alphonsus Liguori ... and the development of their practical application.”²¹⁸ Little wonder therefore that when informing a seminarian about those moral manuals which currently served as textbooks, Groulx advised him that “There is also the theology of Lehmkuhl which nowadays most ordinarily purchase.”²¹⁹

Groulx’s familiarity with the manuals of Gury, Ballerini, Dumas and Lehmkuhl, indicates the significance of moral theology within the contemporary seminary curriculum. In fact, as Catholic moral theologian Charles E. Curran notes: “The discipline of moral theology traditionally found its home in the seminary and was aimed

²¹⁵“À propos de Gury vous feriez bien de savoir au préalable de M. Aubin, si l’on suivra encore la vieille édition de Dumas. Gury a été commenté entre autres par Ballerini qui est à mon avis supérieur à Dumas” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1 : 519).

²¹⁶R. M. Bush, “August Lehmkuhl,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 8: 619.

²¹⁷See “Moral Manuals,” in R. P. McBrien, eds., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 812.

²¹⁸The full sentence reads as follows: “Il s’attachait avec un soin égal à l’exposé et à l’explication des principes suivant la doctrine de saint Thomas d’Aquin et de saint Alphonse de Liguori, ses deux grands maîtres, et au développement des applications pratiques” (P. Bernard, “Augustin Lehmkuhl,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, E. Amann, eds., *DTC*, 9: 172-173).

²¹⁹“Il y a aussi la théologie de Lehmkul [sic] qui est plus ordinairement achetée aujourd’hui” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, *Correspondance*, 1: 519).

at training priests for their ministry.”²²⁰ The penchant for praxis which marked Groulx’s mature theological thought undoubtedly had roots in the practical orientation and pastoral²²¹ or ministerial application emphasized by moral theology, which lay at the heart of his seminary preparation for the priesthood. Yet at the same time one must remember that for most ordinands in Quebec during the latter half of the nineteenth century moral theology represented in fact the only area of theology they knew, and often minimally at best, so that from this perspective Groulx seems an exception to contemporary French-Canadian seminarians. Indeed, as historians Philippe Sylvain and Nive Voisine note:

The greater number of those newly ordained entered parish ministry with barely enough theological knowledge to employ intelligently the moral manuals – especially the *Compendium theologiae moralis* of the Jesuit, Jean-Pierre Gury.²²²

In *Mes mémoires* Groulx concludes the review of his seminary education by discussing yet another manual, that of the Swiss Jesuit theologian and historian, Hugo von Hurter (1832-1914), whose “scholarly bibliographical, historical, and critical research won him the praise and thanks of all those near and far interested in the development of theology as an academic discipline.”²²³ Hurter summarized his theological teaching in the

²²⁰ Charles E. Curran, “Moral Theology,” in R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 892.

²²¹ Moral theology and pastoral theology share a common nature to which J. H. Brennan alludes when speaking of pastoral theology: “Like moral and ascetical theology, it is a practical science as distinct from purely speculative theology.” (J. H. Brennan, “Pastoral Theology,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 10: 1080). The intrinsic relationship between moral theology and pastoral theology comes to the fore when considering their respective roles, as J. H. Brennan remarks: “Moral theology explains moral precepts and establishes duties; pastoral emphasizes their pertinence to daily life” (J. H. Brennan, “Pastoral Theology,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 10: 1080).

²²² “Le plus grand nombre des nouveaux ordonnés s’engage dans le ministère paroissial avec juste assez de science théologique pour se servir intelligemment des manuels de morale – il s’agit surtout du *Compendium theologiae moralis* du jésuite Jean-Pierre Gury” (N. Voisine, ed., *Histoire du catholicisme québécois: Les XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*; P. Sylvain, N. Voisine, v. 2: *Réveil et consolidation (1840-1898)*, p. 273).

²²³ The full sentence reads as follows:

Medulla theologiae dogmaticae (1870), “a manual which quickly circulated among major seminaries”²²⁴ and thereafter saw several editions. He subsequently elaborated a three-volume textbook series, *Theologiae dogmaticae compendium* (1876-1878), which went through a number of editions and established itself as a classic in the field, indeed a “virtual breviary of theology.”²²⁵ Not surprisingly then, in 1877-1878 during his official visit to Canada as apostolic delegate, Mgr George Conroy (1833-1878),²²⁶ ordered the Grand Séminaire de Montréal to adopt Hurter’s *Theologiae dogmaticae compendium*.²²⁷

One can gauge the stature Hurter continued to enjoy during Groulx’s early days by the fact that over half a century later Zigliara’s²²⁸ and Hurter’s manuals stood as the only such works which Groulx mentioned by name in his memoirs. Thus with regard to his final studies at the Grand Séminaire de Montréal, Groulx recalled:

To teach dogmatic theology back then the Seminary used Hurter’s manual which, in keeping with the modernist current, already leaned too heavily towards positive theology. Abbot Curotte unceremoniously cast aside Hurter and immersed us in saint Thomas to the great dismay of my

théologien de grand renom, dont les patientes et érudites recherches d’ordre bibliographique, historique et critique ont mérité les éloges et la reconnaissance de tous ceux qui s’intéressent de près ou de loin au mouvement des sciences théologiques. (P. Bernard, “Hughes Hurter,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, eds., *DTC*, 7: 332)

²²⁴“qui fut bientôt un manuel répandu dans les grands séminaires” (P. Bernard, “Hughes de Hurter,” *DTC*, 7: 333).

²²⁵“sorte de bréviaire de la théologie” (P. Bernard, “Hughes de Hurter,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, eds., *DTC*, 7: 333).

²²⁶See N. Voisine, ed., *Histoire du catholicisme québécois: Les XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*; P. Sylvain, N. Voisine, v. 2: *Réveil et consolidation (1840-1898)*, pp. 227, 232-233, 239, 242-243, 271-272, 385-388, 411).

²²⁷See R. Litalien, *Le Grand Séminaire de Montréal de 1840 à 1990*, p. 101. The speed with which the Grand Séminaire de Montréal adopted Hurter’s manual the year of its completion, 1878, indicates the immediate impact it exercised on contemporary Catholic theological education. According to the minutes of the meeting of the Conseil du Grand Séminaire de Montréal, held on 15 March 1878, it adopted Hurter’s *Theologiae dogmaticae compendium* effective fall 1878 and did so at the behest of the apostolic delegate, Mgr. George Conroy. Mr. Marc Lacasse, archivist for the Sulpicians in Montréal confirmed this information to the present writer at 16h07 on Wednesday, 14 August 2002.

²²⁸See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 57.

poor fellow students who had no idea how to proceed without the manual, nor how to grasp a lecture by taking notes.²²⁹

While section 2.5 of this chapter will address at more length the issues raised in the above passage, Groulx's remarks here require a few observations about the relationship between Hurter, positive theology and Modernism, "the doctrinal and disciplinary crisis in the Catholic Church in the early years of the twentieth century."²³⁰ First, by virtue of his "rigorously scientific historical methodology"²³¹ Hurter did indeed parallel positive theology which "deals with historical data and particular facts (drawn from the Bible and tradition to determine the doctrines Christians believe)."²³² Furthermore, by the first decade of the twentieth century positive theology in practice assumed the form of "purely historical research"²³³ which could lend itself to Modernism since the latter tested "the foundations of Christianity with the help of new critical and historical methods."²³⁴

However, Hurter's manual predated by more than twenty years the onset of the "Modernist crisis."²³⁵ Further, his thoroughgoing methodology did not *ipso facto* reduce

²²⁹"Le manuel alors en usage, au Séminaire, pour l'enseignement du dogme, c'est Hurter, manuel qui, selon la mode moderniste, incline déjà par trop vers la théologie positive. L'abbé Curotte délaisse sans façon Hurter. Il nous plonge à fond dans saint Thomas, au grand désespoir des pauvres confrères peu habitués à se passer de manuel, ni à capter un cours au moyen de notes" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 89-90).

²³⁰Gregory Baum, "Modernism," in R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 877.

²³¹"méthodes rigoureuses des sciences historiques" (P. Bernard, "Hugues de Hurter," in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, eds., *DTC*, 7: 332). See also F. X. Murphy who speaks of Hurter's training in "historical method" by his father Frederick (1787-1865), who authored an eminent four-volume historical study of Innocent III (F. X. Murphy, "Hugo von Hurter," in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 7: 271).

²³²"Positive Theology," in Gerald O'Collins, Edward G. Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, p. 187.

²³³"une pure recherche historique" (M. J. Congar, "Theologie," in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *DTC*, 15: 439).

²³⁴Normand Provencher, "Modernism," in R. Latourelle, R. Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 720.

²³⁵J. J. Heaney, "Modernism," in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 9:994; see also pp. 991, 995.

positive theology to “nothing but history,”²³⁶ much less render Hurter’s theological agenda synonymous with Modernist “tendencies.”²³⁷ Groulx’s accusation that Hurter’s work evidenced Modernism therefore will not bear close scrutiny.²³⁸ Nor will the insinuation that through Hurter’s textbook series Modernist teachings gained a foothold at the Grand Séminaire de Montréal. In fact Modernism constituted “primarily a European phenomenon,”²³⁹ and apparently did not make inroads among the educated ecclesiastical circles of Québec.²⁴⁰ Nevertheless, Groulx’s comments remain significant because they indicate the extent to which the Modernist crisis colored the spectrum of his theological vision, so that when he wrote *Mes mémoires* at the end of his life he perceived Hurter’s source book through the lens of Modernism, which he anachronistically projected back into the manualistic *Theologiae dogmaticae compendium*.

²³⁶“pure histoire” (M.-J. Congar, “Théologie,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *DTC*, 15: 439).

²³⁷The present writer concurs with the following position on Modernism:

As historians look back from a later time, too many of them tend to attribute to modernism a unity and cohesiveness it never had. It formed a whole only in its global condemnation in the decree *Lamentabili* (17 July 1907) and the encyclical *Pascendi* (08 September 1907). It is possible, however, to detect some tendencies shared by a number of writers of the period. (N. Provencher, “Modernism,” in R. Latourelle, R. Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 720).

In a similar vein Gregory Baum remarks: “Rather than a system, Modernism was an intellectual orientation of Catholics who wrestled with the questions posed by modernity” (G. Baum, “Modernism,” in R. P. McBrien, ed., *The Harpercollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 878).

²³⁸The present writer has not found any piece of writing which links Hurter with Modernism.

²³⁹Christopher J. Kauffman, “Modernism,” in Michael Glazier, Monika K. Hellwig, eds., *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, p. 580.

²⁴⁰Speaking largely in reference to philosophical and theological education in Quebec at the end of the nineteenth and first two decades of the twentieth century, Yvan Lamonde notes:

Ce rehaussement des études ne semble pas déjà entraîner de querelles d’érudition ou de déviance doctrinale. La crise moderniste interprétée par Mgr L.-A. Paquet [sic] comme une nouvelle vague des novateurs du seizième siècle au vingtième et comme une opposition à la scolastique donne lieu à des mises en garde épiscopales et à une littérature explicative et préventive. Rien de plus. (Y. Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec*, pp. 197-198)

2.4 Rome - Philosophy and Thomistic Theology

Over the course of time Groulx inexorably reached the conclusion that he could not carry on his teaching and ministry without further studies in theology and philosophy.²⁴¹ Writing to a friend on June 1, 1906, he stated:

Due more than anything else to my meagre finances I have seriously thought these last few days that I will stay three years in Rome so as to study there philosophy and theology ... I want at all costs to cover again completely the gamut of philosophical studies I did during college, but at an age when I knew nothing about sound intellectual discipline.²⁴²

²⁴¹Groulx thus wrote a letter on September 4, 1904, expressing his need to study in Rome: “J’ai besoin de ce voyage, non pour moi, et je crois être sincère, mais pour que mon action ne devienne pas tout à fait insignifiante. Je ne me crois pas assez humble pour dire du mal de moi, mais je crois avoir la conscience de mon absolue pauvreté en fait de lumières et d’études. Je ne l’éprouve jamais si cruellement que quand il m’arrive un nouveau dirigé” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 533).

On December 26, 1904, Groulx reiterated this conviction and singled out his intention to renew his study of philosophy: “Et puis, il y a la question des études préparatoires. Je voudrais me rafraîchir en philosophie” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 539).

In a letter dated August 10, 1906, Groulx again made it clear that he considered graduate theological and philosophical studies essential to the fulfillment and future of his vocation: “Mon voeu, cependant, serait de partir pour quatre ans: trois ans à Rome, (philosophie et théologie), et un an à Paris ou ailleurs pour la littérature. Ce sera long et je prévois bien un peu ce qu’une pareille réclusion me va coûter de sacrifices et d’impatiences, mais en face des devoirs que la Providence m’impose chaque jour, je serais coupable de n’aller pas jusqu’au bout” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 28).

In a similar vein Groulx’s letter to his parents on October 12, 1906, explained that his ministry to young people necessitated such studies: “il me semble que la Providence le veut. J’ai besoin de ces études pour poursuivre l’oeuvre que le bon Dieu m’a confiée parmi les jeunes gens” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 55).

A few days later Groulx likewise confided to a friend: “J’espère par ailleurs que le Bon Dieu me retiendra assez solidement dans la pensée du besoin immense que j’ai de ce voyage et de ces études pour m’en rendre le séjour supportable” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 66).

When in Rome, Groulx wrote to his half-sister Flore Émond (1881-1916) on December 10, 1906, and once more emphasized the necessity of graduate studies in order for him to continue teaching: “Je comprends bien qu’en étant devenu prêtre, je ne dois plus agir selon mes caprices, mais aller où la Providence m’envoie. Ce n’est pas uniquement pour mon plaisir que je suis venu en Europe; parce que si c’était uniquement pour cela, je reprendrais le steamer demain, en route pour le Canada, mais c’est parce que le Bon Dieu le voulait et me le demandait. Ma tâche de professeur de Valleyfield me demandait plus de science et plus d’étude, et la Providence m’a trouvé des bienfaiteurs qui m’ont rendu possible ce séjour d’étude” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 115-116).

²⁴²“J’ai songé sérieusement, ces jours-ci, et la modicité de mes ressources m’y aide plus que tout le reste, à séjourner trois ans à Rome, pour y voir philosophie et théologie ... Je veux à tout prix refaire mes études philosophiques que j’ai faites en entier au Collège, mais à un âge où je ne connaissais rien de la bonne discipline intellectuelle” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 711).

Nor could Groulx any longer remain satisfied with his theological studies at seminary. On the contrary, in a letter dated October 16, 1906, Groulx explained why he decided to cease his many pursuits and go to Rome: "I must make this sacrifice for the good of my theological studies which suffered during my seminary days."²⁴³

Soon after writing this letter Groulx arrived in Rome where he began courses on November 5, 1906, at the Minerva.²⁴⁴ His enrollment there did not come about by chance for Tommaso Zigliara, author of the *Summa philosophica* so influential in contemporary Quebec,²⁴⁵ had served as regent of the Minerva from 1873 to 1897.²⁴⁶ Indeed he made it a leading source of Neothomist teachings, as J. Weisheipl points out: "In Rome the center of Thomistic revival was the Dominical College of St. Thomas (Minerva), where the *Summa theologiae* was used as a textbook."²⁴⁷ In view of its solid Neothomist reputation and the pivotal role Zigliara's manual of philosophy then played in Quebec classical colleges and seminaries, it hardly seems surprising that Groulx enrolled at the Minerva.

When he travelled to Rome and took up studies at the College of St. Thomas Groulx not only fulfilled his personal dream but correlatively followed the current pattern of French-Canadian professors of philosophy who sought advanced training "*ad*

²⁴³ "Je dois faire ce sacrifice en faveur de mes études théologiques qui ont été plus que gâchées pendant mon temps de séminaire" (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 66).

²⁴⁴ Founded on August 4, 1577, as the College of St. Thomas at the Minerva, renamed the Pontificio Instituto Internazionale 'Angelicum,' in November, 1909, Pius XI (1857-1939) noted in his encyclical *Studiorum Ducem* of June 29, 1923, that the Angelicum could be called "the home" of St. Thomas. See M. J. Costelloe, "Pontifical Universities – Roman," in W. J. McDonald, *NCE*, 11: 559.

²⁴⁵ See Y. Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec*, pp. 224-227. See also Y. Lamonde, *Historiographie de la philosophie au Québec, 1853-1971*, pp. 70-72.

²⁴⁶ See J.-B. Gai, "Thomas-Marie Zigliara," in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *DTC*, 15: 3693. See also I. P. Grossi, "Tommaso Zigliara," in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 14: 1120.

²⁴⁷ J. A. Weisheipl, "Contemporary Scholasticism," in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 12: 1166. A. Nichols similarly refers to "the revival of the teachings of Thomas at the Roman College of the Minerva, and by the 1870s, the emergence of a new light: Tommaso Zigliara, who would come to command the intellectual respect of Leo XIII" (A. Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic Theology*, p. 328).

mentem Thomae et Romae.”²⁴⁸ Regarding developments in the education of Quebec philosophy professors during the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century, Y. Lamonde observes:

However, the latest trend involved the crossing, the trip to Rome. *Ite ad Romam, ite ad Thomam*. The new Canadian College (1888) received those who came to pursue a doctorate either in theology, canon law, philosophy, or in two or three of these disciplines, either at the university of the Propaganda before 1910, or the Angelicum after 1910; at the same time they also attended seminars at the Roman Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas.²⁴⁹

Here too Groulx followed suit with his contemporaries since throughout his studies at the Minerva (renamed the Angelicum in 1909), he lodged at the Canadian College.²⁵⁰ From there he wrote a letter on November 27, 1906, indicating that he, like several of his fellow students from Quebec in those days, would pursue twin doctorates: “I have enrolled at the ‘Minerva’ for a program of study in philosophy and another in theology. Of all the universities it will enable me to employ best the only two years I will spend in

²⁴⁸Y. Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec*, p. 190. Referring to graduate studies for Quebec philosophy professors after the promulgation of the encyclical *Aeterni Patris* in 1879, C. Galarneau observes: “Et pour mieux se rendre aux désirs de Rome, les maisons d’éducation enverront désormais leurs professeurs au seul centre de la catholicité, où ils n’étudieront plus que la théologie – philosophie thomiste” (C. Galarneau, *Les collèges classiques au Canada français*, p. 186).

²⁴⁹“Mais la nouveauté, c’est la traversée, le voyage à Rome. *Ite ad Romam, ite ad Thomam*. Le nouveau (1888) Collège canadien accueille ceux qui vont faire un doctorat soit en Théologie, soit en Droit canon, soit en Philosophie, soit dans deux ou dans les trois disciplines, à l’université de la Propagande avant 1910, à l’Angelicum après 1910 tout en suivant les conférences de l’Académie romaine saint Thomas d’Aquin. (Y. Lamonde, , *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec*, p. 203). Unlike other French-Canadian doctoral students prior to 1910, Groulx did not attend the university of the Propaganda where it appears the entrance requirements had recently tightened so that his failure to complete his studies at the Grand Séminaire de Montréal cost Groulx admittance to the university of the Propaganda. He explained this in a letter to a friend on November 14, 1906: “Je n’ai pu me faire inscrire comme élève de la Propagande, il faut pouvoir fournir le certificat *d’études théologiques complètes* dans un Grand Séminaire affilié à l’Université Laval. Jusqu’ici, les Canadiens avaient pu profiter d’une exemption sous forme de privilège, mais le cardinal Gotti est devenu intraitable en vertu de l’axiome que *«favores sunt restringendae»* (!)” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 93).

²⁵⁰See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 51, 66, 81, 90. On November 11, 1906, Groulx wrote to his stepfather: “Une photographie du Collège Canadien. J’habite au IIIe la chambre où la fenêtre est marquée d’une croix” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 91).

Rome for the examinations I must pass.”²⁵¹ Over half a century later Groulx in retrospect articulated the expectations brought to bear on him and other young French-Canadians who made ‘the crossing’ to Rome for graduate studies: “At the end of my second year I tackled the double examination. Back then you had to return from Europe with a diploma in hand or else everyone took you for an absolute loser.”²⁵²

Groulx’s memoirs also remind the reader that although he did not become a philosophy professor he had in reality studied to that end. The fact that his graduate education specifically prepared him to teach philosophy, but that he never did so, partially explains the apologia for his life’s work which one finds in *Mes mémoires*, as well as in Groulx’s last will and testament. More to the point, philosophy shaped it. Thus, after a fifty-year teaching career, he affirmed:

I liked philosophy a great deal, at least as much as literature. I liked it because it seemed to establish discipline and order in my mind. I have always considered it an invaluable guide because of the clarity and exactness it requires. I believe I can say without exaggeration that although I was subsequently made a professor of rhetoric, I would just as readily have taught philosophy.”²⁵³

The implications of this statement only come to the fore when one recalls that Neothomism constituted the exclusive philosophy of Groulx's educational circles, and

²⁵¹“Je me suis inscrit à la «Minerve» pour un cours de philosophie, et un autre de théologie. C’est de toutes les Universités, celle qui me permet d’employer le mieux, et en vue des examens qu’on m’impose, les deux seules années que je dois passer à Rome”(G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 100). Some two weeks earlier, on November 14, 1906, Groulx wrote along similar lines: “Je suis donc élève de «La Minerve», l’université dominicaine... je dois suivre les deux cours de philosophie et de théologie ... Il me faut tenter en juin prochain le Doctorat en philosophie et la licence en théologie” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 93).

²⁵²“À la fin de ma deuxième année, je risquai le double examen. Il fallait alors revenir d’Europe avec un parchemin ou l’on passait pour un parfait raté” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 118).

²⁵³“J’aimai beaucoup la philosophie, autant à tout le moins que la littérature. Je l’aimai pour ce qu’elle mettait, ce me semble, de discipline, d’ordre, en mon esprit. J’y ai toujours vu une irremplaçable maîtresse pour ce qu’elle rend exigeant de clarté et de précision. On a fait de moi, dans la suite, un professeur de rhétorique. Tout aussi volontiers, si je ne me suis pas payé d’illusion, eussé-je enseigné la philosophie” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 57).

that according to Neothomist thinking theology and philosophy went hand in hand. Indeed Neothomism sought to “allow philosophy and theology to be reciprocally related,”²⁵⁴ so that the Neothomist scheme endeavored first and foremost “to provide a philosophical foundation for the study of theology.”²⁵⁵

Furthermore, Groulx’s aspiration, albeit unfulfilled, to teach philosophy, inextricably entailed theology, not simply because the two in theory formed the warp and woof of Neothomism, but because the philosophy instructor of contemporary Quebec classical colleges and seminaries in practice often assumed responsibility for teaching theology, and demonstrating its correlation to philosophy. This approach concurred with the Neothomist intellectual ethos and took root throughout much of Quebec, as Y. Lamonde notes in reference to the new era of French-Canadian Catholic education initiated by *Aeterni Patris*:

In this context of rather frequent dual teaching, Philosophy represented more than preparatory studies for Theology. Indeed it behooved the professor to set out the relationship between Theology and Philosophy, as well as between faith and reason. This relatively widespread twin teaching took place at the very moment that a ‘Catholic’ philosophy established itself through the ongoing restoration of a medieval philosophy and theology.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁴Rino Fisichella, “Theology and Philosophy,” in René Latourelle, Rino Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 1077. R. Fisichella underscores the Neothomist intent to harness philosophy for the intellectual service of theology by quoting this excerpt from Leo XIII’s encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, which states that “putting philosophy to good use is required in order that theology may acquire and be invested with the nature, the character, the natural disposition of a true science” (R. Fisichella, “Theology and Philosophy,” in R. Latourelle, R. Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 1077).

²⁵⁵James A. Weisheipl, “Neoscholasticism and Neothomism,” in *NCE*, 1: 337.

²⁵⁶“Dans ce contexte relativement fréquent du double enseignement, la Philosophie n’est pas uniquement une propédeutique à la théologie; par surcroît, le professeur est amené à établir les rapports entre Théologie et Philosophie, entre foi et raison. Ce double enseignement, relativement fréquent, apparaît au moment même où la Philosophie «catholique» se nomme, où la restauration d’une philosophie et d’une théologie médiévales s’amorce (Y. Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec*, p. 143).

Regarding the interface of philosophy with theology and related, apologetic concerns in latter nineteenth and early twentieth-century Quebec, Y. Lamonde observes: “Dispersée dans une «définition» de la philosophie qui englobait aussi bien l’enseignement philosophique que la théologie, les sciences et les polémiques savantes ou non, la philosophie au Canada français de 1853 à 1917 consistait ... en un

At the Minerva Groulx studied under a leading figure in this restoration, the Italian²⁵⁷ Dominican theologian Enrico Buonpensiere²⁵⁸ (1853-1929),²⁵⁹ “one of the most qualified Thomists at the turn of the century.”²⁶⁰ Buonpensiere succeeded Zigliara as rector at the College of St. Thomas from 1897 to 1909, and helped secure Thomism by expounding “the *Summa* in the tradition of older commentators.”²⁶¹ In fact Buonpensiere authored works on nearly all Aquinas’ dogmatic tracts and these “commentaries epitomize the logical rigor of scholastic argumentation,” as theologian Yves Congar attests.²⁶² Groulx set about studying Buonpensiere’s monograph on the *Summa Theologiae*, namely, *De Sacramentis in genere* (1899), *De Deo Uno* (1903), and *De Deo Trino* (1905).²⁶³ As his professor of dogmatics Groulx naturally attended Buonpensiere’s courses, whose overall effect he still remembered half a century later: “I fortunately had the opportunity to catch up in systematic theology. Father Buonpensiere, the elderly Spanish professor

éclectisme d’idées conséquent à la diversité des intérêts de ces clercs et érudits qu’on appelle justement polygraphes” (Y. Lamonde, *Historiographie de la philosophie au Québec*, p. 27).

²⁵⁷ In L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 113, Groulx refers to Buonpensiere as a Spaniard, but in fact he was born in Terlizzi, near Bari, Italy. See I. Grossi, “Buonpensiere, Enrico,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 2: 886. See also “Enrico Buonpensiere,” in Michael Walsh, ed., *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, p. 239.

²⁵⁸ Regarding the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century establishment of Thomism at pontifical universities in Rome, and at the College of St. Thomas in particular, G. Fritz and A. Michel note: “Les instituts pontificaux donnèrent, comme il convenait, les premiers exemples ... À Rome pareillement enseignèrent le thomisme, à la Propagande, Satolli, Lorenzelli, Lépicier; à la Minerve (devenue depuis l’Angelicum), Lepidi et Buonpensiere.” (G. Fritz, A. Michel, “Scolastique,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *DTC*, 14: 1727).

²⁵⁹ In L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 113, Groulx describes Buonpensiere as elderly, yet he was born on October 26, 1853, and therefore was only 53 years old when Groulx first attended his classes in November, 1906. See I. Grossi, “Enrico Buonpensiere,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE* 2: 886. See also “Enrico Buonpensiere,” in M. Walsh, ed., *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, p. 239; G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: lxiv. Groulx was twenty-four when he went to the Minerva and in the memory of his youth Buonpensiere may well have seemed old to him.

²⁶⁰ I. Grossi, “Enrico Buonpensiere,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 2: 886.

²⁶¹ J. A. Weisheipl, “Scholasticism,” in W. J. McDonald, *NCE*, 12: 1169.

²⁶² “Ces commentaires ont toute la rigueur des *disputationes* scolastiques” (Y. Congar, “Henri Buonpensiere,” in B. Loth, A. Michel, eds., *DTC: tables générales* 1: 489). On *disputationes* see Roy J. Deferrari, *A Latin-English Dictionary of St. Thomas Aquinas*, p. 308. See also, Leo F. Stelten, *Dictionary of Ecclesiastical Latin*, p. 77.

²⁶³ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: lxvii. See also G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 836n. 103.

who held this chair, had a rather poor voice and diction, but proved himself a profound metaphysician through what I would call pugilistic reasoning ... he fully satisfied me.”²⁶⁴

Concurrent with the lectures he attended at the Minerva Groulx also followed a thorough program of reading so that he almost immediately took up the study of the three-volume *Institutiones philosophiae moralis*,²⁶⁵ by the Jesuit, Italian moral philosopher Augusto Ferretti (1845-1911), recently retired rector of the Gregorian University.²⁶⁶ At the same time Groulx began his purview of *Philosophia peripatetico-scholastica ex fontibus Aristotelis et S. Thomae Aquinatis expressa et ad adolescentium institutionem accommodata*.²⁶⁷ Comprising three volumes, this early textbook of Neothomistic philosophy proved influential since its author, a Jesuit professor of philosophy at the Gregorian University, Michaele de Maria²⁶⁸ (1836-1913), espoused

²⁶⁴“Je puis me reprendre heureusement en théologie dogmatique. L’occupant de cette chaire, un professeur espagnol, le Père Buonpensiere, professeur âgé, d’une diction et d’une voix plutôt pauvres, s’y révèle profond métaphysicien et d’une argumentation que je dirais pugilistique ... avec lui, je ne reste pas sur ma faim” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 113).

Prior to the 1960s Catholics employed the term “dogmatic theology” in lieu of “systematic theology.” See “Systematic Theology,” in Richard P. McBrien, ed., *The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 1238. See also Gerald O’Collins, “Theology,” in R. P. McBrien, ed. *The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 1250; Paul Avis, “Theology in the Dogmatic Mode,” in Peter Byrne and Leslie Houlden, eds., *Companion Encyclopedia of Theology*, p. 976; Guido Pozzo, “Method,” in René Latourelle, Rino Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, pp. 671-672; Van A. Harvey, *A Handbook of Theological Terms*, pp. 240-241; Colin Crowder, “Dogmatics,” in Alan Bullock, Stephen Trombley, eds., *The Norton Dictionary of Modern Thought*, p. 235; J. J. Mueller, “Theology,” in Michael Glazier, Monika K. Hellwig, eds., *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, p. 865. M.-J. Congar, “Théologie,” in A. Vacant E. Mangenot, E. Amann, eds., *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 15: 432-434; Gerald O’Collins and Edward G. Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, p. 258; Aidan Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic Theology: An Introduction to Its Sources, Principles, and History*, p. 24; Wolfgang Beinert, “Dogmatic Theology,” in Wolfgang Beinert and Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, eds., *Handbook of Catholic Theology*, p. 190.

Yves Congar, “Buonpensiere,” in Bernard Loth, Albert Michel, eds., *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique: tables générales*, 1: 489.

²⁶⁵ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rénillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: lxxv.

²⁶⁶ See A. Michel, “Auguste Ferretti,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, eds., *DTC*, 5: 2178.

²⁶⁷ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rénillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: lxxv.

²⁶⁸ See J. A. Weisheipl, “Scholasticism,” in W. J. McDonald, *NCE*, 12: 1168. See also “Michel de Maria,” in B. Loth, A. Michel, eds., *DTC: tables générales*, 2: 3097.

“the purest possible”²⁶⁹ Thomism, whose new reign he helped establish in contemporary Italian ecclesiastical universities.

At the Minerva Groulx’s course of studies in philosophy led him right back to Tommaso Zigliara’s *Summa philosophica*. Thus, on December 23, 1906, only six weeks after he began classes at the College of St. Thomas, Groulx advised a prospective student:

If you come here to study philosophy make sure to go over your Zigliara. It has reclaimed pride of place, even at the Propaganda. Professors expound it and elaborate on it. However the student who has the bright idea to get down pat that old manual will cut in half their workload.²⁷⁰

It comes as no surprise that Groulx found himself once again studying Zigliara’s *Summa philosophica* since it went through nineteen editions and long served as the textbook series for numerous seminaries and centres of Catholic studies.²⁷¹ Yet this explains why Groulx retrospectively voiced the sentiment that in philosophy he had learned virtually nothing new at the Minerva. Indeed some fifty years later he wrote:

I had the distinct impression that the philosophy classes I attended there barely surpassed what I had received at the Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse. However, I must make one exception, a professor of psychology, Father Zacchi (if I recall correctly), who had obviously drawn on the Louvain school which at the time enjoyed much acclaim under the impetus of the future cardinal Mercier.²⁷²

²⁶⁹The complete quotation reads as follows: “Enfin ce fut le règne du thomisme (aussi pur qu’on peut le trouver en dehors de la question de la grâce efficace et des décrets prédéterminants) avec Remer, De Maria, De Mandata, Pignatoro, Billot et Mattiussi” (G. Fritz, A. Michel, “Scolastique,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *DTC*, 14: 1727).

²⁷⁰“Si vous alliez venir pour la philosophie, ne manquez pas de repasser votre Zigliara. Il revient en honneur, même à La Propagande. Les professeurs le commentent, l’élargissent. Mais l’étudiant qui aurait eu la bonne idée de se mettre le vieux manuel dans la tête, simplifierait sa besogne de moitié (G. Guot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 124).

²⁷¹See J.-B. Gai, “Thomas-Marie Zigliara,” in A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *DTC*, 15: 3693-3694.

²⁷²“En philosophie, j’ai la nette impression d’entendre un cours à peine supérieur à celui qu’on m’avait donné au Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse. Je fais exception néanmoins pour un professeur de psychologie, un

Groulx had good reason to single out Angelo Zacchi (1874-1927)²⁷³ because this Italian Dominican theologian proved one of the leading scholars of Italy in the field of apologetics.²⁷⁴ Further, in the above passage Groulx understandably situates psychology within the framework of philosophy since late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Neoscholasticism considered psychology that division of natural philosophy which dealt with “the organic world,”²⁷⁵ so that contemporary Neoscholastic manuals presented psychology as “a special natural philosophy ... concerned with living things.”²⁷⁶ Little wonder then that with regard to Zigliara’s manual Yvan Lamonde notes the “remarkable importance attributed to ‘psychology’ (species of life, origin of the soul, its union with the body).”²⁷⁷

Moreover, from a Neoscholastic perspective Groulx naturally associated the cutting edge of psychology with Désiré-Joseph Mercier (1851-1926), who inaugurated the chair of Thomistic philosophy in 1882²⁷⁸ at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium,²⁷⁹ where he founded the Higher Institute of Philosophy in 1888,²⁸⁰ and as its initial president introduced there a course on experimental psychology in 1891,²⁸¹

Père Zacchi (si je me souviens bien), qui manifestement avait pris contact avec l’école de Louvain, alors très en vogue, sous l’impulsion du futur cardinal Mercier (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 113).

²⁷³ See “Angelo Zacchi,” in Bernard Loth and Albert Michel, eds., *DTC: tables générales*, 3: 4423.

²⁷⁴ See Antonio Piolanti, “Italie,” in B. Loth, A. Michel, eds., *DTC: tables générales*, 2: 2365.

²⁷⁵ W. A. Wallace, “Natural Theology and Metaphysics,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 14: 63. See also J. A. Weisheipl, “Scholasticism,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 12: 1168.

²⁷⁶ W. A. Wallace, “Natural Theology and Metaphysics,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 14: 63.

²⁷⁷ “une importance remarquable accordée à la ‘psychologie’ (espèces de vies, origine de l’âme, son union au corps)” (Y. Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec*, p. 225).

²⁷⁸ See A. Simon, “Désiré-Joseph Mercier,” in B. Loth, A. Michel, eds., *DTC: tables générales*, 2: 3179. See also A. L. Wylllemen, “Désiré Joseph Mercier,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 9: 671.

²⁷⁹ See V. Denis, “Catholic University of Louvain,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 8: 1035-1036.

²⁸⁰ See A. Simon, “Désiré-Joseph Mercier,” in B. Loth, A. Michel, eds., *DTC: tables générales*, 2: 3179.

²⁸¹ See H. Misiak, “History of Psychology,” in W. J. McDonald, *NCE*, 11: 973.

followed the next year by his establishment at the institute of a psychological laboratory, one of the earliest in Europe outside Germany.²⁸² Not coincidentally therefore, within weeks of beginning courses at the Minerva, young Groulx undertook the study of Mercier's influential philosophical work, *La Psychologie*,²⁸³ which saw several editions and exemplified why, with respect to psychology, Mercier stood as the "first among Catholic intellectuals to recognize the value of the new science and to promote it."²⁸⁴

2.5 Modernism

Groulx's studies at Minerva from 1906 to 1908 coincided with the Modernist crisis, which served as a foil to sharpen his Scholasticism. The Vatican attributed this movement of biblical "higher criticism" to the rejection of Thomism, which it consequently reaffirmed as the Catholic philosophy:

By now the positive method seemingly constituted straight historical research which sought, through extant documents, to know the past and objectively state what it was. Such work amounts to history pure and simple. What role could it then play in theology and what would happen if its conclusions did not square with the science of revealed truth and its criterion? A crisis had to occur sooner or later. The problem came to a head with the modernist crisis when discussions turned into a debate about the independence of historical research, the true nature of positive theology, and its relationship to speculative theology.²⁸⁵

²⁸² See H. Misiak, "History of Psychology," in W. J. McDonald, *NCE*, 11: 971. See also A. L. Wylleman, "Désiré Joseph Mercier," in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 9: 671.

²⁸³ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: lxxv, 26ln. 2.

²⁸⁴ See H. Misiak, "History of Psychology," in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 11: 973.

²⁸⁵ "Le travail positif se présentait maintenant comme une pure recherche historique visant à connaître le passé d'après les documents qui nous en sont restés, et à dire simplement ce qui a été. Un tel travail est de pure histoire. Quelle serait sa situation par rapport à la théologie, et qu'advierait-il si ses résultats ne concordaient pas avec les exigences de la science sacrée? La crise ne pouvait manquer de s'ouvrir tôt ou tard. Le problème devait être débattu au moment de la crise moderniste, sous la forme de discussions sur la vraie nature de la théologie positive, sur ses rapports avec la théologie spéculative, sur la liberté de la

In fact, the papacy vigorously promoted Scholasticism to counter Modernism. Groulx experienced this firsthand at Minerva. On April 9, 1907, he recorded in his journal:

This morning, at the outset of his lecture, Reverend Father Buonpensiere, rector of the Minerva, in effect denounced the method of so-called 'positive theology'. A few days ago, in an audience accorded to some Fathers of the Dominican Order, Pius X exhorted the sons of St. Thomas to teach steadfastly scholasticism. The Holy Father said that positive theology does not nurture the spirit, «*non nutrit mentem*». It studies the writings of the Church Fathers and the canons of the Church Councils, but denies them their full import because it does not employ the syllogistic method. It therefore neither does justice to doctrine nor provides the means to refute squarely opponents of the faith.²⁸⁶

Five months later the pope condemned the Modernist movement in the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*. This impelled Groulx to shore up his Thomist convictions, especially since he admired in Pius X's encyclicals that 'holy wrath', which he found

recherche historique" (Y-M. Congar, "Théologie," in Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 15: 439).

²⁸⁶"Ce matin le R. P. Buonpensiere, recteur de La Minerve, à l'ouverture de son cours a condamné en quelque sorte la méthode dite de «théologie positive». Dans une audience accordée en ces derniers jours à quelques Pères de l'Ordre de S. Dominique, Pie X a exhorté les fils de S. Thomas à enseigner résolument la scolastique. La théologie positive, a dit le Saint-Père, ne nourrit pas l'esprit, «non nutrit mentem». On étudie les textes des Saints Pères, les canons des Conciles, mais parce qu'on ne s'y sert pas de la méthode syllogistique, on ne leur donne pas leur pleine valeur; ce n'est pas ainsi qu'on fait valoir les dogmes et qu'on réfute solidement les adversaires" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 836).

'Positive theology' means an essentially historical method. See G. F. Van Ackeren, "Theology," in William J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 14: 42-44, 46-47. See also Y-M. Congar, "Théologie," in a. Vacant, E. Mangenot, É. Amann, eds., *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 15: 426-430, 462-472; William Henn, "Theological Notes," in Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, Dermot A. Lane, eds., *The New Dictionary of Theology*, p. 1009; William J. Hill, "Theology," in J. Komonchak, Mary Collins, Dermot A. Lane, eds., *The New Dictionary of Theology*, p. 1012; Wayne L. Fehr, "History of Theology," in J. Komonchak, Mary Collins and Dermot A. Lane, eds., *The New Dictionary of Theology*, pp. 1030-1031; "Positive Theology," in R. McBrien, ed., *The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p. 1035; Aidan Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic Theology*, pp. 31-32; René Tavenaux, "Le catholicisme posttridentin," in Henri-Charles Puech, ed., *Histoire des religions*, 2: 1077; Johann Sebastian Drey, *Brief Introduction to the Study of Theology with Reference to the Scientific Standpoint and Catholic System*, p. xviii-xx; Guido Pozzo, "Method," in R. Latourelle, R. Fisichella, eds., *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, p. 675-676; Van A. Harvey, *A Handbook of Theological Terms*, p. 185; G. O'Collins, E. Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, p. 207.

wanting in Leo XIII's.²⁸⁷ Accordingly he espoused the papal line and imputed the Modernist tendencies of his fellow French theological students to their deficiencies in Thomist philosophy. He remarked about them:

I cannot shake another, somewhat disturbing memory from my second stay in Paris. As everyone knows 1908 marks the year of *Pascendi*, the encyclical which resoundingly condemned the modernist heresy. One has to have experienced a European university in those days to comprehend the extraordinary ferment in contemporary thought. The Church without doubt underwent one of its worse doctrinal crises. Professors in Rome did not hesitate to condemn openly the intellectual presumptuousness of this new heresy. While attending the Dominican University at the Minerva I studied with some young French priests who boarded next door to the Canadian college, at the Procuracy of Saint-Sulpice on the street of the Four-Fountains. These likable, freethinking young men had a virtually phobic aversion to scholasticism. I dare say they considered Saint Thomas a rather pathetic figurehead from a bygone era. They gleefully ridiculed the subtleties of the Thomistic dialectical system. Their knowledge of philosophy amounted to nothing more than a nebulous mishmash of Cartesianism mixed, above all, with Kantianism. One must remember the influence German culture exerted on all intellectual disciplines in France at this time. Theology no longer sought to explicate doctrines but to establish their history and Harnack, a German, acted as high priest of exegesis. Meanwhile Loisy, professor at the Institut catholique de Paris, assumed the stature of an intellectual liberator in the eyes of the youth who thought he would once and for all dispel the mists in which Rome too readily shrouds itself as a matter of course. Needless to say, religious orders could not avoid these issues which more or less tainted everyone, and not only in France.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁷“véhémence souveraine” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 131-133).

²⁸⁸“Un autre souvenir m’est resté de ce deuxième séjour à Paris, celui-ci plutôt pénible. L’année 1908*, ai-je besoin de le rappeler, c’est l’année de l’encyclique *Pascendi*, condamnation retentissante de l’hérésie moderniste. Il faut avoir vécu dans les universités européennes, pour savoir ce que fut, en ce temps-là, l’extraordinaire effervescence des esprits. Indéniablement l’Église traverse l’une de ses pires crises doctrinales. À Rome, les professeurs ne se privent point de dénoncer les audaces de pensée de la nouvelle hérésie. À l’université dominicaine La Minerve, j’ai pour compagnons d’étude quelques jeunes prêtres français, pensionnaires à la Procure de Saint-Sulpice, voisine du Collège canadien, sur la rue des Quatre-Fontaines. Charmants garçons, pétillants d’esprit, leur aversion pour la scolastique touche véritablement à la phobie. Dirais-je qu’ils tiennent saint Thomas pour un assez triste sire à jamais déclassé? Ils s’amusent

Groulx's European sojourn (1906-9) enabled him to observe firsthand the unfolding 'modernist' controversy. In fact his theological and philosophical studies at Rome irresistibly drew him to the center of this doctrinal vortex. Groulx's diary and correspondence record his initial reaction to 'modernism,' while his memoirs reveal that a half-century after its denouement 'the modernist crisis' had intellectually left an indelible impression on Groulx. Indeed the Modernist crisis served as a touchstone for the relationship of history and theology in Groulx's thought:

The situation therefore required vigorous measures, indeed it demanded decisive action. Pius X's strong arm delivered the fateful blow in the summer of 1908. At the time we were five or six Canadians staying at Issy-les-Moulineaux. This Seminary buzzed like a beehive during the vacation

follement de l'appareil dialectique du thomisme et de ses subtilités. C'est qu'en philosophie ils ne possèdent qu'un vague éclectisme, mélange de cartésianisme et de kantisme, de kantisme surtout. Car, dans la France d'alors, il faut se rappeler la vogue dont jouit la culture allemande, dans tous les domaines intellectuels. En théologie, il n'est plus question d'exposer les dogmes, mais d'en faire l'histoire. En exégèse, l'Allemand Harnack est le grand pontife. Et l'abbé Loisy, professeur à l'Institut catholique de Paris, prend, aux yeux de cette jeunesse, la taille d'un libérateur intellectuel qui va enfin balayer les nuées où se complaît par trop la routine romaine. Et l'on sait aussi que les ordres religieux n'échappent pas à ces engagements. Tous sont plus ou moins contaminés, et pas seulement en France" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 131-132).

Groulx twice mistakenly dated Pascendi: "L'année 1908 ... c'est l'année de l'encyclique Pascendi," (p. 131), and "Pie X le donne pendant l'été de 1908" (p. 132). In fact Pascendi was issued September 8, 1907. Writing from memory some fifty years later, Groulx apparently confused the chronology of his experiences in the second summer of his studies in Europe.

Groulx embraced scholasticism as the philosophical scheme of the church, yet could laugh at its methodological intricacies. He thus referred to the examiners at his doctoral defense in Rome as "acrobates du syllogisme" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 115).

Groulx associates the aversion to Thomist dialectics with Kantianism and for good reason since Kant considered this dialectical argumentation a 'pseudoscience' or 'pseudo-philosophizing,' which he called a 'transcendental dialectic' since such sophistical arguments transcended the realm of sensibility. See T. K. Seung, "Immanuel Kant," in Mircea Eliade, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 8: 248. See also Bernard Ramm, "Dialectic," in Everett F. Harrison, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Carl F. Henry, eds., *Wycliffe Dictionary of Theology*, p. 165; J. B. Lotz, "Immanuel Kant," in W. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 8: 125-126; William L. Reese, "Dialectic," in *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion*, p. 174; Anthony Quinton, "Dialectic," in Alan Bullock and Stephen Trombley, eds., *The Norton Dictionary of Modern Thought*, p. 222; Antony Flew, "Immanuel Kant," in *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, p. 191; A. Flew, "Dialectic," in *Dictionary of Philosophy*, p. 94; "Dialectic(s)," in Thomas Mautner, ed., *The Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy*, p. 141; Manfred Kuehn, "Immanuel Kant," in T. Mautner, ed., *The Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy*, p. 292; W. H. Walsh, "Immanuel Kant," in Paul Edwards, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 4: 311, 315-316; Roland Hall, "Dialectic," in P. Edwards, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2: 387; Albert B. Hakim, *Historical Introduction to Philosophy*, pp. 419-421. Mortimer J. Adler, "Dialectic," in *The Great Ideas: A Lexicon of Western Thought*, pp. 156-157.

period, especially at mealtimes. Sixty to eighty Sulpicians or other priests, most of whom taught in the major seminaries of France, took advantage of these summer months to do thesis research in preparation for the licentiate or doctorate. Everyone avidly discussed contemporary issues. One evening we heard that Pius X had just promulgated the long awaited encyclical and that *La Croix* of Paris would publish a French translation in a special late edition. It came out later than expected, so I decided to read this portentous document the following day. Meanwhile, widespread consternation set in overnight. The next day, after having said mass outside its premises, I went as usual at the beginning of breakfast time in the main dining hall. As I said before it normally buzzed like a beehive with a swarm of French clerics busily talking and arguing aloud. However, this morning a numbing silence filled the huge room. They seemed like priests on a retreat or monks keeping vigil over a coffin in a funeral parlor. They spoke only in hushed tones. I walked towards the small table reserved for my fellow Canadians. My puzzled look begged the question, "What is going on?" One of those seated brought out from under the table a copy of the Paris *La Croix* which carried the encyclical. What a bombshell! It hit the seminary with cataclysmic impact, but we certainly did not experience a Pentecost. On the contrary, we saw all too well that the Pope's actions troubled, indeed appalled this group of priests who trained the clergy of France. They immediately reacted as though *Pascendi*, this writ from the Head of the Church, spelt a reversion to obscurantism, to the Dark Ages. In their eyes the Church had savagely suppressed the development of modern thought and thus turned its back on the future. I do not want to generalize unduly since, I repeat, this matter by no means involved the Society of St. Sulpice alone. Within the Society of St. Sulpice itself I often noticed that although considered backward, a good number of the community remained orthodox and shuddered at the state of mind which reigned among too many of the younger clergy. In any case the lesson from that morning was not lost on an impressionable Roman seminarian such as myself. After witnessing this grievous scene ... I understood many of the reasons for what was then taking place in France: the degradation of French thought, the conflicts between Catholics over so many fundamental issues, and the anticlerical furor ... If salt has lost its savor ... What awaits even the mightiest

Christian structures when the only element which holds them together disintegrates or is no longer present?²⁸⁹

2.6 Switzerland – Neoscholasticism

Minerva's narrow scholarship impelled Groulx to complement his studies at Fribourg University in Switzerland.²⁹⁰ He now knew that when he returned to Quebec he would not teach philosophy, yet he pursued it at Fribourg.²⁹¹ After taking a summer course there in 1907 he declared: "Certain persons in Rome had cast doubts in my mind about the orthodoxy of the teaching here, but my stay has convinced me that they

²⁸⁹ "Donc un vigoureux coup de barre s'impose. Ce coup de barre, on l'appelle ardemment. La robuste main de Pie X le donne pendant l'été de 1908. [sic] Nous sommes cinq ou six Canadiens qui logeons à Issy-les-Moulineaux. Pendant les vacances, à l'heure des repas surtout, le Séminaire prend l'allure d'une ruche bourdonnante. Soixante à quatre-vingts Sulpiciens ou autres prêtres, la plupart professeurs dans les grands séminaires de France, profitent de ces mois de repos pour mener recherches ou études à Paris, préparer des thèses de licence ou de doctorat. Tout ce monde remue fièvreusement les idées du jour. Un soir on nous apprend que l'encyclique de Pie X, attendue depuis longtemps, vient de paraître. La Croix de Paris en annonce une traduction française, par édition spéciale, dans la soirée. L'édition tardant à venir, je remets au lendemain la lecture du grave document. Mais déjà l'alarme est répandue. Le lendemain, ma messe dite à l'extérieur, j'entre comme d'habitude, au début du petit déjeuner, dans le grand réfectoire du Séminaire. D'ordinaire, je l'ai dit, la ruche bourdonne à plein. Tous ces prêtres français parlent, discutent à pleine voix. Ce matin-là, dans la vaste pièce, un silence glacial. Des prêtres en retraite, eût-on dit, ou encore des prêtres autour d'un cercueil, dans un salon funéraire. On ne parle qu'à voix basse. Je me dirige vers la petite table réservée à mes confrères canadiens. Des yeux, j'esquisse un mouvement, une question qui veut dire: «Qu'est-ce qui se passe?» L'un des attablés sort de dessous la table un exemplaire de La Croix de Paris. L'encyclique! C'était bien là la bombe, la catastrophe tombée sur le Séminaire. Non, nous n'assistions pas à une Pentecôte. La triste vérité qui s'étalait devant nous, c'était bien plutôt cette assemblée de prêtres, éducateurs, du clergé de France, littéralement bouleversés, atterrés devant le geste du Pape. Pour eux, *Pascendi*, la parole du Chef de l'Église, c'est, dans leur premier réflexe, le retour à l'obscurantisme, aux ténèbres. C'est la pensée moderne brutalement foudroyée dans son essor. Pour eux encore, l'Église se ferme proprement les portes de l'avenir. Certes, je ne veux pas trop généraliser. Saint-Sulpice, je le répète, n'est pas seul en cause. Et, dans Saint-Sulpice même j'avais pu maintes fois m'en rendre compte, bon nombre de membres de la communauté, restés orthodoxes, mais hélas réputés retardataires, gémissaient sur l'état d'esprit d'une trop forte partie du jeune clergé. Il n'empêche que, pour le petit étudiant romain que je suis, la leçon de ce matin-là ne fut pas perdue. J'y vis un fait navrant ... Je compris aussi bien des raisons de ce qui passait alors en France: le dévergondage de la pensée française, les désaccords des catholiques sur tant de problèmes de fond, la crise anticléricale ... Quand le sel s'est affadi* ... Que peuvent devenir les structures les plus solides quand le ciment chrétien, le seul qui tienne, s'effrite ou n'y est plus?" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 132-133). See also M. J. Costelloe, "Roman Pontifical Universities," in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 11: 559.

²⁹⁰ L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 113-115.

²⁹¹ L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 150.

grossly exaggerated, indeed slandered this place. The Dominicans are in charge here of their specialties, namely neoscholastic philosophy and ecclesiastical subjects”²⁹²

Through its academic superiority Fribourg University intellectually enhanced Thomism in Groulx's eyes. Here he came into contact with Pierre Mandonnet, the French Dominican medievalist who “zealously promoted the history of the Dominicans, Thomism and Aristotelianism in the 13th century,” as M. H. Vicaire points out.²⁹³ In 1893 Mandonnet had co-established the *Revue Thomiste* at Fribourg, and during Groulx's stay there he was completing *Des écrits authentiques de saint Thomas d'Aquin*, which were foundational for Thomistic scholarship. Groulx soaked in his lectures:

The reader will no doubt allow me to introduce some of my Fribourg professors, at least those who left a lasting, vivid impression on me. Among the elective courses I decided to take there was one I made sure never to miss: the weekly class of Father Mandonnet o.p. Providence works in mysterious ways. Who would have guessed that by attending the lectures of this medievalist, perhaps the foremost of his day, I received in effect an excellent course on historical methodology? Although it seems hard to believe, there below the rostrum of this scholarly Dominican who dissected medieval texts with surgical precision, I, the makeshift editor of the small *Cours d'histoire du Canada* --compiled for my rhetoric students at Valleyfield -- learned the rigorous demands of this hallowed discipline, especially the art of analyzing a document. I must add that Father Mandonnet taught with such startling clarity and that caring voice and good nature that readily convert students into disciples of a mentor. I first heard him at the summer session of 1907 (29 July to 08 August) where he mesmerized me. I have just found again my notes from those initial courses and sure enough,

²⁹²“On m'avait bien donné à Rome quelques doutes sur l'orthodoxie de l'enseignement. J'ai pu me convaincre sur place qu'on a extraordinairement exagéré et même calomnié. L'enseignement de la philosophie (néo-scholastique) et des matières ecclésiastiques est aux mains des Dominicains ...” (G.Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 846-847, n. 128).

²⁹³“Pierre Mandonnet,” *NCE*, 9: 147-148.

the professor did address issues in historical methodology: 'The interface of scholarship and history,' 'How to uncover and examine documents,' 'Is there a philosophy of history?' After these theoretical considerations his lectures dealt with practical matters: 'How does one interpret and teach church history?'; "The latest works on the Inquisition.' Yes, as I reread these notes I say to myself: Providence does indeed guide our every step!²⁹⁴

Mandonnet taught philosophy and theology from an historical perspective, which stimulated Groulx's interest in history. In fact, while Groulx attended Fribourg, Mandonnet continued his two-volumed *Siger de Brabant et l'averroïsme latin au XIII^e siècle*, which "marked an era in the study of doctrinal history."²⁹⁵ Mandonnet rendered historiography a mainstay of Catholic doctrine, which later served as a lesson to Groulx the historian.

Groulx's philosophy professor at Fribourg, Marc de Munynck, favorably introduced modern thought to him and thus broadened his Neoscholasticism. Although young, de Munynck had already published a major work in 1904 at Louvain, *Praelectiones de Dei existentia...* Specializing in the French philosopher Henri

²⁹⁴"On me permettra, sans doute, de présenter quelques-uns de mes professeurs de Fribourg, ceux-là du moins qui m'ont laissé un durable et vivant souvenir. Parmi les cours marginaux que j'ai résolu de suivre, il en est un que je me gardais bien de manquer: le cours hebdomadaire du Père Mandonnet, o.p. Les voies de la Providence sont secrètes. Qui m'eût dit qu'en écoutant le célèbre médiéviste, le plus réputé peut-être de son temps, je prenais opportunément un excellent cours de méthodologie historique? Ce sera bien là pourtant, au pied de la chaire du savant dominicain, disséquant avec une magnifique maîtrise, ses textes du Moyen Age, que le rédacteur improvisé du petit *Cours d'histoire du Canada* pour ses rhétoriciens de Valleyfield, apprendra l'extrême rigueur de la fameuse discipline, et en particulier, l'art de traiter un document. Le Père Mandonnet enseigne, au surplus, avec une saisissante clarté et ce ton paternel, cette bonhomie qui, autour d'un maître, transforment si facilement les étudiants en disciples. Je l'avais déjà entendu aux cours des vacances de 1907 (29 juillet au 8 août). Et il m'avait conquis. Je viens de retrouver mes notes de ces premiers cours. Ce sont bien des problèmes de technique historique qu'avait abordés le professeur: «Rapports de l'érudition et de l'histoire,» «Comment découvrir et traiter un document,» «Y a-t-il une philosophie de l'histoire?» Puis après ces cours théoriques, quelques applications pratiques: «Comment doit-on comprendre et enseigner l'histoire ecclésiastique?» «Les derniers travaux sur l'Inquisition». Oui, je relis ces notes et je me dis: La Providence! de quoi ne se mêle-t-elle point!" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 150-151).

²⁹⁵"Pierre Mandonnet", *NCE*, 9: 147-148.

Bergson and became “one of the architects of the scholastic revival in Belgium.”²⁹⁶ He challenged Groulx to relate Neothomism to contemporary philosophy:

Another Dominican equally fascinated me ... Although still young, Father de Munnynck, o. p., already proved an outstanding essayist. His frequent contributions to scholarly journals earned him a reputation as both a philosopher and a theologian. He readily engaged in argumentation and took mischievous delight in challenging accepted ideas. In the face of narrow-mindedness he opened new vistas by walking a tightrope which voluntarily, if not rashly, led him to the edge of modernism. What a dangerous game to play in 1908-1909... At our very first meeting he assigned me the task of preparing a critical overview of Bergson's *Time and Free Will : An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*. This formidable work made me realize the woeful deficiencies of my doctorate in philosophy from the Minerva.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁶“un des artisans du renouveau de la scolastique en Belgique” (“Munnynck, Marc de,” in B. Loth, A. Michel, eds., *DTC*, 2: 3268).

²⁹⁷“Un autre dominicain m'aura aussi grandement intéressé ... Encore jeune, le Père de Munnynck, o. p., est déjà un remarquable essayiste. Collaborateur assidu à des revues de spécialistes, le philosophe et le théologien ont du renom. Volontiers agressif, il ne s'épargne pas le malin plaisir de heurter les idées reçues. Il innove, brave les préjugés, marche sur la corde raide, côtoie, non sans quelque volontaire témérité, les abords du modernisme. En 1908-1909, c'est jeu dangeureux... Dès la première réunion, il me colle un travail: préparation d'un résumé critique des «Données immédiates de la conscience de Bergson.» Travail ardu qui permet au modeste docteur en philosophie de La Minerve de sonder, en son esprit, un certain vide abyssal” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 151-152).

Bergson's first book, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (1889) was translated as *Time and Free Will : An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (1910). Given the sophistication, depth, and originality of Bergson's thought in this work young Groulx had good reason to perceive such an assignment as a daunting task. See Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, pp. 38-40, 43, 48, 60, 78-79, 91-92, 96, 117, 122 n. 2. See also T. A. Goudge, “Bergson, Henri,” in Paul Edwards, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 1: 287-288, 294; Darrell Jodock, “Bergson, Henri,” in M. Eliade, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 2: 113; I. J. Gallagher, “Berson, Henri Louis,” in W. J. McDonald, ed., *NCE*, 2:324; Frédéric Worms, “Bergson,” in Laurent Jaffro, Monique Labrune, eds., *Gradus philosophiques*, pp. 96-101; Isabelle Mourral, “Bergsonisme,” in Frédéric Laupies, ed., *Dictionnaire de la culture générale*, p. 96; “Bergson, Henri,” in Élisabeth Clément, Chantal Demonque, Laurence Hansen-Love, Perre Kahn, *La philosophie de A à Z*, pp. 49-51; Antony Flew, “Bergson, Henri,” in *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, p. 41; “Bergson, Henri,” in T. Mautner, ed., *The Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy*, p. 65; Lawrence F. Hundersmarck, “Henri Bergson,” in Ian P. McGreal, ed., *Great Thinkers of the Western World*, pp. 430-432; Peter A. Angeles, “Bergson, Henri,” in *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Philosophy*, p. 32; Albert B. Hakim, *Historical Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 526; Mortimer J. Adler, “Time,” in *The Great Ideas: A Lexicon of Western Thought*, p. 864; James C. Livingston, Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, *Modern Christian Thought*, v. 2: *The Twentieth Century*, p. 312; “Creative Evolution,” in Frank N. Magill, ed., *Masterpieces of World Philosophy*, pp. 477-478, 481; Donald A. Nielsen, “Bergson, Henri,” in William H. Swatos, Jr., *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society*, p. 54; “Bergson, Henri,” in Bruce Murphy, ed., *Benét's Reader's Encyclopedia*, pp. 980-999; “Bergson, Henri,” in Kathleen Kuiper, ed., *Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature*, p. 130; Theodor W. Adorno, *Notes to Literature*, 1: 235; Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, 1: 201-202, 291; Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man*, p. 52; Étienne Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical*

In the spring of 1909 illness cut short Groulx's doctoral program at Fribourg; still he considered it the summit of his education.²⁹⁸ A child of *Aeterni Patris*, Leo XIII's 1879 encyclical that promulgated the restoration of Scholastic philosophy, he endorsed the scholasticism of Aquinas in particular. The period of Groulx's formal learning coincided with the strong modern revival of Scholasticism that *Aeterni Patris* inaugurated, so that Thomism was epistemologically the basis of his instruction from Sainte-Thérèse to the Catholic University of Fribourg. In fact, the latter's foundation in 1889 largely resulted from the official encouragement of the papacy,²⁹⁹ which thereby sought to institutionalize Scholasticism, just as it did in 1880 when Leo XIII ordered the establishment of the Higher Institute of Philosophy at Louvain.³⁰⁰ Not surprisingly, after taking his degrees in Minerva because of its reputation as a bastion of Thomism these two Thomist powerhouses were the only universities Groulx considered for further studies.³⁰¹ J.A. Weisheipl describes it: "In Rome the center of Thomistic revival was the Dominican College of St. Thomas (Minerva), where the *Summa theologiae* was used as a textbook ... Tommaso Zigliara ... regent of the college from 1870 to 1879, wrote an influential *Summa philosophica* that ran through 17 editions."³⁰²

Experience, p. 292; Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, v. IX: *Maire de Biran to Sartre*, pp. 179, 185-189, 194, 202.

²⁹⁸ L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 157-159.

²⁹⁹ "Fribourg, University of," *NCE*, 6: 198-199.

³⁰⁰ "Scholasticism," *NCE*, 12: 1165-1170.

³⁰¹ G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 846, #128.

³⁰² *NCE*, 12: 1165-1170.

Groulx's French-Canadian educators had naturally recommended Minerva to him,³⁰³ since Zigliara's *Summa philosophica* was the exclusive handbook for the teaching of philosophy in Quebec from about 1880 to 1909.³⁰⁴ With regard to it Lamonde observes:

In the vein of Aristotle and the 'Summa' of Saint Thomas, Mgr. Zigliara's work follows a scholastic model which extensively employs papal encyclicals ([including the] *Syllabus*) as primary sources of doctrine. It introduces a new schematization of Logic which groups the laws of reasoning, into the category of 'dialectic', and the criterion for certitude into the category of 'critique'. This approach comes nowhere near Descartes nor Lamennais since there are many criteria for certitude and, in a new twist, they serve to refute German idealism.³⁰⁵

Groulx knew the "Zig" since his classical college days, which explains his sense of déjà vu at Minerva.³⁰⁶

Groulx's Thomist schooling had come full circle in Europe. Minerva completed his cursory French-Canadian initiation into Neothomism and philosophically corroborated its dogmatic scheme. Rome also drew Groulx from the pedagogical periphery to the ecclesiastical epicentre of Thomism's contemporary resurgence. Meanwhile at Fribourg Groulx encountered scholars on the intellectual cutting-edge of Neoscholasticism, whose influence helped refine his parochial Thomism. Considering the Scholastical continuum of his training, one realizes why Fribourg represented the culmination of Groulx's academic apprenticeship. Rather than being a hiatus in his

³⁰³ L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 113.

³⁰⁴ Y. Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec (1665-1920)*, p. 224.

³⁰⁵ "L'ouvrage de Mgr. Zigliara est à l'enseigne d'Aristote et de saint Thomas («*Summa*»); de présentation scolastique, il utilise assez abondamment les encycliques papales (*Syllabus*) comme documents doctrinaux. De nouvelles divisions sont introduites en Logique: Des lois du raisonnement sont groupées dans la «dialectique» et les critères de certitude dans la «critique». On est loin de Descartes, on est loin de Lamennais: Les critères de certitude sont nombreux et servent à la réfutation, nouvelle, de l'idéalisme allemand" (Y. Lamonde, *La philosophie et son enseignement au Québec 1665-1920*, p. 225).

³⁰⁶ L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 57.

nationalist agenda, as Susan Mann Trofinmenkoff implies,³⁰⁷ Groulx's studies in Europe laid the philosophical groundwork for his religious nationalism. One should keep in mind that Groulx was not equally exposed to the various strands of neothomism:

...scientific at Louvain (under the future cardinal Mercier),
historiographical at Fribourg (under father Mandonnet),
anti-Kantian in Paris, reduced to twenty-four theses and
contained in the scholastic philosophy manuals of Italy
associated with l'Action française in France!³⁰⁸

2.7 Nazism

For almost sixty years, a succession of writers and scholars have alleged that Fribourg indoctrinated Groulx in Nazism, rather than Scholasticism. First, on August 15, 1944, against the backdrop of censorship and propaganda during World War II, *Maclean's*, published an article entitled "Crisis in Quebec", by Blair Fraser, Ottawa editor of the magazine who enjoyed as historian, J. L. Granatstein points out, "close friendships with politicians and officials [and] had unrivalled access to government secrets."³⁰⁹ In this piece, which dealt with growing French-Canadian opposition to imminent conscription for overseas service,³¹⁰ Fraser, an avid supporter of the war effort with "a unique opportunity to influence a national audience,"³¹¹ charged that Groulx's "myth"³¹² of Quebec history likened the English military rulers of post-Conquest French

³⁰⁷ "Three years of study in Europe, from 1906 to 1909, temporarily interrupted his growing talent for inspiring young people with religious and secular zeal" (S. M. Trofimenkoff, *The Dream of Nation*, p. 220).

³⁰⁸ "...le néothomisme prend différentes tonalités: scientifique à Louvain (avec le futur cardinal Mercier), historique à Fribourg (avec le père Mandonnet), anti-kantien à Paris, mis en manuels de philosophie scolastique à l'usage des séminaires, réduit à vingt-quatre thèses en Italie, associé à l'Action française en France" (Émile Poulat, "L'âge des révolutions," in Frédéric Lenoir, Ysé Tardan-Masquelier, ed., *Encyclopédie des religions*, 1: 668).

³⁰⁹ J. L. Granatstein, "Blair Fraser" in J. A. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 915.

³¹⁰ André Laurendeau opens his account of the WWII conscription crisis with a statement of Groulx's influence on him. See André Laurendeau, *La crise de la conscription – 1942*, p. 10; see also p. 74n.1, 140n.1. For an English translation see *André Laurendeau: Witness for Quebec*, pp. 3, 57, 107. Desmond Morton, J. L. Granatstein, *Victory 1945: Canadians from War to Peace*, pp. 129, 137.

³¹¹ J. L. Granatstein, "Fraser, Blair" in J. A. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 915.

³¹² Blair Fraser, "Crisis in Quebec," *Maclean's Magazine* 57/16 (August 15, 1944):43.

Canada to the “Gestapo,”³¹³ thus intellectually aiding and abetting French-Canadian resistance to conscription. Furthermore, knowing that Groulx was already 66 years old³¹⁴ and therefore could not possibly have derived his longstanding nationalism from latter-day Nazi ideologues, Fraser turned the tables on Groulx’s “myth” by portraying him as a proto-Nazi. Fraser declared:

Canon Lionel Groulx is a ... sinister, molder and leader of French-Canadian youth ... He is a convinced racist, a former pupil at Fribourg in Switzerland of Gonzague de Reynold, who in turn was a pupil of Count de Gobineau, founding philosopher of all modern racist theories, including Hitler’s.³¹⁵

Despite Fraser’s contention, no evidence exists that Groulx studied with Gonzague de Reynold (1880-1970) at Fribourg, nor that Groulx’s graduate studies in Europe from 1906 to 1909 introduced him to, much less indoctrinated him in, the thought of Joseph-Arthur comte de Gobineau (1816-1882), the French diplomat and writer whose *Essay on the Inequality of Human Races* (1853-1855) asserted the superiority of the white race over others and presented the “Aryans” or Germanic peoples as the summit of civilization. In fact the extant primary sources from this period in Groulx’s life, namely his diary³¹⁶ and correspondance, which includes some 451 texts,³¹⁷ often lengthy letters, make no mention of Gobineau nor Reynold.³¹⁸ Moreover, in his memoirs Groulx challenged Fraser’s claim:

³¹³ B. Fraser, “Crisis in Quebec,” *Maclean’s Magazine* 57/16 (August 15, 1944):43.

³¹⁴ B. Fraser, “Crisis in Quebec,” *Maclean’s Magazine* 57/16 (August 15, 1944):43, “Now 66 and in frail health, Canon Groulx makes an impressive picture on the occasions, now infrequent, when he speaks in public.”

³¹⁵ B. Fraser, “Crisis in Quebec,” *Maclean’s Magazine* 57/16 (August 15, 1944): 43.

³¹⁶ See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 791-848.

³¹⁷ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2 : xxxi.

³¹⁸ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2 : xxxix-xl.

For those who insist on knowing, I will add in conclusion that these constitute the only mentors at Fribourg who could have influenced me. I mention this once more because later, back in Canada, I could not help but read with a smile the wild story by a well-known English-Canadian magazine writer Blair Fraser-Mason Wade's *French Canadians* repeated this fable—whereby Fraser sought above all to explain what some call my nationalism by tracing its origins to Fribourg. There I supposedly came under the influence of that theorist of racism, Gobineau, or at least his disciples. Among the latter this English-Canadian writer included Gonzague de Reynold, which makes this no less a tall tale. At the risk of seeming illiterate I must unfortunately confess that I have never read anything by the Count de Gobineau. I have read much of Reynold, but not during that period of my life. In fact at the time of my brief stay in Fribourg, Reynold was still young and had not written much.³¹⁹

Scholars cannot uncritically employ this autobiographical source, particularly on such a sensitive matter. Yet as historian Ronald Rudin states regarding Groulx: “his memoirs, if used carefully, provide some useful insights into his career.”³²⁰ With this cautionary note in mind, Groulx's testimony bears consideration. First, the Swiss, francophone writer Gonzague de Reynold did not teach at Fribourg University during this period. On the contrary, seeking broader intellectual horizons he had left the provincial atmosphere of Fribourg in 1905 for the international environment of Geneva, where he stayed until 1913.³²¹ Second, Groulx was two years older than Reynold, who at this time had only

³¹⁹“Ajouterai-je, en conclusion, que si l'on tient à le savoir, ce sont là les seuls maîtres à Fribourg qui ont pu m'influencer. J'y reviens, parce que plus tard, de retour au Canada, je ne lirai pas sans un sourire plus qu'amusé, le conte funambulesque d'un revuiste anglo-canadien de renom Blair Fraser, conte repris par Mason Wade dans son *French Canadians* et qui,--surtout Fraser--pour expliquer ce que l'on appelle mon nationalisme, en font remonter les sources à Fribourg. C'est là que j'aurais subi l'influence du théoricien du racisme, Gobineau, ou du moins, de ses disciples. Et, parmi ces derniers, le revuiste anglo-canadien a rangé Gonzague de Reynold: ce qui n'est pas amoindrir la fantaisie. Malheureusement, je dois l'avouer, sous peine de passer pour un pauvre esprit, je n'ai jamais rien lu du Comte de Gobineau. J'ai beaucoup lu Reynold, mais pas à cette époque-là de ma vie. D'ailleurs, lors de mon passage à Fribourg, Reynold, encore jeune, avait peu produit” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 154).

³²⁰R. Rudin, *Making History in Twentieth-Century Quebec*, p. 226, n. 24.

³²¹“Les neuf ans que j'ai passés à Genève m'apparaissent dans ma vie comme la période lumineuse durant laquelle j'eus pour la première fois une jeunesse... Dans cette Genève d'avant la Société des Nations, cette

published a few works: *L'Âge d'or* (1899), *Au pays des aïeux* (1902), *Jacques Rousseau et ses contradicteurs* (1904), *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et les paysages de la Suisse* (1905).³²² Although Groulx methodically built up and maintained his personal library from youth, not one of these titles appears in his collection. Third, Reynold published most of his appreciable literary corpus years, often decades after Groulx studied at Fribourg,³²³ so that his library does indeed comprise several publications by Reynold, but all of them date from 1935 or later : *L'Europe tragique* (1935), *Portugal* (1936), *D'où vient l'Allemagne?* (1939), *Le XVII^e siècle: le classique et le baroque; suivi de trois études sur Malherbe, Molière, Mme. de Lambert* (1945); *La formation de l'Europe* (1944-1950, 6 v.); *Conditions politiques et historiques de la paix* (1945).³²⁴ Fourth, Fraser offered no evidence to substantiate the supposition that Reynold was “a pupil of Count de Gobineau,” who in fact died when Reynold was two years old. Fifth, Groulx’s library, albeit extensive and variegated, does not include any of Gobineau’s writings. Finally, due to illness Groulx studied barely four months in Fribourg.³²⁵

Genève genevoise dont le coeur était suisse et l'esprit européen, je ne tardai point à me sentir chez moi. Fribourg était trop petit et Paris trop grand: Genève possédait les dimensions dont mon esprit avait besoin pour se sentir à l'aise. C'est d'elle ... que m'atteignirent, pour la première fois, les grands courants du monde contemporain et les grandes inquiétudes de l'Europe, à l'avant-veille de la guerre. ” (Gonzague de Reynold, *Mes mémoires*, 3: 120-121.) See the biography by Maurice Zermatten, *Gonzague de Reynold*, p. 49.

³²² See M. Zermatten, *Gonzague de Reynold*, pp. 49, 253.

³²³ See M. Zermatten, *Gonzague de Reynold*, pp. 253,-254.

³²⁴ See appendix, #1, CRLG.

³²⁵ While Groulx’s diary chronicles, often copiously, his studies and travels in Europe, his two scant journal entries for Fribourg reflect the brevity of his stay there, as well as his illness. Indeed the second entry is a poem entitled “Vision d’hôpital.” See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 2: 846-848; 1: 91-92. See also G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 605. In his letter dated 16 February 1909, Groulx writes : “la maladie—encore elle! — est venue me signifier, ces tout derniers jours, que j’aurai prochainement à m’accorder un congé. Je ressens des atteintes du mal à peu près classique qui a nom appendicite”. In his letter dated 03 March 1909 (2 : 613), Groulx writes : “je vous écris sur le dos, le seul mode de travail que je connaisse depuis tantôt huit semaines.” In his letter dated 26 April 1909, (2: 619): “vous ne sauriez croire ce qu’après quatre mois de maladie, de chambre et de lit, après mon année d’études désormais perdue ... je me sens près du découragement,” 1: 102, 158-161, 169-170; 4: 185.

However, the allegation that Groulx's European academic sojourn inculcated him in proto-Nazi thought resurfaced in 1945³²⁶ when, on the assumption that "Groulx was greatly affected during his studies in Switzerland and France,"³²⁷ American³²⁸ historian Mason Wade concluded that :

Groulx is a disciple of the historical school of the Count de Gobineau, the eminent nineteenth-century French racist whose doctrines so strongly influenced Houston Stewart Chamberlain and the Nazi racists who derived from him.³²⁹

Yet Groulx had not studied in France. It appears that his bishop would not allow him to attend a French university,³³⁰ and that his meagre finances ultimately convinced him that he could not afford to study in Paris.³³¹ Wade also ignores the fact that Gobineau "had few French disciples."³³² Furthermore, Wade, like Fraser, wrote this in the heat of wartime strife over conscription, amidst what Wade called "the urgent necessities of war,"³³³ whose imperatives most certainly colored, if not distorted, his and Fraser's perception of Groulx. As a matter of fact Wade made the above statements in *The*

³²⁶ Although published in 1946 Mason Wade wrote *The French-Canadian Outlook* in 1945, as he repeatedly states in the preface to its 1964 Carleton Library Edition ; see Mason Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, pp. ix-xi. See also the preface to the original publication, M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 15.

³²⁷ Mason Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook: A Brief Account of the Unknown North Americans*, p. 124.

³²⁸ See M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 1: xiv-xv, where he speaks of his position as an American studying the history of Canada.

³²⁹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 124.

³³⁰ See G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 310, where Groulx contemplates future studies at the University of Fribourg: "Si mon évêque veut se permettre pour une fois de penser comme moi, j'ai presque formé le projet de venir étudier ici l'an prochain ... Il est à peu près entendu qu'on me fermera les universités françaises." Over half a century later Groulx reiterated that episcopal reservations concerning studies in France dictated that he chose the Swiss university instead: "Qu'allais-je faire à Fribourg ... Quelles raisons ou motifs m'ont conduit là? Inquiets de ce qui se passait en France, mon évêque, nos chefs religieux d'alors ne prirent guère, pour leurs jeunes prêtres, un séjour d'études à Paris, pas même à l'Institut catholique, réputé foyer de modernisme" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 149).

³³¹ G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 469: "Je quitterai Rome vers le 15 juin (1908), en route très probablement pour Fribourg, où j'ai à peu près résolu d'aller faire un peu de philosophie et de littérature. Il m'en coûte de sacrifier Paris, mais j'y suis contraint par l'état de ma santé et par l'exiguïté de mes ressources pécuniaires."

³³² Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought*, p. 198.

French-Canadian Outlook, which opened by speaking about the “mass meetings against conscription,”³³⁴ and discussed at length this issue³³⁵ in order to ascertain “the roots of modern opposition to conscription.”³³⁶ Indeed he published this book in direct response to the conscription controversy, as Wade clearly reiterated in a later edition of *The French-Canadian Outlook*:

It was written with a sense of urgency, in the hope of dispelling some of the tensions between English and French Canadians which had arisen during the Second World War, and which came to a head in the conscription crisis of 1944-45.³³⁷

Echoing Fraser’s “Crisis in Quebec,” Wade extended this line of thinking over the course of Canadian history, so that he interpreted the conscription clash as the latest manifestation of a pattern of “recurrent ‘crises’ in Quebec.”³³⁸ Surmising that these episodes betokened the “problem of Canadian union,”³³⁹ Wade resolved to find the sources of conflict that punctuated French and English Canadian relations which, he believed, stood at the heart of “the crises here chronicled.”³⁴⁰ In this endeavor Wade resorted to psychology, which he deemed essential to understand French Canadians’ “very highly developed group consciousness,”³⁴¹ as he put it. His argument therefore begins with this fundamental premise:

³³³ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, pp. 10-11.

³³⁴ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 9.

³³⁵ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, pp. 139, 141-143, 149-152, 154-157, 161-162, 181-182.

³³⁶ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 58.

³³⁷ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook* (McClelland and Stewart, 1964), p. ix. The original publication expresses similar sentiments: “It is my hope that this book will serve to dispel some of the misunderstandings between English and French North Americans” (M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 14).

³³⁸ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 182. See also p. 10 concerning “the basis of the recurrent ‘crises’ in Quebec.”

³³⁹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 11. See also p. 50.

³⁴⁰ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 12.

³⁴¹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 11.

The attitudes of minority groups can often be explained only in psychological terms, and French-Canadian attitudes are a good example...So this short history will also be in some measure a psychological study.³⁴²

Based on this rationale, whose validity he made no attempt to demonstrate, Wade's inquiry laid aside a thoroughgoing historical methodology and adopted, at least in part, an ostensibly psychological framework for which he provided neither the scientific parameters nor the theoretical principles to justify this venture of an historian into the field of psychology. Nevertheless, Wade set out to all intents and purposes to sketch historically a French-Canadian psyche or "outlook," to use his expression. In this effort he surveyed what he considered the salient events of Canadian history and summarily assessed their psychological impact on French-Canadian "consciousness," especially in relation to English Canadians. Thus in "New France: 1534-1759," the first chapter of Wade's book, he contended that this period of history, which he characterized as the "golden age of French Canada,"³⁴³ fulfilled a psychological need in French Canadians to compensate for the "acute awareness of their minority status"³⁴⁴ within contemporary Canada. Wade asserted that:

The French Canadian tends to console himself for an uncomfortable position in the present by dwelling upon the glories of his past. This very understandable psychological reaction also explains the tendency of his historians to romanticize the history of New France.³⁴⁵

Among the latter Wade not coincidentally singled out Groulx.³⁴⁶

³⁴² M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 12.

³⁴³ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 20.

³⁴⁴ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 11.

³⁴⁵ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, pp. 20-21.

³⁴⁶ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 21.

While covering the period from the Conquest in 1760 to the Constitutional Act of 1791, the second chapter of Wade's book continued his purportedly psychological examination of the history of French and English Canadian relations. Wade accordingly postulated in the first sentence of this chapter that, "An important part of the French Canadian's special outlook arises from his consciousness of belonging to a conquered or at least a minority, people."³⁴⁷ This accounted, he argued, for French Canadians' "emotional opposition to anything 'Anglo-Saxon,'"³⁴⁸ and a "state of mind"³⁴⁹ which Wade typified as "defensive"³⁵⁰ and "inordinately sensitive."³⁵¹ Indeed he came to the conclusion that French Canadians suffered from an "inferiority complex."³⁵² Wade thus moved beyond the pale of historical analysis to hazard the psychological diagnosis of an entire people, past and present. However, he provided neither sociological data, psychological studies, nor even historical research to support his inferences. Rather, Wade again fell back on contemporary Quebec historiography to which he imputed the supposed psychological pathology of French-Canadian society. He declared:

Historical teaching in Quebec, with its undue emphasis on the French period and the difficult years from 1760 to 1867, when the French Canadians were struggling for survival as a distinct group, is largely responsible for the prevalence of this state of mind and for all the accompanying manifestations of an inferiority complex.³⁵³

Here Wade proved wanting in two respects. First, his book did not present a developed, detailed study of the teaching of history in contemporary Quebec, yet this constituted

³⁴⁷ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 41 ; see also Mason Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 868, in reference to Groulx, "He painted the days of New France as a golden age, of which the *habitant* and the *coureur de bois* were the folk heroes."

³⁴⁸ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 42.

³⁴⁹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, pp. 41-42.

³⁵⁰ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 42.

³⁵¹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 42.

the crux of his argument. Second, he diagnosed a psychological disorder on the ostensible basis of historical teaching, a tactic inconsistent with sound logic and careful methodology.

When surveying the period from 1867 to 1918 Wade pursued his so-called psychological approach to Canadian history. In this vein he proposed the “minority complex”³⁵⁴ or “inferiority complex”³⁵⁵ of French Canadians as the primary explanation for their supposedly characteristic “passionate emotional reaction”³⁵⁶ to the tribulations which they as a people experienced over the course of time. This “mentality,”³⁵⁷ Wade contended, lay at the core of the crises which bedevilled relations between English and French Canadians. With regard to the latter he analogically reasoned that, “The inferiority complex in a national group, as in individuals, produces arrogant and aggressive attitudes, which only intensify the conflict.”³⁵⁸ Although the legitimacy of such an analogy required justification Wade provided none. Moreover, his argument relied heavily on French Canadians’ supposed ‘inferiority complex’ or ‘minority complex,’ yet Wade never defined these crucial concepts. Rather, he interchangeably, indeed indiscriminately, employed both terms as if they represented one and the same phenomenon.

In the latter part of his account for the years 1867 to 1918, Wade looked at French and English Canadian relations amidst the turmoil of World War I (1914-1918).

³⁵² M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 42.

³⁵³ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, pp. 41-42.

³⁵⁴ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 102.

³⁵⁵ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 103.

³⁵⁶ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 117.

³⁵⁷ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 102.

³⁵⁸ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 103.

He naturally focused on the conscription crisis which then divided French and English Canadians.³⁵⁹ In this context Wade first directly mentioned Lionel Groulx:

The blanket condemnation by the English of the French as slackers and traitors left fertile soil for the development of French-Canadian separatism. This movement was led by the nationalist and racist-minded historian Abbé Lionel Groulx, who in 1917 assumed the leadership of the *Action Française* group which had been formed in 1913.³⁶⁰

These statements contained several factual and historical inaccuracies. First, 1913 did not mark the establishment of the *Action Française* but of the *Ligue des droits du français* an organization established to protect the French language in the face of the burgeoning, English-dominated world of commerce and industry. Second, in 1917 this group, which comprised clerical and lay nationalists, began publishing a monthly journal, *Action française*, whose editorship Groulx did not assume until 1920. Third, the *Ligue des droits du français*, which became the *Ligue d'action française* in 1921, took a definitely nationalist stance on issues in contemporary French-Canadian society, but it did not constitute a separatist movement. Rather, in 1922 the publication, *Action française*, toyed “with the idea of political independence,”³⁶¹ as historian Fernande Roy notes. Indeed Wade anachronistically erred by referring to Quebec separatism as a ‘movement’ *per se* prior to and during the Great War. With regard to separatism in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Quebec, political scientist Michael B. Stein observes that this period saw only:

isolated advocates of the doctrine of separatism, eg, the journalist Jules-Paul Tardivel, and occasional flirtations with it in the early 1920s and mid-1930s by strong

³⁵⁹ J. L. Granastein, “Conscription, World War I,” in J. A. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 545.

³⁶⁰ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 119.

³⁶¹ Fernande Roy, “L’Action Française,” in J. A. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 16.

nationalists such as Abbé Lionel Groulx and his followers.³⁶²

Furthermore, as historian Susan Mann Trofimenkoff points out, while Groulx at moments entertained separatist notions nonetheless, “He carefully avoided the word separatism and denied all his life any advocacy of it.”³⁶³ Due to the multifaceted character and politically amorphous nature of his nationalist thought, not to mention his myriad writings, in particular the unpublished correspondence of his mature years, Groulx’s position on separatism requires qualification, nuance, and circumspection, like that which he usually exercised when addressing this subject. Fourth, neither in the case of *Action française* nor Groulx did Wade supply even one specific bibliographic reference, much less the analysis of a primary text, to corroborate his above statements. Yet their error lies not simply in factual and historical inaccuracies, as well as a lack of substantiation, but more fundamentally in a reductionist line of thinking which indiscriminately equated nationalism with separatism and separatism with racism.³⁶⁴ When Wade wrote this book in 1945 the temper of the times, understandably preoccupied with Fascism and Nazism, the demands of the war effort, and the propaganda to support it, not only suited but fostered such reductionism. However, Wade ill served historiography by narrowing the gamut of Groulx’s nationalist thought to a separatist stereotype while concurrently reducing this noted intellectual to a racist caricature.

³⁶² Michael B. Stein, “Separatism,” in J. A. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 2142.

³⁶³ Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, “Lionel-Adolph Groulx,” in J. A. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1021.

³⁶⁴ Sketching the spectrum of nationalist thought Roger Scruton notes that, “In its extreme form nationalism might involve the emergence of an ethnocentric or even racist ideology.” (R. Scruton, “Nationalism,” in R. Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought*, p. 369).

Wade castigated Groulx because he held him responsible on three counts for arousing animosity between French and English Canadians during WWI. First, when due to Regulation 17³⁶⁵ the curtailment of French as a language of instruction and communication in Ontario elementary schools escalated this matter into a national controversy at a crucial moment in the war, Wade reproached Groulx for proving “exceedingly active in the agitation against ‘Regulation 17’”³⁶⁶ when the war effort of the country could not afford such dissent and divisiveness. Groulx did in fact couch criticism of the Ontario Schools Question in a seemingly innocent story about school children in Quebec during ‘the penny for French survivance’ campaign that followed the promulgation of Regulation 17. However, Groulx’s vignette, published in *Les Rapailages* (1916), implicitly likened English Canadians to the enemy “Prussians”³⁶⁷ vilified by the wartime propaganda then in full swing. His quaint scenario sheathed a subtly seditious message, as indicated by this excerpt relating the visit of a school commissioner to an elementary class:

He told them about the hardships of their little friends in Ontario and out West, whose schools gave them no chance to learn properly their beloved mother tongue. He entreated them to speak well their language so as to defend it to the fullest, and held up as a model the little Polish children who

³⁶⁵ Marilyn Barber, “Ontario Schools Question,” in J. A. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1721. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 323; Ramon Hathorn, “Groulx, Lionel-Adolphe,” in E. Benson, W. Toye, eds., *OCCL*, p. 498.

³⁶⁶ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 121; see also M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 1: 721, 762, “There was much bitter feeling in Quebec early in 1918. Abbé Groulx continued to intensify popular indignation about the Ontario school question.”

³⁶⁷ Jeffrey A. Keshen provides an example of WWI Canadian propaganda about Prussians before the USA entered the war, “one advertisement carried in numerous Canadian newspapers for *The Spy* read: ‘Do you know that the Prussians have 10,000... secret police lurking and scheming in the United States?’” (J. A. Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship during Canada's Great War*, p. 21). During his public campaign on behalf of Franco-Ontarians amidst the Regulation 17 controversy, Henri Bourassa provocatively referred to “the Prussians of Ontario” in the heat of WWI. See Pierre Savard, “Relations avec le Québec,” in C. J. Jaenen, eds., *Les Franco-Ontariens*, p. 236, which also mentions the charge of “Prussianism” – *prussianisme* – that some francophone Catholics levelled against Ontario because of its treatment of Franco-Ontarians.

suffered the whip of their Prussian masters rather than betray the language of their homeland.³⁶⁸

Second, Wade accused him of fear-mongering during the winter of 1917-1918, when in a series of university lectures on Confederation Groulx not only criticized its founders but “emphasized the fears of the French-Canadian opposition leaders of the day for national survival.”³⁶⁹ Third, Wade argued that the “unconciliatory”³⁷⁰ tenor and seemingly provocative timing of these lectures on the heels of the conscription crisis, exacerbated wartime tensions in the country and fomented civil disobedience among French Canadians. Referring to Groulx’s lectures Wade protested that they:

inclined their audiences toward a rigid insistence on their rights and opposition to coercion by their English compatriots. The moment was ill-chosen for such counsels, with the Military Service Act taking effect and with the bloodshed of the August anticonscription riots in Montreal fresh in men’s minds.³⁷¹

More than forty years after Groulx delivered these lectures he looked back on them and admitted that to a certain degree he had in fact rendered history subservient to the burning issues of the day. He wrote in his memoirs:

The war so inflamed imperialist feelings that the sense of indignation between them and the French-Canadian nationalists neared boiling point. Even an historian had great difficulty staying calm. Did I sometimes forsake the

³⁶⁸ “Il leur raconta les épreuves de leurs petits camarades de l’Ontario et de l’Ouest, incapables de bien apprendre à l’école le doux parler de leurs mères. Il leur demanda de bien parler leur langue pour se préparer à la bien défendre; il leur cita l’exemple des petits Polonais préférant subir le fouet des maîtres prussiens plutôt de trahir le parler de leur patrie” (L. Groulx, *Les rapailages*, p. 29).

³⁶⁹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 121; see also M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 755: “Meanwhile the eloquent young nationalist leader Abbé Groulx was influencing large audiences by his lectures at Laval University in Montreal on Confederation, in which he made much of the forebodings of the French-Canadian leaders that Confederation spelled danger to their faith and national existence – forebodings which, the abbé made abundantly clear, had been fully realized by 1917.”

³⁷⁰ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 121.

³⁷¹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 121. See Richard A. Preston, “Military Service Act,” in J. H. Marsh, ed., *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1486. See also, M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 2: 756, in reference to Groulx’s lectures, “his argument encouraged separatism and opposition to the Military Service Act.”

equanimity of this profession? I fear so. I took the liberty of making all too obvious allusions to the contemporary unrest.³⁷²

Covering the years 1919 to 1945, the penultimate chapter of Wade's book tackled its original object and central concern, namely the causes which led to the WWII conscription crisis with its concomitant breakdown in French and English Canadian relations. From the first page of this chapter, Wade imputed much of the blame to Groulx and his influence.³⁷³ Indeed the second page reiterated Wade's strictly separatist interpretation of Groulx's nationalism³⁷⁴ and declared: "More important than his separatism ... is the racism which permeates his work."³⁷⁵ Wade had ample means to put this bald statement to the proof since Groulx had already published a major body of work by 1945. However, one looks in vain for a single specific bibliographic reference to primary sources. Rather than analyzing the latter to make his case, at this critical juncture Wade turned to the specious notion that Gobineau's thought held Groulx in its thrall from the time he went to Europe for graduate studies.³⁷⁶

Wade's argument in this chapter then ostensibly drew on psychology to explain the strained relations of French and English Canadians during the WWII conscription crisis. In an apparent endeavor to fight fire with fire, Wade integrated into his supposedly 'psychological' approach what he called "the racist terms firmly established

³⁷²"La guerre a chauffé à blanc les susceptibilités des impérialistes. Entre eux et les nationalistes canadiens-français, la passion est bien proche d'atteindre au paroxysme. Un historien, même un historien, a grand-peine à garder son sang-froid. Me suis-je départi ici et là de la sérénité du métier? J'en ai bien peur. Je me suis laissé aller à quelques allusions par trop évidentes aux malaises de l'heure" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 298-299).

³⁷³M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 123. See also pp. 124-125, 129-130, 132, 136, 156, 162, 162 n.1.

³⁷⁴M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 124.

³⁷⁵M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 124.

³⁷⁶M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 124.

in French-Canadian thinking by the school of Canon Groulx.”³⁷⁷ Offering neither sociological data nor psychological research to validate this contention, Wade nevertheless proceeded to cast French and English Canadians as ethno-psychological archetypes whose essentially different emotional make-ups accounted for the conscription crises of both world wars and the purportedly persistent effect of the WWI crisis on French Canadians alone:

the ‘Latin’ frequently relieves his pent-up emotions by an explosion, and though he does not customarily allow anger to sway him from following a reasonable course of action dictated by logic, he will nurse his irritation for a long time afterward. On the other hand, when the ‘Anglo-Saxon,’ much less given to emotional reactions than the ‘Latin,’ does, at rare intervals, permit common sense and reason to yield to emotions, the outbreak is much more serious. But the demonstration, thoroughly venting emotional repressions which have taken a long time to build up to explosive tension, leaves no lasting mark. There was one such mass ‘Anglo-Saxon’ outburst in 1917; a few years later many English Canadians could be found who accepted calmly or even supported the French-Canadian position on conscription, while the French never forgot the ill feeling of the time.³⁷⁸

Wade’s ostensibly ‘psychological’ history of French and English Canadians’ conflicts thus came full circle, since he had started with the premise that “their emotional reactions have been determined by heredity and environment.”³⁷⁹ However, such determinism, not to say social Darwinism, did justice neither to psychology nor historiography, much less to the complexity of French and English Canadian relations which, like Groulx’s thought, Wade reduced to stereotypes in a book bereft of both

³⁷⁷ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 156.

³⁷⁸ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, pp. 156-157. See also p. 179; compare M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 768-769: “English Canada soon lost most of its bitterness against Quebec as time passed, but French Canada never forgot the troubles of 1917-18.”

³⁷⁹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 19.

research and a critical apparatus. Although allegedly intended to quell the WWII “crisis in French-English relations,”³⁸⁰ Wade’s publication itself exemplified the crisis atmosphere and wartime matrix which gave birth to it.

Be that as it may, *The French-Canadian Outlook* laid the foundation³⁸¹ for Wade’s expanded study, *The French Canadians*, completed in 1950.³⁸² Despite ten years preparation, including a two-year sojourn in Quebec and grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation,³⁸³ Wade nonetheless avowed in *The French Canadians* that, “Considering its scope and the immense amount of work that remains to be done in the field, this book had to rely largely on the secondary sources which proved trustworthy.”³⁸⁴ Nor in this aspect alone did Wade’s latest work somewhat replicate its predecessor because in *The French Canadians* he again posited that the “attitudes of minority groups can often be explained only in psychological terms,”³⁸⁵ and he referred to this book too as a “psychological study.”³⁸⁶ From its first page therefore Wade resorted to the semblance of psychology, alleging that French Canadians’ “strong group consciousness and cohesiveness arise from a basic loneliness and insecurity.”³⁸⁷ This assertion, which Wade did not substantiate, set the tone for *The French Canadians* so that its second chapter, “The Legacy of

³⁸⁰ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, (McClelland and Stewart, 1964), p. ix.

³⁸¹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 14: “The present work ... is an epitome of a more detailed and fully documented study still in progress.” See also M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, (McClelland and Stewart, 1964), p. ix, “This book, written in 1945, was designed as a brief interim report on a research project on which I had been engaged for five years, and which took five more years to complete.”

³⁸² M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: xvii.

³⁸³ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: xv. See also, M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 14; M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, (McClelland and Stewart, 1964), p. ix.

³⁸⁴ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: xiv.

³⁸⁵ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: xiii.

³⁸⁶ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, v. 1, p. xiii.

³⁸⁷ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: xiii.

Conquest: 1760-91,” began by indicating the “psychological” motivation behind a term used to designate the obtainment of Canada by Great Britain in the Seven Years’ War (1756-63). Wade opined that, “The marked preference by French Canadians for the term ‘cession’ rather than ‘conquest,’ when there would have been no cession without a conquest is a psychological defence.”³⁸⁸ Indeed this chapter opened with a string of “psychological” observations about French Canadians, and specifically associated these with the most important historian of nineteenth-century French Canada, François-Xavier Garneau (1809-1866), and with Lionel Groulx:³⁸⁹

When the French Canadian says ‘*Je me souviens*,’ he not only remembers the days of New France but also the fact that he belongs to a conquered people. This fact is deeply embedded in his consciousness ... and it is an important factor in his psychological makeup ... From it stem the persecution and inferiority complexes which underlie much French-Canadian thinking. These attitudes are mirrored in the work of certain French-Canadian historians.³⁹⁰

Such sweeping generalizations seemed to go hand-in-hand with the panoramic historical survey Wade conducted, but they ultimately compromised the scholarship of his detailed, methodical monograph. At the same time such statements, albeit in the name of psychology, betrayed the tendentiousness of Wade’s study, as epitomized by his unqualified affirmation that, “Anti-Semitism fulfils an emotional need for the French Canadian, and is as instinctive as the American Southerner’s color prejudice.”³⁹¹

Wade’s recourse to the “emotional need” and “instinctive” anti-Semitism of French Canadians made it clear that he still espoused the psychological determinism

³⁸⁸ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: 88n.1.

³⁸⁹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: 88n.2.

³⁹⁰ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: 47.

³⁹¹ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 2: 980.

based on “heredity and environment”³⁹² that he had invoked in *The French-Canadian Outlook*. Further, he presented no theoretical justification for this analogy with American Southerners, and his work, which he himself considered essentially a “constitutional and political history,”³⁹³ lacked sociological and psychological research to warrant this comparison and corroborate its conclusion. Thus, despite a much more extensive text than *The French-Canadian Outlook*, its sequel perpetuated the same kind of fundamental errors which undermined Wade’s overarching argument in both books. This resulted in no small part from their purposely skewed orientation. Wade early stated that in *The French-Canadian Outlook* “particular attention will be devoted to the extremists of a generally peaceful people.”³⁹⁴ The first paragraph of *The French Canadians* likewise signalled that “disproportionate attention will be devoted to the extremists of a generally placid and easy-going people.”³⁹⁵ This approach not only risked forfeiting a sense of proportion but also lent itself to mistaking the exception for the norm. It comes as no surprise then that with broad brushstrokes of “persecution and inferiority complexes” Wade painted an archetypal French Canadian in the “extremist” hues of endemic “anti-Semitism” and “prejudice.” Wade had after all carried on his research and writing throughout a pivotal decade in what historian Eric Hobsbawm aptly calls “an age of extremes,”³⁹⁶ so that the contemporary twin spectres of Fascism and Nazism, with their accompanying evils, inexorably loomed large in Wade’s perspective. Indeed to a significant degree they served as the lenses through which he perceived the history of French Canadians due to his focus on their “extremists.”

³⁹² M. Wade, *The French Canadian Outlook*, p. 19.

³⁹³ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: xiii.

³⁹⁴ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 12.

³⁹⁵ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: xiii.

Furthermore, since he wrote *The French-Canadian Outlook* during WWII and its sequel in the wake of the war, as indicated by its original title, *The French-Canadians 1760-1945*, these works dealt with contemporary developments and events in close proximity to their occurrence. His treatment of them accordingly suffered from a dearth of requisite historical distance, as Wade himself acknowledged in the 1968 revised edition of *The French Canadians*:

Rereading my views of 1950 ... I was forcibly reminded of the warning of my historical father-in-God, J. Bartlet Brebner, about the dangers of writing contemporary history:

‘As we approach the present our inferences grow more and more subject to distortion. Circumstances which bear one kind of fruit in tranquility yield another kind in days of apprehension and still another in times of war.’³⁹⁷

If chronological nearness may well result in historiographical myopia, ‘truth is the first casualty of war’ and may distort the writing of history as few other experiences in humankind can. One must keep these caveats in mind when reading Wade's books, for their subtext lay in the war then going on against Fascism and Nazism. More to the point, the ‘just cause’ of that war effort and its exigencies constituted the foil whereby Wade articulated his historical critique of French-Canadian nationalism in general and Lionel Groulx in particular. Take for example Wade's remarks in *The French Canadians* on the periodical *L'Action nationale* during 1940-1941, the nadir of the Allies in WWII. Wade chastised the review for discussing French-Canadian culture “as European culture went down before the Nazi assault.”³⁹⁸ Keenly aware of Groulx's close ties to *L'Action nationale* and his decades of ardent nationalist activism, Wade

³⁹⁶ Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes*, pp. 108-177.

³⁹⁷ M. Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 1: xvii.

³⁹⁸ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 900.

characterized Groulx as one of the “extreme elders”³⁹⁹ who directed the journal. Elsewhere in *The French Canadians* Wade denounced the “prevailing sense of selfish security”⁴⁰⁰ among French Canadians while WWII waged on. Indeed he ended the chapter “French Canada and World War II: 1939-1944,” with a wholesale indictment of French Canadians for what he considered their inexcusably egocentric conduct during both world wars. Referring to the conscription crisis⁴⁰¹ of WWI and its WWII counterpart, Wade wrote:

As in 1917, French Canada had reached the crucial stage of a world conflict in a state of mind increasingly pre-occupied with its own domestic concerns, which led it to show a shocking disregard for what English Canadians, Americans, Britishers, and Frenchmen regarded as the vital struggle for the survival of their common way of life. In its revolt against wartime propaganda and against major alterations in its way of life imposed by Ottawa, French Canada discounted the common danger.⁴⁰²

Wade contended that this “state of mind” or “outlook,” as his earlier book put it, found much of its justification in Groulx’s teachings, especially since he represented without doubt the “most popular historian”⁴⁰³ of the day in French Canada. Indeed both *The French-Canadian Outlook*⁴⁰⁴ and *The French Canadians*⁴⁰⁵ underscored Groulx’s contemporary influence. In keeping with the “crisis” motif whereby Wade interpreted French-Canadian history, namely that “French-Canadian nationalism always comes to a

³⁹⁹ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 901.

⁴⁰⁰ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 990.

⁴⁰¹ Elaborating on his treatment of the WWI and WWII conscription crises in *The French-Canadian Outlook*, Wade dealt extensively with both in *The French Canadians*, as evidenced by two weighty chapters, “The Conscription Crisis: 1916-1919” (pp. 708-780), and “The Reinforcement Crisis and Its Aftermath: 1944-5” (pp. 994-1106).

⁴⁰² M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 990.

⁴⁰³ M. Wade, in *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 21.

⁴⁰⁴ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, pp. 21, 123-125, 130, 156, 162n. 1.

⁴⁰⁵ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 641, 755, 866-867, 872, 874, 877, 896, 902, 905-907, 916, 1114.

head in periods of economic, as well as political, crisis,”⁴⁰⁶ Wade inferred that Groulx’s impact drew its strength from such crises, and no more so than in times of war and attendant conscription.

Thus, with regard to Arthur Maheux (1884-1967), priest, professor of Canadian history at Laval University and advocate of the war effort, Wade duly observed:

In 1943 Abbé Maheux published the text of a series of radio talks on historical points of opposition between French and English, under the title of *Pourquoi sommes-nous divisés?* Canon Groulx replied with a pamphlet entitled *Pourquoi nous sommes divisés*. An index of the popularity of the two spokesmen in wartime Quebec was provided by the fact that the Groulx pamphlet sold forty thousand copies in six weeks, while the Maheux volume, published under the official auspices of Radio-Canada, attained a distribution of less than ten thousand copies in a year.⁴⁰⁷

Groulx’s prominence during both world wars seemingly confirmed Wade’s “crisis” theory on the fortunes of French-Canadian nationalism. Yet this rationale did not adequately recognize the perennial vitality, with or without crises, of French-Canadian nationalism, nor the leading role Groulx played therein throughout half a century, wartime or not, so that contrary to the basic assumption of Wade’s reasoning, neither nationalism nor Groulx ultimately depended on crises for their significance in French-Canadian society. Wade lost sight of their broader reality, because his reciprocal foci of “crises” and “extremists” doubly tended to narrow his historical view of French-Canadian nationalism. Indeed these correlative, focal points served as blinders restricting his perception of the nature itself of French-Canadian nationalism, which he consequently reduced to episodic or cyclical extremism. By the same token, extremism

⁴⁰⁶ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 901.

stringently delimited the frame of reference within which Wade viewed Groulx, as exemplified by the first lengthy passage that spoke of Groulx in *The French Canadians*:

The term 'ultranationalist' will henceforward be used to describe the extremists of the Groulx school; though it must be remembered that the term 'nationalism' is a misnomer for the movement after the First World War, which was an intense provincialism complicated by ethnic and religious factors, rather than the true nationalism professed by Henri Bourassa in his early days, and now largely adopted by forward-looking English Canadians.⁴⁰⁸

Although he did not define the "true nationalism" of contemporary English Canadians, Wade in effect deemed them the norm by which he not surprisingly therefore adjudged Groulx an "extremist." Continuing in this vein, Wade again and again depicted Groulx as the principal 'extremist,' in fact a new breed of nationalist who impelled the movement in French Canada to unprecedented excess. *The French Canadians* thus portrayed Groulx as an "ultranationalist of a radicalism hitherto unknown in Quebec;"⁴⁰⁹ decried his literary exposition of an "intransigent nationalism and racism;"⁴¹⁰ recalled the "radical nationalism already implicit in Groulx's earlier work;"⁴¹¹ denounced the interwar "current of racism which had been running even more strongly in French-Canadian nationalism, thanks to twenty years of Abbé Groulx's teaching;"⁴¹² and

⁴⁰⁷ M. Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, p. 162n. 1. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 46-52; M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 955, 965.

⁴⁰⁸ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 865.

⁴⁰⁹ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 876.

⁴¹⁰ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 876.

⁴¹¹ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 880.

⁴¹² M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 916.

concluded with a reiteration of the “sterile racist provincialism of Canon Lionel Groulx in the 1920s.”⁴¹³

From this litany of ‘extremist’ epithets to those describing Fascists and Nazis, the reader of *The French Canadians* needed not go far. Wade had to all intents and purposes couched Groulx’s alleged ‘extremism’ in words synonymous with Fascism and Nazism, so that according to Wade’s scheme Groulx’s nationalist thought constituted a French-Canadian functional equivalent for contemporary European Fascist and Nazi ideologies.⁴¹⁴ This analogy paved the way to associate Groulx with the Axis Powers of WWII which Wade hastened to do, as evident in the first paragraph of the chapter, “French Canada and World War II,” where he contended that Groulx’s teaching “encouraged a certain sympathy with Hitler in some French-Canadian quarters.”⁴¹⁵ However, this association remained tenuous because Wade did not establish a direct link between Groulx and Hitler. Instead, he argued that the nationalism of Fascists, Nazis, and the “Groulx school,” all originated in the same source and consequently represented parallel ideological developments.

Nevertheless, the charge Fraser originally had laid against Groulx in the heat of the WWII Quebec conscription crisis now assumed a scholarly verisimilitude through Wade’s massive work *The French Canadians*. Indeed he thereafter claimed to be the original author of this allegation, as evident in an article he wrote in 1971:

Canon Groulx evidently died convinced that I had borrowed from the late Blair Fraser (it was in fact the other way round) the charge that he was influenced during his

⁴¹³M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 1109.

⁴¹⁴M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 904, 906-908, 916.

⁴¹⁵M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 2: 916.

studies at Fribourg by the racist doctrines of Gobineau and his disciples, among them Gonzague de Reynold.⁴¹⁶

In any case *The French Canadians* imparted lasting credence to this contention, because Wade's publication soon served as the *locus classicus* on this matter. Thus, although he pointed out the lack of specific supporting evidence⁴¹⁷ for Wade's assertion that "Abbé Groulx, at least, was directly influenced by the racist ideas of the Comte de Gobineau",⁴¹⁸ in his 1956⁴¹⁹ doctoral thesis political scientist Michael Oliver nonetheless agreed with Wade as to "the brand of racialism which Abbé Groulx showed in his writings."⁴²⁰ In fact, Oliver assisted Wade in the revised edition of *The French Canadians*.⁴²¹

In 1966 historian Serge Gagnon, avowedly drawing his information from Wade,⁴²² followed suit with an article in the periodical *Cité Libre*,⁴²³ where he stated: "This eminently conservative nationalism soon became linked to a form of racism, inherited from the disciples of Gobineau whom Groulx encountered while studying at

⁴¹⁶ M. Wade, review of L. Groulx's *Mémoires*, 1, in *CHR* 52/3 (September 1971): 322.

⁴¹⁷ "Neither [Blair] Fraser nor Wade specify the evidence upon which they base this suggestion." Michael Oliver, *The Passionate Debate: The Social and Political Ideas of Quebec Nationalism, 1920-1945*, p. 244 n. 65.

⁴¹⁸ M. Oliver, *The Passionate Debate*, p. 243 n. 65.

⁴¹⁹ Although not published until 1991, Michael Oliver had completed the manuscript for his book in 1956. See M. Oliver, *The Passionate Debate*, pp. 11-12. The failure of the Meech Lake Accord in 1990 and its aftermath apparently prompted Oliver to publish virtually without changes his original manuscript. See M. Oliver, *The Passionate Debate*, pp. 13-14.

⁴²⁰ M. Oliver, *The Passionate Debate*, p. 244 n. 65.

⁴²¹ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 1: xviii.

⁴²² Serge Gagnon, "Pour une conscience historique de la révolution québécoise," *Cité Libre* 16/83 (janvier 1966): 4 n.1, "Plusieurs données de cette introduction nous ont été fournies par le *French Canadians* de Mason Wade (Macmillan 1945)" See also pp. 5 n. 4, 11 n. 26, 15 n. 43.

⁴²³ The original edition of Mason Wade's work, *The French Canadians 1760-1945*, also informed an article in *Cité Libre* by Pierre Elliott Trudeau; see Yvan Lamonde, Gérard Pelletier, eds., *Cité Libre: une anthologie*, p. 154; the year after the publication of *The French Canadians* Trudeau collaborated with its author, as evident in Trudeau's letter to Michael Oliver on October 19, 1956, "If you permit, I would like to refer to your thesis in an article I wrote last August for Mason Wade, but which is not yet ready for publication." (M. Oliver, *The Passionate Debate*, p. 231). Gérard Pelletier, a founder and leading figure on the editorial board of *Cité Libre*, assisted Wade for the revised edition of his work; see M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, 1: xviii.

the University of Fribourg.”⁴²⁴ In 1985 Gagnon republished this article with “slight revisions”⁴²⁵ in his book *Quebec and Its Historians: The Twentieth Century*, which unlike the original piece does not acknowledge Wade’s *The French Canadians* as a source of information.

In their 1986 historical overview *Juifs et Québécois français*, authors Jacques Langlais and David Rome introduced the subject of “Nationalist Anti-Semitism”⁴²⁶ by tracing the intellectual roots of Lionel Groulx’s thought. Here they too built their argument on the work of Mason Wade:

Groulx’s educational background reveals anti-Semitic influences which must be acknowledged, and which are outlined clearly by historian Mason Wade. During his university studies in Fribourg and Paris, Lionel Groulx was influenced by disciples of the Count of Gobineau, whose *Essai sur l’inégalité des races humaines* sought to establish the superiority of the Nordic race. This work ranked him, along with H. S. Chamberlain, among the precursors of Hitler’s national socialism.⁴²⁷

Political scientist Esther Delisle pursued Wade’s line of thinking in her 1992 monograph, *Le traître et le juif*, which integrally links Groulx to Gobineau.⁴²⁸ In a similar vein Delisle’s second book, *Myths, Memory and Lies*, concluded that, “Abbé Lionel Groulx was a Führer animated by nihilistic hatred, not just of Jews but, in true Nazi fashion, of French Canadians as well.”⁴²⁹

⁴²⁴ S. Gagnon, “Pour une conscience historique de la révolution québécoise,” *Cité libre* 16/83 (janvier 1966) : 4, “Ce nationalisme éminemment conservateur, s’accommoda bientôt d’un racisme, hérité des disciples de Gobineau, que Groulx avait connu durant ses études à l’Université de Fribourg.”

⁴²⁵ Serge Gagnon, *Quebec and Its Historians: The Twentieth Century*, “Translator’s Note,” np.

⁴²⁶ Jacques Langlais, David Rome, *Jews and French Quebecers: Two Hundred Years of Shared History*, p. 93.

⁴²⁷ J. Langlais, D. Rome, *Jews and French Quebecers*, p. 94.

⁴²⁸ Esther Delisle, *The Traitor and the Jew: Anti-Semitism and Extremist Right-Wing Nationalism in Quebec from 1929 to 1939*, p. 52 n. 41, pp. 57-61.

⁴²⁹ Esther Delisle, *Myths, Memory and Lies: Québec’s Intelligentsia and the Fascist Temptation 1939-1960*, p. 224. Such a description of Groulx contrasts sharply with that of historian Susan Mann Trofimenkoff who

Meantime, novelist and journalist Mordecai Richler published his first full-length non-fictional work, *Oh Canada! Oh Quebec!* which addressed the history of French-Canadian antisemitism, an issue vigorously raised by Delisle's *The Traitor and the Jew*. Indeed, as historian Ramsay Cook notes, Richler's book "relied on Delisle's research for some of its information about anti-Semitism in Quebec."⁴³⁰ Richler's argument also enlisted *The French Canadians*, which he declared "indispensable."⁴³¹ This seems an uncritical assessment coming from the seasoned mind of Richler since Mason Wade's work was now forty years old and, citing "the inadequacies of Canadian archives and libraries and the wide dispersion of materials,"⁴³² he had admitted in its preface that his "book had to rely largely on the secondary sources which proved trustworthy."⁴³³ Moreover, in setting out his qualifications as an author on the subject of Canada Wade "claims freedom from ethnic prejudice,"⁴³⁴ a seemingly naïve statement ill-suited to a mordant critic like Richler.

On the heels of Esther Delisle and Mordecai Richler, and in view of the impending 1995 Quebec referendum,⁴³⁵ political philosopher Nadia Khouri published *Qui a peur de Mordecai Richler?*, which briefly alludes to Gobineau⁴³⁶ and Nazism⁴³⁷ with regard to Groulx, while speaking at length on him and Quebec nationalism relative

characterizes Groulx as a "warm, generous, humorous, and gentle priest that many generations of students knew and appreciated" (S. M. Trofimenkoff, review of J.-P. Gaboury's *Le nationalisme de Lionel Groulx*, *CHR* 52/3 [September 1971]: 320).

⁴³⁰ Esther Delisle, *The Traitor and the Jew: Anti-Semitism and Extreme Right-Wing Nationalism in Quebec from 1929 to 1939*, p. 12. See also Mordecai Richler, *Oh Canada! Oh Quebec! : Requiem for a Divided Country*, pp. 210-211, 246.

⁴³¹ M. Richler, *Oh Canada! Oh Quebec!*, p. 84. See also pp. 89, 94.

⁴³² M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, p. xiv.

⁴³³ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, p. xiv.

⁴³⁴ M. Wade, *The French Canadians*, p. xv.

⁴³⁵ See Nadia Khouri, *Qui a peur de Mordecai Richler?* backcover, np.

⁴³⁶ N. Khouri, *Qui a peur de Mordecai Richler?*, p. 90.

⁴³⁷ N. Khouri, *Qui a peur de Mordecai Richler?*, p. 92.

to antisemitism.⁴³⁸ In short Khouri argues that “historically Quebec nationalism – like all nationalisms throughout this century moreover – has inextricable ties with a history of antisemitism and xenophobia.”⁴³⁹

To varying degrees this rationale represents a leitmotif in the writings of those individuals we have discussed from Blair Fraser to Nadia Khouri, so that to a certain extent they comprise a school of thought concerning Quebec nationalism in general and Lionel Groulx in particular. More specifically such thinking has given prominence to the subject of antisemitism in Quebec which, though it lies beyond the purview of our study, constitutes a field of scholarship in its own right, as evidenced by several publications.⁴⁴⁰

Situating her work in the period from 1929-1939, Esther Delisle alleges that “Groulx always goes back to the idea of the biological transmission of psychosociological characteristics”⁴⁴¹ and she asserts “Groulx’s racial cosmogony.”⁴⁴² However, the following statement made by Groulx on June 30, 1935 belies such assertions:

⁴³⁸ N. Khouri, *Qui a peur de Mordecai Richler?*, pp. 49, 87-89, 91-95, 97, 99-103, 106-108, 110, 118, 1120-121, 127-128, 130, 137.

⁴³⁹ “historiquement le nationalisme québécois – comme du reste au cours de ce siècle tous les nationalismes – est intimement lié à une histoire de l’antisémitisme et de la xénophobie” (N. Khouri, *Qui a peur de Mordecai Richler?*, p. 120).

⁴⁴⁰ On Groulx see: Jacques Langlais, David Rome, *Jews and French Quebecers: Two Hundred Years of Shared History*, pp. xiv, xvi, 53, 66, 88, 93-97, 99-100, 102, 139, 149; Gary Caldwell, “L’antisémitisme au Québec” in Pierre Anctil, Gary Caldwell, eds., *Juifs et réalités juives au Québec*, pp. 307, 323, n. 16; Pierre Anctil, *Le Devoir, les Juifs et l’immigration : de Bourassa à Laurendeau*, pp. 118-123; p. 146 n. 20; p. 146 n. 21, p. 151; Alain Davies, Marilyn F. Nefsky, *How Silent were the Churches? : Canadian Protestantism and the Jewish Plight during the Nazi Era*, pp. 3, 6, 9; Pierre Anctil, *Le rendez-vous manqué : les Juifs de Montréal face au Québec de l’entre-deux-guerres*, pp. 263, 272-273; Pierre Anctil, “Interlude of Hostility: Judeo-Christian Relations in Quebec in the Interwar Period, 1919-1939, in Alan Davies, ed., *Antisemitism in Canada: History and Interpretation*, p. 156; Marilyn F. Nefsky, “The Shadow of Evil: Nazism and Canadian Protestantism,” in A. Davies, ed., *Antisemitism in Canada*, pp. 210, 222 n. 103.

⁴⁴¹ E. Delisle, *The Traitor and the Jew*, p. 26.

⁴⁴² E. Delisle, *The Traitor and the Jew*, p. 61.

Nationality is not race, that merely physiological phenomenon based on the myth of blood. Rather this psychological or spiritual entity consists of two elements. First, cultural similarities, a common historical heritage that comprises trials and triumphs, as well as traditions and aspirations. Second, these affinities result in the will to survive as a community, that determination of a human collectivity to perpetuate its moral identity and the legacy of its soul, through vital communion with the sources of its spiritual life. Note that the second element, even more than the first, defines a nationality and reveals its character. Indeed, to employ the language of jurists or philosophers, this constitutes its formal element.⁴⁴³

This understanding of nationality undermines the “racist nationalism”⁴⁴⁴ that Delisle imputes to Groulx. Rather as the above passage indicates he, in fact, espoused a “cultural nationalism,”⁴⁴⁵ indeed a “spiritual nationalism.”⁴⁴⁶ Thus, Elias Baumgarten appropriately cautions that when dealing with the multifaceted phenomenon of nationalism one must employ a nuanced approach that takes into account the variegated forms of nationalism: “As with other forms of partialism, we must evaluate

⁴⁴³“La nationalité n’est pas la race, simple résultat physiologique, fondé sur le mythe du sang. Entité plutôt psychologique ou spirituelle, deux éléments la constituent: en premier lieu, des similitudes culturelles, un patrimoine commun d’histoire, d’épreuves et de gloire, de traditions et d’aspirations; puis, à cause de ces traits de ressemblance, un vouloir-vivre collectif, la détermination d’un groupe humain de se perpétuer dans sa figure morale, dans son âme héréditaire, en contact intime avec les sources de sa vie spirituelle. Retenez qu’à ce second élément, plus encore qu’au premier, se révèle et se définit la nationalité. Pour parler comme les juristes ou les philosophes, c’en serait même l’élément formel” (L. Groulx, *Orientations*, p. 277).

On a “formal element” in philosophy see Mortimer J. Adler, “Element,” in M. J. Adler, *The Great Ideas: A Lexicon of Western Thought*, pp. 178-179. See also André Comte-Sponville, “Formelle (Cause),” in A. Comte-Sponville, *Dictionnaire philosophique*, pp. 255-256.

⁴⁴⁴“racist nationalism” (Elias Baumgarten, “Zionism, Nationalism, and Morality,” in Nenad Miscevic, ed., *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict: Philosophical Perspectives*, p. 79).

Baumgarten elaborates: “Racist nationalism typically denies equal *citizenship* [sic] rights to ‘alien’ races, whereas cultural nationalism may grant full citizenship rights to members of minority cultures” (Elias Baumgarten, “Zionism, Nationalism, and Morality,” in Nenad Miscevic, ed., *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict: Philosophical Perspectives*, p. 79).

⁴⁴⁵“cultural nationalism” (Elias Baumgarten, “Zionism, Nationalism, and Morality,” in Nenad Miscevic, ed., *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict: Philosophical Perspectives*, p. 76; see also pp. 77-82).

⁴⁴⁶“spiritual nationalism” (M. Perry, M. Chase, J. R. Jacobs, M. S. Jacob, T. H. Von Laue, *Western Civilization*, v. 2, p. 556). The complete sentence reads as follows: “Herder did not make the theoretical jump from a spiritual or cultural nationalism to political nationalism.” The authors maintain that within the scheme of historic, spiritual or cultural nationalism “each people was unique and creative; each expressed its genius in language, literature, monuments, and folk traditions” (p. 556).

nationalisms with respect to both the degree of partialism and the kind of partialism that they sanction.”⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁷ Elias Baumgarten, “Zionism, Nationalism, and Morality,” in Nenad Miscevid, ed., *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict: Philosophy Perspectives*, p. 77).

Roger Scruton proposes alternative definitions of nationalism so as to take into account the differences that exist within the spectrum of nationalist thought: “The sentiment and ideology of attachment to a nation and to its interest. 2. The theory that a state (perhaps every state) should be founded in a nation, and that a nation should be constituted as a state. Hence, the attempt to uphold national identity through political action. National identity is something more than nationhood: it involves, not only the territorial integrity, common language, custom and culture noted above as essential to the idea of a nation, but also *consciousness* of these, as determining separate rights and allegiances. This consciousness is held to render intelligible and to justify the habits of association among neighbours. (In its extreme form nationalism might involve the emergence of an ethnocentric or even racist ideology.)”

3 -- GROULX'S INCARNATIONAL PARADIGM

3.1 Catholic Universalism and French-Canadian Particularism

Groulx's cosmology comprised the natural and the supernatural. His position was that of natural theology and was consistent with his training in Neothomism. Groulx's Thomistic insistence on the importance of the natural as complementary of the supernatural explains why he considered the milieu imperative for the faith. In Thomism, nature is the auxiliary of the supernatural. Groulx reasoned therefore that Catholicism cannot exist and develop apart from the nation, culture, and ethnicity, all dimensions of nature. In a conference whose proceedings were published November 23, 1934, Groulx pointed out that Quebec's society provided a matrix for the development of Catholicism: "Among our people not only language serves as a natural buttress to the faith, but so do the traditions, customs, and social structures which have arisen within the framework of the nation."¹

The first principle of Thomism maintains that philosophy seeks truth through reason, whereas theology seeks truth through revelation. Yet, they reach complementary conclusions. Groulx's foundation in Thomistic thought and the emphasis on synthesis prepared him to embrace an Incarnational framework. He wanted to counter the accusation in contemporary Quebec that the Church was irrelevant, even opposed to its national aspirations. Groulx's worldview was essentially Augustinian, with a Thomist twist, in that the 'city of God' and the 'city of man' are ultimately two sides of the same

¹"Il n'y a pas que la langue, chez nous, qui soit un soutien naturel de la foi; il y a des traditions, des habitudes, un cadre social issus du cadre national" ("La causerie de M. l'abbé Lionel Groulx à la section

spiritual finality, so that the 'city of man' must also serve the spiritual. Following Augustine's *City of God*, Groulx believed the church epitomized the human and the divine confluence in societal entities, "those concurrently carnal and spiritual, mixed realities, which embody and undergird the highest values of humanity."² They include culture, civilization, the state, and the nation, which Groulx conceived as collective incarnations, analogous to the church.

In the last two decades of his life, Groulx increasingly referred to Augustine's *City of God*, in order to come to terms with post-World War II social changes which seemed to jolt him out of his somewhat provincial perspective and rather narrow religious outlook. For example, in 1953 Groulx declared, "Christianity no longer exists in isolation. The virtually universal interface of the Christian and pagan spheres is a contemporary reality."³ Groulx's religion and nationalism can no longer live in isolation from the global community.

Even temporalities have eternity as their proper end. Christians are responsible to dispose the 'city of man' to eternity. They cannot be disinterested in the terrestrial city. Indeed the 'city of man' prepares human beings for eternity, as Groulx indicated in this allusion to II Corinthians 4: 18-5:1, "This ephemeral city should serve as a halfway house on the way to eternity."⁴ Temporal society, as Groulx understood it, is not secular *per se*. It is not divorced from the spiritual and eternity. Rather temporal society bridges

Duvernay de la Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste." *Le Devoir*, 23 November 1934: 2. See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 3: 261).

²"ces réalités mixtes, à la fois charnelles et spirituelles, qui encadrent et supportent les intérêts suprêmes de l'homme" (L. Groulx, *Directives*, p. 10).

³"Il n'existe plus de chrétienté close. Car c'est un autre fait contemporain que la compénétration presque universelle des deux cités: la chrétienne et la païenne" (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 100).

⁴"Cité passagère, tente volante, elle doit déboucher sur l'éternité" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 42).

the terrestrial and the celestial. Groulx referred to the 'city of man' as a *passerelle*, in effect a transitional space, between the natural and the supernatural. For Groulx, "the earthly city must provide a passageway for humanity."⁵

Groulx considered the nation not only as a *passerelle* or transitional space between the secular and the sacred, but as a "spiritual possession"⁶ or "asset in the spiritual realm."⁷ Since there was no contradiction between the natural and the supernatural, Groulx argued that there was no incongruity between the 'national' and the 'spiritual.' He concluded: "The faith therefore does not abrogate the national any more than the supernatural negates the natural."⁸ The temporal tends towards the spiritual. As such it is a "mixed reality," both spiritual and carnal, and a link between the divine and the human.

Groulx believed a nation-state can be a spiritual entity, and Catholicism can inform the political and integrate into the nation-state. Speaking to a decidedly separatist audience, Groulx argued that independence is the *telos* of French-Canadian history. Yet in the ultramontanist vein he insisted that this politically separate nation must be spiritual. He would have nothing to do with a state that would be autonomous from Catholicism. While the nation was not the church, none the less, Groulx believed it an appropriate vessel for Catholicism. In 1934 Groulx warned the readers of the

⁵"la cité terrestre doit servir à l'homme de passerelle" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 42).

⁶"avoir spirituel" (L. Groulx, *Directives*, p. 80).

⁷"ce bien d'ordre spirituel" (L. Groulx, *Directives*, p. 106).

⁸"La foi ne détruit donc pas le national, pas plus que le surnaturel ne détruit le naturel" (L. Groulx, "Le national et le religieux" *AN* 3/2 (février 1934), p. 94).

nationalist publication, *L'Action nationale*: "The greatest danger is that the national places itself above everything."⁹

So much did Groulx consider the national a 'mixed reality' that he described it in these incarnational terms as "commingled with our flesh and spirit."¹⁰ In an address delivered December 5, 1936, Groulx told his audience that the nation constitutes such a 'mixed reality': "The national milieu consists of both spiritual and temporal elements."¹¹ He referred to nationality as "one of the foremost spiritual entities."¹² So for Groulx nationality was not simply a cultural, ethnic, or political phenomenon; it was a spiritual one. Groulx's concept of 'mixed realities' included civilizations which he defined as an array of "hierarchical institutions which are at one and the same time temporal and spiritual."¹³

In line with the apologete's task Groulx strove to harness Quebec nationalism for the church. He avowedly pursued this end throughout his multifaceted career, whether teaching Canadian history at Université de Montréal (1915-1949), editing the journal *L'Action française* (1920-1928), guiding its successor *L'Action nationale* (1933 to 1967), authoring some thirty books, writing over 400 articles, or delivering countless speeches. By every means at his disposal, Groulx endeavored to make the faith relevant to French Canadians' national concerns, as he himself recognized:

Another source of consolation is the knowledge
that I worked for the long-term survival of

⁹"Le suprême péril pour le national, c'est de se mettre au-dessus de tout" (L. Groulx, "Le national et le religieux," *AN* 3/2 (February 1934), pp. 97-98).

¹⁰"mêlé à notre chair, à notre esprit" (L. Groulx, *Directives*, p. 80).

¹¹"Composé d'éléments spirituels, le milieu national l'est aussi d'éléments terrestres" (L. Groulx, *Directives*, p. 167).

¹²"une de ces hautes entités spirituelles" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 3: 260. L. Groulx, "L'éducation nationale et les écoles normales," *AN* 4/1 (septembre 1934): 19-20. See also L. Groulx, *Orientations*, p. 174).

¹³"ces institutions hiérarchisées, à la fois terrestres et spirituelles" (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, pp. 152-53).

French Canada: a small country and people whom I have always considered the paramount spiritual entity in North America because of their Catholicism. From this perspective, which I have maintained throughout my life, I believe one can understand everything I said, wrote, and did, and why I sometimes did it with zeal.¹⁴

As a theologian who studied apologetics (Th.D. 1908), Groulx thought a viable apologia must incorporate French Canada's particularistic ethos and Catholicism's universalist ethic. Their integration preoccupied his lifework to mold his people into "a living apologia."¹⁵

The Industrial Revolution posed serious problems for Western society such as "urbanization, pauperism, and a new stratification of classes."¹⁶ Concerned Catholics responded to the effects of industrialization through diverse movements collectively called 'social catholicism.' In French Canada where their substantial constituency gave leverage to push for governmental accommodation of their religio-nationalist agenda, it included 'ultramontanism' which advocated "the dependence of the political order upon the spiritual order"¹⁷ to ensure society's welfare. This "political ultramontanism"¹⁸

¹⁴"Une autre de mes consolations, ce fut la conscience de travailler pour la survivance du Canada français: petit pays et petit peuple qui, parce que catholiques, m'ont toujours paru la grande entité spirituelle en Amérique du Nord. De ce point de vue qui fut celui de toute ma vie, on pourra s'expliquer, je crois, tout ce que j'ai dit, tout ce que j'ai écrit, tout ce que j'ai fait, et de même pourra-t-on comprendre que parfois je l'aie fait passionnément" (L. Groulx, "Extrait du testament," *AN* 57/10 (juin 1968): 889). See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 320-21).

¹⁵"une apologétique vivante" (L. Groulx, *Une croisade d'adolescents*, p. xii). Groulx apparently borrowed this expression from Émile Chartier (1876-1963) who collaborated with him in the early days of the Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Canadienne-Française (ACJC). See also G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 130.

¹⁶Alec R. Vidler, *A Century of Social Catholicism 1820-1920*, p. x.

¹⁷A. R. Vidler, *A Century of Social Catholicism 1820-1920*, p. 116.

¹⁸John Webster Grant, ed., *A History of the Christian Church in Canada*, 3 vols., vol. 3: *The Church in the Canadian Era*, p. 69.

shaped Groulx's understanding of the relationship between Catholicism and French-Canadian nationalism.

3.1.1 Louis-François-Richer Laflèche

This issue of "political ultramontanism" received thorough treatment from Louis-François-Richer Laflèche (1818-1898), a missionary to aboriginals and Métis in the Northwest (1844-1856), professor at *Séminaire de Nicolet* (1856-1861), vicar capitular, coadjutor, and finally bishop of Three Rivers, Quebec, from 1870 on. Laflèche systematized French Canada's ultramontane ideology through an extensive series of articles originally published in the *Journal des Trois-Rivières* and subsequently compiled into a single volume entitled *Quelques considérations sur les rapports de la société civile avec la religion et la famille* (1866). To resolve the apparent contradiction between ultramontane principles and their nationalistic praxis in French Canada, Laflèche appealed to the precedent of the ancient Hebrew covenant. In fact his treatise rests on the premise that "there exists more than a few parallels between the early history of this people and our own."¹⁹

Laflèche developed his argument for the parallelism between French Canadians and Jews through an allegorical exegesis of the Hebrew scriptures. He thereby conceptualized French Canadians as God's 'peculiar people' in North America, where the 'promised land' prefigured French Canada, while the Torah foreshadowed Catholic doctrine and canon law. Laflèche effectively appropriated "the Hebrew

¹⁹"Il y a plus d'un trait de ressemblance entre l'histoire primitive de ce peuple et la nôtre" (Laflèche, *Quelques considérations sur les rapports de la société civile avec la religion et la famille*, (p. 41. Hereafter *Quelques considérations*).

conceptual grid”²⁰ in order to articulate a theological justification of French-Canadian nationalism. Little wonder young Groulx likened him to “the patriarchs of the Old Testament,”²¹ which indicates the biblical framework that undergirded Groulx’s nationalist construct.

3.1.2 Jules-Paul Tardivel

Jules-Paul Tardivel (1851-1905) stirred ultramontane nationalists through his fiery newspaper *La Vérité*, which Groulx read eagerly for years. Soon after its publication Groulx obtained Tardivel’s futuristic novel *Pour la patrie* (1895) and underlined his claim that God predestined French Canadians to found an integrally Catholic nation-state on the North American continent. Groulx wrote to Tardivel and subsequently purchased his autobiographical *Mélanges* (1903). He perceived Tardivel as an apologist who defended the faith through journalism. Tardivel’s polemics won Groulx’s unqualified endorsement. He even credited this lay activist with initiating militant Catholicism in Quebec. Upon learning of Tardivel’s death, Groulx responded: “In our circles he epitomized the tradition of a militant faith which spurns failings and compromises. He virtually fathered this tradition.”²²

Groulx perused Tardivel’s voluminous diatribe *La situation religieuse aux États-Unis. Illusions et réalité* (1900), while studying philosophy at Rome (Ph.D. 1907). Not surprisingly he later employed American society as a foil to show that only French Canada provided a suitable environment for Catholicism’s societal development

²⁰Donald Harman Akenson, *God's Peoples: Covenant and Land in South Africa, Israel, and Ulster*, p. 41.

²¹“Les patriarches de l’ancienne loi” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 340).

in North America. Groulx thus worked out the seminal inference behind Tardivel's Franco-Catholic argumentation (more on this in chapter 5).

3.1.3 Louis-Adolphe Pâquet

The tensely conservative intellectual mood that dominated Rome when Groulx studied there (1906-8) convinced him that ultramontane doctrine remained “the only truly and integrally Catholic”²³ one. In the midst of Groulx's Roman sojourn Pius X condemned ‘Modernism’ (*Pascendi*, Sep. 8, 1907), a movement that attempted to align Catholic dogma with contemporary philosophical and scientific currents. Rome familiarized Groulx with the scholarship of Louis-Adolphe Pâquet (1859-1942), French Canada's premier exponent of ‘Thomism,’ the teachings of Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274) who maintained that, while philosophy searches truth through reason and theology seeks truth through revelation, ultimately they reach complementary conclusions. Groulx's Ph.D. studies relied heavily on Pâquet's systematic exposition of Aquinas' masterpiece, the *Summa theologiae*. Groulx readily acknowledges in a letter to Pâquet: “At Rome I used your handbooks to prepare for my examinations in theology.”²⁴ Following Thomism's dialectical paradigm to reconcile seemingly antithetical principles, like reason and revelation, Pâquet synthesized Catholicism and French-Canadian nationalism by postulating their ultimate complementarity. This synthesis found definitive expression in his landmark homily, *La vocation de la race*

²²“Il représentait parmi nous la tradition de la foi qui lutte, qui n'admet ni les faiblesses ni les compromis. C'est une tradition qu'il a presque créée” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, and P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 1: 555).

²³“La seule réellement et intégralement catholique” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, P. Trépanier, eds., *Correspondance*, 2: 402).

française en Amérique (1902), which virtually constituted the ultramontane nationalist creed. Premising a divine economy for all peoples of the world, Pâquet inferred that God ordained French Canadians as North America's apostles, so that their national calling entailed apostolic universality. Such reasoning exemplified Pâquet's methodological "mediation between universal principles and their application in a specific context."²⁵ He accordingly contextualized Thomist theology in nationalistic Quebec, thereby paving the way for Groulx to integrate Catholicism and French-Canadian nationalism, whose synthesis²⁶ comprised the essence of Groulx's apologetic. In this perspective one sees why Groulx regarded Pâquet as his intellectual mentor. Their correspondence attests Groulx's longstanding reliance on Mgr. Pâquet's counsel and expertise. Moreover, under Groulx's editorial supervision²⁷ the publishing house *Bibliothèque de l'Action française*²⁸ printed an annotated edition (1925) of *La vocation de la race française en Amérique*,²⁹ which, as literary scholar Pierre Hébert notes, "became a classic of its genre."³⁰ Indeed he published the works of this theologian because, as Groulx explained to the readers of the journal he edited, Pâquet articulated "the justification of French-Canadian nationalism as *Action française* always conceived

²⁴"J'ai préparé mes examens de théologie à Rome dans vos manuels" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Louis-Adolphe Pâquet, April 21, 1917. See also G. Huot, R. Bergeron, P. Trépanier, eds *Correspondance*, 2: lxxiii-lxxiv).

²⁵"médiation entre des principes universels et leur application dans un milieu particulier" (*Louis-Adolphe Pâquet* [textes choisis et présentés par Yvan Lamonde], p. 8).

²⁶"synthèse" (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 158).

²⁷L. Groulx (pseudonym: Jacques Brassier), "La vie de l'Action française," *AF*, 12/7 (juillet 1924): 56. See L. Groulx, "La vie de l'Action française," *AF*, 12/8 (août 1924): 126; L. Groulx, "La vie de l'Action française" *AF*, 13/2 (février 1925): 125-26; L. Groulx, "La vie de l'Action française," *AF*, 13/3 (mars 1925): 198-99; L. Groulx, "La vie de l'Action française," *AF*, 13/4 (avril 1925): 258-59.

²⁸P. Hébert, "Quand éditer, c'était agir." *RHAF* 46/2 (automne 1992): 244.

²⁹L.-A. Pâquet, *Bréviaire du patriote canadien-français* (sermon du 23 juin 1902, commenté par Émile Chartier), p. 49-59.

³⁰"Devenu un classique du genre" (P. Hébert, "Quand éditer, c'était agir." *RHAF* 46/2 (automne 1992): 244).

it.”³¹ Groulx especially valued “*La vocation de la race française en Amérique*” since he held that “the ideas, the thesis that he [Pâquet] expounds in it, lies at the very foundation of our patriotism.”³² Indeed, Groulx deemed this edition an authoritative vindication of French Canadians’ nationalist claims.

Like Pâquet, Groulx perceived White Anglo-Saxon Protestants as a race which founded a material empire, since matter was properly the domain of Anglo-Saxons. Like Pâquet, Groulx conceived the French race as essentially spiritual. Theirs was the empire of the faith, the gospel; the spiritual was properly their realm. Groulx characterized these two ethnic groups in accord with the spirituo-materialist dualism of his thought. Some twenty years after Pâquet’s benchmark oration, Groulx clearly echoed its message: “If the English are materialistically speaking the most powerful race in the world, the French, from whom we descend, are the preeminent race in the realm of the spirit.”³³ The French were spiritually what the English were materially. This was the rationale for a French-Canadian minority to shore up its collective self-image vis-à-vis the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant majority in Canada. It compensated for their material inferiority.

3.1.4 Henri Bourassa

Henri Bourassa (1868-1952), founder of the daily *Le Devoir* (in 1910), politician, and a latter-day ultramontanist, embodied Groulx’s idea of French-Canadian

³¹“la justification du nationalisme canadien-français tel que nous l’avons toujours entendu à l’*Action française*” (L. Groulx, “La vie de l’Action française,” *AF* 12/7 [juillet 1924]: 55).

³²“Les idées, la thèse qu’il y expose tiennent aux fondements mêmes de notre patriotisme” (L. Groulx, “La vie de l’Action française,” *AF* 13/2 [février 1925]: 126).

³³“Si la race anglaise est la première du monde par la puissance matérielle, nous sommes les fils de la race française, la première du monde par la puissance de l’esprit” (L. Groulx, “Les motifs de notre fierté,” *L’Almanach de la langue française* (1925): n.p.).

nationalism. He thought Bourassa conclusively argued that his compatriots' survival as Catholics depended on French, as Bourassa argued in *La langue gardienne de la foi* (1918), whose publication Groulx oversaw while in charge of the Bibliothèque de l'Action française.³⁴ Here Bourassa declared French "the only living language which is genuinely catholic, or universal, in every sense of the word."³⁵ Groulx expanded Bourassa's assertion into an argument for "the profound affinities between the French race and Catholicism."³⁶ This rationalization prompted Groulx to identify French Canadians with "the universal race."³⁷ Bourassa meantime illustrated French Canadians' universalist character through a synopsis of their world-wide missionary outreach, *Le Canada apostolique: revue des oeuvres de missions des communautés franco-canadiennes* (1919), which the Bibliothèque de l'Action française also published under Groulx's direction. In fact, he orchestrated the publication of both Pâquet's and Bourassa's works in order to propagate their religio-nationalist thought, which he fully embraced. Little wonder then that, with Groulx at its helm, the Bibliothèque de l'Action française engaged in "schematic publishing"³⁸ so as to promote this line of thinking. In the ultramontane nationalist scheme, universality represents a corollary of apostolicity, hence the imperative for Bourassa to demonstrate that French Canada constituted a missionary nation. Groulx elaborated this thesis in a missiological monograph, *Le Canada français missionnaire* (1962), which predicated French Canada's global apostolate on their cultural catholicity. By positing the Catholic essence of the French

³⁴P. Hébert, *Quand éditer, c'était agir*, pp. 225, 240.

³⁵"la seule langue vivante vraiment catholique, c'est-à-dire universelle, dans tous les sens du mot" (Henri Bourassa, *La langue, gardienne de la foi*, p. 44).

³⁶"les affinités profondes de la race française et du catholicisme" (L. Groulx (pseudonym: Alonié de Lestres), *L'appel de la race*, 4th. ed., p. 31).

³⁷"la race de l'universel" (L. Groulx (pseudonym: Alonié de Lestres), *L'appel de la race*, 4th. ed., p. 31).

language Bourassa prepared the groundwork for Groulx to equate French-Canadian culture and Catholicism. He naturally therefore deemed Bourassa “the Master.”³⁹ This devout layman modeled Groulx's concept of ‘le chef,’ which played a key role in his nationalist theory.

3.2 Groulx's Universal-Incarnational Dialectic

Laflèche, Tardivel, Pâquet, and Bourassa believed the French-Canadian nation paralleled Israel and the election of the church, and their holiness (separateness) and mission. This Judeo-ecclesial conceptualization of French Canada sustained their conviction that French-Canadian nationalism complemented Catholicism. By implication, therefore, the church and the nation had basic affinities. Foremost among them were their common origin in Providence, their *raison d'être* in their mission, and their final end (*telos*) in the kingdom of God. Their similarity inevitably promoted the telescoping of the church into the nation. Groulx's apology built on the ideological foundation of his ultramontane-nationalist predecessors. However, he went beyond them to develop an incarnational argument for the synthesis of universality and particularity in French Canada. Groulx defined Catholicism as a dialectic “of the universalism and incarnation of the faith.”⁴⁰ On this basis he contended Catholic universality does not exist *in vacuo*, but in symbiosis with culture. Indeed he postulated that “the law of the Incarnation”⁴¹ compels Catholicity to inculturate (adopt culture), so

³⁸“l'édition à thèse” (P. Hébert, *Quand éditer, c'était agir*, p. 239. See also pp. 231, 233).

³⁹“le ‘Maître’” (CRLG, L. Groulx's papers, L. Groulx to Raymond Barbeau, 4 janvier 1962. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 348-350).

⁴⁰“de l'universalisme et de l'incarnation de la foi” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 291).

⁴¹“la loi de l'Incarnation” (L. Groulx, “Catholicisme, principe d'avant-garde,” *Quartier latin* 21/9 [2 décembre 1938]: 3. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 199). In his memoirs Groulx evidences some

that inculturation creates the incarnationist dynamic of Catholicism. By the same token he considered Catholicity the ability “to adopt all cultures”⁴² and perceived Catholicism as the corporate *animus* of individual societies “integrating itself into their social structures and traditions.”⁴³

Groulx's theological agenda demonstrated his incarnational thinking. He stressed the incarnate nature of God warning: “No one has the right to limit the extent of his humanity, not even under the pretext of upholding the transcendence of God.”⁴⁴ On the contrary Groulx declared that immanence, i.e., divine presence and activity in the universe, epitomizes the attributes of God. Christology consequently serves as the axis of Groulx's theological framework. His doctrinal synopsis, *Rencontres avec Dieu* (1956), manifested his Christocentrism.

Groulx affirmed the essential particularity of humankind. He pointedly observed: “Nobody is anonymous. No one can say ‘I am a generic, human being. I have no ties whatsoever. I do not belong to any country. I am not part of any nation. We humans are concrete, specific beings.’”⁴⁵ He therefore proposed “a philosophical and theological pluralism”⁴⁶ commensurate with the diversity and the specificity of the human condition. Similarly he challenged theologians to adapt dogmatics to the

uncertainty about the year of this article's publication which he erroneously attributes to the period 1940-1950. See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 196.

⁴²“assumer toutes les cultures” (L. Groulx, *Le Canada français missionnaires: une autre grande aventure*, p. 86).

⁴³“s'insinuant dans leurs institutions et traditions” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 329).

⁴⁴“Nul n'a le droit de limiter son humanisation, pas même sous prétexte de ménager la transcendence de Dieu” (L. Groulx, “Catholicisme, principe d'avant-garde,” *Quartier latin* 21/9 (2 décembre 1938): 3. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 198).

⁴⁵“Personne ne peut dire: je suis homme sans plus; je ne me rattache à rien; je n'appartiens à aucun pays... Nous sommes des hommes concrets, particularisés” (L. Groulx, *Constantes de vie*, p. 23).

⁴⁶“un pluralisme philosophique et théologique” (L. Groulx, review of *Vingt-quatre défauts thomistes*, by André Dagenais, *RHAF* 18/2 [septembre 1964]: 310).

concerns and *mentalités* of their respective communities. This endeavor causes the kaleidoscopic evolution of historical theology and precludes a definitive systematic theology, Groulx reasoned.

For him, salvation takes place existentially, “not in an abstract, imaginary world, but in an inexorably specific social milieu.”⁴⁷ He therefore espoused a contextual soteriology centered on the space-time locus of human existence, in keeping with “the temporal, down-to-earth character of Catholicism.”⁴⁸ The spatiotemporal cornerstone of Groulx's salvific schema undergirded his contention that the redemptive enterprise must encompass human beings' social environment. In fact he maintained that the failure of Christian missions to developing countries resulted from a notion of redemption that rendered the faith irrelevant to third-world realities. Similarly he imputed modern Quebec's religious decline to “an unrealistic, ethereal, phantom Catholicism.”⁴⁹ Rather than invoking ‘pie in the sky’ Groulx urged Catholics to seek first the kingdom of God's establishment ‘here and now.’ He proposed through “Catholic sociology”⁵⁰ to implement Catholicism's social precepts in present-day societies “so as therein to lay concretely the groundwork for the kingdom of God.”⁵¹ Since he tied salvation to a progressive realization of ‘the Kingdom’ Groulx's eschatological perspective resembled that of his North American, Protestant contemporaries swayed by the ‘social gospel’

⁴⁷“non dans un monde imaginaire ... mais dans un milieu strictement particularisé” (L. Groulx, “Catholicisme, principe d'avant-garde,” *Quartier latin* 21/9 (2 décembre 1938): 3. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 197).

⁴⁸“l'aspect terrestre et temporel du catholicisme” (L. Groulx, “La révolution des laïcs,” *Aujourd'hui Québec* 3/1 (mars 1967): 3. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 329).

⁴⁹“un catholicisme irréel intemporel, désincarné” (L. Groulx, “La révolution des laïcs,” *Aujourd'hui Québec* 3/1 (mars 1967): 3. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 329).

⁵⁰“la sociologie catholique” (L. Groulx, *Constantes de vie*, p. 171. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 20).

⁵¹“d'y préparer concrètement le royaume de Dieu” (L. Groulx, “La révolution des laïcs,” *Aujourd'hui Québec* 3/1 (mars 1967): 3. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 329).

movement, which asserted that the principal goal of Christianity was the reform of society, the building of the kingdom of God on earth.

Western society in the first half of the twentieth century was dominated by virulent nationalism, which was in fundamental opposition to the ethos of Christianity, to say nothing of Christian ethics and the doctrine of the church. As a militant French-Canadian nationalist and an ordained priest with earned doctorates in theology and philosophy, Groulx too was obliged to reconcile Catholic universalism and French-Canadian particularism. Although he would have agreed with the theological first principle of his Protestant contemporary Paul Tillich (1886-1965) that "religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion,"⁵² Groulx would intend this axiom in an incarnational sense. Groulx went beyond ultramontane nationalism and countered secularism through incarnational theology. Culture was the incarnation of Catholicism. By the same token, Groulx believed religion was the foundation of French-Canadian culture. Indeed he believed there could be no civilization apart from Christianity.

One could refer to Groulx's incarnational worldview, rather than simply his incarnational theology. He applied the paradigm of the Incarnation to all issues, not simply to doctrinal questions. He maintained that the supreme task of Christianity consists of "the integration of the spiritual into the spatiotemporal."⁵³ He considered the Incarnation a paradigm to integrate seemingly antithetical entities, such as the divine and the human, the spiritual and the temporal, the universal and the particular, the transcendent and the immanent, and the church and the nation. In this vein he attempted

⁵²Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture*, p. 42.

⁵³"l'insertion du spirituel dans le terrestre et le temporel, tâche suprême du christianisme" (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 52).

to “reconcile two seemingly divergent tendencies of the Catholic faith toward universalism and incarnation.”⁵⁴ Groulx reasoned that Catholicity does not exist *in vacuo*, but in symbiosis with culture.

The Incarnation did not simply begin with the conception of Christ. Rather the Incarnation began in the eternal principle of God's identification with humanity. The Incarnation was not limited to the historical moment but was co-extensive with the principle of God's identification with the human condition. Defining the Incarnation as the archetype of divine-human relations allowed Groulx to maintain that the Incarnation is continuous. Not confined to the historic moment of the conception of Christ in space and time, the Incarnation is the entire approach of God towards humanity.

Since the Incarnation reconciles divinity and humanity, Groulx appeals to the paradox of the Incarnation to demonstrate the complementarity of Catholicism and French-Canadian nationalism. By analogy Groulx reasoned that, to fulfill the redemption of humankind, Christianity must inculturate, just as God had to incarnate. In effect he articulated an incarnational theology that conceives the kingdom of God as the extension of the Incarnation to all cultures. Groulx regarded particularization as the *modus operandi* of Catholicism. By the same token he identified particularisms with the normative concretization of Catholicism. Groulx's incarnational motif denotes a “universalist systemic”⁵⁵ that prizes the particular.

The Incarnation is the concretization of God in human time and geographic space. Groulx did not emphasize the concept of the eternally existent Logos. His focus

⁵⁴“concilier les deux tendances apparemment divergentes de l'universalisme et de l'incarnation de la foi catholique” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 291).

⁵⁵Kenelm Burridge, *In the Way: A Study of Christian Missionary Endeavours*, p. 6.

was squarely on the Incarnation, the God-man in time and space, rather than in eternity. When God became human, the divinity assumed temporality. Using the language of the johannine gospel, Groulx stressed the incarnate nature of the deity warning:

By virtue of its incarnation the Word fully assumed human nature. No one has the right to limit the extent of its humanity, not even under the pretext of upholding the transcendence of God. Let us remember saint John's unequivocal affirmation: *The Word became flesh*.⁵⁶

Immanence, i.e., divine presence and providential activity in the universe, characterizes Groulx's doctrine of God. Groulx conceived the transcendence of Christianity as the intervention of the divine in time; therefore he referred to "its nature as a divine phenomenon in time."⁵⁷ Groulx based the unique transcendence of Christianity on the Incarnation as both a temporal and eternal phenomenon. He believed this distinguishes Christianity from all other world religions and established its superiority, inasmuch as the Incarnation represented the capstone of divine revelation. In reference to Christianity Groulx asserted:

Christianity is first and foremost belief in an historical event: the coming of God in space-time ... Christianity does not so much seek to make known to us the existence of God ... as to teach us that one day, 2,000 years ago, God acted, and ever since then continues to engage human history through specific, purposeful acts. This constitutes the core of Christian revelation.⁵⁸

⁵⁶"Dans son Incarnation, le Verbe a assumé tout l'humain. Nul n'a le droit de limiter son humanisation, pas même sous prétexte de ménager la transcendance de Dieu. Rappelons-nous le mot si absolu de Saint Jean: *Le Verbe s'est fait chair*" (L. Groulx, "Catholicisme, principe d'avant-garde," *Quartier latin* 21/9 [2 décembre, 1938]: 3. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 198).

⁵⁷"son caractère de fait divin dans le temps" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 16).

⁵⁸"Le Christianisme, c'est d'abord la foi à un événement historique: l'irruption de Dieu dans le monde et dans le temps ... le Christianisme, en effet, ne se propose pas tant de nous faire connaître l'existence de Dieu ... que de nous apprendre le geste d'un Dieu qui, un jour, il y a 2,000 ans, s'est engagé dans

Although transcendence achieves the reconciliation of the universal and the particular, incarnation effects their integration. As an historian Groulx believed the doctrine of the Incarnation to be the cornerstone both of history and Catholicism. Groulx was quite aware of the early councils of the church that strove to define the relationship of the human and the divine in the person of Christ. Groulx insisted that Jesus Christ was fully human. In fact, he considered Christ the archetype for all humanity. In regard to Jesus, Groulx stated: "A real, flesh and blood human being, the passionate debate about his divino-human double nature overwhelmingly preoccupied a string of ecumenical councils."⁵⁹ Following the johannine epistles Groulx affirmed:

We know of the Logos' eternal existence; we even know about his temporal birth. On a fixed date in history, in a small, geographically circumscribed country, he was born of a dully designated virgin. Far from being mere legend, a host of eyewitnesses saw him and rubbed shoulders with this flesh and blood human being. As one of his disciples put it, 'That which ... we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled ... That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.'⁶⁰

Groulx juxtaposed the eternal and temporal nature of Jesus Christ and focused on the dual nature of Christ as the *sine qua non* of redemption. He used the term *temporelle* to designate Christ's birth, and to drive home his point. He affirmed the temporality and

l'histoire des hommes, pour y poser, depuis lors, des actes spécifiques et décisifs. C'est là le propre de la révélation chrétienne" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, pp. 16-17).

⁵⁹"Être concret, être de chair dont la double nature divino-humaine, mise en cause, passionnera, à un point inouï, les prochains conciles" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 12).

⁶⁰"Nous connaissons l'existence éternelle du Logos; nous connaissons de même sa naissance temporelle, né d'une vierge nommément désignée, dans un petit pays géographiquement déterminé, à une date connue. Rien donc d'un personnage de légende. Son être corporel, humain, nombre de témoins des multitudes l'ont vu, l'ont approché. «Ce que nous avons vu de nos yeux, ce que nous avons contemplé et

spatiality of Christ, as evident through the use of the word “*determine*” in reference to the geographic location of Christ's birth. He pointed to the double nature of Christ as the centrepiece of the first Christian councils. He asserted the specific date of Christ's birth as an established fact so as to affirm the historical reality of the Incarnation. He made it clear that the double nature of Christ is the object of saving faith.

At the same time, he emphasized the carnal nature of Christ, and he paraphrased the johannine writings, as indicated by his use of the term “*Logos*.” Although Groulx professed that *Acts* was his favorite book of the New Testament because of its stress on praxis, he decidedly leaned towards the johannine corpus because of its leitmotif concerning the human concreteness of the divine in the person of Jesus Christ. Both contain an emphasis on concrete, historical Christianity in action.

Redemption is a human phenomenon, that is to say it is to be effected by a person for fallen humanity, but by a human being who is at once human and divine. Groulx's constant designation of Christ is not the traditional title of God-man. To underscore the humanity of Jesus Groulx referred to Christ as “the Human-God.”⁶¹

3.3 The Human Condition

The Incarnation is as much a statement about the human as about the divine. God reveals the ultimate human condition and thereby provides for the synthesis of

que nos mains ont touché ... ce que nous avons vu et entendu, nous vous l'annonçons», dira l'un des disciples” (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 12. See I John 1:1-3).

⁶¹In a sermon late in his life Groulx employs the expression “Dieu-homme”: “Le Christ est ce qu'il est - Le Dieu-homme descendu un jour dans l'histoire humaine -- Le fait n'est pas niable” (Lionel Groulx, “Retraite à des médecins et autres professionnels, à l'Hôtel-Dieu de Valleyfield, Semaine sainte, du 18 au 21 avril 1957. Premier et deuxième sermons,” CRLG, L. Groulx Papers, *Spicilèges* 1957). This is the only instance the present writer has found where Groulx refers to Christ as “Dieu-homme” rather than “Homme-Dieu.” Part of the explanation for Groulx's constant reference to “Homme-Dieu” lies in the fact that this expression was most often used in the catechism Groulx studied at Ste-Thérèse.

divine and human nature. The Incarnation is not simply a doctrine concerning God; it is not only Christology. It is the doctrine of the human condition in relation to the divine nature. For Groulx all concepts of the human condition had to be brought in line with the Incarnation. In the last volume of his memoirs Groulx hammered home this point, positing the Incarnation as the affirmation of the humanity of God. He defined the Incarnation as the paradigm of the human condition:

Catholicism does not at all dissociate the human and the divine, the natural and the supernatural ... therefore, with respect to the sanctification of human beings, or if one prefers, their elevation to the supernatural plane, Catholics have a responsibility not to shun their human nature but rather to follow the example of the Incarnation by allowing divine grace to permeate their humanity.⁶²

Such a view means that Groulx does not accept a definition of the human condition as fundamentally perverted by sin. Rather, the original balance between the spiritual and the temporal has been lost. For him the human condition can be restored here and now through the church.

While Groulx, on the model of the Incarnation, believed human beings have divine potential, nevertheless, he entertained no illusions about the earth-bound nature of the human condition, which he squarely affirms. Following the paradigm of the Incarnation, Groulx insisted that the spirituality of human beings always exists in conjunction with their spatiotemporality, so that time and space define the theatre of

⁶²“Le catholicisme ne dissocie point l'humain et le divin, le naturel et le surnaturel ... En regard de la sanctification de l'homme, ou, si l'on veut, de son élévation au plan surnaturel, le devoir du catholique ne saurait donc consister à s'évader de l'homme, mais, à l'exemple de l'Incarnation, de permettre à la grâce d'assumer l'homme” (L. Groulx, “Catholicisme, principe d'avant-garde,” *Quartier latin* 21/9 (2 décembre 1938): 3. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 198).

human spirituality. Groulx pithily remarked, in reference to those who would promote a spirituality divorced from earthly realities, "Nobody can play the angel without paying the consequences."⁶³ And yet, chastity for Groulx represented the original, human condition of morality over carnality. In a 1926 *L'Action française* article, Groulx summoned French-Canadian youth to live chastely because:

There is strength and dignity of human character only based on the preeminence of the soul over the body, which underscores the importance of chastity as an invaluable discipline ... The chaste youth ... is a young man on the road leading back to the pristine state of humanity in Eden, when the forebearer of humankind still faithfully followed the divine scheme of things, and thus incarnated the harmony of cosmic forces in the primeval universe.⁶⁴

Such an ideal can be realized only when the proper relationship of the spiritual and the temporal is established individually and socially. Adam is the archetype of the primitive human condition in that he manifests the primacy of the spirit over the body. Like Christ he incarnates the spiritual and the temporal in the human condition.

Each human being is a microcosm of the Incarnation. Groulx's earliest teaching evidenced his conviction that the divine is fundamental to understand the human condition. In a lecture delivered February 22, 1906, he said:

We should always remember that the term human is a divine expression uttered by the mouth of the Creator, on the sixth day of creation ... this word should constantly evoke in us a vision of the ideal humanity of the Son of Man whose perfection

⁶³"Nul ne s'essaie impunément à faire l'ange" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 14).

⁶⁴"Il n'y a de puissance et de grandeur humaine que dans la suprématie de l'âme sur l'être corporel: ce qui implique l'importance de la chasteté ... Le jeune homme chaste ... c'est le jeune homme en route vers l'intégrité primitive, alors que, fidèle encore à l'ordre divin, l'ancêtre de l'Eden incarnait dans le jeune univers, le plus bel équilibre de forces" (L. Groulx, "L'école des héros," *AF* 16/8 [août 1926]: 90).

stands as the bench mark of our own moral
perfectibility ...⁶⁵

Humanity is supernatural in its pristine nature. Groulx insisted on a holistic conception of the human condition in which the spiritual is integral to the human condition. Sanctification does not require the negation of human nature. On the contrary, it means the integration of the divine into the carnal nature of humanity. The essence of the human is as much temporal as spiritual. So insistent was Groulx in this regard, that he appealed to the doctrine of corporal resurrection to prove that the human condition is equally carnal as spiritual, and that there is no fundamental contradiction between the two. Here again, for Groulx Christ served as the touchstone of the human condition. In reference to the human body he affirmed, "The Word itself became flesh and ordained corporal resurrection so as to establish clearly that humans are by no means purely *spiritual* beings, rather they are created to reunite ultimately with the inseparable, albeit transformed, companion of their soul..."⁶⁶ Christ is the archetype of humanity. The human is the framework of the spiritual, just as the human is for the divine in the Incarnation. Groulx affirmed the carnal because of the precedent of the Incarnation. Groulx's validation of the carnality of the human nature and condition showed how profound a conviction the Incarnation was for him. He opposed the disjunction of the natural and the supernatural. His world view relied on the ultimate, even organic unity

⁶⁵"Nous devrions nous souvenir toujours que le mot homme est un vocable divin sorti de la bouche du Créateur, au sixième jour de la création ... ce mot devrait constamment évoquer sous nos yeux l'humanité idéale du Fils de l'Homme qui assigne sa perfection comme terme de notre perfectionnement moral..." (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, "L'éducation de la volonté en vue du devoir social"; conférence donnée à l'Académie Emard, collège de Valleyfield, *Spicilèges*, 22 janvier 1906).

⁶⁶"Le Verbe lui-même s'est fait chair; et il a voulu la résurrection des corps pour bien établir que l'homme n'est point purement *spirituel*, mais créé pour retrouver un jour, transfiguré, l'inséparable compagnon de son âme..." (L. Groulx, *Chemins de l'avenir*, p. 43).

of the spiritual and the temporal. Groulx considered the Incarnation as God's resounding affirmation of the human.

The social milieu has to be viewed as the collective human condition. Determinative for the human condition, the social milieu must be redeemed for the salvation of humanity. In an article published June 21, 1947, concerning the state of religion in contemporary Quebec, Groulx reminded the French-Canadian people:

Do they realize that Christ, the *exemplary cause* of Christian perfection, is also its *efficient cause*, as theologians say, so that to put it simply, the one who sets the standard to achieve is also the one whose almighty power can contribute to its attainment?⁶⁷

Groulx believed that society provides the means to perfect human beings. Groulx's insistence on the integration of Catholicism into all social issues legitimized its social action. Society is not incidental to human redemption; society is the locus of salvation. By virtue of the Incarnation, the spiritual does not negate the natural but integrates it towards spiritual ends. Groulx considered the Incarnation as the new beginning of humanity.

Groulx's concept of race is his affirmation of the particularism of the human condition. Humans are creatures of race or ethnicity in that they are specific beings. Race for Groulx, Pâquet and their contemporaries was obviously not a negative term

⁶⁷"Sait-il que le Christ, *cause exemplaire* de la perfection chrétienne, en est aussi, comme disent les théologiens, la *cause efficiente*, c'est-à-dire, en d'autres termes, que celui-là qui assigne l'idéal à conquérir est aussi celui qui peut y porter de sa main toute-puissante?" (L. Groulx, "Notre problème religieux," *Notre Temps* (21 juin 1947): 1. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 204). See T. Kondoleon, "Exemplary Causality," *NCE*, 5: 715-16; A. B. Wolter, "Efficient Causality," *NCE*, 5: 184-88. See also A. Chollet, "Cause," *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* (hereafter *DTC*), 2: 2014-17; G. F. Kreyche, "Causality," *NCE*, 3: 342-45.

but an affirmation of humanity, and ultimately of human rights.⁶⁸ Not 'racist' as is practically the case in post-World War II Western society, rather race referred to that which is distinctive and characteristic of a people, culture, or a nation. Race is that which renders a community a 'distinct society.' Race is not simply a matter of blood relationship, but of fundamental social cohesion. Referring to particular properties as of a gem or chemical, race's essence is socio-cultural, according to the nineteenth-century organic concept of race and schematization of humanity.

The concept of culture depends directly on one's view of the human condition. Groulx insisted that secular anthropology be completed by a Christian concept of the human condition. He proposed a Christian anthropology. The primacy of the spiritual begins with the human condition and applies subsequently to all social dimensions. Humanity lays in human beings' spiritual rather than carnal nature. Groulx considered this a fundamental anthropological tenet. The watershed of anthropology is that of a merely natural concept of the human or one which also conceives human nature as supernatural. The latter is rooted in the Incarnation. In his last major work, *Chemins de l'avenir* (1964), Groulx once again turned to the johannine corpus of the New Testament to support his view of the human condition.⁶⁹

The nation is the most specific entity of the collective human condition. Whereas Christ is the incarnation of one person, the Catholic nation is collectively the

⁶⁸ J-P. Wallot, "Groulx, l'histoire et son «petit peuple»" *Le Devoir*, samedi 22 octobre 1983. In this regard Wallot points out: "Cette haute conception de l'histoire ... se traduit dans la pratique par une série organisée d'interrogations, par une problématique axée avant tout sur l'ethnie ou la nation, appelée souvent la «race»; problématique qui entend situer cet homme concret canadien-français dans ses circonstances politiques, économiques, sociales, religieuses, culturelles."

⁶⁹ "L'homme peut-il rêver plus haut qu'être fils de Dieu? Fils de Dieu! Ce fut pourtant et c'est toujours notre destinée de chrétien même ici-bas. Saint Jean, le plus grand des évangélistes, nous en garantit la

Incarnation. The nation has to be saved because it is integral to humanity, inasmuch as the human condition is social. Groulx based his Catholic rationale for nationalism on the Incarnation. He insisted that Catholicism is no purer by separating it from the national. He affirmed the immanence of God through Jesus Christ in the face of arguments which insist on the transcendence of God to protect the divine nature. Groulx associated the Incarnation with the immanence of the spiritual, the temporality of the spiritual. The paradox of the Incarnation served his two-fold purpose to promote the collaboration of Catholicism and nationalism.

Groulx considered independence to be an inviolable human right to one's own language, religion, and culture which assures the development of the human condition in its particularity: "Separatism is not a mere fancy. It rests on a legitimate claim, namely the inalienable right of human beings to their cultural and national development."⁷⁰ This right develops in a collective framework, it is not an individual phenomenon. Groulx's push for separation derives from his humanism. To prevent the development of the human condition in its particularity is fundamentally antithetical to the particularism of human nature. Groulx's remarks that separatism is not an overnight phenomenon were meant to counteract the accusation that it is incongruent in the context of Canada. He wanted to demonstrate that, in the history of humanity, separatism had a long tradition that comes from the basics of natural law. To deprive a people of independence is to deprive them of the right to develop fully as human beings. The nation is the matrix where the collective human personality develops in

certitude: «... Tous ceux-là qui l'ont accueilli, il leur a donné le pouvoir de devenir fils de Dieu ... nés de Dieu.» Véritable déification de l'homme!" (L. Groulx, *Chemins de l'avenir*, p. 92. See also I John 3:1-3).

context. Groulx did not consider *la survivance*⁷¹ simply for French-Canadian nationalism. A spiritual construct, it concerns the destiny of Christians as such. Groulx qualifies *la survivance* as *éternelle*, not simply a matter of national, cultural and linguistic survival. It is fundamentally a soteriological concept. Christian redemption is its prime referent. *La survivance* has a spiritual basis and must not be interpreted exclusively in temporal terms.

3.4 Christian Humanism and Moral Perfection

Groulx embraced the Hebraic, medieval and Christian worldviews, which perceive the human condition as concurrently spiritual and temporal. He insisted on the essentially social nature of the human condition and therefore stated that Christian perfection can only be achieved in and through one's social context.

Human beings do not live in a vacuum on a faceless landscape. Social creatures by nature, they live in a societal, national milieu on which their existence and perfection inexorably depend. It is an axiom of elementary philosophy that the perfection of humanity is achieved socially.⁷²

Like salvation Groulx conceived Christian perfection as taking place within spatiotemporal parameters. The Incarnation was the cornerstone of Groulx's concept of Christian humanism. Groulx believed Christian humanism derived directly from the

⁷⁰“Le séparatisme n'est pas un phénomène champignon. Il procède d'une revendication légitime: le droit imprescriptible de la personnalité humaine à son développement culturel, national” (L. Groulx, *Directives*, p. 14. See also L. Groulx, “Directives,” *Laurentie* 101 [1957]: 74).

⁷¹*La survivance* refers to the struggle for the survival of the French Canadian language and culture. See Kenneth McNaught, *The Pelican History of Canada*, pp. 67, 97, 127, 137, 160, 290. See above, #1.3.

⁷²“L'homme ne vit pas à l'état individu, sur une terre anonyme. Etre social de par nature, il vit dans un milieu social et national, où, quoi qu'il fasse, son être, sa perfection sont fortement engagés. C'est un axiome de philosophie rudimentaire: la perfection de l'homme se conquiert socialement” (L. Groulx,

humanity of Christ. Jesus Christ is not only God-incarnate, but the human-incarnate.

Groulx considered incarnation to be normative for individual and collective humanity.

In a speech delivered June 23, 1929, Groulx articulated an incarnational concept of Christian humanism:

Can we overestimate the invaluable contribution made by this latter humanism which is based on the humanity of Christ and the consequent Christian conception of humankind presented in the gospel? If culture means in fact the full-orbed development of human life then the ethos of a culture will depend on its understanding of the human condition. Are human beings mere creatures of nature or, in the vein of the Incarnation, are they born and raised for the supernatural? Are humans prisoners of this earthly realm who slavishly desire worldly things alone, or are they geared, indeed striving for life after death, yet imbued here and now with a sense of human individuality, community, and solidarity, which has its source in the Human-God?⁷³

Christian humanism results from humanity. The origin of this philosophy, according to Groulx, were Christ and the New Testament. Christian humanism for Groulx meant the primacy of the spiritual in the human condition.⁷⁴ Through the notion of Incarnation he

"Catholicisme, principe d'avant-garde," *Quartier latin* 21/9 (2 décembre 1938): 3. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 198-99).

⁷³"Faut-il souligner l'apport merveilleux de ce dernier humanisme, issu de l'humanité du Christ, de la conception de l'homme apportée par l'Evangile? Si la culture signifie, au vrai, l'épanouissement de la vie humaine, combien l'essence en sera tout autre, selon l'idée que l'on se fait de l'homme destiné à la réaliser ou à l'incarner: homme de la simple nature ou homme agrandi dans le surnaturel, procédant de l'Incarnation; homme enfermé dans la prison du terrestre, envoûté par des aspirations uniquement terrestres, ou homme orienté, obsédé par l'au-delà, portant ici-bas un sens de la personnalité humaine, de la société humaine, de l'universelle fraternité humaine, en provenance de l'Homme-Dieu?" (L. Groulx, *Constantes de vie*, pp. 29-30).

⁷⁴"Quel autre spectacle nous offrirait le triomphe de l'humanisme chrétien ... Ce serait l'âme au-dessus du corps et du temps; le matériel ordonné au spirituel, le temporel à l'éternel. Nul refus, pour tout cela, du progrès matériel, de l'exploit financier, technique ou autre. Mais tous ces gains au service de l'homme et non pour l'exploitation de l'homme" (L. Groulx, *Constantes de vie*, pp. 30-31).

sought to bring classical humanism in line with Christianity. Groulx maintained that the Incarnation provides the framework for Christian humanism. In a May 2, 1948 address to his alma mater at Sainte-Thérèse, Groulx explained why humanism must mirror the Incarnation:

A fully elaborated humanism especially does not ignore the contribution of Christianity which not only complements, but integrates, rectifies, and transforms secular humanism, investing it with the supernatural by bringing it in line with the Incarnation. Christian humanism entails, I dare say, an approach to education which allows the divine to pervade the lives of human beings, to restore their moral integrity, and to make of them well-rounded individuals who exercise their faculties in accord with eternal precepts...⁷⁵

In this same speech Groulx reminded his audience that, "No broad or merely consistent humanism can afford to do without... the heritage of Hebraic, oriental, or medieval culture."⁷⁶ Incarnational humanism weds the sacred and the profane in the human condition. It is not opposed to the technical or scientific, but merely expresses the primacy of the spiritual over the technical and scientific definition of the human condition. From his youth Groulx rejected secular humanism and embraced its Christian counterpart with its attendant doctrines of Christian moral perfection and divinization.

⁷⁵"Un humanisme complet ne saurait surtout ignorer l'apport du christianisme qui ne vient pas seulement compléter l'humanisme profane, mais qui, en l'imprégnant de surnaturel, c'est-à-dire, en le mettant dans la ligne de l'Incarnation, l'intègre, le redresse, et le transfigure. Humanisme chrétien ... qui produit l'homme plein de la vie de Dieu, l'homme retourné à sa rectitude morale, type d'un superbe équilibre, gouverné, dans ses facultés, par la loi éternelle..." (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, "Professionnels et culture classique," *Spicilèges*, 2 May 1948. See also L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 33).

⁷⁶"Un humanisme généreux ou simplement intégral ne saurait se refuser ... ni à l'apport hébraïque, ni à l'apport oriental, ni non plus, à l'apport du Moyen âge" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, "Professionnels et culture classique," *Spicilèges* 2 May 1948. See also L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 33).

Groulx articulated his philosophy of Christian education in his memoirs, where he made it clear that he brought humanism in line with the paradigm of the Incarnation.

Groulx believed human perfection to be attainable here and now. In his utopia all believers are morally perfect, but this by no means effaces the social differences between them. Groulx's vision was one of moral equality, yet a highly stratified social order. Perfection and equality are only meant in a moral sense, not economically and socially. Not unlike St. Paul's admonition to the Christians of various classes in antiquity (I Cor. 7, 21), all were to strive for moral perfection and regard each other as spiritually equal. Yet they were to be content and retain their various respective positions in society. In this vein Groulx concluded Christian perfection to be "realizable to the same degree at every level of humanity, regardless of their social class."⁷⁷ Groulx was not speaking of the eschaton. He insisted this can be realized here and now in society. He obviously accepted social classes and concurred with a social hierarchy. His was a conservative model of society.

Christian humanism means the subservience of the material to the spiritual in humanity. This hierarchy has to be maintained in order to prevent the exploitation of human beings. Groulx argued straight from the incarnational concept of human nature to a Christian concept of culture. He did not believe the material advantages of a technological society are worth the loss of a spiritual concept of humanity. His critique of technological society was not a Manichean rejection of matter; he merely argued against its primacy in culture to the detriment of a spiritual concept of the human.

⁷⁷"réalisable, et avec égale perfection, dans toutes les classes sociales, à tous les degrés de l'échelle humaine" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, "Professionnels et culture classique," *Spicilèges*, 2 May 1948. See also L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 33).

Economics and technology are to be affirmed, but within a spiritual framework. Human beings are being exploited by technology and economy when the latter do not promote their spiritual welfare. Groulx countered the secular view of human nature with the divine. Technology, Groulx declared at the end of his life and in the midst of the technological revolution known as 'the atomic age,' must not be an end unto itself, but only a means to serve spiritual ends. Otherwise civilization would no longer exist, for when the temporal, albeit in the guise of the technological, becomes a finality, humans become barbarians.⁷⁸ Groulx viewed with foreboding a society run by technocrats. A culture dies when it becomes no more than a materialistic conception of the human condition, and civilizations become decadent, indeed die, "the day they eviscerate or distort their conception of human nature and existence, the day their soul, the spiritual principle which animates them, weakens and dies."⁷⁹ For Groulx a materialistic, consumer society is the antithesis of civilization. Groulx fought for French-Canadians to maintain a spiritual world view and to be living proof of human spirituality in 'the space age.' In 1964 Groulx warned his compatriots, "In this day of the so-called technological or atomic age, an era of discoveries ... humankind believes it reigns over both earth and space. Humanity goes on building its life and future without any spiritual or supernatural frame of reference."⁸⁰

⁷⁸"La technique la plus prodigieuse peut aider l'homme à se faire plus homme, mais dans la mesure où il la domine et la maintient à l'état d'instrument. Ce n'est pas en la subissant qu'il peut ajouter à sa densité humaine, à sa taille morale ... La technique n'a pas de finalité en soi ... Si l'on ne doit plus forger que l'homme technique, n'aspirer plus qu'à la culture technique, ne parlons plus de civilisation. Ouvrons nos portes aux barbares" (L. Groulx, *Chemin de l'avenir*, p. 144).

⁷⁹"Le jour où se vide ou se déforme leur conception de l'homme, de la vie, le jour où s'éteint et meurt le principe spirituel qui en était l'âme" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, "Cours inaugural pour la chaire de civilisation canadienne-française," *Spicilèges*, 1953).

⁸⁰"À cet âge que l'on dit l'âge technique, ou atomique ... l'homme se croit roi de la terre, roi des espaces. Le monde s'en va construisant sa vie, son avenir en dehors de toute hypothèse spirituelle ou surnaturelle" (L. Groulx, *Chemin de l'avenir*, pp. 153-154).

The goal of Christian humanism is to reestablish humanity in its “full perfection and primal dignity.”⁸¹ Groulx's first book, *Une croisade d'adolescents* (1912), dealt extensively with Christian moral perfection. Groulx did not attempt simply to establish a French-Canadian nation. He aimed for nothing less than a moral, spiritual society. Perfection is the restoration of the human condition to its original perfect state. In this sense salvation is redemption and/or the restoration of the human condition. Humanity is an ideal temporarily realized in Adam and consummated eternally in the Incarnation. Through Christ and subsequently in all believers the Human-God is to be realized again and again in time and space. Groulx sought to integrate the ideal of moral perfection into the objective realities of human beings, and he was concerned with the human condition as a moral issue.

Jesus-Christ is the model of humanity as Groulx understood it; he is the manifestation of the potentiality of human nature. In Christ, God becomes human so that humans can become divine. In an exemplarist fashion, Christ is the model to follow here and now, as Groulx made clear in a 1961 article on the relationship between religion and humanism. In reference to Jesus Christ he affirmed:

As a flesh and blood human being with all attendant faculties, he possessed the gamut of human attributes, yet in him human nature and personhood achieved divinity. The Son of humanity incarnated the highest form of humanism. More wondrous still, only Christ stands above the lowliest human being who chooses the Human-God as their model, accepts the gospel in its entirety, and allows the supernatural to enhance their nature. The one who does so establishes within themselves that

⁸¹“perfection totale, dans sa grandeur originelle” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, “Religion et humanisme,” *Spicilèges* 1961; cited in “Humanisme,” *Cahiers de l'Académie canadienne-française*, 1961: 23).

remarkable Christian equilibrium which restores and indeed surpasses the moral eminence of the first human being. Furthermore, in view of the spiritual gifts and natural ability or talent of this spiritual person, what could keep such a veritable superhuman from similarly incarnating one of the highest forms of humanism, and even creating works of unparalleled truthfulness and beauty?⁸²

On the model of the Incarnation, Groulx maintains that human beings can become transcendent, an attribute normally applicable only to God. For him, human beings have to surpass their temporality and share the nature and attributes of God. Christ is the model of human nature assuming the supernatural.

The deity is so human that God is the crucified God. Spiritual rebirth is the divinization of the human condition, the integration of the divine in the human. Groulx referred to John 3:1-8 and I John 3:1-3 in a manner consistent with the Christian principle of divinization: "We have learned that by faith we are the children of God! What does this expression mean if not a human being permeated, transformed, and renewed by the divine life force; in short, a reborn, pristine human being in whom potential divinization becomes reality?"⁸³ Divinization is a symbiotic relationship

⁸²"En sa qualité d'homme, il possédait tout l'homme avec son corps, toutes ses facultés; mais en Lui l'homme s'achevait en nature et en personne divine. Le Fils de l'homme ... a incarné l'humanisme le plus élevé. On peut même parler de transcendance. Et voici s'accomplir cette autre merveille qu'après le Christ rien n'est plus grand que le pauvre homme que nous sommes qui, pour idéal, a élu l'Homme-Dieu, a tout accepté de l'Évangile, a laissé s'ajouter à sa nature la surnature. Celui-là a établi en soi le splendide équilibre chrétien, a reconquis et même au-delà l'élévation morale du premier homme. Après cela accordez à ce privilégié les dons de l'esprit, le génie ou le talent, et quoi donc peut bien empêcher ce véritable surhomme d'incarner à son tour l'une des formes les plus élevées de l'humanisme, et voire de faire passer dans le domaine de la vérité et de la beauté, des oeuvres proprement insurpassables?" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, "Religion et humanisme," *Spicilèges* 1961, cited in "Humanisme," *Cahiers de l'Académie canadienne-française* 1961: 23-24).

⁸³"Nous avons appris que nous sommes enfants de Dieu, par la foi! Qu'entend signifier un mot comme celui-là, si ce n'est, en toutes lettres, un être humain, pénétré, changé, renouvelé par la vie de Dieu: nouvelle naissance, homme nouveau, le divinisable devenu divinisé?" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 35).

between human acts and divine precepts. Participation in the divine life is achieved through acts commensurate with Christ. The believer is divinized to the extent he/she participates in the life of Christ by acting in accord with Christian principles. With reference to Galatians 2:20 -“it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me”- Groulx rhetorically asked,

Who has not already read or heard these words from St. Paul? Is this an outburst of religious lyricism from the pen of the great apostle, or the assertion of an exceptional privilege which belonged to him alone? On the contrary, it accurately reflects a spiritual reality which can be the lot of every Christian.⁸⁴

Just as Christ is the incarnation of God, so human beings are to incarnate the supernatural and transcendent. So fully can human nature become Christ-like and divine that Groulx spoke of *surhommes*, a notion derived from ancient Christian teaching, not from Nietzsche's philosophy. Divinization, as Groulx understands it, is not human beings becoming gods; rather it is their reflection of Christ's moral perfection. Christ-likeness is not to be exceptional, but the pattern for the human condition. Supernatural potential is inherent in Catholicism, the religion of human deification in accord with the Incarnation. This explains Groulx's emphasis on asceticism, discipline, moral rigor, and prayers. Catholicism develops the spiritual potential in the human condition. *Surhommes, dieux*, these words refer to a spiritual state which the human condition could attain. In a speech delivered June 6, 1933, Groulx declared, in reference to the youth of Quebec:

Their birth in a Catholic milieu and into the Catholic faith gives them the incomparable advantage of having ... as a moral model the infinite perfection of Christ, and of having as the goal of their spiritual development that elevation of their character which, if they so choose, can make of them superior human beings and gods.⁸⁵

Although Groulx himself practiced a life of Christian discipline and greatly admired piety, even in Protestants, he was opposed to religious exercises that extract the believer from time and space realities. In this vein he spoke of “Hindu fantasies, a religious technique which by means of ascetic striving and ethereal ecstasy ultimately enables one to escape time.”⁸⁶ Religious practice must relate directly to temporal and spatial realities. “Intemporal” was a negative term for Groulx, because he believed it runs counter to the reality of the human condition. For Groulx this was as realistic as a human attempt to defy the law of gravity. The laws of time and space apply universally to the human condition, even to the humanity of Christ. Groulx considered “the law of temporality” a parameter of religious phenomena, the hallmark of both humanity and Christianity. For Groulx no religion, not even Christianity, could escape time. On the contrary, even eternal religion such as Christianity takes place ‘in time.’ Groulx considered baptism incarnational, that is to say, as the means whereby the divine

⁸⁴“Qui n’a déjà lu ou entendu cette parole de Saint Paul: Ce n’est que lyrisme religieux sous la plume du grand apôtre? Ou constatation d’un privilège exceptionnel, qui n’aurait appartenu qu’à lui? Non pas, mais exacte réalité spirituelle et qui peut être le lot de tout chrétien” (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 35).

⁸⁵“Leur naissance dans un milieu et dans la foi catholiques leur vaut cet incomparable privilège d’avoir ... pour idéal moral, l’infinie perfection du Christ, et pour terme de leur développement spirituel, cette élévation de personnalité qui peut faire d’eux, s’ils le veulent, des surhommes et des dieux” (L. Groulx, *Orientations*, p. 113).

⁸⁶“Les rêveries hindouistes, une technique religieuse qui, par un effort d’ascèse et d’extase intemporelle, parviendrait, dans le temps, à faire sortir du temps” (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 16).

assumes the human in order to spiritualize humanity. In reference to the believer's unity with Christ through baptism, Groulx stated:

The day of my baptism God took hold of me, penetrated the depths of my being, invested my life with the divine, and made me a living member of an organic body ... Can I therefore view this graft onto the divine trunk, this belonging to Christ, as anything less than total and absolute? What could justify in the least dissociating my life and actions from his? On the contrary, I am convinced that my life as an individual and as a Christian must concord. This certainly entails a thoroughgoing commitment. Yet how can I not heartily embrace it if thereby I see each and every act of my mortal existence transformed as it were into a supernatural deed, regardless if the act in question be big or small, of a religious nature or not! These acts undergo transformation because they take place in synergy, indeed in symbiosis with Christ, so that my whole being can profoundly share in his divine life!⁸⁷

Just as there is not a solely secular dimension, so also there is no singularly spiritual sphere, even though Groulx maintained the primacy of the spiritual. The two exist in dynamic reciprocity, mutually informing one another.⁸⁸ Groulx's vision of the Christian life was one of symbiotic integration.

⁸⁷“Au jour de mon baptême, Dieu s'est emparé de moi, a pénétré en moi, m'a injecté sa vie, m'a fait membre vivant d'un corps vivant ... En conséquence, cette greffe sur le tronc divin, cette appartenance au Christ, la puis-je concevoir autre que totale, absolue? Au nom de quoi pourrais-je dissocier, en quelque chose, ma vie de la sienne, mon action de la sienne? Une conviction me saisit plutôt: celle de l'unité obligatoire de ma vie d'homme et de ma vie de chrétien... Engagement rigoureux, certes. Mais avec quelle joie ne pas l'accepter s'il me révèle la plus extraordinaire transfiguration de tous les actes de ma vie d'homme, de tous, des plus grands aux plus petits, actes religieux ou autres! Actes transfigurés parce qu'accomplis en synergie, disons même en symbiose avec le Christ, puisque, par tout mon être, je plongerai en sa vie, divine!” (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 83).

⁸⁸“Dans mon existence de chrétien ... finies ce que nous appelions tout à l'heure les coupures, les cloisons étanches entre mes diverses occupations; fini même le détestable parallélisme entre ma vie religieuse et ma vie profane où l'une chevaucherait à côté de l'autre sans jamais se compénétrer” (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 86).

3.5 Contextuality

Groulx affirmed the essential particularity of the human condition. He insisted that Catholics ought to “acknowledge the concrete.”⁸⁹ In this vein he articulated his conception of the human condition as first and foremost, concrete and particular. Even his early writings demonstrate a concern for theological contextualization, as is evident in a February, 1918 article where he called for a contextual theology that seeks to “adapt doctrines to a concrete situation.”⁹⁰ The principle of contextuality informed Groulx's idea of doctrine and shaped his conviction that the theological task lies in the adaptation of religious dogmas to the concerns and mentalities of concrete social communities.

In an address delivered June 23, 1939, Groulx stated, “No one can say, ‘I am a generic human being. I have no ties whatsoever, I do not belong to any country. I am not part of any nation.’ We humans are concrete, specific beings.”⁹¹ In a speech delivered November 1, 1953, he challenged his audience to come to terms with the specificity of the human condition. He summoned them to acknowledge the inexorable spatiotemporal parameters of human existence: “Where have you met humans who were not spatiotemporal beings, that is to say, individuals concretized by their time and place, particularized by their geopolitical and economic space, as well as by their cultural and religious milieu, to say nothing of the complete array of traits which they

⁸⁹“Admettre le concret” (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 152).

⁹⁰“Adapter à une situation concrète des doctrines” (L. Groulx, review of *Le clergé et l'action sociale*, by Joseph-Papin Archambault, *AF* 2/2 [février 1918]: 87).

⁹¹“Personne ne peut dire: je suis homme sans plus; je ne me rattache à rien; je n'appartiens à aucun pays, à aucune nation. Nous sommes des hommes concrets, particularisés” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, “Notre mystique nationale” discours prononcé à Montréal le 23 juin 1939, lors du dîner de la fête nationale à l'hôtel Windsor, *Spicilèges*. See also L. Groulx, *Constantes de vie*, p. 23. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 52-56).

inherited?"⁹² In 1964 Groulx published a book review which, despite its brevity, revealed that even in his advanced age he still had a firm grasp of theology, including its history and operative principles. To account for the panoply of theological expressions throughout the course of Christianity, Groulx pointed out that:

Many factors account for this diversity of opinions. Theologians have not always employed the same conceptual and philosophical apparatus. For no less than twelve centuries Christian thinkers to all intents and purposes borrowed the concepts of Plato or at least of Platonism. Even the Fathers of the Church rarely based their theological inquiry or thinking on the philosophy of Aristotle. Augustine, the acknowledged 'father of theological reflection in the West', derived his remarkable categories of thought from Platonism. In addition to these factors, the preeminent theological schools developed their systems of theology from primordially different intellectual and spiritual frames of reference. Further, one must consider the quite distinct mindsets and ways of thinking which characterize a milieu. Since the earliest centuries of the Church East and West have constituted widely divergent cultural spaces. Each has elaborated its own theology and spirituality. The Church readily accepts these theologies as long as they respect the unity of the faith.⁹³

⁹²“Où avez-vous rencontré des hommes qui ne fussent pas des hommes concrets, je veux dire concrétisés, individualisés par leur temps, leur lieu géographique, politique, économique, culturel, religieux, et par tout le faisceau d'hérités qu'ils portaient en eux?” (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 152).

⁹³“Bien des causes peuvent enfanter cette diversité d'opinions. Les théologiens n'ont pas toujours usé des mêmes instruments conceptuels et philosophiques ... À ces causes se peuvent joindre les différentes perceptions initiales, intellectuelles et spirituelles où ont pris naissance et se sont appuyées les grandes écoles de théologie dans leurs élaborations systématiques. Puis viennent en ligne de compte des milieux de pensée, de mentalité assez peu ressemblants. Orient et Occident représentent, depuis les premiers siècles de l'Eglise, des espaces culturels fort différents. De part et d'autre une théologie, une spiritualité se sont élaborées. Théologie que l'Eglise accepte dès que conforme à l'unité de la foi” (L. Groulx, review of *Vingt-quatre défauts thomistes*, by André Dagenais, *RHAF* 18/2 [septembre 1964]: 310-11).

Groulx therefore proposed “a philosophical and theological pluralism”⁹⁴ commensurate with the diversity and specificity of the human condition. For him, then, the theological task to render religious truth relevant to its social context precluded a definitive systematic theology. Perhaps older and wiser now, eighty-six year-old Groulx laid aside the doctrinaire pronouncements of his early days as he concluded:

The Truth with a capital ‘T’ is vast. Who can ever boast that they have fully grasped it? Is it surprising then that not everyone perceives the same facets of truth, thus giving rise to its diverse interpretations and the philosophical and theological pluralism which exists? Since human intelligence cannot match the scope of divine truth it will always have an elusive element that fosters a host of interpretations. The Church itself does not shy away from the diversity of philosophical and theological schools provided that they maintain the unity of the faith.⁹⁵

⁹⁴“un pluralisme philosophique et théologique” (L. Groulx, review of *Vingt-quatre défauts thomistes*, by André Dagenais, *RHAF* 18/2 [septembre 1964]: 310).

⁹⁵“La Vérité avec une majuscule est immense. Qui peut se vanter de l’avoir jamais saisie en sa plénitude? Qu’il y en ait diverses interprétations et que tous n’en saisissent pas les mêmes aspects et que, par conséquent, un pluralisme philosophique et théologique puisse exister, qui peut s’en étonner? Il y aura toujours, dans la vérité divine, qui n’est pas à la mesure de l’intelligence humaine, une part d’insaisissable qui donnera lieu à de multiples interprétations. De la diversité des écoles en philosophie et en théologie, l’Eglise elle-même ne s’offusque point, à condition que soit préservée l’unité dans la foi” (L. Groulx, review of *Vingt-quatre défauts thomistes*, by André Dagenais, *RHAF* 18/2 [septembre 1964]: 310).

4-- THE CHURCH AS INCARNATION

According to Groulx's ecclesiological schema, the church began at the Incarnation. He defines the church in terms of the Incarnation, as the mediator between God and humankind. The Incarnation means essentially that Christ is the head of humanity; vicariously, then, the church is the head of humanity. The church, like the Incarnation, is the union of the divine and the human. Groulx conceived the Incarnation and the church as Platonic in that their primal existence resided in the mind of God. They existed before the actual events occurred. In reference to the origins of the church, he stated:

It first began long ago, before the dawn of time. In fact it is as old as the plan for the Incarnation, so that the origin of the Church lies in the eternal counsels of God. The Son of God, the Word, became in effect the spiritual head of humanity from the moment he proposed to incarnate in a woman's womb and thus united himself in principle with the entire human race. This already constituted the church.¹

Groulx insisted on an incarnational interpretation of the church: "We have learned that the church is Christ. Like its founder the church is both divine and human. By virtue of the latter it thus incarnates in the history of humankind and the geography of a land."² Incarnation acts the first principle of Groulx's ecclesiology. Jesus Christ is the initiation of a process that will continue until the consummation of time. On this basis Groulx argued that the church has a divine-human nature:

¹"Dès lors, en effet, que le Fils de Dieu, le Verbe, projetait de s'incarner dans le sein d'une femme, et qu'il s'unissait en principe à tout le genre humain, il devenait le chef spirituel de l'humanité. Et déjà c'était l'Église" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 46).

²"L'Église, avons-nous appris, c'est le Christ ... Divine comme son fondateur, l'Église est également humaine comme lui. Et, par ce côté, elle s'incarne dans l'histoire de l'homme et dans la géographie d'une terre" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1953], L. Groulx, "Où allons-nous?" conférence prononcée à l'Auditorium du Plateau [Montréal] le 26 mars 1953). See also L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 99).

Since it is the permanent continuation of the Son of God's incarnation, the church, like Christ, is divino-human. By virtue of its nature and end, as well as its primary means to attain that end, it is a divine society; yet it is a human society because it is a visible, corporate body, a human collectivity which all can see, an institution situated ... in time, on earth, amidst humankind.³

The paradox of the church is like that of the Incarnation. It is transcendent yet incarnate, eternal but temporal too. Yet, the church is not the captive of its modality. Its *esse* transcends these modes. Groulx maintained an incarnational cycle whereby God incarnates in Christ, Christ incarnates in the church, the church incarnates in peoples, cultures, and nations so that they too become spiritual entities. In a speech given December 19, 1946, Groulx articulated his concept of the ecclesiological cycle of incarnation:

Following as always the example of its head who chose to incarnate in order to bring about the redemption of the world, the Church incarnates in the human being who offers themselves to it. It takes them as they are, in their collective human milieu, which itself incarnates through its social, cultural, judicial, and political structures. The Church does not incarnate in them to become captive or imprisoned therein, but rather ... to infuse them with its free and noble spirit whose eternal efficacy can redress and spiritually vitalize any people or civilization which allows it to pervade them.⁴

Groulx reacted vehemently to the propagation of Catholicism as a solely transcendent religion largely uninformed by its temporal and spatial specificity. He made the point

³"Incarnation permanente du Fils de Dieu, l'Église sera donc, comme le Christ, divino-humaine. Société divine par nature, par sa fin, par les moyens immédiats qui conduisent à cette fin; société humaine, visible, parce qu'elle est un corps, une humanité accessible aux regards, une institution plantée...dans le temps, sur terre, au milieu des hommes" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, pp. 49-50).

⁴"À l'exemple toujours de son chef qui a choisi de s'incarner pour opérer la rédemption du monde, l'Église s'incarne dans l'homme qui s'offre à elle. Elle le prend tel qu'il est, dans son milieu humain, incarné lui-même dans ses structures sociales, culturelles, juridiques, politiques. Elle s'y incarne ... pour y lâcher, si j'ose dire, le flot de sa sève indépendante et souveraine, flot dont le jaillissement vers l'éternel peut redresser, spiritualiser tout peuple, toute culture qui accepte de se laisser envahir par lui" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* (1946), L. Groulx, "Pour les noces d'or de Mgr Philippe Perrier," [19 décembre 1946]. See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 235-236).

that geographic, temporal specificities shape the church. The divine perpetually integrates into the human. The temporal serves as a vessel for the church to accomplish its mission. In a lecture delivered January 19, 1953, Groulx stated in reference to the church:

The Church transcends all civilizations ... nevertheless it incarnates in them. It is both eternal and temporal. It is supranational and universal; yet at the same time it is regional and national. Just as Christ ... was a man of a certain country, civilization, and time period, so too is the Church. It incarnates in one civilization after another ... Anybody with some insight perceives that Christianity has two concurrent principles: the principle of incarnation and the principle of disengagement ... In sum, the Church incarnates in whatever time and place it finds itself. This constitutes its mission and duty. It divests itself of a spacio-temporal entity when the latter becomes obsolete.⁵

The integration of the church into the national and the temporal is imperative in order to assert its spiritual primacy. The Incarnation of the church is a prerequisite for its primacy in society. Incarnation counteracts the effects of secularism in society. For Groulx, God intends to bring the human condition within the primacy of the spiritual through the Incarnation. The essence of the church is much more than institutional, it is the principle of the divine assuming all of humanity. By 1953 Groulx revised his position on the unique role of French Canada for the welfare of Catholicism and the church in North America: “Here then the error would be not so much to misjudge the influence of the church on civilizations, but rather to consider the church absolutely

⁵“L’Église est transcendante à toute civilisation. ... pourtant elle s’y incarne. Elle est immortelle, et elle est temporelle. Elle est supra-nationale, universelle; elle est en même temps régionale et nationale. Comme le Christ, a-t-on fait remarquer, a été l’homme d’un pays, d’une civilisation, d’une époque déterminée, ainsi en est-il de l’Église. Elle s’incarne dans les civilisations successives ... L’esprit le moins averti découvre en effet, dans le Christianisme, une double exigence: exigence à la fois d’incarnation et de dégagement. ... En résumé, l’Église s’incarne dans le temporel de son temps où qu’il soit. C’est pour elle sa mission, son devoir. Elle s’en dégage lorsque ce temporel est périmé” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1953], L. Groulx, “L’Église, facteur de civilisation,” [à la chaire de civilisation canadienne-française 19 janvier 1953].)

dependent on civilizations and its welfare inextricably linked to that of one race, culture or civilization.”⁶ In this sense Groulx perceived the church as transcendent, in effect transcultural. But even the universal church is incarnate; “no matter where it is, even in Italy, in Rome itself, the universal church incarnates in a particular country, people, and culture’.”⁷ The universality of the church does not exist apart from the national. Just as Groulx maintained Catholicism to be the religion of incarnation, he held the Catholic Church to be an incarnation. Like Christ, the universal church takes on temporal and spatial qualities. Even the head of the church, the Papacy, exists in an incarnational mode at Rome.

No contradiction exists, therefore, between the universalism and the particularism of the church. The universal church on earth is by definition incarnate since it is circumscribed by space and time. This is its telos. In order for Catholicism ‘to become all things to all people’⁸ it must incarnate. Groulx rejected any docetic notion of the church. The church actually adopts a people, a culture, a nation, and yet “the church transcends time and space; it is universal and eternal. While not confined to time and space, it nonetheless lives in time and space. It is at once both universal and regional; it has temporal roots in distinct, decidedly particular peoples and countries.”⁹

Based on the Incarnation Groulx held that immanence, i.e., divine presence and activity in the universe, epitomizes God’s attributes. The role of the church is to integrate cultural and national particularisms, all the while preserving its integrity. For

⁶“L’erreur serait donc ici, non de méconnaître l’influence de l’Église sur les civilisations, mais de croire l’Église absolument dépendante des civilisations, irrévocablement liée au sort d’une race, d’une culture, d’une civilisation” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1953], L. Groulx, “L’Église, facteur de civilisation,” [à la chair de civilisation canadienne-française, 19 janvier 1953].)

⁷“cette Eglise universelle s’incarne partout, même en Italie, même à Rome, en un pays, en un peuple, en une culture particularistes” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 14-15).

⁸ I Cor 9:22.

⁹“l’Église ... transcende le temps et l’espace; elle est universelle et éternelle. Mais si elle déborde l’espace et le temps, elle ne vit pas moins dans le temps et l’espace. En même temps qu’elle est universelle, elle est régionale; elle a des racines temporelles, en des peuples, en des pays bien définis, bien particularisés” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1946], L. Groulx, “Pour les noces d’or de Mgr Philippe Perrier” [19 décembre 1946]. See L. Groulx, *Mémoires* 4: 235-236).

Groulx, the church organically develops through its host community. It acts in solidarity with its social milieu, which largely explains his support for French-Canadian nationalism. He spurned the notion of the church as “an institution floating high in the air, incapable of casting in its lot with that of a particular people so as to share their concerns, identify with their future, and concretely prepare the kingdom of God among them.”¹⁰ The church does not serve as the instrument of cultural and national uniformity. Cultural imperialism stands at odds with the incarnation of the church into various cultures and ethnicities. Like a chemical catalyst, the church constitutes each particular incarnation and at the same time comprises all cultures, peoples and nations. All particularisms find their own niche in Catholicism. So incarnate is the church that it fully takes on the features of a people and a nation, just as Christ fully takes on humanity. The church does not level cultures, ethnicity, or nationality, not even in the name of religion and the transcendent. The church reflects the gamut of humanity in all its various expressions and manifestations. In this vein, Groulx insisted that the church is as much particular as universal and he considered uniformity to be barbarous because it does not respect the particularism intrinsic to the human condition.

The church must dwell fully in the culture just as the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ. The church does not begrudgingly accommodate cultural and ethnic particularisms. Groulx did not foresee any contradiction, much less dichotomy, between the church and a particular culture. Temporality in all its manifold expressions is not inherently inimical to the church, according to the law of Incarnation. For Groulx humanity meant largely distinctiveness, individuality, or as he preferred, in Thomistic terms, particularism. The church must assimilate the numerous particularisms, yet keep their cultural and national integrity intact. Groulx scorned those who act as though “the church did not reflect the originality of all peoples and their particularities, nor made it

¹⁰“Une institution planant en haut des airs, incapable de s’attacher à un peuple particulier, d’embrasser ses problèmes, de s’associer à son destin, d’y préparer concrètement le royaume de Dieu” (L. Groulx, “La révolution des laïcs,” *Aujourd’hui Québec* 3/1 [mars 1967]: 3. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 329).

a duty to alter nothing therein but that which remains too pagan, too contrary for Christianity to assimilate it.”¹¹ By virtue of its ecclesiological or missiological principle, the church assumes ethnic, cultural, and national particularisms, yet maintains their originality. In a sense, then, the church is the preserver of particularisms.

4.1 Inculturation and disengagement

Since the incarnation is the cornerstone of his thought, Groulx took the temporal seriously. On the analogy of the Incarnation, Groulx no more admitted the dichotomy of the spiritual and the temporal than the Chalcedonian definition allowed a dichotomy between the divine and human nature of Christ. The model of the Incarnation assumes the ultimate compatibility of the spiritual and the temporal. The dual operative principles or dynamics of the church are inculturation and disengagement.

Inculturation is the essence of Incarnation. For Groulx the faith has to be inculturated in time and space. He employed the metaphor of a civilization as a garment that the church temporarily uses as a means of incarnation. But since Christianity transcends civilization, it would ultimately abandon it when it is no longer a useful garment. The church must be anchored but never mired in the temporal. Christianity is the spirit that could animate a culture. When that culture turns away or becomes decadent, the spirit leaves it. This is the essence of Groulx’s incarnational philosophy of culture. In this vein he states:

Anybody with some insight perceives that Christianity has two concurrent principles: the principle of incarnation and the principle of disengagement. Christianity incarnated in Roman civilization only to

¹¹“Comme si l’Église ne reflétait pas l’originalité de tous les peuples, tous les particularismes et ne faisait pas un devoir strict de n’y rien altérer que ce qui serait trop païen et trop inassimilable au christianisme” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1958], L. Groulx, “Résumé d’une conversation avec M. François-Albert Angers”).

disengage as it fell into decay; similarly Christianity distanced itself from Renaissance civilization to the extent that it lapsed into ancient paganism. Today some say that Christianity is in the process of divesting itself of nineteenth-century bourgeois civilization.¹²

Groulx perceived the history of Christianity as a cycle of cultural incarnation and disengagement. Although a militant nationalist, Groulx made it clear that the church is not the exclusive province of any nation or people. The paradox of the church is that it is simultaneously supranational and national. Groulx exploited to the fullest the duality of the Incarnation and its dynamic tension. The polarity of inculturation and disengagement explains the nature of Christianity. Disengagement is a necessity since Christianity is transcendent; incarnation is necessary because of the temporal nature of Christianity.

Groulx believed that the incarnation of the church in a human community provides the guarantee of its survival: "One thing is for sure, nowhere on the earth has the church incarnated only in order to die out there."¹³ In other words, Groulx tied the survival of the church to that of the people. Groulx went so far as to say that the church incarnates even in states, and this despite his ultramontanist animosity to the state. According to the principle of incarnation, the spiritual incarnates in all dimensions of the temporal, even that ultimate temporality, the state. Otherwise secularism would have to be admitted as a principle, and nationalism could justify marginalizing the church. Groulx therefore countered by affirming that far from being alien to the nation, the church actually assumes the nation.

¹²"L'esprit le moins averti découvre en effet, dans le christianisme, une double exigence: exigence à la fois d'incarnation et de dégagement. Le christianisme s'est incarné dans la civilisation romaine, mais pour s'en dégager aussitôt que celle-ci est devenue caduque; il s'est dégagé de la civilisation de la Renaissance, dans ce qu'elle parut un retour au paganisme. Et aujourd'hui, selon quelques-uns, serait-il en train de se dégager de la civilisation bourgeoise du 19^e siècle" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1953], L. Groulx, "L'Église, facteur de civilisation," [à la chaire de civilisation canadienne-française, 19 janvier 1953].)

¹³"En nul point du monde, la chose est certaine, l'Eglise ne s'est incarnée pour y mourir" (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 100).

Groulx envisaged a state for which the church is integral. They could be complementary, as long as the church had the primacy in the relationship. Based on the biblical metaphor of yeast, he argued that while the church is indeed universal:

However, it can neither live nor act at the periphery of the nation anymore than yeast can outside dough. While one must certainly never forget the universal nature of the Catholic Church, at the same time one must always remember that this church expressly incarnates in whichever country it finds itself. By no means does it encounter everywhere the same people, political, economic, social and cultural structures. Still, it does not lose sight of its sons' transcendent task which entails arranging the structures of each State or nation in such a way as to facilitate the mission of the church to teach the Truth and dispense Life.¹⁴

Groulx argued for the church as the *animus* of the state. Indeed the church can so inform the nation-state that it contributes to the fulfillment of the mission of the church. In this vein he argued for the reciprocal relationship of the church and the state. While he asserted the independence of the church from the state, nevertheless, at the same time he affirmed the incarnation of the church in the nation. Groulx maintained that the church exists "independent of nations and States yet incarnated nonetheless in States and nations."¹⁵ If the divine can antithetically assume the human, the church can assume the state.

¹⁴"Elle ne peut toutefois ni vivre ni agir en marge de la nation pas plus que le levain à côté de la pâte. Et sans doute ne faut-il jamais oublier le caractère universel d'une Église catholique. Encore ne faut-il non plus oublier que cette Église s'incarne résolument en quelque pays qu'elle se trouve. Elle ne rencontre point partout le même peuple, les mêmes structures politiques, économiques, sociales, culturelles. Elle n'oublie point pour autant la tâche transcendante de ses fils qui consiste en l'aménagement des structures de chaque État ou nation, en vue de lui faciliter sa mission d'enseignante de la Vérité et de dispensatrice de Vie" (L. Groulx, *Chemins de l'avenir*, p. 42).

¹⁵"indépendante des nations et des États, mais pourtant incarnée dans les États et dans les nations" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1953], L. Groulx, "L'Eglise, facteur de civilisation," [à la chaire de civilisation canadienne-française, 19 janvier 1953]).

4.1.2 Mission

In an address delivered March 26, 1953, to the Montreal chapter of the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Groulx set forth his belief that mission constitutes the on-going incarnation of the church:

Divine, like its founder, the Church, like him, is also human. In keeping with this, it incarnates in the history of humankind and the geography of a land. Yet do you realize that by means of this incarnation a singular privilege accrues to the peoples who have received the Church and regard it as their mother? Do you realize what a guarantee it gives them, and above all, what a mission it entrusts to them? You see, the Church is essentially dynamic and expansive. It knows no closed borders. As surprising as it may seem, by all accounts Christ needs the help of his followers in order to accomplish the work of the Redemption ... In accordance then with the principle of mission, as well as their own special calling, each people who has received the faith becomes its torchbearer and thus takes part in the supreme divine endeavor to win over the whole world.¹⁶

Salvation occurs in time and space, not apart from but integral to these realities. Consequently, the spiritual mission of the church is temporal and spatial as well. Since Groulx interpreted the human condition as largely positive, albeit sinful, he believed culture, races, and nations have something to offer Catholicism. This viewpoint is consistent with the Thomist rationale that the natural complements indeed completes the supernatural. Cultural, ethnic, social, and linguistic phenomena do not detract from the faith. The supernatural takes shape through them. Although a spiritual phenomenon, salvation is substantially affected by economic, social, and cultural conditions, since

¹⁶“Divine comme son fondateur, l’Église est également humaine comme lui. Et, par ce côté, elle s’incarne dans l’histoire de l’homme et dans la géographie d’une terre. Mais, en raison de cette incarnation, apercevez-vous quelle dignité singulière l’Église confère aux peuples qui l’ont accueillie et en ont fait leur mère, quelle prime d’assurance elle leur apporte, et d’abord quelle mission devient la leur? Car l’Église est essentiellement dynamique, expansive. Elle ignore les frontières closes. Pour étonnante que la chose paraisse, il faut maintenir que le Christ requiert le secours de ses membres pour accomplir l’oeuvre de Rédemption ... En sorte que tout peuple qui a reçu la foi, devient, par mission et par appel spécial, porteur de flambeau, engagé dans la suprême entreprise de Dieu qui a pour fin la conquête universelle du monde” (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 99).

these are intrinsic to the human condition. Salvation is contextual. Groulx therefore predicated mission on the aptitude of Catholicism to “adopt all cultures.”¹⁷

Groulx critiqued other religions on several grounds. For him the marvel of Christianity is that it holds out the hope of divinization to every single human being, not only to the elite. Other religions are not grounded in spiritual and temporal realities, they extirpate their followers out of reality. They do not perfect human beings in their social contexts, but dichotomize the spiritual and the temporal. These religions are neither anchored in history nor grounded in the spatial, the temporal and the social. Groulx believed they promote a piety that encourages irrelevant religious acts that do not in any tangible way improve the human condition. For instance, Groulx considered Hinduism unrealistic, indeed rêverie, because he did not believe it possesses a spatiotemporal concept of the divine. It is not anchored in time and space; it attempts to escape them. Groulx believed this to be contrary to the human condition and to divine revelation. Yet how much did Groulx really know about Hinduism? His was a Western caricature of it.

Groulx applied a similar critique to his own faith, Catholicism. If anything, he proved even more unrelenting in his criticism of disincarnate Catholicism. He saved his sharpest barbs for Catholicism which is out of touch with reality. Decrying “an unrealistic, otherworldly, disembodied Catholicism,”¹⁸ Groulx elaborated an immanent philosophy of religion in which the faith indwells a community by “integrating itself into their institutions and traditions.”¹⁹ Groulx imputed the failure of missions in underdeveloped nations to an overly transcendent vision of Catholicism, that renders it irrelevant to third-world realities. Conversely Groulx focused on the social context, insisting that salvation takes place “not in an abstract, imaginary world, but in a

¹⁷“assumer toutes les cultures” (L. Groulx, *Le Canada français missionnaire*, p. 86).

¹⁸“un catholicisme irréel, intemporel, désincarné” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 329).

¹⁹“s’insinuant dans leurs institutions et traditions” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 329).

distinctly particular milieu, demarcated by geographic boundaries.”²⁰ Christianity as Groulx understood it is not primarily other-worldly oriented. Rather it is temporally, spatially oriented. Christianity cannot destroy a cultural context but rather must adopt it, affirming the nationality of a culture.

Groulx affirmed the validity of national particularism in mission. Indeed he demonstrated missiological common sense when he rhetorically asked, “How could one hope for conversions to Catholicism which seemed to demand a kind of national apostasy?”²¹ The expression “national apostasy” is telling. The notion of apostasy is naturally associated with religion, yet Groulx metaphorically applied it to nationalism. This indicated his apologetic concern to integrate nationalism in mission. In its missionary endeavor, Christianity must never force people to national apostasy. Incarnational missiology involves incarnation in nations. For Groulx mission never simply entailed conversion, and specifically not cultural conversion. On the contrary, mission is Christianity inculturating in different societies. Groulx did not believe that the church could save the soul without taking an interest in its social context, because souls exist in very specific settings.

Ethnic, cultural, social salvation depends on the church, or at least it cannot be realized apart from it. Groulx expanded and applied broadly the Catholic tenet that there is no salvation outside the church. This does not mean that national salvation does not require temporal means. Rather, Groulx's point was that temporal means alone are not enough. For him, only the cooperation of the spiritual and the temporal can save a nation. The church does not simply save individuals. It redeems entire nations both temporally and spiritually. The church is the fountainhead of all salvation, including *la survivance* (see above #1.3). Groulx conceived the church and the nation in a symbiotic

²⁰“non dans un monde imaginaire, abstrait, mais dans un milieu strictement particularisé, délimité par des lignes géographiques” (L. Groulx, “Catholicisme, principe d’avant-garde,” *Quartier latin* 21/9 [2 décembre 1938]: 3. See also L. Groulx *Mémoires*, 4: 197).

²¹“Comment espérer des conversions au catholicisme qui paraissait exiger une sorte d’apostasie nationale?” (L. Groulx, *Le Canada français missionnaire*, p. 85).

relationship. When the church accepts the human it does not simply accept the sinner but the totality of the human condition with his or her cultural, national, and ethnic dimensions. Salvation does not redeem just the sinner, but the entire human being. Indeed, Groulx seldom referred to the human condition as one of sin but addressed the totality of humanness. The nation needs to be disposed in such a way as to promote the mission of the church and enable it to fulfill its mandate in society. Little wonder then, that for Groulx, the mission of French Canada has much in common with the mission of the church. Both seek the same end. Far from entailing national self-denial, Groulx maintained that Christianity validates culturo-national self-affirmation, even though self-renunciation of one's birthplace, people, and country is a Christian principle anchored in the teachings of Jesus. To deny that the human condition is delineated by language, culture, nation and geography goes directly against the principle of the Incarnation.

The impact of the Incarnation on Groulx's philosophy of culture and his critique of other religions is important to grasp. While he critiqued other religions on the basis of the Incarnation, on that same basis he fully embraced other cultures. His belief in the Incarnation makes him totally Catholic; at the same time, that same belief made him accepting of cultural differences.

4.2 Christian Ministry and Laity

Groulx conceived the priesthood in incarnational terms:

Priesthood! This hallowed word evokes for us, among other things, the moving yet disturbing truth that while most of our duties confine us to a specific task at a given location, nevertheless by virtue of his other, more venerable offices, the priest through prayer, the sacraments, and especially the celebration of mass, becomes so identified with Christ at the altar as to transcend time and space, thus participating in the universal life of the Church and the drama of the

Redemption, which is after all the grand drama of History.²²

There is a continuous cycle whereby God becomes human through the Incarnation, and the human becomes divine through the priesthood. The priesthood has temporal and spatial parameters. The priest is a hierophany in that he passes naturally from time and space to the eternal and universal. Groulx held that in the mass the priest is a christophany. In his sacerdotal functions the priest transits naturally from the immanent to the transcendent. Moreover, the priest participates in the universality of the church through the sacraments, specifically the mass. Apart from his sacerdotal functions, the priest operates primarily in the theatre of the temporal, the particular, the specific, the concrete. The sacerdotal is the priest's port of entry into transcendence, and the eucharist is the *locus classicus* of the divine-human encounter. It integrates the divine and the human so that Groulx considered the eucharist "the most intimate meeting between a human being and God."²³ In face of the secularization of Quebec, Groulx insisted in 1964 on the necessity of the sacraments in order to affirm the transcendent in the midst of modernity. Even in the secular city, there are divine sources: the sacraments.

By virtue of their calling, priests must adapt to their milieu in order to minister relevantly to the faithful. Indeed as his messengers, they must incarnate Christ in their specific social context. Early in his clerical career Groulx admonished candidates for the priesthood that they "have the responsibility to adapt their lives to the pressing

²²"Sacerdoce! Mot sacré qui, pour nous, évoque, entre autres, cette vérité émouvante et troublante que, par la plupart de nos fonctions, nous sommes attachés à une oeuvre limitée, sur un point particulier du monde, mais que, par d'autres, plus augustes, par sa prière officielle, par les sacrements, et surtout par sa messe, le prêtre à l'autel, identifié avec le Christ, échappe au temps et à l'espace, se trouve engagé dans la vie universelle de l'Église, dans le drame de la Rédemption, qui est après tout, le grand drame de l'Histoire" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1946], L. Groulx, "Pour les noces d'or de Mgr Philippe Perrier" [19 décembre 1946]. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires* 4: 236).

²³"rencontre la plus intime de l'homme et de Dieu" (L. Groulx, *Chemins de l'Avenir*, p. 137).

concerns of their time and country.”²⁴ The priest must be attuned to the social realities and needs of the faithful so as to meet them. In other words the priesthood must be contextual. Groulx pressed this point home as he reminded the clergy that, “Throughout its history the Canadian Church has known how to adapt itself marvelously to the needs of the people.”²⁵ According to Groulx’s clerical interpretation of French-Canadian history, the church had always sided with the people and must continue to do so. Particularism is a fundamental principle of the priesthood. Thus, “While they must be priests of the universal church, they must also be priests of their province and people.”²⁶ Groulx called for the contextualization of theological education, exhorting the clergy to keep abreast with currents in French-Canadian society. If the church needed to adapt to its milieu, so did its ministers. Groulx attributed the fall of Catholicism in Quebec to the fact that its clergy was not adequately adapted to the specificities of French Canada. In his memoirs Groulx looked back on his own experience of theological training at the Grand Séminaire de Montréal, to trace the origins of the religious crisis in Quebec during the Quiet Revolution:

Our professors, many of them French Sulpicians from France, were admirable men ... but had little influence on the community ... Although these men had lived for twenty, thirty or forty years in Canada, they did not integrate into it. These instructors and spiritual directors bred abstract priests totally unprepared for their concrete social milieu, a milieu which these emigrants from France hardly knew and of which they never spoke to us.²⁷

²⁴“qui ont le devoir d’adapter leur vie aux exigences de leur pays et de leur temps.” (L. Groulx, review of *Le clergé et l’action sociale*, by Joseph-Papin Archambault, *AF* 2/2 [février 1918]: 87). Groulx argues that the priest “s’adapte à son oeuvre, à son milieu, aux âmes qui sont la portion de son héritage.”

²⁵“L’Église canadienne a su, dans tout son passé, s’adapter merveilleusement aux besoins du peuple” (L. Groulx, review of *Le clergé et l’action sociale*, by Joseph-Papin Archambault, *AF* 2/2 [1918]: 88).

²⁶“S’ils doivent être le prêtre de l’Église universelle, ils doivent être aussi le prêtre de leur province, de leur race. L’Église n’exclut point ce particularisme” (L. Groulx, review of *Le clergé et l’action sociale*, by Joseph-Papin Archambault, *AF* 2/2 [février 1918]: 87).

²⁷“Nos professeurs, pour un bon nombre des Sulpiciens, Français de France étaient d’admirables hommes ... sans pourtant beaucoup d’influence sur la communauté ... Des hommes qui vivaient au Canada depuis vingt, trente et quarante ans, mais sans en être. Des professeurs, des directeurs d’âme qui formaient un

In *Chemins de l'avenir* Groulx elaborated his critique of these French Sulpician professors:

Living virtually in isolation at the Grand Séminaire, they remained ever so foreign to this country. Furthermore, they oversaw a seminary in which more than half the students were Americans, Irish, or English Canadians, so how could they adapt our preparation for the priesthood to the unique milieu in which we had to live out our Catholicism and assure its future? I regret to say that in my day Montreal only trained generic priests as ill-prepared for French Canada as for the moon.²⁸

Groulx pursued his critique of the Grand Séminaire de Montréal, which dispensed a theological education that lacked contextuality and resulted in “an ecclesiastical training too out of touch with its social milieu.”²⁹ While Groulx admired the spirituality of his teachers at the Grand Séminaire, he lamented their abstraction from the concrete realities of Quebec and its consequent ministerial needs. Since religion should impact its milieu, the clergy must meet the concrete needs of society. This cannot be accomplished through a false asceticism which abstracts the faith from social realities. In the face of what he perceived as a contemporary tendency to the latter, Groulx squarely affirmed, “Our religion is an incarnational religion.”³⁰ Not surprisingly then, Groulx argued that the dynamism of the faith depends on its informing social evolution. He angrily criticized the clergy who present an amorphous Catholicism. He held them responsible for the dramatic decline of the church in the Quiet Revolution. Groulx

prêtre abstrait, nullement préparé à son milieu concret, milieu que ces émigrés de France ne connaissaient guère et dont ils ne nous parlaient jamais” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 74-75).

²⁸“Ceux du Grand Séminaire, vivant presque cloîtrés, étaient restés combien étrangers au pays. Directeurs, au surplus, d’un Séminaire composé, pour une bonne moitié, de séminaristes américains, irlandais ou anglo-canadiens, quelle adaptation nous pouvaient-ils donner à nos tâches sacerdotales, au milieu spécial où il nous fallait vivre et faire vivre notre catholicisme? À Montréal, je regrette de le dire, on ne formait, en mon temps, qu’un prêtre anonyme, préparé aussi bien pour la lune que pour le Canada français” (L. Groulx, *Chemins de l'avenir*, pp. 31-32).

²⁹“Une formation ecclésiastique trop désadaptée à son milieu” (L. Groulx, *Chemins de l'avenir*, p. 31).

³⁰“Notre religion est une religion d’incarnation” (L. Groulx, *Chemins de l'avenir*, p. 43).

protested, "I wanted to take a stand against those who presented to the youth of that generation a closed Catholicism, uninformed by its time period and social milieu."³¹

Groulx referred to the dual nature of the priest. He considered his work as editor of *l'Action française* indicative of the priest working on both the spiritual and temporal planes. This makes him a nationalist and a priest, as he himself declares:

Delegated, indeed mandated by my Archbishop to head the *Action française*, I firmly resolved that in this patriotic endeavour I would allow nothing to keep me from fully assuming my priestly office and sacerdotal vocation. Moreover, I perceived therein a transcendent objective or goal which I unhesitatingly embraced.³²

Groulx thus insisted that in all their undertakings Catholics, whether lay or clerical, must establish "the coordination of the temporal and spiritual planes."³³ The priest like all Catholics, has a double vocation. Just as the lay person works primarily in the temporal sphere but nevertheless is responsible for the spiritual also, likewise, the priest functions largely in the spiritual realm, yet has to contribute to the temporal order as well.

Groulx insisted on the spirituality of the laity because he could not claim French-Canadians constituted the people of God, nor could he maintain that perfection is the standard for all Christians, if it were otherwise. The spirituality of the people is a prerequisite so that Groulx can present them as God's elect. Since he conceived the human as both spiritual and temporal, he believed lay persons also have a supernatural vocation, integral to the church and the redemption of humanity:

³¹"Je voulais réagir contre cette forme de catholicisme fermé, sans fenêtres sur son temps et son milieu, que l'on présentait alors à la jeunesse" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 21).

³²"Délégué, mandaté en quelque sorte par mon Archevêque à la direction de *L'Action française*, j'étais bien résolu, dans mon action patriotique, à ne me dépouiller en rien de ma qualité de prêtre, de mon caractère sacerdotal. J'apercevais là, du reste, une transcendance d'objectif ou de fin qui ne m'a jamais gêné" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 2: 20).

³³"La coordination des plans: le temporel et le spirituel" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 2: 20).

Let us begin by recognizing an indisputable fact, i.e., the twofold vocation of the Christian layperson, namely their supernatural as well as temporal vocation ... According to the new divine economy, collaboration in the work of Redemption and the rectification of history does not involve only the clergy and bishops. Rather it is the entire Church, so that the laity as much as the clergy must respond to this call.³⁴

For Groulx the laity epitomizes the human, indeed carnal nature of the church. The double nature of human beings as both spiritual and temporal informs his doctrine of the laity. They too are spiritual so that they also have an integral part in the church as well as in society. In line with the primacy of the spiritual Groulx maintained that the *raison d'être* of even the laity is the advancement of the spiritual in their respective fields of endeavor. Their purpose in life is first and foremost spiritual rather than temporal. The Christian is spiritual and therefore has a supernatural vocation. By the same token the Christian, in accord with human nature, is carnal and has a temporal vocation as well. It is not one to the exclusion of the other, but rather both simultaneously. The human soul does not exist in isolation from the temporal reality of the human condition. The temporal is ordained by God as a valid field of human endeavor. Groulx based his argument on the Scriptures; he gave a broad temporal mandate to humanity on the basis of his interpretation of Genesis. The earth is to be rendered both a spiritual and temporal reality. The earth must become a spiritual milieu, as was the case before the fall.

³⁴“Commençons par reconnaître un fait indiscutable: la double vocation du chrétien laïc: vocation surnaturelle et vocation temporelle ... Dans l'économie nouvelle instituée par le Christ, collaborer à la ressaisie de l'histoire, à l'oeuvre de Rédemption, n'importe pas seulement au clergé et aux évêques. C'est toute l'Église, et par conséquent le laïcat autant que le clergé qui se doit d'entendre l'appel” (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 151. See L. Groulx, “La mission de la jeunesse canadienne-française,” *Vie française*, mars 1954).

4.3 Incarnation -- The Axis of History

In a 1949 response to Marxist historical methodology, Groulx retorted that the Incarnation provided the dialectic whereby history could be properly interpreted. Referring to the Incarnation he stated: "This archetypal idea governs the gamut of history...[it constitutes] God's supreme, final endeavor to set human history aright—Modern history has this meaning or none at all. This is the only dialectic which makes it comprehensible."³⁵ History is a divine-human phenomenon, an outworking of the human condition. The Incarnation is the axis of history. In a 1953 lecture to inaugurate the chair of French-Canadian civilization at Université de Montréal, Groulx cautioned his academic audience that:

Catholic historians and sociologists cannot however deny the historical fact of Christ's advent which proved a turning point in the history of humankind ... indeed as a result of God's astounding personal intervention in the affairs of this world, we now find ourselves for some 2,000 years participating in a new divine economy, the economy of Redemption, the Son of God's final, supreme endeavor to rectify the course of humanity. This grand scheme involves every human being and all peoples. It now remains for sociologists and historians to research the extent to which this understanding of the human vocation, sometimes perhaps more unconsciously than consciously, shaped the consistently apostolic character of French Canada down through history to the present day, as well as the degree to which this conviction to fulfill a calling informed the defense of French *survivance*.³⁶

³⁵"Idée-maîtresse qui domine tout le spectacle historique ... Suprême, dernier effort de Dieu pour la ressaisie de l'histoire humaine. L'histoire moderne a ce sens ou elle n'en a pas. C'est la seule dialectique qui la fasse comprendre" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, Spicilèges [1949], L. Groulx, See L. Groulx, "Notre problème religieux," *Notre temps* [21 juin 1947]: 1. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 204).

³⁶"Historiens et sociologues catholiques ne sauraient tout de même nier le fait historique de la venue du Christ et l'orientation qu'en devait prendre l'histoire des hommes ... depuis 2,000 ans et par suite de cette intervention personnelle et éclatante de Dieu dans la vie du monde, nous sommes engagés dans une ère nouvelle, l'ère d'une Rédemption, d'une dernière et suprême tentative du Fils de Dieu pour redresser le destin de l'humanité. Tout homme, tout peuple sont engagés dans la magnifique aventure. Aux sociologues, aux historiens de chercher maintenant dans quelle mesure cette idée de la vocation humaine, plus subconsciente peut-être que consciente parfois, a marqué d'un caractère si persévérément apostolique l'histoire du Canada français, celle d'hier et celle d'aujourd'hui; dans quelle mesure aussi

One notes in Groulx's speeches and writings from the late 1940s onward an increasing emphasis on the Redemption as the meaning of history. As he encountered secular interpretations of history, his interpretation of history became more and more Christocentric. Why is this trend so noticeable in Groulx from the late 1940s? The answer seems to lie in the new era in human history inaugurated by the atomic bomb, as well as the catastrophic consequences of unbridled nationalism, which caused World War II and the immeasurable human tragedy associated with it. It is no coincidence that in 1955, when Groulx preached at a retreat for professors of the Université de Montréal of Montreal, he began with the Incarnation. The crux of Groulx's philosophy of history, the Incarnation, formed his worldview. In referring to the Christian, Groulx declared:

One fact stares him in the face, an extraordinary, matchless, unsurpassable event that towers above History, and it is this: one day God came down to earth, a human body encapsulated the Infinite ... What event rivals the coming of Christ into the world? Millennia preceded it, perhaps some millennia will follow it ... indeed this singular event serves as the ultimate nexus of time. It, and none other, constitutes the pivotal point of History.³⁷

For Groulx time was measured in reference to the Incarnation. This is the classic Catholic position of the Incarnation relative to history. Groulx spoke here as an historian to fellow Catholic academics. He was almost eighty years old when he wrote his theological testament, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, published in 1955. He had his eyes set on eternity, markedly more so than in his virulent nationalist heyday between the two world wars. While Groulx idealized New France and seventeenth-century France as

cette certitude d'une vocation à remplir a pu contribuer à la défense et à la survivance française" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1953], L. Groulx, "Cours inaugural pour la chaire de civilisation canadienne-française").

³⁷"Un fait se dresse devant lui, fait unique, insurpassé et insurpassable, gigantesque dans l'Histoire: et c'est, un jour, sur notre planète, la descente de Dieu, l'incorporation de l'Infini dans une chair humaine ... Quel fait égale la venue du Christ dans le monde? Des millénaires l'ont précédé; d'autres millénaires peut-être le suivront ... l'insigne événement se présente, en vérité, comme le noeud suprême dans le temps. Lui et point d'autre constitue, dans l'Histoire, la période axiale" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, pp. 9-10).

historical archetypes, the epicenter of history is the Incarnation in his historical schema. The Incarnation means a new beginning for humanity, in effect the second creation of human beings. In a 1947 article written to commemorate Saint John the Baptist, Groulx pointed his compatriots back to the Incarnation to understand their own place in history and to determine the course of their future as a nation. He concluded his article with this exhortation:

May Catholics in our country at last recover the meaning of history as it has unfolded for two thousand years. They know not or little realize the transcendent drama in which they play a part. Have they come to see the Incarnation of the Word as God's supreme endeavor to redirect the course of history, to redeem humankind, and to restore order to civilization which the first head of humanity culpably rent to pieces? And yet the history of Christ and the Church has this meaning or none at all ... Catholic peoples therefore have a mission and this mission is to ensure the realization of the Redemption. They will determine the outcome of this supreme drama of history. In view of this, we have to all intents and purposes concluded that the French-Canadian people must do some soul-searching so as to fathom the import of their faith.³⁸

As seen in chapter 2, young Groulx had a literary penchant for epics on salvation, specifically the providential plan of human history. Drawing on Bossuet, Groulx's philosophy of history is that Providence causes history, that it intervenes in the temporal. The proposition by Angers, Wallot and others that Groulx the historian distinguishes Catholicism as a cultural factor integral to the history of Quebec does not

³⁸“Puissent enfin les catholiques de chez nous retrouver le sens de l'histoire telle qu'elle se déroule depuis deux mille ans. Ils ne savent pas ou savent trop peu dans quel drame transcendant ils sont engagés. Ont-ils appris à voir, dans l'Incarnation du Verbe, la suprême tentative de Dieu pour ressaisir le cours de l'histoire, redresser l'homme, redresser la ligne d'une civilisation criminellement fracassée par le premier chef de l'humanité? Et pourtant l'histoire du Christ, l'histoire de l'Église ont ce sens ou elles n'en ont point ... Les peuples catholiques ont donc une mission. Et leur mission, c'est d'assurer l'avenir de la Rédemption. Ils ont à décider du dénouement de ce drame souverain de l'histoire. Et c'est pourquoi nous sommes tentés de conclure que le peuple canadien-français a peut-être besoin de demander humblement l'intelligence de sa foi” (L. Groulx, “Notre problème religieux,” *Notre temps* [21 juin 1947]: 1. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 204-205).

do justice to the primary role of the Incarnation in his philosophy of history. Groulx remained clearly in the camp of providentialist historians, understandably so in light of the influence of Laflèche, Tardivel, Pâquet. With regard to their philosophy of history John Hare notes,

It comes as no surprise that in a Catholic country Providence remains one of the explanatory dynamics of history. In the vein of Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1681), the providential interpretation of history enjoyed a long life in Quebec ... it is noteworthy that Thomas Chapais and Lionel Groulx perpetuated the tradition of providential history into the twentieth century.³⁹

Groulx interpreted Christianity first and foremost as faith in the Incarnation specifically, its historicity. The historicity of revelation is the watershed between Christianity and all other religions. The uniqueness of the Incarnation lay in the fact that Christian revelation is grounded in history. He declared:

Christianity is above all faith in an historical event, namely, the entry of God into the world and time ... As faith in the Incarnation and Redemption, Christianity basically proposes not so much to make known the existence of God, like other religions, but to teach us that one day, 2,000 years ago, and ever since then through specific, decisive acts, God has intervened in human history. This constitutes the essence of Christian revelation. Nothing like this exists in the history of any other world religions.⁴⁰

³⁹“Dans un pays catholique, il n'est pas surprenant que la Providence demeure une des forces explicatrices de l'histoire. L'explication providentielle de l'histoire, à la suite de Bossuet dans son *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1681), aura une longue vie au Québec ... il n'est pas sans intérêt de souligner que Thomas Chapais et Lionel Groulx continuèrent au XX^e siècle la tradition providentialiste en histoire” (J. Hare, introduction, *Pour la patrie*, by Jules-Paul Tardivel, p. 17).

⁴⁰“Le Christianisme, c'est d'abord la foi à un événement historique: l'irruption de Dieu dans le monde et dans le temps ... Foi en l'Incarnation et en la Rédemption, le Christianisme, en effet, ne se propose pas tant de nous faire connaître l'existence de Dieu – d'autres religions l'ont connue – que de nous apprendre le geste d'un Dieu qui, un jour, il y a 2,000 ans, s'est engagé dans l'histoire des hommes, pour y poser, depuis lors, des actes spécifiques et décisifs. C'est là le propre de la révélation chrétienne. Rien de tel dans l'histoire d'aucune religion du monde” (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, pp. 16-17).

Little wonder the Acts of the Apostles was Groulx's favorite book in the Bible since he interpreted it as the continued intervention of God in human history. "Our faith assures us that our God, God of the Incarnation and Redemption, is integrally involved in the History of this world and humanity. Although he does not do History without us, he remains its master and we can wondrously do it with Him."⁴¹ History is a divine-human event. Groulx shared this providentialist world view with his immediate predecessors, Laflèche, Tardivel, Pâquet, but Groulx developed it more fully, since he alone among them was an historian.

The Old Testament was key to Groulx's philosophy of history, because he perceived it as chronicling historical facts in a providentialist mode. History with divine meaning and a goal is crucial to the Thomist teleological scheme of a proper end, to say nothing of the Christian eschatological concept of history. In effect, it is sacred history, and Groulx insisted on this. History perhaps more than any other discipline, must not be secularized, that is to say divorced from the spiritual. Rather it must testify to the development of divine-human relations throughout the course of time. It must make sense of those events and interpret them spiritually as well as historically. To interpret history as sacred history is imperative for Groulx because only then can he appropriate all of human existence for the spiritual. Nothing in the collective past of humanity would escape the net of the spiritual. Groulx maintained that the Redemption is the proper end, as well as the interpretative motif, whereby one can understand the history of Catholic peoples.

History is a divine plan that humans must carry out. This evidences Groulx's teleological philosophy of history; it allowed him to define the task of the historian as that of discerning the causes of history. This, as we have seen, is a Thomist notion of causality. Groulx stated, "The exacting, difficult task of the historian is to unravel the

⁴¹"Notre Dieu, Dieu de l'Incarnation et de la Rédemption, notre foi nous en assure, est intimement mêlé à l'Histoire des hommes et de ce monde. S'il ne la fait pas sans nous, cette Histoire, il en est le maître. Et nous la pouvons faire avec Lui et magnifiquement" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 26).

complex interplay of causes and to attribute to each its true role.”⁴² History is the interface of God and humanity, and “the history of humankind is made in conjunction with God. God does not do it without human beings.”⁴³ There is no secular history. Groulx derived his historiography from the first principles of Catholicism. Christian revelation is the prime referent of his philosophy of history. Though the focus of his historical work is not the church *per se*, theological principles informed his historiography so that he can be considered a church historian. Groulx used history to provide an apology for the church in French Canada. Obviously for Groulx ‘salvation history’ was the key to all history. In fact Groulx did not separate sacred and secular history. As a professional historian, it ran counter to his insistence on synthesis to dichotomize the two. The Redemption indicates how integral the Incarnation is to his worldview, indeed how it is integrated in his philosophy of history. Groulx wanted to make the point that the destiny of Quebec is tied to that of the Redemption, so that it must seek to fulfill its collective destiny in line with the Redemption. He thus sought to convince contemporary Quebec that its *survivance* depended on its realization of the Redemption. He wanted to persuade them that to the extent they accomplish their redemptive mission, French Canada will assure its future. In effect, they cannot realize their nationhood apart from Catholicism, apart from keeping their responsibility as a Catholic people. Consequently it means they have no future apart from Catholic mission and Redemption.

Messianism is essentially an Old Testament concept that originally referred to religious aspirations in Israel, but French-Canadian scholars attribute it to Groulx and his providentialist historiography. Groulx considered predestination an historical as

⁴²“L’opération délicate et difficile de l’historien, c’est de démêler le jeu complexe des causes et d’assigner à chacune son juste rôle” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1959], L. Groulx, “Ma conception de l’histoire,” [prononcée à la télévision canadienne Radio-Canada, à l’émission Conférence, le 22 décembre 1959]).

⁴³“L’histoire des hommes se fait avec Dieu. Dieu ne la fait pas sans les hommes” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, *Spicilèges* [1960], L. Groulx, “Monsieur René d’Anjou,” le 14 octobre 1960).

well as a spiritual phenomenon. Predestination is the spiritual dynamic, and history its temporal correspondent. Unlike secular historians, Groulx did not conceive the historical as existing on one plane and predestination on a totally separate one. On the contrary, history and predestination are two sides of the same coin. Predestination is not simply a spiritual issue, but an historical one, hence, an objective issue as well. A speech he delivered June 29, 1937 illustrates the conjunction of history, predestination, and mission in French Canada, according to Groulx's teleological philosophy of history:

If our history has a purpose, and it does, our singularly just and imperative destiny, that which logically follows from our efforts for 177 years to secure our own way of life; that which represents the clearly defined goal towards which the development of our history consistently points, can only be this: to constitute in America with as much autonomy as possible that political and spiritual entity so absolutely unique on this continent, namely, a French, Catholic State; this would stand as a monument to the triumph of a superb human endeavor.⁴⁴

The cornerstone of Groulx's philosophy of history is distinctly different from that of his secular historical disciples. On the basis of the Incarnation Groulx articulated his philosophy of religion, his philosophy of culture, and his philosophy of history, all of which serve to substantiate theologically the support of Catholicism for the French Canadian nationalist movement. We will now examine how Groulx applied his theology and philosophy of the Incarnation to French Canada.

⁴⁴"Si notre histoire a un sens, et elle a un sens, notre seul destin légitime et impérieux, l'aboutissement logique de notre effort de 177 ans, pour nous dégager et vivre notre vie à nous, le but nettement visé par la flèche indicatrice, par la ligne toujours montante de notre histoire, ne peut être que celui-ci: constituer en Amérique, dans la plus grande autonomie possible, cette réalité politique et spirituelle, suprême originalité de ce continent, triomphe, chef d'oeuvre d'un splendide effort humain: un État catholique et français" (L. Groulx, *Directives*, p. 234).

5 -- NEW FRANCE, NEW ISRAEL

The nationalists of French Canada faced a dilemma in the later nineteenth century. As ultramontanists they championed the supreme authority of the papacy in the government and the teaching of the church to secure its independence from the nationalistic forces that engulfed contemporary Europe and threatened to render the faith an ideological vassal of secular nationalism. As religious nationalists they themselves strove to ally the church with their own nationalistic aspirations and to vindicate their claims on the basis of Catholic doctrine. Indeed, in the name of Catholicism some ultramontane nationalists even sought to establish a nation-state for French Canadians. How then could they preserve the institutional and doctrinal integrity of the church, in keeping with the spirit of ultramontanism, yet at the same time theologically and ecclesiastically accommodate French-Canadian nationalism?

5.1 The Ancient Hebrews as Archetype

In section 2.1.1 we have seen how Laflèche tackled this issue. Employing the analogy of biblical Israel, he argued that nationhood provides the requisite framework for the complete implementation of Catholic social directives. He turned to Israel because this religious entity, unlike the Catholic Church, also constituted an ethnic community and a political body, in short, a nation. Israel typified a society whose spiritual welfare went hand in hand with its national salvation. As such it offered a prototype for the synthesis of Catholicity and the French-Canadian nation based on the precedent of the inextricable relationship in the Hebrew scriptures between Judaism and Israel. Laflèche argued that French Canadians, like the Hebrews, needed a national base

to realize the kingdom of God and to accomplish the mission Providence assigned them:

We do not intend here to recount the eminent teachings found in the opening pages of the Hebrews' history. In defining the word *nation* we said something in this regard, and even pointed out the rather striking parallel between the family of the patriarch Abraham, whom God chose to become the stem of a numerous, faithful people, and the first French families which Providence brought to the banks of the St. Lawrence. Just as the fertile land of the iniquitous children of Canaan was promised as a homeland for the descendants of the father of believers, so too the lush valley of this mighty river became our lawful inheritance after the extinction of the depraved races who lived there. This awesome, fearful lesson stands front and center in the historical books of Moses, which our national origins replicate with astonishing similarity.¹

Just as Yahweh chose the Hebrews to convert pagans in antiquity, so God appointed French Canadians to evangelize the native peoples of North America.² Laflèche managed to find innumerable proof texts in support of religio-nationalism. He even identified Jacques Cartier (1491-1557) with Abraham:

¹"Notre intention n'est pas de redire ici les hauts enseignements que nous donnent la première et la seconde page de l'histoire des Hébreux. En définissant le mot *nation*, nous avons eu occasion d'en dire quelque chose, et même de signaler un rapprochement assez frappant entre la famille du patriarche Abraham, choisie de Dieu pour devenir la tige d'un peuple nombreux et fidèle, et les premières familles françaises amenées aussi providentiellement sur les bords du St.-Laurent. La terre fertile des coupables enfants de Canaan fut promise pour patrie aux descendants du père des croyants, comme la riche vallée du grand fleuve est devenue notre légitime héritage, après l'extinction des races criminelles qui l'habitaient. Grande et terrible leçon qui se lit en tête des livres historiques de Moïse, et que notre origine nationale a répétée avec une fidélité remarquable" (L.-F. Laflèche, *Quelques considérations sur les rapports de la société civile avec la religion et la famille*, p. 163). See also L.-A. Laflèche, *Quelques considérations*, p. 39: "Or, une des premières conditions nécessaires à une nation pour atteindre sa fin, c'est d'avoir un territoire à elle en propre ... C'est surtout ce que l'histoire sainte nous montre dans la vocation d'Abraham."

²"Notre mission et notre destinée nationales sont l'oeuvre des missions sauvages, et l'extension du royaume de Dieu par la formation d'un peuple catholique dans la vallée du St. Laurent" (L.-A. Laflèche, *Quelques considérations* p. 71).

In view of these important facts which Jacques Cartier himself tells us with much detail in the reports he made of his voyages, how can anyone not see the striking correlation they establish between this illustrious man and the patriarch Abraham?...

We repeat, what Christian man who believes in the doctrine of an infinitely wise Providence who ordains all earthly events, can fail to perceive the striking similarity between the path Abraham followed in taking possession of the land God promised to his descendants, and that which Jacques Cartier followed in taking possession of the Canadian landmass, to which that same Providence guided his steps through the orders of his sovereign?³

Laflèche pointedly remarked to his compatriots that in order to preserve the religion and nationality of the Israelites, the Lord commanded them to remain separate from their reprobate neighbors.⁴

Laflèche's recourse to the Hebrew scriptures is not surprising when one remembers that in the past Christian religio-nationalists, such as Ulstermen and Afrikaners, theologically articulated their nationalism by adopting "the scriptures as manuals of instructions, and, much more than most Christian denominations, they paid attention to the 'Old Testament'." Laflèche's ultramontane purpose was to establish an authoritative social agenda that precluded secularization. In resorting to the Old

³"En présence de ces faits si importants que Jacques Cartier nous raconte lui-même avec un grand détail, dans les relations qu'il a faites de ses voyages, qui ne serait frappé des rapports qu'ils établissent entre cet homme illustre et le patriarche Abraham?"

Nous le répétons, quel est l'homme chrétien, et qui croit au dogme d'une Providence infiniment sage qui dispose de tous les événements ici-bas, qui ne soit frappé de la ressemblance qu'il y a entre la conduite du patriarche Abraham prenant possession de la terre que Dieu promet à ses descendants, et celle de Jacques Cartier prenant possession de la terre canadienne, vers laquelle la même Providence a dirigé ses pas par l'ordre de son souverain?" (L.-F. Laflèche, *Quelques considérations*, pp. 53-54).

⁴"Aussi Dieu, qui tenait à conserver intacte la nationalité de son peuple, avait-il défendu rigoureusement les alliances avec les peuples étrangers, et surtout l'adoption de leurs coutumes et de leurs pratiques était-elle défendue sous les peines les plus graves" (L.-A. Laflèche, *Quelques considérations*, p. 24).

⁵D. H. Akenson, *God's Peoples*, p. 8.

Testament archetype of theocracy, he found a way of relating all spheres of society to the spiritual by virtue of its determinative role in human affairs. This ideal impelled Laflèche to unite religion and government so that politics would not become the thin edge of the wedge to secularize French Canada.⁶ He consequently cited Mosaic law as the religious precedent for doctrine to inform civil legislation.⁷

Despite centuries of overwhelming adversity, the Jewish people still exists, according to Laflèche, because of their adherence to the social scheme of the Torah, which provides the key to the “social sciences:”⁸

The phenomenal existence of the Jews as a nation, their indissoluble bond to the Mosaic code, which has seen them through all the vicissitudes of human life, and governed them around the world for some four thousand years, this existence and bond constitute such a phenomenon that any thinking, perceptive individual would naturally want to seek its cause and carefully study the means which Providence employs to keep this people, though few in numbers, alive as a nation.⁹

⁶Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada*, pp. 55, 115, 117, 122, 219, 225.

⁷“Lors donc que Moïse recommandait à son peuple de choisir pour chefs, dans chaque tribu, des hommes sages, il entendait leur dire de choisir avant tout des hommes qui eussent la crainte de Dieu et qui fussent fidèles observateurs de sa loi. C’est pour cela qu’en parlant des devoirs du chef de l’État, il met en tête la connaissance de la loi divine ... (Deut. 17-18.) Pourquoi cette ordonnance qui oblige le chef du pouvoir civil à faire une étude spéciale de la loi de Dieu? ... C’est par une législation en tout conforme à la loi divine qu’il jouira du bonheur, puisqu’il est dit: ‘Heureux le peuple qui a Dieu pour maître et Seigneur.’” (L.-A. Laflèche, *Quelques considérations*, pp. 215-216). See also, p. 216: “Tels sont évidemment les hommes qui ont la modeste prétention de constituer la société civile en dehors de la religion, et de la soustraire à l’action et à la direction de la loi divine. L’Esprit Saint les a qualifiés énergiquement: ‘Ce sont des insensés.’ Et pourquoi? parce qu’ils ont dit dans leur coeur: ‘Il n’y a point de Dieu en politique’.” Here Laflèche applies Psalm 14:1 to political liberalism.

⁸“En autant que les choses humaines peuvent être comparées aux choses divines, il nous semble que l’on peut dire la même chose des principes sociaux que nous révèlent la législation mosaïque et l’ensemble de l’histoire du peuple de Dieu. Comment ne pas admettre qu’une organisation sociale qui a résisté à toutes les causes de destruction qui ont agi pendant des siècles, et avec tant d’intensité, sur un peuple aussi petit que le peuple juif, sans jamais lui arracher ce principe de vie qui semble l’avoir doué de l’immortalité; comment ne pas admettre, disons-nous, qu’une telle organisation sociale ne soit un chef-d’oeuvre hors ligne?” (Laflèche, *Quelques considérations*, p. 161).

⁹“L’existence phénoménale des Juifs comme nation; leur attachement indestructible à la législation mosaïque qui les conserve et les régit, depuis près de quatre mille ans, sous tous les climats, à travers toutes les vicissitudes des choses humaines, cette existence et cet attachement sont quelque chose de si étrange que tout esprit sérieux et observateur doit naturellement aimer à en chercher les causes, et à

Following this logic, Laflèche concluded that the survival of French Canadians similarly depends on their practice of Catholic social principles, which must likewise have force of law in French-Canadian society. His line of argument partially explains the nomistic, even severe character of ultramontane nationalism. Laflèche's articulated its ethos: "our NATIONAL SALVATION depends no less than our eternal salvation on our *constant, unshakeable devotion to CATHOLICISM.*"¹⁰ In effect, he applied to French-Canadian society Cyprian's (c. 210-258) dictum, *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside the Church there is no salvation). Such reasoning comes as no surprise since Laflèche's theological literalism impelled him to extend Cyprian's principle to the temporal realm. Failure to do so would virtually condone secularism, the antithesis of ultramontanism. Laflèche ends his treatise *Quelques considérations* by presenting a strong national concept based on religion and the Hebrew scriptures:

In the conclusion of *Quelques considérations*, we reiterate that our mission as a people has an essentially religious character. Our national salvation depends just as much as our eternal salvation on our adherence to the faith of our fathers. As long as we dutifully follow in their footsteps heaven will bless us like them, and we will prosper as they did. We will walk forward with conviction and assurance towards the fulfillment of our destiny, which undoubtedly lies in the establishment of a *great Catholic nation* in the beautiful, lush valley of the St. Lawrence!¹¹

étudier avec soin par quels moyens la Providence à voulu conserver toujours vivace la nationalité de ce petit peuple" (L.-A. Laflèche, *Quelques considérations*, p. 105).

¹⁰"Notre SALUT NATIONAL non moins que notre salut éternel dépend de notre *attachement constant et inébranlable au CATHOLICISME*" (L. - F. Laflèche, *Quelques considérations*, p. 55).

¹¹"Nous le répétons en finissant: notre mission comme peuple a un caractère essentiellement religieux. Notre salut national tout aussi bien que notre salut éternel dépend de notre attachement à la foi de nos pères. Tant que nous serons fidèles à marcher sur leurs traces, comme eux le ciel nous bénira, comme eux nous prospérerons; nous avancerons d'un pas ferme et sûr vers l'accomplissement de nos destinées, qui sont sans aucun doute la formation d'une *grande nation Catholique* dans la belle et riche vallée du St. Laurent!" (L.-F. Laflèche, *Quelques considérations*, p. 261).

Laflèche therefore insisted on the integral relationship between national and spiritual salvation in order to prevent Quebec's secularization through nationalism based on a holistic soteriology inspired by the Old Testament.

5.2 Groulx's Old Testament Conception of French Canada

Young Groulx likened Laflèche to "the patriarchs of the Old Testament,"¹² which indicates that the ancient Hebrew covenant formed the frame of reference for Groulx's own nationalist convictions. Groulx drew this analogy from the book of Genesis, which traces the origins of the Israelites to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons.¹³ Laflèche visited the Séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse where Groulx studied. The latter's diary, memoirs, and a panegyric evoked the profound impression Laflèche made on him.¹⁴ In 1899, within months after Laflèche died, nineteen-year-old Groulx obtained Laflèche's *Conférences sur l'encyclique Humanum Genus* (1885), which Leo XIII issued (20 April 1884) in condemnation of Masonry's denial of revelation and espousal of a natural, rather than supernatural concept of humanity.¹⁵ Backed by a lifetime of vigorous pastoral care for his people and a prophetic vision for their future as a Catholic nation, Bishop Laflèche's teachings persuaded Groulx that 'Mother Church' could embrace the national hopes of French

¹²"les patriarches de l'ancienne loi" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal* 1: 340). See also *Journal* 2: 927: "Ce patriarche de la race française, bénit notre avenir comme faisaient les patriarches des premiers âges du monde quand ils étaient devenus plus vieux que le palmier du désert" See section 2.1.1

¹³Genesis 12-50.

¹⁴G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 339-340, 395; 2: 924-927. See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 318. Here Groulx vividly and accurately recalls Laflèche's polemical role in the 1896 federal elections, as well as Bishop Médard Émard's exceptional support of Laurier and the Liberals; see R. Perin, *Rome in Canada*, pp. 111-112, 136, 218-219.

¹⁵Groulx's copy of Laflèche's *Conférences* is at the CRLG.

Canadians and yet preserve the doctrinal integrity of Catholicism.¹⁶ Laflèche personified Groulx's Janus-faced tenet of "religion and homeland."¹⁷ This motto echoed the sentiment throughout turn-of-the-century Canada that "nationalism was a spiritual matter."¹⁸ Years later, under Groulx's editorship, *L'Action française* featured articles on Laflèche,¹⁹ and in his memoirs Groulx pointed out that he had derived the theological origins of his nationalist doctrine from Laflèche long before he knew anything of Charles Maurras.²⁰

Groulx inherited Laflèche's biblical model of French-Canadian society. Like Laflèche, Groulx perceived French Canada through the prism of the Hebrew scriptures. In his journal entry for July 13, 1896, Groulx described a local community event in

¹⁶Young Groulx considered Laflèche one of French Canada's foremost theologians. See G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 395; see also R. Perin, *Rome in Canada*, pp. 77, 79.

¹⁷"La religion et la patrie" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 144). See also 1: 294: "les choses saintes de ma nationalité et de ma religion;" 1: 319: "la Patrie et Dieu;" 1: 338; "saintes choses de ma foi et de ma nationalité;" 1: 341; "En servant bien son Dieu on sert toujours mieux son pays;" 1: 345: "la patrie et la religion;" E. Dubois, *Le petit séminaire de Sainte-Thérèse 1825-1925*, p. 216: "Religio et Patria"; L. Groulx, *Une croisade d'adolescents*, p. 128, *Le credo du jeune homme-apôtre*: "Je crois en Dieu; je crois en Jésus-Christ; je crois en l'Église infaillible et immortelle. Je crois à mon pays; je veux qu'il soit toujours, dans mon coeur, mon premier amour après Dieu".

¹⁸Mary Vipond, "Canadian National Consciousness and the Formation of the United Church of Canada," in Mark G. McGowan and David B. Marshall, eds., *Prophets, Priests, and Prodigals: Readings in Canadian Religious History, 1608 to Present*, p. 168; (see also pp. 167, 174, 178, 181); J. Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, pp. 96-97, 110; Moir, ed. *The Cross in Canada*, p. 203; Careless, Brown, *The Canadians*, pp. 594-595; Cyril Powles, "The Anglican Church and Canadian Culture," in Robert E. VanderVennen, ed., *Church and Canadian Culture*, p. 20; John Gwynne-Timothy "The Evolution of Protestant Nationalism," in Philip LeBlanc, Arnold Edinborough, eds., *One Church, Two Nations?*, pp. 43, 53; Stewart Crysdale "Upheaval and Integration" in P. LeBlanc, A. Edinborough, eds., *One Church, Two Nations?*, p. 134; H. H. Walsh, *The Christian Church in Canada*, pp. 229, 237-238, 269-270, 275-276, 278-279, 288, 299, 304, 334; John S. Moir, *Enduring Witness. A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada*, pp. 135, 165, 167, 181-182, 185, 194, 198; N. Keith Clifford, *The Resistance to Church Union in Canada 1904-1939*, pp. 18, 34, 136, 212, 237-238; N. G. Smith, "The Presbyterian Tradition in Canada," in John Webster Grant, ed., *The Churches and the Canadian Experience* pp. 48-49, 51; Goldwin French, "The People Called Methodists in Canada," in J. W. Grant, ed., *The Churches and the Canadian Experience* p. 81; H. H. Walsh, "A Canadian Christian Tradition," J. W. Grant, ed., *The Churches and the Canadian Experience*, pp. 147, 155; Brian J. Fraser, *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915*, pp. x, xii-xiii, 17, 36, 50-51, 66, 71, 80, 83-85, 88-90, 114-117, 131-32, 155, 161, 175.

¹⁹CRLG, L. Groulx's papers, Adélarde Dugré to Lionel Groulx, March 2, 1924; June 26, 1924; July 14, 1924; Lionel Groulx's letter to Adélarde Dugré, July 4, 1925; see Adélarde Dugré, "Mgr Laflèche," *AF*, 12

distinctly Old Testament terms: “Yesterday our Vaudreuil parish held a party for the Campeau family. Around these parts the Campeau family represents what the tribe of Levi represented in ancient Israel. It alone has provided more than six Levites for the Church and several nuns for the cloister. It is a privileged family.”²¹ As this scriptural analogy indicates, the sixteen-year-old Groulx already conceived his compatriots as the ‘elect,’ while those French Canadians who took holy orders symbolized the elite of God’s ‘chosen people’; they were like the Levites who ministered in the sanctuary of biblical Israel. By identifying the Church and its clergy with Israel and the Levites, Groulx seemingly mixed metaphors. Yet, this association makes sense in the Catholic ecclesiological scheme which “presupposes that the definitive historical roots of the Church were first in Israel.”²² The catechism Groulx studied at Ste-Thérèse went to great length to establish the continuity between ‘the religion of Israel’ and Catholicism and associated this Catholic priesthood and eucharist with the Levites and Mosaic ritual sacrifice,²³ “Far from being contrary to the religion of Moses and the patriarchs, the Catholic religion constitutes nothing other than their development and ultimate

(juillet-décembre 1924): 101-16. Adélar Dugré, “Mgr Laflèche, le patriote,” *AF*, 12 (juillet-décembre 1924): 162-72. Adélar Dugré, “Mgr Laflèche, l’orateur,” *AF*, 12 (juillet-décembre 1924): 225-236.

²⁰Groulx, *Mémoires*, 1: 79.

²¹“Hier, en notre paroisse de Vaudreuil, c’était la fête de la famille Campeau. La famille Campeau par ici est ce qu’était la tribu de Lévi au vieux temps d’Israël. Elle seule a fourni plus de six lévites à l’Église et plusieurs soeurs au cloître: c’est une famille privilégiée.” (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 222).

²²Louis Bouyer, “Universalism,” in *Dictionary of Theology*, p. 453; Joseph H. Crehan, “Church,” in H. Francis Davis, Aidan Williams, I. Thomas, Joseph Crehan, eds., *A Catholic Dictionary of Theology*, 4 vols., v. 2: *Catechism-Heaven*, pp. 44-45; “Church,” in K. Rahner, H. Vorgrimler, *Concise Theological Dictionary*, p. 71.

²³“Et tous les jours encore, par le ministère de ses Prêtres, qui étendent les mains sur le pain et sur le vin avant de les consacrer, comme les prêtres de l’ancienne Loi les étendaient sur les victimes avant de les immoler, il continue sur nos autels, mais sous une autre forme, ce même sacrifice” (É. Barthe, A. Fabre, *Catéchisme du catéchiste ou explication raisonnée de la doctrine chrétienne*, 1: 238).

completion.”²⁴ This catechism devoted considerable attention to the Old Testament,²⁵ which partially explains young Groulx’s familiarity with the Jewish religion as presented in the Hebrew scriptures.

Groulx did not encounter the ancient Hebrew scriptures only through his catechism; he read them himself. The Old Testament narratives so permeated young Groulx’s thought that he perceived not only French Canada but also events in his life through the prism of the Hebrew scriptures. In a letter dated January 12, 1897, Groulx described the all-night conversations of his classmates in terms of the biblical account of Joshua 10:12-13: “On several occasions we also profaned the evening sabbath in order to have more time. If anyone could have done like Joshua at Gibeon and said to the sun: ‘Sun, *stop here...*’, there would have been no need to burn the midnight oil. But where to find another Joshua?”²⁶ As Groulx’s memoirs show, he looked back a half-century to his translation from his home diocese of Valleyfield to the archdiocese of Montreal. Groulx noted, in reference to archbishop Napoléon-Paul Bruchési (1855-1939): “Most of all I remain deeply grateful that the archbishop brought me out of Egypt and called me to Montreal.”²⁷ Groulx paralleled this event in his life to the biblical exodus of Israel, which of course was the watershed of their history. The exodus also had a New Testament equivalent in the Gospels. The return of the Christ-

²⁴“la Religion catholique ... loin d’être contraire soit à la religion mosaïque, soit à la Religion patriarcale, n’en est que le développement et le complément définitif” (É. Barthe, A. Fabre, *Catéchisme du catéchiste*, 1: 221).

²⁵É. Barthe, A. Fabre, *Catéchisme du catéchiste* 1: 13, 16-18, 65 n.1, 158, 166, 169-170, 176, 179, 185-193, 197, 201-206, 228-232, 236-241.

²⁶“Aussi avons-nous profané maintes fois le repos de la nuit pour prolonger le temps. Qui aurait pu faire comme Josué, à Gabaon et dire au Soleil: «Soleil, *stop here*, arrête ici», pas n’eût été besoin de faire le midi le coup de minuit. Mais où prendre un Josué?” (G. Huot, J. Lalonde-Rémillard, P. Trépanier, eds. *Correspondance*, 1: 721).

²⁷“Je garde surtout une gratitude profonde à l’archevêque qui m’a tiré d’Égypte et appelé à Montréal” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 2: 260).

child from Egypt was compared to the exodus of Israel in the Old Testament, “out of Egypt have I called my son”(Matt. 2:15). This scriptural metaphor suited Groulx because he believed his transfer to the archdiocese of Montreal was the turning point in his career, so that he could fulfill his divine destiny as prophet to the French-Canadian people.

Groulx considered French Canada the Israel of North America. The French Canadians represented a part of that continuum inasmuch as the Old Testament law culminated in Catholicism, fulfilling the ancient Jewish faith. According to this rationale there is only one true faith, so that Christianity supersedes Judaism. He compared the ecclesiastical leaders of French Canada to the patriarchs of Israel in the Old Testament. He regarded Catholicism as the covenant between God and French Canadians. They must live according to Catholic precepts, so that divine law constitutes the law of the land for French Canada as a nation. Groulx combined Jewish and Christian metaphors of patriarchs, councils, prophets, and doctors, derived from ancient Israel and the early church, and the separation of the nation from others in order to preserve its integrity. The two were reconcilable since the law must be kept in order to be a national witness to God and divine truth. Only in this Jewish context can one understand Groulx’s interpretation of the gospel as the law for French Canadians. Far from being nihilistically anti-semitic, as Delisle contends, Groulx actually sought to emulate, indeed appropriate, for French Canadians the religio-national model of Israel. Moreover, this parallel explains Groulx’s *angst* that French Canada, like Israel, would incur God’s wrath through materialistic idolatry. God would reject Quebec too, if it did not live up to its spiritual calling.

With the influence of Laflèche and his own studies, Groulx's conceptualization of French Canada as analogous to Israel remained a constant throughout his lifetime. Thus, as editor of *L'Action française*, Groulx supervised the writing of a piece that explicitly compared French-speaking Catholics in North America to the Jews of the Bible. This analogy proved all the more revealing in view of the fact that the article appeared amidst the 1922 proposal by the leaders of *L'Action française* to consider political independence for Quebec. The piece opened with the following declaration:

To prepare this article on the role of the Franco-American priest in the struggle for the *survivance*, we reread the two books of Maccabees and will tell you why. As a philosophy student our first reading of these books struck us because of the similarity between us and the situation of Jews during that period under Greek domination and the Hellenism which pervaded Palestine. Just as Gentile customs threatened the Jews in 200 BC so too we Franco-Americans find ourselves surrounded by trends, ideas, and mores that pose a threat to our ethnic community ...

...Like the Hebrews, we are a profoundly religious people. Our *survivance* as a distinct people inextricably entails the preservation of our faith, traditions, language, and ethos.²⁸

²⁸“En vue de la présente chronique sur le rôle du prêtre franco-américain dans la lutte pour la *survivance*, nous avons relu les deux livres des Machabées. Et voici pourquoi: Elève de philosophie nous avons été frappé à la première lecture de ces livres par la similitude de situation entre celle des Juifs de cette époque, sous la domination grecque et l'infiltration de l'hellénisme en Palestine, et la nôtre, Franco-Américains, enveloppés que nous sommes par des courants d'idées et de mœurs aussi menaçants pour notre entité ethnique que les coutumes des gentils pour les Juifs de l'an 200 avant Jésus-Christ... Tel le peuple hébreux nous sommes un peuple profondément religieux. Notre *survivance* comme race distincte est intimement liée à la conservation de notre foi, de nos mœurs, de notre langue, de nos caractéristiques propre” (Charles Dollard, pseudonym of Adélar Duplessis, “Le rôle du prêtre franco-américain,” in *AF* 7/5 mai 1922): 281).

Drawn directly from the Hebrew scriptures this biblical rationale for French-Canadian nationalism belies the anti-semitic “delirium of extremist right-wing nationalism”²⁹ that Esther Delisle and other writers impute to Groulx.

The historic origins of French Canada accounted for the surpassing excellence of the Catholic faith in Quebec. Catholicism was unadulterated, pure in New France as nowhere else in the Western hemisphere. The liberalism and attendant secularism of post-eighteenth century Europe had not tainted their faith. Catholicism in New France exemplified the purest goal of Christianity: “I would even dare say if ever there was a corner of North America, where a group of people ardently attempted to integrate the spiritual into the secular and temporal, which is, without doubt, the supreme task of Christianity, it occurred in New France.”³⁰ For Groulx, the Catholicism of New France surpassed that of France, since New France had not been tainted by the Renaissance and Protestantism.

Israel provides the paradigm whereby Groulx argued biblically for a concept of the nation as the divinely chosen people whose solidarity is religious as well as ethnic and whose society is oriented to the primacy of the spiritual. Israel provided Groulx the requisite biblical precedent to argue that God’s people are an ethnic and a national as well as a spiritual community. The biblical archetype of a spiritually privileged branch of the elect allowed Groulx to reason allegorically that French Canadians are likewise the spiritually privileged among Catholics. He applied Old Testament concepts literally to contemporary French Canada. His belief in a social

²⁹ See E. Delisle, *The Traitor and the Jew: Anti-Semitism and extremist right-wing nationalism in Quebec from 1929 to 1939*.

hierarchy, both ethnic and spiritual, was based on spiritual election. Indeed, spirituality and ethnicity go hand in hand in the Old Testament. These two parameters define God's people. Groulx transposed this rationale to French Canadians.

Israel, as the people of God, incarnates the spiritual in every sphere of their collective existence. This religious and ethnic social model represents a spirituo-national incarnation. Its customs, language, history, mores, and traditions are inextricably linked to the primacy of the spiritual. The cornerstone of Jewish national solidarity is their religion; Groulx wanted that for French Canadians too. Groulx envied Jewish solidarity because it is both spiritual and cultural. It transcended different nations where they were dispersed, and for whom Israel represents their common homeland. Groulx wanted to create a spirituo-cultural entity like that of the Jews. He sought to promote a French-Canadian ethos and thereby foster a sense of belonging and collective identity in North America.

Groulx believed that in biblical Israel everything in society related to God, so that the primacy of the spiritual constituted its organizing principle as a society. Biblical Israel epitomized a distinct society in which the inextricable interrelationship of religion, ethnicity, culture, language, and nationality reciprocally reinforced social solidarity and assured *la survivance*. Groulx also reasoned that Israel, like France later, ceased to be God's people when the spiritual no longer had primacy. The proposition that New France was the only place in North America where the spiritual invested the temporal allowed Groulx to argue that Quebec was the New Israel. He implicitly

³⁰“S’il y a un petit coin de terre de l’Amérique du Nord ... où un groupe humain ait tenté avec ferveur l’insertion du spirituel dans le terrestre et le temporel, tâche supérieure du christianisme en définitive, c’est en Nouvelle France que le fait s’est produit” (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 52).

conceived the Middle Ages as an ideal perpetuated by the Catholic Reformation in seventeenth-century France and transposed to New France.

French Canada corresponds to Israel, the spiritual homeland, indeed the 'promised land.' Groulx believed the spirituality of New France marked French Canadians to such an extent that Catholicism incarnated in their culture. In speaking of New France's sociological legacy Groulx stated:

Catholicism informed our public and private mores, our cultural, judicial, and political institutions; not alone, but more than any other factor, it gave us our social structures, the type of family and parish which continue to elicit the admiration of sociologists ... The apostolic impulse still lies at the core of our ethos, and the faith of our forebears is so inextricably woven into the warp and woof of our lives that to dissociate our Catholic and French natures from one another would entail the demise of both.³¹

Catholicism so inculturated the soul and spirit of French Canadians that the two were virtually indistinguishable. Catholicism incarnated in the institutions of New France, in its social infrastructure. In French Canada alone could an orthodox society exist in North America. Groulx declared:

As I have said so many times before, our noble task is to defend and preserve not only a French people but also a small Catholic people, indeed the only one in North America with the potential to create a society according to the highest standards of

³¹"Le catholicisme imprégnera nos moeurs individuelles et publiques, nos institutions culturelles, juridiques, politiques; il nous donnera ... plus que tout autre facteur, des cadres sociaux, un type de famille, un type de paroisse qui excitent encore l'admiration des sociologues ... L'aspiration apostolique nous est restée chevillée au plus profond de l'âme; et la vieille croyance est si emmêlée à la contexture de nos vies, que dissocier notre âme catholique de notre âme française, ou celle-ci de celle-là, fait s'évanouir l'une et l'autre" (CRLG, L. Groulx's papers, "L'Originalité de Notre Histoire," pp. 34-35, *Spicilèges* 1945. See also L. Groulx, *Constantes de vie*, p. 120).

orthodoxy, which would in turn provide a superb affirmation of the Church.³²

Only Quebec could create an orthodox culture because of the primacy of Catholicism in French Canada. For Groulx, Catholicism was superior in Quebec because the French-Canadian milieu was more conducive to the faith than anywhere else in North America. Only in this light can one understand Groulx's insistence on the uniqueness of French Canada and why he argued it was a 'distinct society.' French Canada was more propitious to the full social realization of Catholicism due to its spiritual history and the church's prominent role in contemporary Quebec through its social responsibility for health, education, and welfare. Since Catholic mores, customs, traditions were the warp and woof of French-Canadian culture, Catholicism occupied a uniquely central position in French Canada, whereas in much more religiously pluralistic English Canada and the United States, the social context did not especially favor Catholicism. Groulx maintained that Quebec was a 'distinct society' not primarily because it was French, but because it was a milieu in which Catholicism had incarnated more than anywhere else in North America. In this light one understands Groulx's criticism of American Catholics, as well as his antagonism towards Irish Catholics in Canada. Their presence undermined his contention that French-Canadians were unique in the North American context. He could not assert French-Canadian superiority simply on the basis of their Catholicism, because millions of Americans were also Catholics. However, he had to

³²"Nous n'avons pas à défendre et à sauver - et c'est là notre magnifique tâche - uniquement un peuple français, mais un petit peuple catholique, le seul en Amérique du Nord, ai-je encore dit tant de fois, capable de créer une civilisation selon les normes les plus orthodoxes et qui pourrait rendre à l'Église un superbe témoignage" (CRLG, L. Groulx's papers, L. Groulx, "Rôle d'une société nationale en l'an 1958." *Revue Dominicaine* [septembre 1958]: 12. *Spicilèges* 1958).

be careful not to impinge the transcendence of the faith, which would discredit his religious rationale for French-Canadian nationalism.

Groulx's allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament allowed him to argue for an ethnic definition of God's people even though the New Testament has no ethnic prime referent similar to the Jews of the Old Testament. He needed this ethnic model to argue that French Canadians are uniquely God's, in the Old Testament sense.

Groulx compared the role of French-Canadian Catholics in twentieth-century North America to that of the Jews who became Christians and apostles in the Roman Empire. He emphasized that the first Christians were Jews. Despite Delisle's contention that Groulx was rabidly anti-Semitic at the time he wrote *Orientations* (1935) he repeatedly compared French Canadians to Jews in this book. He could merely have referred to French Canadians as apostles, which he did in many of his other works such as *Le Canada français missionnaire* (1962). Yet in *Orientations* he continually associated French Canadians with Jews and obviously considered Jew a synonym for 'apostle.' He purposely did this since Jew, unlike apostle, is both an ethnic and a religious designation. Groulx intentionally equated French Canadians with Jews in order to argue that as an ethnic group, the former are to twentieth-century North America what the Jews were to the Roman empire. They are the modern, North American Jews. This concurs with the New Testament principle that Christians replaced Jews as God's people and divine envoys to the world.³³

Groulx's concept that the Jews had been providentially replaced as an ethnic group by another race, namely the French Canadians, goes beyond the pale of Christian scriptures and traditions. However, this is not new in the history of Christianity. He

specifically pointed to the first Christians who were exclusively Jews, hence a single ethnic group. Groulx interpreted apostolic succession as an ethnic phenomenon. Following this rationale he contended that French Canadians were the modern, apostolic race; they divinely assumed the apostolic mantle of the Jews. Traditional Christian supersessionism, contrary to the delirium Delisle attributes to Groulx, acknowledged the Jews' original divine election. The Jews had been God's special people; however they were supplanted by Christians, specifically, Groulx contended, by French-Canadians in contemporary North America. The Jews' materialism caused them to reject the spiritual messiah, Jesus Christ, and forfeit their divine election.³⁴³⁵

Why is ethnicity so crucial to Groulx's scheme for *la survivance*? Why must Catholicism incarnate in an ethnic group, which must concretize in a nation-state? Ethnicity is incarnation on a collective scale. What a flesh and blood human being was to the original Incarnation, a race is to Catholicism. The spiritual collectively assumes humanity. The Jews proved that God dealt in terms of entire peoples. The Catholic ethos means that the faith phenomenon is not merely a personal matter; the community is involved. Ethnicity and nationality are essential to catholicity, because they assure its corporate nature. Ethnicity and nationality socialize the faith and thereby prevent its privatization. Ethnicity and nationality assure the integration of the faith in culture and society whereas secularism marginalizes the faith. Indeed, through an ethnically and nationally inculturated Catholicism, the faith becomes central to society. Through

³³ According to Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Jews were witnesses to all the nations.

³⁴ In 1935 Groulx asserted in reference to the Roman empire: "Quelle n'a pas été, sur l'effroyable décadence de ce même empire, l'influence de quelques petits Juifs venus de Palestine, sans bourse et sans prestige, ne portant dans leur besace que la Vérité laquelle est à nous comme elle était à eux et dont, comme eux et au même titre, nous sommes les héritiers et devons être les apôtres?" (L. Groulx, *Orientations*, pp. 47-48).

ethnic and national inculturation, Catholicism becomes the substance of culture. Ethnicity and nationality are the means whereby the faith works out its social implications and attains its corporate, that is catholic ends. Ethnicity incarnates universality just as Christ's human nature incarnated divinity. For Groulx, the French typified "the universal race."³⁶

Groulx favorably compared French Canadians to Jews. Both were God's chosen people, a spiritual as well as an ethnic community. In no other people is the spiritual ethnically incarnate. The Jews are the religio-ethnic archetype for French Canadians. Groulx is anti-Semitic in the traditional Christian sense. Although he gave credence to their divine election, he believed Christians superseded Jews as God's chosen people. Nevertheless Groulx concluded that Jews and French Canadians shared fundamental affinities. In a speech given November 25, 1925, he declared, "our people are a chosen people. A splendid statement by Leon Bloy could also apply to us: 'The French ethos is so separate and distinct that one can only compare it to the Jewish ethos.' Both of them seem marked with the seal of *divine destiny*, an indelible, undeniable decree which ties their fortunes to providence."³⁷ Like Jews, French share separatism as their common ethos, an ideal Groulx affirmed for the modern State of Israel in a speech given November 11, 1953 at the University Club in Boston during a conference held by the *Société historique franco-américaine*, Groulx held up the

³⁶"La race de l'universel" (Alonié de Lestres (pseudonym of Lionel Groulx), *L'Appel de la race*, p. 31).

³⁷"Notre race est une race élue. À nous aussi peut s'appliquer le mot magnifique de Léon Bloy: 'L'essence française est une chose tellement à part, tellement réservée, qu'on ne trouve à lui comparer que l'essence juive. L'estampille de l'une et de l'autre paraît être la *nécessité divine*, l'ineffacable et irréfragable décret qui les associe pour toujours aux vicissitudes providentielles" (L. Groulx, *Dix ans d'Action française*, p. 269).

modern State of Israel as a model for North American francophone Catholics to emulate:

It is never too late when it comes to the faith of your children, the faith of a generation, indeed the faith of an entire people. Someone recently wrote that 'an act of pure faith' gave birth to the young State of Israel, the work of a handful of men 'motivated by an unflinchingly courageous and clear-sighted ideal'... Could one not find a handful of such men among you who are sons of the French?³⁸

The charges of antisemitism leveled against Lionel Groulx by Esther Delisle and others must come to terms with this element in his thought.

Groulx applied Old Testament terms and concepts to Catholicism in French Canada; indeed, he had a definite penchant for the Old Testament. His hermeneutic is literal, almost fundamentalist. He understood the faith in terms of the Old Covenant, that is to say, Catholicism is the divine law for the new chosen people. The book of Acts in the New Testament is similar to the Old Testament in that it presents the efforts of the early, hence distinctly Jewish Church, to apply the faith to all dimensions of the Christian community. Groulx practically made the gospel the law in that he believed its precepts must be implemented into the society of God's people. Indeed Acts represents the transition between Judaism and Christianity, where the two are as yet held in dynamic tension. Groulx offered a biblical model that combines Jewish socio-cultural practice of the faith with the Christian gospel. Little wonder Acts was Groulx's favorite New Testament book, supporting his own attempt to apply integrally the Christian faith

³⁸ "Il n'est jamais trop tard quand il s'agit de la foi de vos enfants, de la foi d'une génération, de la foi de tout un peuple. Le jeune Etat d'Israël, écrivait-on récemment, fut le résultat d'un 'pur acte de foi,' oeuvre d'une poignée d'hommes animés 'par un idéal indomptable, courageux, lucide'... Cette poignée d'hommes, est-il impossible qu'on la trouve parmi ces fils de Français que vous êtes? (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 178).

to society. For Groulx Christianity was both gospel and law, a social ethic for the life of the Catholic nation, as in ancient Israel.

Groulx considered French Canadians a people of the decalogue. In a series of lectures on Canadian history given at Université de Montréal in 1920-1921, he concluded that, despite their trials and tribulations throughout history, the future belonged to French Canadians. He exhorted his listeners:

Take care that from a lack of faith you fail to see how invaluable to the world is the existence of a small nation which follows the decalogue, maintains a just balance between authority and freedom, strongly upholds the foundations of society, and thus serves as a living apologia for the merits of catholicism.³⁹

Through their submission to the divine law, French Canadians could impact the modern world as much as the Jews did in antiquity. They must emulate the biblical Jews and recreate albeit on a Christian basis, the model society of the Hebrew scriptures. These are archetypes for French Canada and its people. In sum, for Groulx Catholic doctrine must become social praxis, the decalogue must provide the first principles of French-Canadian society. As God's people, it must become their civil law. Like the Jews in the Hebrew scriptures, the French Canadians represent a covenant people. They must consequently keep the divine alliance and submit to God's law. The impetus to make divine law social practice is grounded in the Old Testament. Groulx had a penchant for the law, in particular he interpreted the gospel as law. In his youth, Groulx vacillated between a legal career and the priesthood.

³⁹“Prenons garde par manque de foi, de ne pas voir assez de ce que vaut au monde l'existence d'un petit peuple soumis au décalogue équilibrant justement l'autorité et la liberté, défenseur jaloux des assises sociales, apologétique vivante du catholicisme et de ses hautes vertus” (L. Groulx, *Vers l'émancipation (première période): Cours d'histoire du Canada à l'université de Montréal 1920-1921*, p. 298).

The notion of covenant establishes and maintains the unique relationship between God and French Canadians. Completing the New Testament concept of apostolicity, French Canadians can remain God's elect only as long as they practice the divine law in their society. Covenant theology is not normally associated with Catholicism, but rather with Reformed, specifically Calvinist theology. Since there was little or no precedent for the covenant concept in Catholicism, Groulx resorted to biblical precedents from the Old Testament. Groulx's intent was clear. For the elect, God's law is not a private matter, but social, like the Mosaic covenant. Like the Jews of ancient Israel, French Canadians could not be fully God's people without a divine law for their nation. Groulx conceived the Gospel as the law for society, as a social principle. He insisted on a nation informed by the Gospel, whose precepts would have force of law, a nation where the Gospel was the law of the land.⁴⁰

With the advent of Christianity, France was appointed to evangelize Europe, and finally in the New World, French Canada was God's national witness. This special status was not unconditional, much less guaranteed. Like ancient Israel, French Canada lived in the dynamic tension between divine election and reprobation. Groulx used history to argue that French Canadians were God's people and also to exhort them to live up to its calling or to suffer God's punishment like the Jews. Groulx believed his task was to keep French Canada true to its divine calling, through his exhortation to high moral standards, doctrinal orthodoxy, and social conformity to the precepts of

⁴⁰“En se souvenant pourtant des prérogatives d'une race latine et de toute race vraiment humaine, qui au-dessus de l'intelligence maîtresse de la terre et de l'argent, apercevrait l'esprit de Dieu, la loi de son Évangile et ne voudrait réaliser que dans cette lumière souveraine l'ordre et le progrès de la patrie? (CRLG. L. Groulx's papers, *Spicilège* 1924, *Extrait de Le Semeur*, 21/3 octobre 1924).

Catholicism. Young Groulx elaborated on God's choice of French Canada in his journal, reflecting on this dual theme of divine election and reprobation:

In the light of history no doubt remains about the mission of France in Europe. Chosen by God to serve as the preeminent vehicle of faith in the historic Christ, as well as the sword and shield of Catholic righteousness, France is the Israel of the Christian era. Furthermore, our young country is a child of France so that French Canada is an heir of the privileges of its motherland. God cannot deprive us of an inheritance which is rightly ours since, thank heavens, nothing has ever taken place in French Canada that would warrant God stripping us of our special rights.⁴¹

French Canadians had to be the apostles of spiritual primacy or they could not survive. According to Groulx they were grafted in because the Jews had become materialistic. French Canadians would also forfeit their election if they became carnally minded like the rest of North America. French Canadians needed to confirm their election by practicing and propagating the primacy of the spiritual. In Groulx's schema, they must walk a tightrope between apostasy and apostolicity. Since they must propagate the truth throughout North America, they need to be singularly orthodox. French Canada must separate from White Anglo-Saxon Protestant Canada, just as Israel was divinely commanded to separate from its Gentile neighbors under pain of divine judgement. They risked the loss of their election, their religion, in short their survival, unless they separated. As the national prophet, Groulx's role was to warn the elect not to turn away from the Lord, which vicariously meant the church. He called the nation back to God

⁴¹"La mission de la France dans l'Europe n'est plus douteuse devant l'histoire. La France, c'est l'Israël des temps nouveaux choisi par Dieu pour être le suprême boulevard de la foi du Christ venu, l'épée et le bouclier de la justice catholique. Et notre jeune pays, c'est un fils de la France. Le Canada français est donc héritier des privilèges de la mère patrie. Dieu ne peut nous avoir déshérités d'un patrimoine qui nous revient légitimement: Dieu merci jamais rien de ce qui vit sous le ciel du Canada français n'a mérité que Dieu nous dépouille de nos droits privilégiés" (G. Huot, R. Bergeron, eds., *Journal*, 1: 393-94).

and he exhorted them to live out that morality which befitted the people of God, so that they could fulfill their divine destiny.

Israel represents an entire people who served God, rather than one class of individuals, the clergy. Modelling a nation entirely at the service of God, Groulx applied the spiritually holistic ethos of Israel to French-Canadian society. In the spirit of Israel he articulated his understanding of social catholicism that everything is sacred. Nothing should escape the primacy of the spiritual; nothing is secular. Everything in the nation is 'holy to the Lord.' This is the 'totalistic' impetus of Groulx's Catholicism.

5.3 Mission and 'Survivance'

Groulx's inaugural article as editor of *L'Action française* in January 1921, made it clear that under his guidance this nationalist periodical would endeavor to lead the French-Canadian people to fulfill their God-given mission.⁴² Groulx endeavored to preserve French Canada for God. He encouraged Quebec to separate so it would be a 'distinct society' for God. The separation is not just political from Canada; ultimately it was to be spiritual from apostate North American society. The fundamental concept in both Judaism and Christianity is that of holiness, or being set apart as a people to accomplish God's will. Groulx juxtaposed apostate North America to apostolic French

⁴²“Conserver à Dieu un peuple qui glorifie et respecte l'ordre souverain qui, dans l'apostasie générale des nations, continue de professer la vérité unique de rendre hommage à Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ, nous paraît une oeuvre qui l'emporte infiniment sur le rêve d'une grandeur politique et matérielle. Et voilà comment notre effort ne s'arrête pas à cette entreprise de reconstruction française comme à une fin. Les nations aussi bien que les individus sont soumises aux fins suprêmes; une nation n'a même de raison d'être que dans le respect et la glorification de cet ordre. Et c'est pourquoi nous nous attachons à l'Église catholique, non pas seulement comme ... à la première gardienne de l'ordre moral, mais parce que, de l'ensemble harmonieux des vertus qu'elle propose aux peuples dépend la prospérité sociale. Nous nous attachons à l'Église ... parce qu'en elle seule les nations atteignent les fins de Dieu et qu'avant tout nous voulons, comme catholiques, que notre peuple accomplisse sa destinée chrétienne. Et ... c'est parce que nous croyons que l'oeuvre du peuple canadien français sera d'autant plus large et féconde qu'il aura mieux préservé ... ses admirables qualités latines et apostoliques, ses affinités avec le catholicisme, c'est

Canada. His insistence on orthodoxy in Quebec indicates how fully he believed the spiritual could be integrated in the temporal. The danger is not simply temporal assimilation, but more importantly spiritual assimilation; to become like the rest of North American society is to apostatize. Like Bourassa, Groulx followed the religionist rationale that French Canada must survive for the good of the Catholic faith. Assimilation was not merely a matter of losing French language and culture; it would be ultimately *perdition* in the religious sense. So completely did Groulx equate assimilation with apostasy, that to assimilate North American culture was tantamount to abandoning the faith and God.

French Canada was not only the nation of the decalogue, but also the base for the evangelization of North America. The Gospel therefore was its *raison d'être*, as well as its social law. Groulx referred to the founders of New France and asserted their faithfulness to the Gospel. The French Empire in North America was to be the empire of the Gospel.⁴¹ Religion motivated indeed justified French imperialism. The gospel warranted this because it redeemed humanity and established the primacy of the spiritual. Grant rightly pointed out how this vision informed latter French-Canadian nationalist consciousness. It was the French-Canadian equivalent of American 'manifest destiny.'

Apostolicity distinguished French Canada and Groulx interpreted its history in terms of mission. First its mission was to the aboriginal of New France, then to the rest of North America, and contemporarily to foreign countries. Groulx interpreted French-

pour toutes ces hautes raisons que nous voulons le garder français." (L. Groulx, *Dix ans d'Action française*, pp. 133-134.)

Canadian history as an ever-expanding mission from Quebec to the rest of the world. This originated in the missionary impetus that motivated the foundation of New France and its formative mystic phase. He perceived French-Canadian history as the origin and development of a missionary nation. In an address delivered on November 29, 1943, Groulx stated with regard to the history of French Canada:

If any force shaped this history, it is that of Catholicism. French Canada is, above all else, a child of the Church. Indeed an entire period of its history evolved out of an ethos of faith and mysticism. Its basic social institutions, mores, and traditions developed first and foremost from the spirit of Christianity and French law. If there exists one constant in the life of our small people it is their proselytism and missionary outreach. They began by evangelizing North American Indians, thereafter they supplied clergy for every diocese in Canada and much of the United States, more recently they have proven a nursery of missionaries for the conversion of pagan continents.⁴³

French Canadians constituted a missionary people, a proselytizing nation. For Groulx, only a culture that converts others can survive. Proselytism counteracts assimilation. Mission had to be the national goal of French Canada; otherwise it would cease to survive as a 'distinct society.' Groulx did not believe a secular will could be strong enough to sustain a 'distinct society.' As Fernand Dumont points out, Groulx did not believe French Canada could survive as a 'distinct society' without a transcendent

⁴³"Ils fondèrent au reste cette colonie pour en faire un appui de l'Évangile et jamais peuple conquérant n'a planté plus de croix dans son empire ..." (CRLG, L. Groulx's papers, "L'Almanach de la Langue française" 1925, "Les motifs de notre fierté." *Spicilèges* 1925).

⁴⁴"S'il est une ligne de force, dans ce passé, c'est le catholicisme. Le Canada français est, plus que toute chose, le fils de l'Eglise. Toute une époque de son histoire procède même d'une foi et d'un esprit mystiques. Ses institutions sociales fondamentales, ses moeurs, ses traditions, lui viennent en droite ligne de l'esprit chrétien et de son droit français. S'il est une constante dans la vie de notre petit peuple, c'est son prosélytisme et son expansion apostolique: évangéliste d'abord des Indiens de l'Amérique, pourvoyeur ensuite de pasteurs à tous les diocèses du Canada et d'une notable partie des Etats-Unis; puis,

motive. He could not envisage survival apart from Catholicism. The choice was clear: French Canada must convert, or it would be converted. There is no middle ground, especially not for a small people such as the French Canadians. Only by practicing mission could Quebec survive; mission played a crucial role in Groulx's schema for survival.

Groulx's concept of French Canada as a missionary nation followed in the tradition of Laflèche, Pâquet, and more immediately Henri Bourassa. "The diversity of their undertakings and our missionaries' aptitude for adapting to all the contingencies of the apostolate, perhaps best exemplify the character of Canadian missionary endeavors."⁴⁵ Bourassa's caveat at the outset of this study is the fidelity to their calling as a people. The role of missionary history is essential to the demonstration of this fidelity:

One should not interpret this, nor the many subsequent enumeration of men and women of French-Canadian nationality in religious orders, as an attempt in any way to belittle the merits of Catholics of other races. Each people has its own particular vocation. French Canadians inherited from their ancestors that apostolic spirit peculiar to the French nation. I simply wanted to demonstrate that they have not backslidden in this respect.⁴⁶

Missions constituted proof of their collective apostolic succession, "This prodigious expansion of French Catholic Canada bears eloquent witness to its illustrious origins

en ces derniers temps, pépinière d'apôtres pour la conversion des continents infidèles" (L. Groulx, *Constantes de vie*, p. 120).

⁴⁵"La caractéristique des missions canadiennes, qui est peut-être la diversité des oeuvres et la facilité d'adaptation de nos missionnaires à toutes les nécessités de l'apostolat" (H. Bourassa, *Le Canada apostolique: revue des oeuvres de missions des communautés franco-canadiennes*, p. 8).

⁴⁶"Qu'on ne voie pas ici, non plus que dans les fréquentes énumérations qui vont suivre de religieux et de religieuses de nationalité canadienne-française, le moindre dessein de rabaisser le mérite des catholiques d'autres races. À chaque peuple sa vocation particulière. Les Canadiens français ont hérité de leurs

and the fervour of its faith. It proves that New France remains the worthy daughter of Christian France.”⁴⁷ Bourassa concluded: “As it stands this study remains incomplete at best ... It will perhaps give rise to more far-reaching studies and works of greater substance, as the author sincerely hopes with all his heart.”⁴⁸

Groulx obviously updated Bourassa’s *Le Canada apostolique* in his own *Le Canada français missionnaire* published in 1962. Groulx wanted to assume Bourassa’s religio-nationalist mantle and to substantiate this theory in the midst of the Quiet Revolution by attempting to persuade French Canadians that mission was their destiny as a Catholic people. This spiritual concept was thought to be an alternative to the secular, nationalist self-understanding that the Quiet Revolution proposed to modern Quebec, thereby disproving Groulx’s contention that Catholicism and French character were indivisible in Quebec society. In *Le Canada français missionnaire*, Groulx interpreted French-Canadian history as the on-going expansion of Christian mission. Quebec was to be a spiritual entity established throughout North America by the efforts of Catholic, French-Canadian missionaries. The necessary dynamic of French-Canadian historical development is constant missionary expansion. The only way for French Canada to avoid assimilation by the North American White Anglo-Saxon Protestant empire is to maintain its missionary initiative and thereby counter the centripetal pull of the U.S.A.

ancêtres l’esprit apostolique propre à la nation française. Qu’ils n’ont pas dégénéré à cet égard, c’est ce que j’ai voulu démontrer, et pas autre chose” (H. Bourassa, *Le Canada apostolique*, p. 17 n.1).

⁴⁷“Cette merveilleuse expansion du Canada français et catholique témoigne hautement de l’intensité de sa foi et de la noblesse de ses origines. Elle prouve que la Nouvelle-France est restée la digne fille de la France chrétienne” (H. Bourassa, *Le Canada apostolique*, pp. 14-15).

⁴⁸“Telle quelle, cette étude est forcément bien incomplète...Peut-être suggèrera-t-elle des études plus approfondies et des travaux plus substantiels. C’est l’intime et ardent désir de l’auteur” (H. Bourassa, *Le Canada apostolique*, p. 8).

For Groulx, the divine mission of French Canada was fundamental to its nationalist movement; he employed interchangeably the words nationalism and patriotism. The French Empire in America was to be spiritually re-established through French-Canadian missionaries. The historical reality of the French presence throughout North America was to be a spiritual reality through French-Canadian mission. Groulx drew an analogy between ancient Rome and the modern American empire. The latter too was decadent and in need of the spiritual leaven of French-Canadian missionaries. But why could English-speaking Canadian and American Catholics not be missionaries to White Anglo-Saxon Protestant North America? Ethnicity was the crucial difference between them and Catholics in Quebec. For Groulx, their historical and contemporary missionary endeavors proved French Canadians' apostolic character. He did not realize this was part of the general missionary thrust which characterized Western society at the turn of the 19th century, not a phenomenon peculiar to French-Canadians. The work of K. S. Latourette makes this clear.

Groulx elevated the Franco-American empire to the invulnerable realm of the spiritual. The French in North America were becoming spiritually what they would have been temporally before the Conquest. Their empire is to be eternal, since it is a spiritual kingdom. Therefore no one could take it away from them. French Canada could spiritually, through mission, re-establish its spiritual preeminence in North America. Thereby it could fulfill its divine manifest destiny on this continent. What the British had wrenched from them, French Canadians now spiritually would reclaim by means of their missionary endeavors. Groulx wrote, in reference to French Canada:

Between the last quarter of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, the impetus of

the Spirit led it beyond its own continent. It took its place among the great missionary peoples of the world. It sought in effect to recreate its former empire, albeit this time on a higher, indeed a spiritual plane which knows no boundaries.⁴⁹

Groulx considered French-Canadian missions to the Northwest Territories, Labrador, and James Bay a spiritual replica of the historical expansion of the French in North America. French-Canadian missionaries thus represented the spiritual, contemporary counterpart to the historic founders of the French empire in North America; they spiritually replicated the historical exploits of the French on this continent. Groulx expressed this perspective in reference to a contemporary French-Canadian mission to the Far North.⁵⁰ Contrary to Richler's contention, mission, not maternity, was to be the means for the French to reconquer North America. According to the divine economy God worked primarily through the mission of a single, elect nation, in each successive era of divine-human relations. There was a collective apostolic succession, Groulx believed, not through the church, which did not exist until the Christian era, but through nations: first Israel, then France, and finally French Canada. Groulx believed God works not only through the church but also equally through a chosen people, who are missionaries to the world. In Groulx's missiological scheme, the church was primarily a spiritual witness and the nation a complementary temporal witness. Both the church and the nation were God's people.

⁴⁹“Vers le dernier quart du XIX^e siècle, et au début du XX^e, le souffle de l'Esprit l'entraîne hors de son continent. Il prend place parmi les grands peuples missionnaires du monde. Son empire de jadis il semble ... qu'il le veuille reconstituer sur un plan supérieur, le plan spirituel cette fois, avec des frontières indéfiniment extensibles” (L. Groulx, *Le Canada français missionnaire: une autre grande aventure*, pp. 9-10).

⁵⁰“Ainsi, sur la Baie James et sur le littoral du Labrador, et en la vaste presqu'île de l'Ungava, l'empire de la foi reconquerrait un autre morceau de l'ancien empire français” (L. Groulx, *Le Canada français missionnaire*, pp. 22-23).

The Quiet Revolution and the critique of his historiography forced Groulx to modify his view of French Canada as spiritually *sui generis*. This chastened his 'triumphalism' and forced him to rethink his conception of catholicity. It compelled him to catholicize rather than particularize the faith as he did in his earlier militantly nationalist days, when he tended to reduce Catholicism to its expression in French Canada. Rather than deductively argue that apostolicity is the vocation of French Canadians on the basis of their uniquely spiritual nature, Groulx then inductively reasoned that all Catholic peoples are divinely ordained to realize the redemption through mission.⁵¹

Whereas in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, Groulx criticized other Catholics and distinguished sharply between American, Spanish, Irish-Canadian, and French-Canadian Catholics, by the 1960s he considered them all equal. His perspective was accordingly more catholic and less particularistic. The Quiet Revolution humbled his triumphalist concept of French Canadians as superior to all other Catholics and as integrally Catholic in a way which was true of no other Catholic community in North America. As a result, he no longer considered apostolicity the religious particularism of French Canadians. This represented a significant shift in Groulx's view of Catholicism and of French Canada as well. In the heady days of the Quiet Revolution, he warned his

⁵¹"Car tout peuple catholique, même le plus minime, et quoi qu'en pensent, de ce temps-ci, certains apprentis-théologiens, est investi d'une mission sacrée sur cette terre, mission qui n'est pas un mythe, à moins que l'on ignore les exigences élémentaires de son baptême et de son appartenance au Christ; mission qui ne confère nul droit à l'orgueil ni à quelque sentiment de supériorité, mais qui impose d'irrévocables et exaltantes responsabilités dans l'oeuvre de la rédemption du monde" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, "Allocution au banquet du cinquantenaire du Devoir au Reine Elizabeth" 31 janvier 1960, p. 4, *Spicilèges 1960*).

audience in an address given May 17, 1960, to return to a spiritual collective self-understanding, as well as a Catholic social orientation and vocation.⁵²

In the latter years of his life, he wrote, "Catholic peoples thus have a mission. And that mission is to secure the realization of the Redemption. They will determine the outcome of the human drama in history."⁵³ He realized Quebec was fast and fully conforming to modern, secular, Western society, that Quebec was neither morally nor spiritually exceptional. Groulx previously argued that French Canadians were a uniquely apostolic people. Now he argued that they must fulfill their mission because all Catholic peoples are responsible for the redemption. Before he contended they must carry out this mission because virtually they alone constituted an apostolic people. Now they must accomplish it because this is the first principle of all Catholic peoples, not just French Canadians. Groulx strategically shifted his focus from that which was ostensibly particular to French Canadian to that which is universal and therefore applicable to all Catholic nations. Yet in the Christian scheme there is no Catholic people or nation *per se*, except in the sense of the inculturation of Catholicism.

Groulx no longer based his missionary rationale on the supposedly apostolic character of the French-Canadian people but on the missionary ethic inherent in the Christian faith itself. Secularism and modernity in Quebec forced Groulx to espouse a more orthodox rationale for the mission of French Canada. Its *raison d'être* lay in

⁵²"La Providence ne peut vouloir la mort d'un peuple catholique. Mais tout peuple catholique peut gâcher sa vie, sa mission. Exemple: Avez-vous songé à ce qu'aurait pu être l'histoire du peuple juif, si ses chefs avaient accepté le Messie et mis au service de la foi nouvelle son impétueux, son insurpassable prosélytisme? Rappelez-vous la terrible parole de ses chefs: 'Que son sang retombe sur nous et sur nos enfants'. Ils ont refusé et ils n'ont pas fini d'expier" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, "L'infirmière canadienne-française," Auditorium de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Montréal, 17 mai 1960, p. 17; *Spicilèges 1960*, second album.)

Catholicism. Groulx transposed the missionary leitmotif from the particularism of French Canada to the catholicity of the Christian faith. The Redemption, not the nation, now constituted the *locus classicus* of mission.

⁵³“Les peuples catholiques ont donc une mission. Et leur mission, c’est d’assurer l’avenir de la Rédemption. Ils ont à décider du dénouement de ce drame souverain de l’histoire” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 205).

6 -- A DELICATE BALANCE

In the tradition of Pâquet, and more specifically Jules-Paul Tardivel (1851-1905), Groulx defined French Canada by contrasting it with the materialistic United States. Tardivel's newspaper, *La Vérité*, as well as his book, *La situation religieuse aux États-Unis. Illusions et réalité* (1900), colored Groulx's perception of the United States as a materialistic, White, Anglo-Saxon Protestant empire that condemned Catholics to religious assimilation and social insignificance. For Groulx, the U.S.A provided the foil which delineated Quebec as a spiritual nation. American culture bore the brunt of Groulx's social critique. By this time it had assumed imperialistic proportions, much more than English Canada. America posed a real threat to French-Canadian culture and in particular to a spiritual vision of the nation.

6.1 America as 'Moloch'

Like Tardivel, Groulx believed the U.S.A. had delivered its soul to materialism. In view of its geographic proximity, Groulx strove to keep French Canada from becoming like its neighbor. His critique of American culture was spiritual. Americans were selling their souls to consumerism and were strongly influencing Quebec to do likewise, so that Quebec would no longer be a spiritual force in North America. Groulx attempted to preserve French Canada's collective self-understanding as a spiritual people. He evidenced the influence of Pâquet who promoted a spiritual concept of French-Canadian self-understanding and of Tardivel who defined Quebec as a spiritual collectivity, in sharp contrast to the materialistic U.S.A. Quebec had to resist American assimilation, or it too would become materialistic. French Canadians must remain spiritual:

We belong to that small group of peoples on earth, -
how many are there? Four or five? - who have a

singular type of destiny: a tragic kind. For them the concern is not whether tomorrow they will be successful or unfortunate, great or insignificant, but whether they will exist or not, whether they will live to see another day, or fade into extinction. Each day of our life compels us to face one of two momentous choices: either courageously resist, counter, and overcome the American Moloch, or succumb to its fatal attraction by allowing it to co-opt us.¹

In his book *Orientations* (1935) Groulx elaborated a critique of American society. He did not criticize American Catholicism in and of itself, but on the basis of its materialistic and religiously pluralistic milieu. He critiqued contemporary American society because the material, not the spiritual, had primacy in American culture. He believed Americans placed their faith in economics. As a result of its prevalent materialism, the U.S.A. constituted a hedonistic, consumer society. He was concerned lest American cultural imperialism invade the spiritual society of French Canada. American society represented matter over spirit. Groulx used the term *supermen* in an ironic and decidedly negative sense to depict a materialist monstrosity of the human condition. At the height of the 'Roaring' Twenties, he questioned the penchant of contemporary American society, "Is it not now heading towards an atheistic civilization which acknowledges no other god than material progress, no other law than the harsh rule of economic supermen, no other goal than sensual pleasure or breeding better species of the human animal?"² Groulx perceived the geographic and spiritual location

¹"Nous appartenons à ce petit groupe de peuples sur la terre, - Combien sont-ils? Quatre ou cinq? - au destin d'une espèce particulière: l'espèce tragique. Pour eux l'anxiété n'est pas de savoir si demain ils seront prospères ou malheureux, grands ou petits; mais s'ils seront ou ne seront pas; s'ils se lèveront pour saluer le jour ou rentrer dans le néant. Chaque jour de notre vie nous achemine vers l'un ou l'autre de ces choix suprêmes: ou résister, vaincre dans l'arc-boutement héroïque, ou glisser sur la pente fatale, nous laisser happer par le Moloch américain" (L. Groulx, *Directives*, p. 10).

²"N'est-il pas en train de s'acheminer vers une civilisation athée, n'admettant d'autre dieu que le progrès matériel, d'autre loi que la dure loi des surhommes économiques, d'autre fin que la jouissance sensuelle ou l'élevage des meilleures races de l'animal humain?" (L. Groulx, *Orientations*, p. 37). In "Nos Responsabilités Intellectuelles" (Tract No. 6, Secrétariat Général de L'A.C.J.C., pp. 25-29; *Spicilèges* 1928), Groulx continued on by saying: "Que deviendra le géant précoce? Quand ces principes de vie n'agissent plus, il en sera réduit à ses seules ressources vitales, quand tous les microbes de son néo-paganisme se mettront à ravager ... tout peuple en qui n'agissent plus ni l'idée religieuse, ni le frein

of Quebec as the border between matter and spirit, with the U.S.A. corresponding to the material, and French Canada to the spiritual. The Quebec - U.S.A. frontier was symbolic for Groulx. It not only represented the dividing line between Catholic and White, Anglo-Saxon Protestant North America, but more importantly it was the Rubicon separating spirituality from materialism. By virtue of its proximity to the U.S.A., Quebec risked succumbing to American materialistic imperialism. The secular nationalists of the Quiet Revolution reduced Groulx's spiritually based concern for economic imperialism to a purely temporal concern. He asserted in this respect:

To incarnate a unique expression of humanity within the realms of culture and civilization constitutes the supreme destiny of every people...failing an unforeseen miracle American and English-Canadian Catholics seem destined to constitute nothing more than a far-flung diaspora of groups lost amidst multitudes of pagans or a motley Christianity. In the face of such overwhelming uniformity only one group of humans can possibly take a stand as a free, distinct entity: a nation, a French culture and State. Only one people dare cherish the dream of remaining a wholly Catholic people who form a State—us.³

Groulx considered French-Canadians the Jews of North America. He conversely identified the United States with the heathen cultures and nations which surrounded ancient Israel. Indeed he referred to the U.S.A. as Moloch, the pagan deity of Moab, the neighbor of ancient Israel. The American god was materialism. The U.S.A. sacrificed its children to the idol of the 'Almighty dollar.' Groulx began his argument with a materialistic interpretation of American culture as the matrix of Catholicism in the

moral. En vérité, c'est un tragique combat qui là, tout près de nous, se livre aux frontières de l'intelligence et de la matière ...”

³“La destinée suprême de tout peuple, dans l'ordre de la culture et de la civilisation, c'est d'incarner un type d'humanité ... à moins d'un miracle imprévisible, les catholiques américains et anglo-canadiens sont destinés à ne jamais former qu'une vaste *diaspora*, des unités perdues dans la multitude païenne ou dans un christianisme kaléidoscopique. En face de l'orgueilleuse uniformité, un seul groupe humain peut prétendre à dresser une individualité libre, distincte: une nation, un État de culture française. Un seul peuple peut caresser le rêve de rester un peuple catholique homogène, organisé en État, le nôtre” (L. Groulx, *Directives*, pp. 197-198).

U.S.A. The ambient materialism of this society forced the Catholic faithful to compromise the primacy of the spiritual. He presented his case for Quebec as a superior context for the integral social development and realization of Catholicism:

Now one must admit that in its frenzied drive to amass material wealth America has allowed industrial, commercial, and financial interests to monopolize most of its energies. With regard to this culture have not others stated that it is 'essentially economic'? Of course such a materialistic ethos, the hallmark of mortal sin, has without doubt virtually become the universal attitude throughout civilization. Indeed it is in this specific sense that one could say that all Christian nations today are in a state of mortal sin. Yet does it not seem that this strong materialistic current now holds Americans more firmly in its grip than any other people? One observes among them the widespread, almost national mentality of the 'business man' so completely oriented to achieving goals and production that they subordinate thought to action, and even elevate business to the status of a religion. Remember the maxim of Calvin Coolidge, 'He who builds a factory erects a temple' ...

In short this people appears to have set their sights lower than God, which for a Christian society spells the beginning of untold troubles ... How tenuous such a spirituality which has no other principle nor aspiration than to *make money*; instead of religion this is moral pragmatism, indeed it aims for nothing more than the highest possible worker productivity and those conditions most favorable to mass manufacturing!

This points to yet another worrisome tendency in this multitudinous people, namely that for all their genuine good faith they seek not so much to ascend to true spirituality as to vitiate and appropriate it, in order to subject it to the American ideal.⁴

⁴"Or, il faut bien l'admettre, la part la plus considérable de l'énergie américaine se laisse accaparer par la grande industrie, le commerce, la finance, par une sorte d'acharnement frénétique à étreindre la matière. De cette civilisation, n'a-t-on pas dit qu'elle est «d'essence économique?» Oh, sans doute, cette

The mission of the U.S.A. consisted in spreading the gospel of materialism. Groulx dualistically contrasted spiritual French Canada and materialistic America. He presented them as two opposite social ideals. Americans did not seek eternal redemption but material salvation.

Mortal sin applies not only to individuals, but to entire nations. Mortal sin, that most heinous of spiritual conditions, is essentially the supremacy of the carnal over the spiritual in human beings. This, in his mind, was the sin of American society. Quebec constituted a 'distinct society' because the primacy of the spiritual characterizes it, whereas the U.S.A. represented a secular society, founded on the separation of church and state, hence of the spiritual and the temporal. French Canada was a Christian nation; the U.S.A., an apostate. Through his work Groulx strove to prevent French Canada from apostacizing. In the period to which Delisle refers, American society, not Jews, are the focus of his critique. He considers secularism a false religion which undermines 'the hierarchy of values,' resulting in materialistic idolatry.

conversion vers les biens périssables qui définit le péché mortel est à peu près devenue l'attitude générale de la civilisation. Et c'est le sens particulier où l'on a pu dire de toutes les nations chrétiennes qu'elles sont aujourd'hui en état de péché mortel. Mais ne semble-t-il point que cette inclination prédominante vers le matériel tienne aujourd'hui les Américains plus âprement que tout autre peuple? C'est parmi eux que se rencontre, comme un fait général et presque national, l'état, l'esprit du 'business man,' tout entier aux réalisations et à l'action, et qui, à l'action, subordonne la pensée, élève même les affaires à la hauteur d'une religion. On connaît le mot d'un Calvin Coolidge: «L'homme qui construit une usine bâtit un temple.» ...

Bref, il semble que ce peuple vise plus bas que Dieu, ce qui, pour une civilisation chrétienne, marque le commencement de tout désordre ... Et quel fragile spiritualisme que celui qui n'a d'autre loi, d'autre inspiration que le *make money*, moralisme pragmatiste plutôt que religion, sans autre visée, au surplus, que la plus haute efficience du travailleur et les conditions sociales les plus favorables à la grande production!

Car voici bien une autre tendance déconcertante de cet immense peuple; avec la meilleure foi du monde, il cherche moins à s'élever vers le vrai spiritualisme qu'à le dégrader, où à se l'assimiler pour le réduire à la conception américaine" (L. Groulx, *Orientations*, pp. 39-41). See also CRLG, L. Groulx papers, "Nos Responsabilités Intellectuelles" (Trait N. 6, Secrétariat Général de L'A.C.J.C., pp. 25-29; *Spicilèges* 1928).

6.2 American Catholics

Groulx remained tentative and circumspect in his analysis of American Catholics, so as to maintain the integrity of the faith. He argued that American Catholics are inexorably affected by their materialistic, secularist social context. He theologically professed the absolute transcendence of Catholicism. However, in practice he believed it was not impassive to its milieu. The faith was therefore best served by ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and above all religious homogeneity. His argument to make Quebec a singularly French environment indicates that he believed cultural pluralism to be in effect detrimental to the faith. In theory Catholicism is essentially transcendent, but it can be practically adulterated by its milieu. He seriously questioned American Catholicism:

Further, does not this Catholicism have occasion to worry about its own fate? It is undoubtedly too soon to chart accurately its future course, especially since here we find ourselves at the edge of a supernatural realm with its own set of laws which blithely defy the most carefully calculated human predictions. Do outside observers therefore have no reason to ask some profoundly troubling questions? Catholic truth most certainly has transcendent faculties. Moreover, its remarkable universalism enables it to preserve its purity and integrity while incorporating everything wholesomely original that the American ethos has to offer. Yet does the Catholicism of our neighbours hold its own against the gravely pernicious environment of their country? Does it not too readily regard the mystic's contemplative life and meditation as signs of morbidity, and then measure the degree of religious faith by the dimensions of 'buildings'? In sum, under the pressure of the overwhelming masses who threaten to stifle all spiritual initiatives, what will become of American Catholics?⁵

⁵"Et ce catholicisme, ne lui arrive-t-il jamais de s'inquiéter de son propre sort? Il est bien tôt, sans doute, pour dessiner à main levée la courbe de son avenir. Nous voici d'ailleurs au seuil d'un monde surnaturel où des lois à part se plaisent à déjouer les plus aiguës des prévisions humaines. S'ensuit-il que des observateurs du dehors n'aient pas sujet de se poser des points d'interrogation pleins d'anxiété? La vérité

Catholicism could not become all in all in a pluralistic society. Any form of pluralism detracts from the primacy of Catholicism, which Groulx conceived as socially and religiously monistic. Groulx believed the spiritual virtually could not establish its primacy in a pluralistic society, hence his vehement opposition to ecumenism. The full realization of Catholicism required cultural monism. Yet Groulx argued against cultural uniformity on the principle that human rights are based on the cultural particularism of the human condition.

Groulx was guarded when speaking of American Catholicism, yet sharply critical of American society. Catholicism in Quebec was not compromised by its milieu, whereas American Catholicism was implicitly undermined by its materialistic context. Groulx unfairly caricatured American Catholicism as so informed by materialism that it measured spirituality by the size of church buildings. He conceived the relationship between the spiritual and the social as symbiotic, so that its particular social context inevitably affected the universal faith. Catholicism was not so transcendent as to be immune to its milieu because the faith is an incarnate phenomenon. Groulx's chief complaint against American Catholicism was that it was too much a private matter, hence it had succumbed to secularism as well as materialism. American Catholics evidenced this because they did not insist on the application of Catholic precepts in the public domain. They did not insist that Catholicism shape public morality and control America's educational and social institutions. Groulx faulted Catholicism in the U.S.A. for not being temporal enough to inform American society. Theirs was not the leaven which raises the whole lump.

catholique dispose assurément de puissances transcendantes. Et son merveilleux universalisme lui permet, sans engager ni sa pureté ni son intégrité, d'assimiler du caractère américain tout ce qu'il offre de sainement originel. Mais le catholicisme de nos voisins se défend-il victorieusement contre la plus dangereuse atmosphère de son pays? N'a-t-il pas tendance à tenir trop volontiers la vie intérieure, le recueillement du mystique, pour des manifestations morbides, puis à mesurer l'intensité de la foi religieuse au cube des «buildings»? En résumé, sous la pression de la masse effroyable qui menace d'étouffer toute aspiration spiritualiste, que vont devenir les catholiques américains?" (L. Groulx, *Orientations*, pp. 43-44).

Groulx believed it practically impossible for Catholicism to implement its social principles in America. To all intents and purposes American Catholics accepted that the spiritual would not have primacy in their nation. Yet Groulx insisted that spiritual primacy must become social praxis. He did not allow Catholicism in the U.S.A. to work out its own unique relationship with the particularism of America. Groulx's critique of American society vis-à-vis French Canada is that of a liberal as opposed to an ultramontanist social ideal. In the name of the primacy of the spiritual, Groulx insisted that American Catholicism imitate that of French Canada, which, he believed epitomized the seamless integration of Catholicism into society.

6.3 Franco-Americans as *diaspora*

Groulx argued that American Catholics did not have a chance to overcome the secular influence of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant majority in the U.S.A. Why then was there an essential difference between French-Canadian Catholics and English-speaking Canadian or American Catholics? French Canadians ethnically corresponded to the ancient Jews. They were incarnately Catholic. Catholicism informed their traditions, mores, customs, culture, indeed their entire society. English-speaking Canadian and American Catholics were at best one among many in culturally heterogeneous and religiously pluralistic America. French Canadians were therefore integrally Catholic. Groulx denigrated American Catholics because they could not influence American society.

He considered English-speaking Catholics a lost cause. He identified American Catholics with the *diaspora*., that is, they are displaced and dispersed, hence a weak minority. Groulx attenuated his judgment of American Catholics doomed to assimilation by a proviso concerning divine intervention on their behalf. However, he clearly did not believe they had a chance to survive, much less to inform North American society. He believed American and Anglo-Canadian Catholics would

inevitably conform to White Anglo-Saxon Protestant Christianity because of the centripetal force of American culture. Groulx declared that French Catholics in New England could accomplish their God-given mission to North America, that the survival of their faith was beyond assimilation and adulteration, guaranteed by God. Yet, what difference existed between the French and other Catholics in the U.S.A.? They were the elect, an exception to the rule in American Catholicism. Their Catholicism is not American, and that is why it could survive. They would not suffer the same fate as other Catholics in American society. Their separateness is internal and therefore inviolable. They could be spiritual separatists, survivors even in the midst of American culture. Unlike other Catholics in the U.S.A., they had the ability to remain spiritually unadulterated. This is consistent with the analogy of the Jewish *diaspora* that remains a 'distinct society' even though the Jews are not in Israel. They carry their 'holiness,' their 'separateness,' their 'distinctness' with them, wherever they are dispersed. Groulx's analogical argument for French Canada transposed what was biblically true of the Jews to French Canadians in modern North America.

Groulx's rationale led him into obvious contradictions. For example, French-Canadian Catholics avoided spiritual assimilation, whereas other Catholics in American society could not. He practically created a hierarchy of Catholics: French-Canadians are 'a distinct society' among all Catholics in North America. In reference to French-Canadians in contemporary New England, Groulx protested: "No, a thousand times no; no one can make me believe that it is God's will that everything our fathers, our priests, our brothers and nuns sowed on the soil of New England is destined to be smothered by the weeds."⁶

⁶"Non, mille fois non, ce que nos pères, ce que nos prêtres, nos religieux ont semé sur ce sol de la Nouvelle Angleterre, on ne me fera pas croire que tout cela, dans les desseins de Dieu, soit destiné à l'étouffement dans l'ivraie" (L. Groulx, *Pour Bâtir*, p. 174).

Americans are the tares and French Canadians the wheat. This metaphor is significant because it deals with the concept of assimilation. It is a biblical image⁷ that allows Groulx to argue that even in overwhelming American culture, French-Canadian Catholics can avoid assimilation and remain spiritual, 'holy unto the Lord.' Holiness is a biblical concept, indeed a scriptural impetus to separate. Groulx's concept of French-Canadian separatism was a spiritual one. Latter secular *québécois* nationalists adopted the notion of 'separatism' as a political principle, while for Groulx it remained essentially a spiritual imperative. Like the Jews, French Canadians could avoid assimilation only through separatism. Indeed, the preservation of their distinctiveness demanded an inherent separateness.

Groulx articulated the spiritual role of French Catholics in North America through biblical metaphors from the Old and New Testaments. The specific metaphor he used depends on the audience he addressed, since so many of his publications were originally speeches. In the above wheat and tares metaphor, as well as that concerning the grain of salt, Groulx spoke to Franco-Americans in New England. His use of metaphors readily lent itself to the question of separation, preservation, and purity in a pluralistic and corrupt milieu. Conversely, he also used metaphors about spiritually influencing an hostile environment. Groulx compared the relationship of French Canadians to Franco-Americans, in Canada, in the U.S.A, to salt, "Securing a permanent home for the true faith is of immense importance to every country and people in the world. It takes only a small portion of salt to keep a large quantity of food from spoiling ... Our role could be to serve as that small portion of salt which at least in part would save the cultures of the two great nations we cherish."⁸

⁷ Matthew 13: 24-30.

⁸"Faire survivre, sur quelque point que ce soit, un foyer de la vraie foi, importe immensément à tout pays, à tout peuple. Il suffit d'une poignée de sel pour préserver de la corruption une masse considérable d'aliments ... Notre rôle, ce pourrait être celui de la poignée de sel qui, au moins pour une part, sauverait les civilisations des deux grands pays qui nous sont chers" (L. Groulx, *Pour Bâtir*, pp. 174-175).

This metaphor of salt and that of the wheat and the tares deal with the survival as well as the primacy of a spiritual minority in the midst of an unspiritual majority. Yet Groulx contradicted himself since elsewhere, in fact in most instances, he argued for French Catholic separation and homogeneity in Quebec, to preserve the spiritual and its primacy. To encourage his Franco-American audience, he asserted that they can accomplish what elsewhere he says other American Catholics could not. Not only would Franco-Americans avoid assimilation and survive as a distinct community, they would even inform and ultimately save American society. Since Groulx believed the French in North America were God's apostles for the salvation of the continent, he proposed that they could accomplish what other Catholics could not. They were a spiritual minority which, like salt, could not be assimilated by their milieu, but would survive and even redeem their milieu.

So Judaic was Groulx's thought that he considered the French outside Quebec to be the *diaspora*. He encouraged the French Canadians in Western Canada during the mid 1920s to persevere. Groulx noted: "I exhort these children of the diaspora to continue in the resistance."⁹ He applied the same term to the Acadians, whom he presented as the historical North American equivalent of the Jewish *diaspora* whom the British deported from their homes. In his novel on the Acadians' dispossession *Au Cap Blomidon* (1932), Groulx repeatedly referred to this event in terms of diaspora as "the Dispersion." This is not surprising, because Groulx interpreted French-Canadian history as sacred history, the history of God's people in North America. For Groulx the British ethnically cleansed the French from Acadia. Elsewhere in his memoirs he referred to "the French Canadian of the diaspora"¹⁰ as a type of French Canadian outside Quebec. He devoted a portion of the third volume of his memoirs to them, which indicates their importance in his thought. He considered them to be spiritually one with the people of

⁹"J'exhorte ces fils de la diaspora à persévérer dans la résistance" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 3: 19).

¹⁰"Le Canadien français de la diaspora" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 3: 27).

Quebec. The mentality of the Old Testament permeated Groulx's thought, and his allegorical hermeneutic allowed him to interpret French Canada as the spiritual homeland of the French throughout North America, their Israel as it were. In this sense he spoke in 1937 of Quebec becoming a nation-state that would be the spiritual home for French North Americans.

Groulx sought to appropriate for French Canadians the unique spiritual status and claims of the Jews. In his novel on Acadia, *Au Cap Blomidon*, Groulx mixed the Jewish metaphor of the *diaspora* with that of Christian martyrs, so that he referred to the Acadians as "our martyrs of the dispersion."¹¹ He made similar declarations in 1929 and in 1939. Groulx's most controversial book, *L'Appel de la race* (1922) seemed to condone divorce in the name of the faith. It dealt with French Canadians in Ontario. Groulx wanted Quebec to represent for the French throughout North America, what biblical Israel represented for the Jews of the *diaspora*. His vision of French North America was essentially spiritual. For this reason he named the historical journal he founded *La Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française*, assuming a French vision of North America well beyond the borders of Quebec.

Groulx long deplored the population drain from French Canada to the U.S.A. As Joseph said about his brothers treatment of him in the Old Testament, men had meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Indeed, he later interpreted it as the singular sign of God's election of French Canadians. Whereas the 'ethnic cleansing' of the Acadians demonstrated evil British imperialism, it proved the Acadians' divine election. Likewise French Canadians had been dispersed throughout North America to witness to the faith. This was their unique mission. Groulx previously considered their dispersion a crime against humanity; now he interpreted the history of the French in America as the work of God. He resorted to the traditional clerical interpretation of the

¹¹"Nos martyrs de la dispersion" (Alonié de Lestres [pseudonym of Lionel Groulx], *Au Cap Blomidon*, p. 77).

Conquest as God's will to keep French-Canadians holy so that they would fulfill their divine vocation. This was in keeping with Pâquet's *La vocation de la race canadienne-française*, a sharp contrast with Groulx's previously nationalist interpretation of the same events. Groulx still considered these events evil, but now God meant them for good.

World War II compelled Groulx to revise his position. He compared the experience of the French in North America to that of the Jews in antiquity, and in the Holocaust as well. In effect, he appropriated Jewish history so that it becomes the paradigm of salvation history for French Canadians. The analogy with Israel allowed Groulx to bless and alternately to curse French Canada. In the Quiet Revolution divine wrath was soon to be their lot, because they had abandoned the faith and God's mission for them. On the other hand, their apparent tragedy was not really catastrophic, since this was the will of God so that they would fulfill their divine vocation. In effect Groulx retroactively projected the Holocaust, not only the ancient Jewish *diaspora*, into French-Canadian history. He practically equated the French experience in North America to the Jewish Holocaust. The holocaust was the seal of divine election. The dispersion of the Acadians and the Conquest of the French Canadians were their holocaust, their seal of divine election. The French were the Holocaust victims of Canada. Groulx's rhetorical question "*Pourquoi cette survivance?*" reveals his thelogico-historical rationale. All events correspond to a divine purpose.

In his earlier historical works Groulx deplored the over-extension of the French throughout North America, because they could not consolidate their position on the continent. Now he spiritualized this and interpreted it as a blessing. The hand of God made the French divine emissaries throughout North America. Groulx used history to support his ideological conclusions.

6.4 Christian Pacifism, A Corollary of Religious Separatism

Pacifism, as in other Christian traditions, whether Quaker, Amish, or Mennonites is a corollary of religious separatism. The elect must separate from the sinful pursuits of the heathen nations around them. French Canada must separate itself from the militarism, the imperialism of the heathen, and come out from among them as a nation. War is the pursuit of materialistic, imperialist, evil and oppressive nations. Groulx conceived the Conquest of New France as a fundamental injustice, an evil perpetrated by the British empire against a Catholic nation. War is the tool of oppression and must be renounced. Recourse to it is not an option for God's people.

Groulx relied on a New Testament understanding of the people of God in this regard, because the narratives of military conflicts abound in the Hebrew scriptures. The new Israel must endure persecution while awaiting God's deliverance. They must never oppress and persecute in return. Religious separatism lends itself to pacifism for people who believe they must be separate unto God. French Canada must refuse to become involved in such worldly and carnal pursuits as war and imperialism. Groulx considered French Canadians not merely an ethnic minority but more importantly a religious one. French Canadians could be forgiven by White Anglo-Saxon Protestants for being French, but not for being Catholic. They were a divinely appointed minority, and they would always remain so, because the elect were by definition a minority. French Canadians must assume the attitude of a minority and support the rights of other minorities. In their collective self-perception, they must see themselves as God's minority. Groulx criticized Americans because he considered them oppressive by virtue of their numbers and economic control. This was the primary motive for French-Canadian separatism.

Groulx referred to the conscription in World War I as expiation for French Canadians' sin. Groulx believed Quebec's forced participation in World War I was divine punishment for helping British imperialists oppress the Boer minority. He

considered imperialism a national sin, even when perpetrated against an ultra-Protestant minority such as the Boers. As a minority, French Canadians have collectively oppressed another minority because they helped the British empire to crush the Boers, a small, struggling people. Consequently French Canadians themselves were subsequently oppressed by British imperialism. This is divine retribution. Groulx believed an empire is naturally materialistic, whereas its antithesis, a nationalist minority, tended to be spiritual. He perceived pacifism as fundamentally Christian. On the other hand, militarism was evil, and most often results from imperialism. In a letter to Villeneuve, January 22, 1915, Groulx lamented these events:

The little band of nationalists is powerless and will be swept away. Rising ever higher each day, the tide of imperialism will engulf everything. This is so insane, so incomprehensible, that mere human causes alone can no longer explain such madness. This must be divine punishment. We are expiating a national sin. Think of it, in 1899-1900 we Canadians were a poor, insignificant colony barely able to take care of ourselves, yet we found the means to go to the far end of Africa to help Great Britain commit an atrocity. We of Quebec were led into this by one of our own, an idol we adulated and absolved. Well, the retribution of eternal justice has begun. We sought militarism, we shall have it, whether we want it or not. Now the iniquity of the Transvaal will be purged in blood. Oh we must pray, continually, fervently, and as a people. How much we need truly *patriotic*, national bishops, rather than would-be saviours of the Empire. ... Otherwise our religious organisation will be destroyed by Roman diplomats.¹²

¹²“Le petit groupe nationaliste est impuissant et va être noyé. La vague impérialiste, monte, monte toujours et va tout submerger. Cela est tellement fou, tellement incompréhensible que de simples causes humaines ne peuvent plus donner la raison de cet affolement. Il faut y voir un châtement divin. C’est un crime national que nous expions. En 1899-1900, songez que nous, du Canada, pauvre petite colonie qui avions peine à vivre par nous-mêmes, nous avons trouvé moyen cependant de nous transporter à l’autre bout de l’Afrique pour aider la Grande Bretagne à perpétrer un crime atroce. Nous y avons été entraînés, nous de Québec, par un des nôtres, par une idole que nous avons adulée et absoute. Eh bien, c’est la revanche de l’éternelle justice qui commence. Nous en avons voulu du militarisme, nous en aurons malgré nous. Et c’est le crime du Transvaal qui va se laver dans le sang. Mais comment il faudra prier, prier beaucoup et prier comme peuple. Comme nous avons besoin d’évêques *patriotes*, vraiment

In the conscription crisis of World War II, Groulx contemplated the reprobation of French Canadians as the people of God. This theme increasingly haunted him as Quebec afterwards moved inexorably towards secularism and modernity. In a letter to Marcel Hamel he lamented:

We are now expiating many wrongs. Let us hope, nonetheless, that this expiation accords us some right to the mercy of God. Indeed it seems that this mercy is already mightily at work if we consider the movements for renewal and salvation currently taking shape in the wake of so many others. Pray to Him with all your strength so that once and for all our small people, who have sinned but not backslidden to the point of reprobation, may at last find leaders and begin to live again the only life worthy of it, a splendidly vibrant, Christian life. This is an absolute must since a Catholic people has no right to carry on an existence which is anything other than a living apologia of its Catholicism for the modern world.¹³

The expression of such profound religious convictions regarding Canadian participation in the South African War (1899-1902), WWI, and WWII, calls for the qualification of such statements as that by historian Thomas Socknat concerning his study of pacifism in Canada, "The anti-conscription movement in Quebec during both world wars does not figure prominently because it was neither pacifist in nature nor part of the peace movement."¹⁴

nationaux, plutôt que sauveurs de l'Empire. ... Et il y aura le démantèlement de notre édifice religieux accompli par les diplomates de Rome" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Jean-Marie-Rodrigue Villeneuve, 22 January 1915).

¹³"Nous expions, en ce moment, beaucoup de bêtises. Espérons néanmoins que l'expiation nous confère quelque droit à la miséricorde de Dieu. Il semble même que cette miséricorde agit déjà puissamment si nous tenons compte des mouvements de réveil et de salut qui s'esquissent après tant d'autres ... priez-Le bien fort pour qu'enfin notre petit peuple qui a péché et qui n'a pas démérité jusqu'à la réprobation, se trouve enfin des chefs et recommence sa vie, la seule vie qui soit digne de lui; une grande vie bien organique et bien chrétienne. Il le faut à tout prix puisqu'un peuple catholique n'a pas le droit de vivre une existence qui soit autre chose, devant le monde contemporain, qu'une apologétique vivante de son catholicisme" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Marcel Hamel, 30 December 1942).

¹⁴ Thomas P. Socknat, *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada 1900-1945*, p. 9.

Groulx believed the French-Canadian episcopacy was too federalist, and not enough nationalist, especially in times of war. Hence his break with Villeneuve when the cardinal publicly supported the Allied war effort during World War II. God is severe with the elect; they are the first to be punished. This is in line with the Old Testament, as well as the Pauline interpretation of Israel and the Jews in Romans 11. Groulx feared that this fate would befall French Canada. He believed that Quebec, like Israel in the Old Testament, would lose its 'most favored nation status' with God. He repeatedly exhorted French Canadians to maintain the highest standards of public morality. Otherwise they would forfeit their divine election. Materialism too would cost them their status as the chosen, just as it did the Jews. The exhortative, moralizing tenor of so many of Groulx's speeches and publications concerning French Canada were his attempt to prevent their fall from divine grace.

Until the 1920s he interpreted this as purely negative punishment; it was positive, the fulfillment of God's will for them as a people. Groulx alternately interpreted the past of the French-Canadian people as the sign of either their divine election, expiation or reprobation. He even applied the Old Testament apocrypha to French Canadians. Although such writings as Tobias refer to the Jews, Groulx imposed their Jewish context on French Canadians. According to St. Paul, Groulx's favorite apostle, ethnic Jews were not necessarily spiritual Jews. The New Testament could be interpreted in such a way as to claim that Christians are the spiritual, hence real Jews, and have superseded ethnic Jews as God's chosen people. In effect, Groulx usurped the Jewish experience for French Canadians in accordance with traditional Christian supersession.

Just as there is a national mission, there is national sin, a collective responsibility involving all of society. French Canada had helped an evil empire oppress another minority. Groulx's opposition to Canada's participation in the Boer War was a matter of Christian principle, as much as nationalist motives. For a Catholic

people oppression is a mortal sin. This belies the notion that Groulx promoted the persecution of minorities in Quebec.

The heinous nature of French Canada's crime is that one of its own leaders, Wilfred Laurier, had brought it to oppress the Boer minority. Groulx's concept of *le chef* was not always positive: *le chef* could be a savior, but he just as easily could endanger national welfare. Groulx held *chefs* responsible for the problems of the church and the nation. A *chef* could lead the nation in a course of action which is against the will of God, as Laurier did.

6.5 The Quiet Revolution

In his public writings Groulx seldom if ever presented a sinful perspective of French Canada, much less declared that the nation was guilty of mortal sin. His fundamentally spiritual worldview is indicated in his private correspondence, where he speaks of French Canada in religious terms. Even spiritual *chefs* can be bad. Groulx did not exclude the hierarchy of the Church from responsibility for encouraging the people to imperialistic sin. The episcopacy needs to steel the people's will against participation in sinful war. Groulx insisted that the episcopacy must lead the French-Canadian people away from militarist endeavors. They must be careful not to compromise with political powers that seek war for materialistic profit.

For decades Groulx argued for the unique affinity of French-Canadian culture and Catholicism, so much that, on the analogy of Isaiah 5, he conceived Quebec as the Lord's own personal vineyard. However in the Quiet Revolution Groulx faced a society that rejected Catholicism. Worst of all the church now seemed compelled to disengage from Quebec. French Canada had become one of those expendable Christian cultures to which Groulx referred. To all appearances its time is past as a special vessel of the faith. This caused Groulx great anxiety in his latter days. French-Canadian culture had

outlived its usefulness to the church. Deteriorated to the point that it could no longer be an incarnation of the church, all of Groulx's labors seemed in vain. At the end of his life Groulx declared that his entire career had been an attempt to preserve the French-Canadian people as a distinct society for God, in North America. Modern Quebec is nothing more than an old garment the church had outworn and would have to discard. Groulx had not heeded his own words that the church is not the fief of any culture, not even that of French Canada. Indeed its disengagement appeared to be imminent. The Quiet Revolution forced Roman Catholicism to lay aside French Canada. In his Sept. 14, 1953 speech "Survivre ou vivre?" Groulx evidenced his realization that French Canadians were abandoning the faith. The church no longer had a mission for French Canada. Worse still, the church had no more obligation towards Quebec.

Before the Quiet Revolution Groulx was an apologist for French Canada. With its advent he shifted the focus of his apologia from French-Canadian *survivance* to that of Catholicism in Quebec. As member of an institution under siege Groulx no longer had the luxury to concentrate on nationalism. Nor did he wish to do so, because the nationalist movement he had promoted was basically religious, while that of the Quiet Revolution was secularist and thus the antithesis of what Groulx had worked for all his life. Through *L'Action Nationale*, he exhorted French-Canadian nationalists not to attack the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the clergy, or the Church. In response to *Les insolences du frère Untel* (1960), Groulx sarcastically used the mimic pseudonym, Guillaume Untel, "One cannot continue to undermine the clergy and hierarchy without dangerously undermining the faith of their brethren since the clergy and hierarchy do after all constitute the leading wing of the church. Only a thin line separates a conflict with the clergy from an assault against the faith."¹⁵ Groulx wrote this at the beginning

¹⁵"On ne gruge pas indéfiniment le clergé, la hiérarchie, sans gruger dangereusement la foi de ses frères. Car le clergé, la hiérarchie sont tout de même l'aile marchante de l'Église. La marge est mince entre la lutte au clergé et la lutte à la religion" ("De quoi ont-ils peur?" par Guillaume Untel (*AN*, 50/5, [1960]: 440-441).

of the Quiet Revolution. He intentionally juxtaposed the historical archetype of the church in charge of social welfare, to the model of the secular welfare state. Groulx's idea of social welfare was Christian charity in the hands of spiritual authorities and institutions such as the Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Society. His vehement protest against the takeover of health, education and welfare by the state during the 'Quiet Revolution' resulted from his belief that these domains properly belonged to the church. In reality Groulx advanced a socio-religious ideology in an historical mode.

In accord with the traditional Christian interpretation of Israel in the New Testament, especially the epistle to the Romans, God's chosen people can fall from grace and incur divine wrath. Groulx believed Quebec was experiencing God's punishment. He believed salvation, like all other spiritual phenomena, was both human and divine. Salvation means leading the nation back to its Christian vocation. National salvation is therefore inextricably linked to spiritual renewal, but the Quiet Revolution constituted a secular, modernist renewal of Quebec nationalism that profoundly disappointed Groulx. He maintained that as a Catholic nation Quebec had no right to exist apart from its national witness to the faith. This was the bottom line for its survival. Although he promoted national salvation he considered it unjustifiable, indeed a sacrilege, if it is simply to perpetuate the nation as an end unto itself. Unless Quebec once again became a national testimony to Catholicism, it had no valid reason to survive. He bitterly asserted this in the face of Quebec's secularization.

French Canada must not conform to the modern Western world or else it would no longer be a 'distinct society,' that is to say, a Catholic national witness. Indeed by the early 1940s urbanized Quebec was less and less distinguishable from the rest of contemporary North America. Although as a society Quebec still had the outward appearance of a Catholic culture, in fact it had already fundamentally drifted from the Church. C. Everett Hughes' watershed sociological study, *French Canada In Transition* (1943), confirmed what Groulx had suspected. By the early 1940s, French

Canada was no longer the idyllic Catholic society Groulx had ideologically promoted in the 1920s and 1930s. It had become a pluralistic, ethnically diverse, urbanized and modern society.

Groulx interpreted the phenomenon as a form of backsliding. The elect needed to return to God and their divine mission, just as ancient Israel was exhorted to do in the Old Testament. Groulx perceived himself as a prophet to the French-Canadian people. His role was to call them back to God and their providential vocation. He must keep them from going astray and assure that they did not fall from grace through immorality. In this vein he perceived his work as apostolic and a prophetic ministry to Quebec.

Although Groulx publicly presented the ideal of French Canada as the bastion of spirituality in North America, in private he frequently expressed the opposite. He was most anxious that the church lose its institutional control over health, education, and welfare. He worried that the intellectual, artistic, and literary elite of Quebec, along with the bourgeois, would abandon Catholicism and lead the mass of French Canadians away from the church. For all his bravado about the spirituality of French Canada, Groulx feared its apostasy. He sought to turn back the apostasy, which crouched at the threshold of Quebec and threatened to overtake it, just as it had the rest of twentieth-century North America. In a letter to Villeneuve, November 9, 1933, Groulx deplored the latent anticlericalism which he claimed visiting French theologians and philosophers had observed:

All the Frenchmen who have recently visited us: Robert de Coix, Gilson, Maritain, Father Chenu--M. Viatte has just written me in the same vein—are expressing their concern over the latent anticlericalism of our professional and middle classes. We must win back all these people ... we must at least point out, if not fully expose, certain problems: the fractious, negative character of our

Catholicism, the alarming decline of a religious upbringing in the home.¹⁶

In another letter to Villeneuve some two months later, Groulx reiterated his grave misgivings about the state of Catholicism in contemporary Quebec, "We stand in need of a thoroughgoing effort to revamp our national and religious education, without which we will become within one generation a desperate people ripe for apostasy."¹⁷ He summoned the reputation and authority of these leading French Thomists to support his suspicions. This incidentally indicated their stature and influence on the contemporary French-Canadian episcopacy. Villeneuve was now their head as the archbishop of Quebec and cardinal.

Groulx believed the French-Canadian bourgeois and intelligentsia were most susceptible to visions of French Canada, which were neither religious nor nationalist. They were prepared to make compromises with secularism and cosmopolitanism, and he therefore directed his religio-nationalist message to them. This explains why he was so hard on the socio-cultural elite, why he insisted that their art and literature model Catholicism and French-Canadian nationalist sentiment. Compared to the masses of French Canadians he believed the bourgeois were most likely to apostasize because they were more materialistic by virtue of their superior economic conditions, and the intelligentsia and/or *littérati* because of their superior education.

Groulx feared the church was losing its grip on society in general and on the nationalist movement in particular. After World War II, he saw the working class and labor movement in Quebec move away from Catholicism. If the faith amounted only to

¹⁶"Tous les Français qui nous ont visités en ces derniers temps: Robert de Coix, Gilson, Maritain, le Père Chenu - M. Viatte vient de m'écrire dans le même sens - m'ont confessé leur inquiétude sur l'anticléricalisme latent de nos classes professionnelles et bourgeoises. Il faudrait ressaisir tout ce monde ... il faudrait, sinon étaler, du moins pointer certaines plaies: le caractère fractionnaire et négatif de notre catholicisme, l'effroyable recul de l'éducation religieuse dans la famille" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Villeneuve, 9 November 1933).

¹⁷"Nous sommes à l'heure d'un grand effort, d'une rénovation de notre éducation nationale et religieuse, sous peine de ne plus être, dans une génération, qu'un peuple agonisant et mûr pour l'apostasie" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Villeneuve, 18 January 1934).

a list of moral prohibitions for French-Canadian society, he believed it would soon become irrelevant. Anticlericalism and the rejection of the church would ensue. The leaders of French-Canadian society are the reason Groulx took great interest in the politics and government of Quebec. Those who occupied positions of influence and authority in education, the arts and politics could maintain the prominence of the church. For him Quebec needed to renew its Christian witness and vocation.

The renewal movements were not only of a spiritual nature; Groulx's reference to "*chefs*" indicates they were also national. Although Groulx saw the problems of Quebec as fundamentally spiritual, political means were necessary to save and renew French Canada. Salvation from the sin of the nation could come by political as well as spiritual means.

6.6 Faithful Remnant

Groulx initially posited that Catholicism remained essential to the survival of French Canada, but by the early 1950s, he began retreating to a less triumphalist stance concerning the integration of Catholicism in French-Canadian society. This is evident in his speech "Survivre ou vivre?" (1953), an exposition of Isaiah 5 concerning God's continuing promises to Israel despite their unfaithfulness. Groulx applied this to French Canada. In his last major academic work, *Le Canada Français Missionnaire* (1962), Groulx adopted the position that the missionaries of Quebec were its spiritual elite and earnest money for the redemption of their people in general. This book indicates Groulx's increasing focus on Catholicism in his last years. His vision of a Catholic nation waned as secularism and modernity waxed strong in contemporary Quebec.

In the last pages of the final volume of his memoirs, written in 1966 amidst the ferment of the Quiet Revolution, Groulx recorded his consternation for the future of French Canadians. Like the Jews in the Hebrew scriptures, they had abandoned the living God to worship materialistic idols. He exhorted:

Many a time I have said to myself what kind of future awaits a youth hungry for senseless diversions, lazy, eaten up by unbridled sexuality ... and where will the apostasy of these young people lead us, an apostasy all too widespread, despite what others say? I shudder at the thought of what God held in store for the unfaithfulness of his chosen people in times past.¹⁸

The possible reprobation of French Canada was never far from Groulx's thought. Divine judgement was ready to fall on the French Canadians if they abandoned the faith and transgress its commandments. This reinforced his argument that French Canada was a case of *force majeure*. If the call and gifts of God belonged to French Canadians as the divinely chosen people, the curses of God would likewise befall them if they were unfaithful. Deuteronomy 7:4-7 graphically portrays God's swift and terrible punishment of the elect because of their infidelity and perfidity. In his own way, that of an historian imbued with a theology of history directly inspired from the Old Testament, Groulx promoted a crisis theology.

From the 1920s to the advent of modernity, Groulx maintained roughly the same rationale for the survival of French Canada. He initially based it on the French-Canadian clerical and missionary corps, as well as the morality of the mass of French-Canadians. However, as secularism increasingly took hold of Quebec society in its inexorable march towards modernity, Groulx less and less looked on French Canadians as a people who almost inherently possessed high moral character. Indeed, he considered the Quiet Revolution their collective fall, in a moral as well as a religious sense. Thus by the 1960s, Groulx's argument for the survival of French Canada relied heavily, if not exclusively, on the seemingly stellar lives and works of its clergy and missionaries, whom he virtually considered the 'faithful remnant' of God's people in

¹⁸"Quel avenir, me suis-je dit bien des fois, attendre de cette jeunesse, avide d'amusements fous, paresseuse, rongée par une sexualité en débâcle? ... Et où nous mène cette apostasie des jeunes, apostasie, quoi que l'on dise, trop généralisée? Je m'effraie à la pensée de ce que Dieu réservait autrefois aux infidélités de son peuple choisi" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 359).

North America. Groulx linked the concept of national survival to divine salvation. His notion of the survival was essentially spiritual: God would save the French-Canadian people to the extent they faithfully served Catholicism. This is a reductionist rationale which paralleled Groulx's interpretation that French Canada had survived by virtue of the Church.

For Groulx the survival of French Canada did not simply represent a temporal, political concern; it ultimately constituted a spiritual matter. He could not conceive much less accept survival apart from Redemption. By the time of the Quiet Revolution, he realized French Canadians sought to survive not as the pre-eminently Catholic society he envisioned, but as full, indeed hearty participants in the modern, secular, western world. In Groulx's holistic world view, this seemed futile, even fatal to their survival. Not surprisingly then, morality is a leitmotif of Groulx's rationale for French-Canadian nationals. Groulx believed French Canadians would not survive as a people if they did not maintain the highest moral standards.

In accord with the principle of the primacy of the spiritual, he rendered the temporal survival of Quebec dependent on its spirituality. The means to national salvation were therefore ultimately the same as those of spiritual redemption. Groulx did not dichotomize national and spiritual salvation. Political and economic matters are secondary in Groulx's nationalist scheme. This is evident during the Quiet Revolution when he insisted that the survival hinged not so much on the political sovereignty of Quebec as on French Canadians' continued adherence to Catholicism. Yet, Groulx advocated temporal means to secure the survival. The latter could not be assured without political efforts, but above all it required the Catholic faith.

7 -- PRIMACY OF THE SPIRITUAL IN THE NATION

Groulx believed the history of North America proves that the French are God's chosen people, even over other Catholics. As Quebec became increasingly secular, Groulx appealed more and more to an historically spiritual French Canada. His argument assumed a stringently reductionist character, because it limited the spiritual agents of French-Canadian society to the clergy and missionaries, rather than the whole body of French-Canadian people, as before. He interpreted the history of the North American continent in terms of Catholicism and concluded that the French are divinely chosen for its catholization. In the name of Providence he discounted the historical Spanish Catholic presence in North America:

Spanish or French, which of these two Catholic cultures planted in the new world would survive the disastrous Treaty of Paris? Bolstered by Latin America, of which incidentally it constituted the northern extension, one would have thought that the Spanish borderlands in southern and western North America, [namely] Florida, Texas, New Mexico and California, would have more readily held up against the Anglo-Saxon onslaught than would the tiny French beachhead on the banks of the St. Lawrence, which found itself in a hostile environment and cut off from its cultural roots. Contrary to all expectations, the more vulnerable and isolated survived. The wonder does not end there. How do we explain our unique, troubling dispersal across this northern continent when we were little more than a handful of people virtually lost amidst a sea of foreigners, and desperately in need of banding together? Providence stands at the core of all history. Are we forbidden from searching out its ways? Why this continued existence? Are we the chosen ones for a mission, the bearers of a message? We may find an initial answer in the well-known fact of our remarkable missionary outreach around the world. Does not the answer also lie in

our dispersion throughout America, if it is true that a Catholic people must carry their message not only to faraway continents but equally to those around them, wherever they are? One of the most grievous contemporary events, indeed one of the abominations of our times, has been the masses of displaced persons, and worse still, the slaughter of ethnic groups. As in the days of the pitiless ancient empires, such tragic inhumanity has compelled thinkers to ponder its underlying causes. While they certainly impute to the evil of humankind these atrocities which would disturb even the likes of Nero or Caligula, nevertheless some Christian thinkers aptly evoked this passage from the sacred scriptures concerning the exile of Israel to Babylon: "Yaveh hath therefore scattered you among the Gentiles, who know not him, that you may declare his wonderful works, and make them know that there is no other almighty God besides him." (Tobias 13:4)¹

Following Christian tradition, Groulx considered the Jews a carnal people who expected a materialistic messiah and kingdom. He promoted a Catholic nation for French Canadians because spirituality required a geo-political incarnation. Their

¹"De ces deux civilisations catholiques, l'espagnole et la française plantées dans ce nouveau monde, laquelle après la débâcle du traité de Paris allait survivre? Appuyé sur l'Amérique latine dont il n'était, du reste, qu'un prolongement vers le nord, il eût semblé que le pourtour espagnol sud et ouest de l'Amérique septentrionale, Floride, Texas, Nouveau-Mexique, Californie, a pu résister à la marée anglo-saxonne plus facilement que l'infime bordure française du Saint-Laurent, coupée de ses sources culturelles et de tout voisinage propice. Contre toute prévision, c'est le plus faible et le plus isolé qui a survécu. L'étonnant ne s'arrête pas là. Quand petit peuple de rien du tout, à demi perdu dans la masse étrangère, nous aurions eu tant besoin de cohésion, comment expliquer notre singulière et troublante dispersion à travers le continent nord? La Providence est au fond de toute histoire. Nous est-il interdit de scruter son dessein? Pourquoi cette survivance? Serions-nous les élus d'une mission, les porteurs d'un message? Notre expansion missionnaire à travers le monde, fait assurément extraordinaire, nous apporterait peut-être une première réponse. Pourquoi n'en pas voir une deuxième en notre éparpillement, ici-même en Amérique, s'il est vrai que leur message, les peuples catholiques n'ont pas qu'à le porter sur les continents lointains, mais tout autant autour d'eux, partout où ils sont? Un des spectacles contemporains les plus affligeants, et pourquoi ne pas dire une des abominations de notre temps, aura été ces vastes déplacements de personnes et mêmes de tronçons de peuple livrés à une sorte de charcuterie. Démembrements tragiques qui rappellent les temps féroces des anciens empires et qui devaient amener les penseurs à en chercher les raisons profondes. Sans doute, imputent-ils ces crimes à la méchanceté des hommes, à ces rejets barbares qui eussent déconcerté un Néron ou un Caligula. Mais il s'est trouvé aussi des penseurs chrétiens pour nous rappeler ce passage des livres sacrés sur la déportation d'Israël à Babylone: 'Yaveh nous a dispersés parmi les nations qui l'ignorent, afin que vous racontiez ses merveilles, et que vous leur fassiez connaître qu'il n'y a point d'autre Dieu tout-puissant que lui seul' (Tobie XIII, 4)" [Quotation from the new Catholic Edition of the Holy Bible] (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, pp. 164-165).

nationalist expectations prove their carnality. The same aspirations are spiritual in the case of French Canadians. Referring to the gospel account of Jesus and the rich young man, Groulx interpreted the latter as an exception to most Jews, when he noted: “Unlike so many others, this young man does not ask, ‘When will you restore the kingdom of Israel as a carnal, temporal power?’”² In this Jewish context, as virtually nowhere else in his work, Groulx referred pejoratively to the temporal and rejected nationalism as antithetical to spirituality.

Groulx’s fellow clergy ironically often perceived his own nationalist emphasis as unspiritual and especially inappropriate for a priest. By virtue of his incarnational thought, Groulx normally affirmed the temporal, the national, and the carnal, but not in the case of the Jews, who he thought sought the carnal to the exclusion of the spiritual. Groulx believed that the Jews, like Esau in the Hebrew scriptures (Gen. 25: 29-34), sold their spiritual birthright to fulfill their carnal craving. Groulx employed a double standard with the Jews, as he did with Irish Canadian and American Catholics. Secularism and modernity, the drift away from the faith and the church in Quebec, compelled Groulx to conclude that the apostolic mandate was not inherent in French Canada but was fundamental to the Catholic scheme of redemption. What was true for French Canadians was also true for all Catholic peoples.

In 1953 Groulx spoke of the “august destiny of Catholic peoples” by commenting, “When they live out their calling in accord with the Redemption their

²“Il ne demande pas, ce jeune homme, comme tant d’autres: «Quand allez-vous relever le royaume, la puissance charnelle, temporelle d’Israël?»” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, “Sermons de retraite.” *Spicilèges* 1944).

history looms large, no matter how small they are.”³ The future of Quebec lay not in its French character, but in its Catholicism. Its survival depends first and foremost on the religion rather than the language or the culture of French Canada. As he witnessed the coming of the Quiet Revolution during his latter years, Groulx increasingly resorted to Catholicism alone as the rationale for the ‘distinct society’ of French Canada. Meanwhile, young, secular nationalists relied more and more on only French as the basis of their nationalism.

7.1 The Longing for “Orthodox Revolution”

By the early 1940s Groulx realized that French Canadians were not the uniquely Catholic, moral people he had thought in the 1920s and 1930s. Secularization and modernity advanced in French-Canadian society despite Groulx’s attempts to thwart them through *L’Action Française*. By the 1940s the Quiet Revolution already appeared on the horizon, as evidenced in the manifest *Le Refus global*, published in 1948. The renewal movements to which Groulx referred are but temporary respites prolonged by World War II and the protracted, reactionary Duplessis regime. This evaporated with Duplessis’s death in 1959. In the early 1940s Groulx thought that Quebec could still return to its original morality and God-given mission. By the early 1950s he realized French Canada was not the spiritual entity he had once believed. French Canada now could only rely on its clergy and missionaries to realize the mission of French Canada as a ‘living apologetic’ of Catholicism.

³“Magnifique destin des peuples catholiques. Si petits soient-ils, quelles dimensions ne donnent-ils pas à leur histoire s’ils la vivent dans la ligne de leur vocation qui est celle de la Rédemption” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, “Cours inaugural pour la chaire de civilisation canadienne-française” *Spicilèges* 1953).

Consequently he called for a spiritual renaissance, or as he named it, an 'orthodox revolution.' This expression is as paradoxal as that of the so-called Quiet Revolution, a secular equivalent of what Groulx had envisaged:

The young generation demands, incarnates a new order, a 'revolution.' I mean 'revolution' in the orthodox sense of the word which young people themselves avowedly attribute to it. They no longer subscribe to the methods or contentions of the past. They believe, feel, and affirm that rather than falling back on the vacuous, outdated doctrines of old partisan credos, instead we must all join forces together seeking renewal at the profoundly spiritual, religious, and national wellsprings of our collective existence.⁴

Groulx was particularly conscious of a widening gulf between the generations in contemporary Quebec. The youth demanded freedom from the 'dark ages' of Duplessis. The fact that Groulx proposed an 'orthodox revolution' reveals the social as well as theological conservatism of his thought. He called for spiritual renewal in Quebec, and instead there was a secular, modernist revolution. This explains Groulx's bitter disillusionment with the Quiet Revolution despite its nationalist tenor. Increasingly irrelevant to contemporary society in Quebec, Catholicism became more and more perfunctory. The revolution Groulx called for was to be orthodox and doctrinal, a philosophical renewal in the sources of Christian humanism. Quebec needed a spiritual renaissance according to Catholic principles, because the spiritual should be the fountainhead of French-Canadian society. An orthodox revolution is in fact a call for an

⁴"La jeunesse exige, incarne un ordre nouveau, une 'révolution.' Je dis 'révolution' dans le sens orthodoxe que la jeunesse prétend elle-même assigner au vocable. Elle ne croit plus aux anciens moyens, aux anciennes querelles. Elle croit, elle sent, elle dit qu'il faut un rassemblement de toutes les volontés; qu'à ces volontés il faut un retrempelement, non pas aux doctrines superficielles et surannées des vieux credos de partisans, mais aux sources profondes de notre vie, sources spirituelles, sources religieuses, et nationales" (L. Groulx, *Directives* pp. 91-92).

ad fontes movement. This, however, did not prevent Groulx from recommending economic liberation in early 1962 to Raymond Barbeau:

If I were you I would immediately try to stir up the young generation in the name of economic liberation. It seems to me that this stands as the first and foremost problem to solve. Moreover, it contains enough explosive elements to ignite the youth.⁵

7.2 A Mixed Reality

After the condemnation of *L'Action française* in France (1926), Groulx circumspectly presented the national as subservient to the spiritual. He considered the national as mediating between the spiritual and the temporal and he described the national as a “mixed reality” in his book *Directives* (1937):

The national does not stand above all else and it is not my intention to limit myself to it. While I intend not to forget that I am French Canadian, I must also remind myself that I am a human being, a Catholic, and a priest. The national is contingent on greater truths from which it draws its principles and dynamism. Yet inasmuch as it is both carnal and spiritual, it constitutes one of those hybrid entities which provide a framework to uphold the highest aims of humanity.⁶

The nation integrates the spiritual and the carnal. Groulx specifically spoke of the carnal, rather than the temporal nature of the national. ‘Carnal,’ of course, refers to human nature and indicates that the national parallels the human condition. Carnal

⁵“À votre place, j’essaierais de soulever tout de suite la jeune génération, au nom de la libération économique. Il s’agit là du problème initial à résoudre, ce me semble, avant tout autre. Et il y a là-dedans assez de passion explosive pour remuer une jeunesse” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Raymond Barbeau, 4 January 1962).

⁶“Non que le national soit au-dessus de tout ni que j’aie dessein de m’y limiter. Si j’entends ne pas oublier que je suis canadien-français, j’entends aussi me souvenir que je suis homme, catholique, et prêtre. Le national est suspendu à des réalités plus hautes d’où il emprunte sa règle et sa vie. Il

emphasizes that the national is no more evil, than that God is less divine by assuming human flesh and blood. Groulx obviously did not consider the carnal necessarily evil, contrary to Jean-Pierre Gaboury's contention that Groulx was Manichean. The Incarnation therefore validated the national in Groulx's opinion.

Groulx affirmed the national and yet brought it within the pale of the spiritual. The national collectively incarnated the spiritual. He posited an entire order of "mixed realities" phenomena that are both spiritual and carnal. These "mixed realities" bridged the spiritual and the temporal. He postulated these "mixed realities" because, on the basis of the Incarnation, the spiritual does not exist apart from the temporal anymore than God exists apart from humanity in Jesus Christ. The human condition involves a dynamic tension between the spiritual and the carnal. It is a synthesis of the two and the national is a liaison between them.

7.2.1 Economic Nationalism

Groulx sought national economic independence in order to assure the primacy of the spiritual in French Canada. Quebec needed to control its economy to prevent the subordination of the spiritual to materialistic concerns. The nationalization of the French-Canadian economy would be the means to a spiritual end, not an end unto itself. This rationale allowed Groulx to present economic nationalism as theologically orthodox. In his book *Directives* (1937) he declared:

We maintain that if it is true that the moral aspirations of a people must take precedence over everything else, it is also true that in a world gone awry economic forces and the powers of finance all too often manipulate moral dynamics so that a people

n'appartient pas moins à ces réalités mixtes, à la fois charnelles et spirituelles qui encadrent et supportent les intérêts suprêmes de l'homme" (L. Groulx, *Directives*, pp. 9-10).

is not really the master of their spiritual lives unless they exercise complete control over their material resources. Everyone readily acknowledges the orthodoxy of seeking to resolve this classic problem. Indeed, we do not pursue economic mastery for the sake of wealth as an end unto itself. Rather, this represents natural self-defense and the will to better ourselves, in accord with that fundamentally Latin and Christian doctrine which exhorts a people to strive for conditions that further their normal development and enrich their intellectual life.⁷

Groulx wrote *Directives* (1937) during the Great Depression when economic concerns prevailed. As a result he could not readily promote the separation of Quebec on an economic basis unless he could decisively demonstrate the economic advantages of independence. This represented no small task in the contemporary economic context, and one for which Groulx had few qualifications. He therefore resorted to a religious rationale which circumvented separatism in the name of spiritual and moral priorities.

Groulx attributed the Great Depression to the subordination of moral concerns to economic ones. Economic autonomy constituted a *sine qua non* for the primacy of the spiritual. He insisted on the independence of the Quebec economy largely on the basis of the primacy of the spiritual in society. He thus anchored French-Canadian economic nationalism in Christian doctrine. The primacy of the spiritual allowed Groulx to argue that French Canada must be the master of its own economy in order to fulfill its spiritual destiny:

⁷“S’il est vrai, se dit-on, que les aspirations morales d’un peuple doivent passer avant toute chose, il est aussi vrai, dans notre monde renversé, que les forces économiques et les puissances d’argent commandent trop souvent les puissances morales et qu’un peuple n’est vraiment maître de sa vie spirituelle que s’il détient l’entière administration de son patrimoine matériel. Chacun reconnaît là l’orthodoxie parfaite avec laquelle se pose toujours le problème. Non, ce n’est pas la richesse pour la richesse qui nous pousse à prêcher la conquête économique. C’est un instinct de défense et une volonté de construction, c’est une doctrine d’ordre latin et chrétien qui incline un peuple à chercher les conditions d’un progrès normal et à

If the national has the importance and plays the role we have indicated, and if it, like everything human, shares a profoundly incarnate, temporal nature, it follows that by virtue of its eminence this spiritual reality must have sway over all material matters.⁸

The spiritual would need to remain independent of economics, or the latter would control it. Groulx thus argued for economic autonomy in the name of the independence of the spiritual. This affirmation of the temporal gives it an impetus, which in a secular environment renders the economic more important than the spiritual. Rather than securing its independence, this heady economic nationalism ignores the spiritual.

Groulx's incarnational thought disposed him to economic independence, because he believed there could be no spiritual independence without economic autonomy. The economic and the spiritual were inextricably linked in Groulx's holistic world view. Groulx thus argued for economic autonomy not on grounds of the pressing economic needs of Quebec, but on the principle that they must act as masters of their own economic destiny so as not to compromise their spiritual freedom. Only economic independence could prevent their oppression by materialism.

In Groulx's agenda, the national acted as the vicar of the spiritual. It is therefore no more a sin to be nationalist than to be human. Nationality is integral to the human condition. Economic nationalism is necessary to assure the subordination of the material to moral, indeed spiritual priorities. To the extent that the economy, or any other dimension of society, is out of French-Canadian hands, it can prevent the realization of French Canadians' spiritual vocation. Groulx contended that economic

faire plus beau le temple de sa pensée" (L. Groulx, "Le problème économique; conclusion," *AF* 6/6 [décembre 1921]: 716-17. See also L. Groulx, *Directives*, pp. 43-44.).

⁸"Si le national a le prix et joue le rôle que nous lui avons marqués, et s'il plonge comme tout ce qui est humain, dans le charnel et le temporel, il s'ensuit qu'à ce bien d'ordre spirituel, bien de haute sanction, qualité, se doit subordonner le matériel" (L. Groulx, *Directives*, p. 106).

independence is not destructive, because it is based on the primacy of the spiritual. The purpose of this somewhat religious rhetoric on Groulx's part was to silence critics who failed to see the spiritual relevance of economic nationalism.

7.2.2 Moral Nationalism

Groulx argued that Quebec joined Confederation to insure the primacy of the spiritual in French Canada. However, its contemporary relationship to the Dominion demanded reevaluation, because Confederation seemed to prevent rather than promote the primacy of the spiritual in Quebec. Groulx had to present the case for French-Canadian separatism in this spiritual vein, because nationalism came to represent an anathema for Catholicism, with the papal condemnations of the *Action Française* (1926), Italian Fascism (1931), and German Nazism (1937). According to Groulx's interpretation, Quebec based its decision to participate in Confederation on spiritual and moral concerns rather than on temporal ones. In *Directives* Groulx maintained:

We insisted on a federal system not out of economic nor political interests, but above all for moral, that is to say national and spiritual reasons. We believed that the survival of our language and culture, as well as our historical, judicial and religious traditions demanded a significant degree of national and political autonomy.⁹

Yet elsewhere Groulx insisted that Confederation was faulty because its founders did not adhere to a transcendent doctrine. If that alliance would ever threaten the primacy of the spiritual in French-Canadian society, the political autonomy of Quebec would become a moral imperative. This constitutes the crux of Groulx's nationalist rationale.

⁹“[...]Nous avons demandé les institutions fédératives, non pour des motifs d'ordre économique ou politique, mais, au premier chef, pour des motifs d'ordre moral: je veux dire d'ordre national et spirituel. La survivance de notre langue, de notre culture, de nos traditions historiques, juridiques, religieuses

The spiritual should provide the impetus for the social evolution of French Canada, according to Groulx. Quebec did not enter into Confederation for economic or political reasons. The primacy of the spiritual served as the organizing principle of the historical development of Quebec society from its origins in New France down to the present. At no time had Quebec undermined the primacy of the spiritual by subjecting the moral and the religious to economic and political interests. The upshot of Groulx's argument is unmistakable. Quebec now, as throughout its history, must take whatever measures necessary to guarantee the primacy of the spiritual in French-Canadian society. Groulx thus undermined the argument that the participation of Quebec in Confederation rested primarily on economic and political considerations. This theological reasoning empowered the nationalist movement in Quebec and justified its eventual separation. Canadian federalists maintained that Confederation made sense, while its breakup would spell economic doom and political disaster. From the perspective of economic considerations and geo-political practicality, the case for the separation of Quebec could indeed appear weak, perhaps even indefensible. However, by elevating separatism to a moral and spiritual plane, Groulx situates independence in a higher realm that overrules economic and political objections.

7.3 The Spiritual As Social Theory

As long as we confess to be Catholics one immutable truth must serve as the primary guideline of our thought, namely, that a society, a race, a people, cannot be what it normally should be, nor develop fully and attain consummate maturity, unless it follows God's plan by establishing a temporal order consistent with that of the divine.

exigeait, avons-nous cru, une certaine autonomie politique et nationale" (L. Groulx, *Directives*, pp. 53-54).

Indeed years of experience have only strengthened my faith in the Church and its social role. The study of doctrine and history, for instance, have brought me to the conclusion that Catholicism represents the archetype of civilization, so that apart from Christian political principles no nation can achieve a wholesome, lasting, harmonious collective existence ... by the same token the gravest error public figures and lay apostles can commit is that of not carrying out their work according to the precepts of the faith, thus denying to their labors and pursuits the collaboration of the Church of Jesus Christ, which constitutes the pre-eminent vehicle of national salvation.¹⁰

Groulx's fundamental premise was that of contingent reciprocity. The temporal cannot be evaluated in terms of itself, because that is practically secularism. The temporal must be evaluated in relationship to the moral and spiritual. The temporal could not establish its own value, because it is a moral, not a material concept. Groulx declared that material wealth is not prosperity unless it contributes to moral welfare:

The various elements of progress exist in mutual dependence. Material riches *per se* do not constitute wealth except to the degree that they contribute to a well-balanced economy, which itself represents an integral part of the moral and social good. We must therefore resolve never to seek economic gain at the expense of our national and moral welfare. Those working for our future must remember that first and foremost true progress maintains social order which, when undermined, always takes its toll ... If Catholicism still means to us all it should so that we

¹⁰“Aussi longtemps que nous n’aurons pas renoncé à notre catholicisme, cette vérité inflexible devra dominer nos esprits comme un primat intellectuel, qu’une société humaine, une race, un peuple ne sont ce qu’ils doivent être, n’atteignent leur condition normale, leur vraie grandeur, leur vraie beauté, que constitués selon le plan de Dieu, dans un ordre temporel organisé en fonction de l’ordre supérieur. Car s’il y a quelque chose que les années ont fortifié en moi, c’est ma foi en l’Église et en son rôle social. L’étude de la doctrine et de l’histoire m’ont appris entre autres choses que pour les peuples, il ne saurait exister de solide et durable équilibre en dehors des lois d’une politique chrétienne, ni de plus haute forme de civilisation que le catholicisme ... de même faut-il croire qu’il ne peut exister pour l’homme public et pour l’apôtre laïc qu’une erreur, une seule erreur irréparable, celle de n’avoir pas accordé son action aux règles de sa foi, d’avoir écarté de son labeur et de son chemin, la collaboration de cette suprême ouvrière du salut national qu’est l’Église de Jésus-Christ” (L. Groulx, “Les périls actuels,” *L’Action canadienne-française* 19 [mai 1928]: 298-299. See also L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 2: 355-357).

faithfully follow its teachings, then it will set out for us the priorities and steps whereby we may build the earthly city. To ignore these precepts, let alone not to apply them, amounts to folly and negligence on the part of true believers.¹¹

Morality therefore defines wealth, indeed circumscribes the material. In Groulx's world view there is no autonomous existence, everything exists in relationship to other things. The complementarity of the spiritual and the temporal is a leitmotif of Groulx's thought. What does Groulx mean by economic equilibrium? Certainly he is not referring to a balance of supply and demand, nor to a company's balance sheet. Rather he insists on a notion of progress or wealth that integrates the material and the moral. This exemplifies Groulx's moralistic rationale, which reduces all social issues to a matter of morality.

Maintaining the balance between the material and the moral is the crux of society. Groulx's conservative, not to say reactionary, attitude was based on the primacy of the spiritual over the temporal. This delicate balance explains why Groulx alternately promoted the national on one hand and Catholicism on the other hand:

You would doubtlessly accord to this French State the right to have all the institutions requisite for a viable State; more specifically, you would acknowledge that the various and sundry expressions of human spirituality require financial support, so that to all intents and purposes the preservation of national culture necessitates

¹¹"Une dépendance mutuelle existe entre les divers facteurs du progrès. Une richesse n'est pas une richesse par cela seul qu'elle l'est en elle-même; il faut qu'en plus elle représente un élément de l'équilibre économique, lequel n'est souvent à son tour qu'un élément de l'équilibre moral et social ... Le mot d'ordre à retenir, c'est donc la renonciation absolue aux gains qui ne pourraient se faire qu'au détriment des forces nationales ou morales. Les constructeurs de notre avenir s'en souviendront: le vrai progrès est avant tout la préservation d'un ordre; et l'ordre blessé prend toujours sa revanche ... Si le catholicisme reste pour nous ce qu'il doit être, si nous l'acceptons loyalement dans sa vérité, il nous indique selon quelle discipline, dans quelle hiérarchie des valeurs, doit se construire la cité terrestre. Et de la part d'une élite de croyants, ce serait un étrange illogisme de ne pas admettre cette vérité et une plus étrange insouciance de ne pas l'appliquer" (L. Groulx, "Le problème économique: conclusion," *AF*: 6/6 [décembre 1921]: 717-718).

economic independence, all the more so these days when economic forces have proven omnipotent in the political, social, moral, intellectual, and cultural lives of nations. Following this rationale you must therefore admit that no people nor State can survive, much less determine the course of its future, if they are not the masters of their own economic affairs.¹²

A proper concept of the state depends on the right relationship of the spiritual and the temporal. Proper concepts of positive law, economics and morality derive from this relationship. If the primacy of the spiritual is not established, the state would practically acquire unlimited authority with no moral accountability. The state uninformed by the spiritual would become an immoral institution, since no higher authority would circumscribe its authority. Groulx ultimately could not accept fascism, communism, or any other political system which acts as its own moral authority. However he is prepared to accept an authoritarian government to the extent it enforces Christian moral standards and cooperates with the church. Free market capitalism is equally unacceptable on this basis because it has no corrective.

Groulx's concept of the interrelationship of the spiritual and the temporal forms a holistic construct. Linked to economic, social and national conditions, the spiritual does not ultimately depend on temporal realities but rather exists in a symbiotic relationship with them, according to Groulx:

I have sought in my own way to convince you of this by insisting time and again that a misguided economy inexorably undermines social conditions,

¹²“À cet État français, vous concédez sans doute le droit à tous les organes d'un État viable; et vous admettez en particulier la nécessité d'un appui matériel à toute vie spirituelle, en d'autres termes, la nécessité d'une certaine indépendance économique pour la conservation de la culture nationale; en outre cette nécessité, vous la reconnaissez d'autant plus que de nos jours, l'empire se révèle tout-puissant de l'économique sur la vie politique, sociale, morale, intellectuelle, culturelle d'un peuple, eh bien, du même coup, vous êtes forcés d'admettre qu'il n'y a de peuple et d'État viables, maîtres de leur destinée, que l'État et le peuple maîtres de leur vie économique” (L. Groulx, “L'économique et le national,” *Le document* 22 [mars 1936]: 2).

so that when a society and its economy go awry this insidiously affects the national, moral and religious state of a people. Note carefully that this affirmation does not subordinate our faith to economic and national affairs but simply points out their interrelatedness.¹³

Even in the Great Depression Groulx did not argue for French Canadian economic autonomy on the basis of Quebec's pressing economic needs, but because they must be masters of their economic destiny, so their spiritual independence would not be compromised. Economic independence is essential to prevent the oppression of materialism. For subsequent secular nationalists, this easily became an impetus for the promotion of the economic as the cornerstone of survival. Those who followed Groulx in the nationalist movement retained his emphasis on economic independence but ignored the spiritual framework which made this imperative in his scheme. They then forgot about what Groulx deemed an historical commonplace, "Experience teaches that peoples who uphold god-given values flourish and prosper, while those who disdain them and sacrifice their souls on the altar of materialism end up decadent and ruined. This constitutes an historical commonplace."¹⁴ Yet there is an ambivalence in Groulx's thought; on one hand he insisted on the importance of the temporal as the matrix of the spiritual; on the other hand, he emphasized the primacy of the spiritual over the temporal. This is indicative of the equivocation and corollary dynamic tension inherent

¹³"C'est ce que maintes fois j'ai essayé de vous exprimer à ma manière, quand je vous disais qu'un état économique bâti de travers entraîne fatalement un état social bâti de travers, qu'un état économique et un état social bâtis de travers ont leurs impitoyables réactions sur les réalités nationales, morales, et religieuses d'un peuple. Ce n'est pas là, notez-le bien, subordonner notre foi, ni à l'économie ni au national. C'est simplement marquer la liaison entre les deux." (L. Groulx, "Pour jeunes Laurentiens," 1945 (30 septembre, 1945). Vers l'Indépendance, Semaine Sociale, pp. 16-17, *Spicilèges* 1945).

¹⁴"L'expérience enseigne que les peuples qui respectent l'éternelle hiérarchie des valeurs grandissent et prospèrent et que ceux qui la méprisent, qui livrent leur âme aux forces matérielles aboutissent à la décadence et à la ruine. C'est un lieu commun historique" (L. Groulx, "Pour Jeunes Laurentiens" Plan et grandes ligues; politique de la Main tendue; pp. 6-7; *Spicilèges* 1945).

in the doctrine of the Incarnation, so that Groulx can state his position in a speech to the *Jeunes Laurentiens* by projecting it onto his audience:

You believe in the spiritual, but you also believe in the temporal - you believe in the primacy of the spiritual, and you believe that the temporal only has value and meaning to the extent that it serves the purposes of the spiritual; yet due to the current state of society you believe that the temporal will not accept this scheme of things unless human beings care to do so.¹⁵

This delicate balance inevitably leads to misunderstandings of the temporal: the spiritually minded consider it as a dangerous leaning towards materialism, whereas secularists perceive it as religious and “messianic.” Groulx can easily be interpreted both ways. This is especially true if one does not take into account Groulx’s Thomist insistence on synthesis. For Groulx the Incarnation constitutes a social paradigm. It models the affirmation, indeed the assumption of the temporal by the spiritual, in order to redeem all things temporal. Groulx argued that modern civilization tends toward the dominance of the spiritual by the temporal, consequently the laity, as much as the clergy, need to dispose the temporal in such a way that it defers to spiritual priorities and thus corrects this imbalance. This lies at the heart of Groulx’s social theory.

Groulx’s address to the *Jeunes Laurentiens* in 1945 presaged his approach to the nationalists during the Quiet Revolution. He attempted to steer them away from a secular nationalism while trying to bring them back within the fold of the spiritual. The *Jeunes Laurentiens*, like the nationalists who followed in the 1950s and 1960s in French Canada, were secularly oriented, but historically the roots of the French-

¹⁵“Vous croyez au spirituel; mais vous croyez aussi au temporel - vous croyez à la primauté du spirituel; et vous croyez que le temporel n’a de valeur et de raison d’être que si le spirituel l’ordonne à soi; mais vous croyez encore que, dans l’état de civilisation où nous vivons, le temporel n’accepte cette ordonnance

Canadian nationalist movement were in the religio-nationalism of Tardivel and Bourassa. Groulx wanted to keep them in this stream and prevent the secularization of the modern French-Canadian nationalist movement. A balance must be achieved by affirming the temporal, all the while asserting the primacy of the spiritual.

Groulx clearly wanted to lead French-Canadian society away from materialism. Although in the light of the twenty-first century, the 1920s seem innocuous enough, in that day and age this period amounted to a sexual, moral, and social sea change, not unlike that which occurred during the 1960s in the U.S.A. as well as its Quebec corollary, the 'Quiet Revolution.' Groulx was already forty-three years old by 1921. A late Victorian, religious moralist, he reacted to the liberalization of the 1920s, especially in urban Montreal, which was then prosperous and indeed the largest city in Canada. Montreal was certainly no exception to the 'Roaring 20s,' and Groulx equated disorder with an imbalance in the relationship between the material and the moral. An imbalance in favor of materialism would have serious moral consequences and outweigh any material advantages prosperity may initially secure.

For Groulx progress represented a moral construct, namely an equilibrium between the spiritual and the temporal in society. As a result the establishment and maintenance of a proper relationship between the moral and the material throughout the evolution of a society stands as the supreme social task in Groulx's thought. Prosperity did not necessarily constitute progress, because material wealth might undermine the moral and overrun the spiritual. Groulx's principle seems to be that of the Old

ou ne s'y plie que si les hommes s'en mêlent." (L. Groulx, "Pour Jeunes Laurentiens," Plan et grandes lignes; politique de la Main tendue, p. 13; *Spicilèges* 1945).

Testament proverb that there must be enough material well-being so as not to sin in order to meet human needs, but not so much that one abandons God.¹⁶

Groulx's 'orthodox' nationalist position relevantly addressed the national yet respected the primacy of the spiritual. In the midst of the Great Depression Groulx wrote *Orientations* (1935) in which he criticized both the Canadian Confederation and the U. S. A. on the basis of their supposedly erroneous social concept of the relationship between the spiritual and the temporal. He attributed this error to the prevalence of Protestantism in North America. The Reformation dichotomized the spiritual and the temporal, resulting in a social theory which practically excluded the spiritual from the public domain. The key to solve social problems lies in properly relating the spiritual to the temporal. The primacy of the temporal in society produced the Depression. Groulx protested against a capitalism unbridled by the spiritual in Canadian society:

We know that in some provinces of the Dominion the spirit of Protestantism has warped the conception of justice, law, the State and its authority, the relations among the social classes, and between labor and capital. We know how ... little they understand the proper relationship of the spiritual to the temporal in the public domain, and thus find it difficult to establish the parameters of a sound social policy. As long as we live within this Confederation can we selfishly go on allowing ourselves the luxury of taking for granted its doctrinal failings and concomitant problems? Can federal policy and that of other provinces court disaster without imperilling Quebec? Bitter experience belies any such illusions. The moral structures in society which we required ... for the good of our people, we also demand with the same eagerness for the rest of Canada. This country cannot serve as the true homeland of all its children

¹⁶"Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me, Lest I be full, and deny *thee*, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God *in vain*" (Proverbs 30:8-9).

unless its policies put into practice the principles of Christianity. In other words, either Christianity will pervade the mores and laws of Canadian society, or peace and justice will exist for none. I fear our moral resolve will inexorably succumb to the force of prevailing attitudes.¹⁷

Relationships between social classes also depend on the proper relationship of the spiritual and the temporal. Labor relations and capitalism are equally contingent on their relationship. Groulx believed that Protestantism down through the centuries has eviscerated morality by promoting a concept of it as a subjective matter, rather than an objective social standard. Moreover, Protestantism undermined the church's role as the moral arbiter in society.

The proper relationship of the spiritual and the temporal in French Canada is the basis for its 'distinct society.' The primacy of the spiritual sets Quebec apart from White Anglo-Saxon Protestant Canada, which is materialist and secular because of Protestantism's *de facto* subjection of the spiritual to the temporal:

No one can convince me that a Catholic people two to three million strong exists in Canada just to say the same thing as others, to content themselves with the same publications, theatre, social policy, and philosophy of life as others who are Christians separated from the true faith by the profound tragedy of the Reformation. I contend that while others too often pursue materialistic interests to the

¹⁷"L'on sait comme en certaines provinces de la Puissance, l'esprit de la Réforme a faussé les notions de la justice, du droit, de l'État et de son autorité, les relations des classes, du capital et du travail; l'on sait comme ... on y entend mal les rapports du temporel et du spirituel dans la vie publique; comme on y a de peine enfin à trouver les principes d'une saine économie sociale. Or aussi longtemps que nous vivrons en Confédération, nous est-il loisible de prendre égoïstement notre parti de ces misères ou de ces carences doctrinales? La politique fédérale ou celle des provinces se peuvent-elles orienter dans le sens du désordre sans péril pour le Québec? Nous avons été payés pour nous garder de ces illusions. Les conditions de vie morale que nous requérons ... pour notre nationalité, nous les requérons avec la même urgence pour tout le Canada. Ce pays ne sera pour tous ses fils une patrie hospitalière que s'il pratique les principes de la politique chrétienne. En d'autres termes, ou le christianisme triomphera au Canada dans les lois et les mœurs, ou la justice et la paix n'existeront pour personne. Contre l'atmosphère ambiante, je dirais même qu'il faudrait perdre tout espoir de préserver notre armature morale" (L. Groulx, *Orientations*, pp. 33-34).

neglect of spiritual imperatives, Catholics above all others, are duty-bound to uphold the supernatural character of the faith and to affirm boldly God's just demands on humanity.¹⁸

The Reformation, as Groulx conceived it, initiated secularism, made religion and morality private matters, rather than public concerns. The prime referent of the Reformation was the individual, rather than society. The rights of the spiritual must translate into practice through appropriate civil legislation and the enforcement of strict standards of public morality. In practice, the rights of God mean the application of the primacy of the spiritual in society. It is not sufficient to affirm personally the primacy of the spiritual as Protestant Pietists did. Rather, it has to be practiced in the public domain. When Groulx spoke of a spiritual nation this meant in practice a moralistic society. The distinctness which results from the social primacy of the spiritual must be reflected in all public life.

In Groulx's soteriological scheme the spiritual requires the temporal, indeed effects salvation through it. The spiritual co-operates with the temporal to achieve human redemption:

One cannot imagine the Church adopting an attitude of indifference towards the earthly, human realities on which the success of its mission largely depends ... Such indifference seems even less conceivable since these factors impact not only the mission of the Church and the redemption of humanity - as repeatedly underscored by recent popes - but moreover, by virtue of his universal sovereignty Christ the King rightfully claims obedience from

¹⁸“Nul ne me persuadera qu'un peuple de deux à trois millions de catholiques existe au Canada pour dire la même chose que les autres, se contenter de la même presse, du même théâtre, de la même législation sociale, de la même philosophie de vie, quand ces autres sont des chrétiens séparés de la vraie foi par le grand malheur de la Réforme. Alors que les droits du spirituel sont trop souvent oubliés ou noyés dans des préoccupations matérielles, je soutiens que des catholiques sont tenus plus que les autres à une affirmation de la foi surnaturelle, aux courageuses revendications des droits de Dieu” (L. Groulx, *Orientations*, p. 35).

every temporal entity of creation, including all peoples and each of their institutions.¹⁹

Groulx associated the primacy of the spiritual with the lordship of Christ. The latter applies to all temporal realities, hence the 'totalistic' nature of Roman Catholicism. *Pour Bâtir* is written late in Groulx's life (1953), when he was more concerned with spirituality; hence his emphasis on the lordship of Christ. He often uses the term 'indifferent' to indicate that the church could not be neutral, nor distant from social issues. On the contrary it has to inform them in order to effect human redemption and to establish the sovereignty of Christ in all realms of human existence. The universality of Christ, and vicariously of the church, entails its universal applicability to all social entities and institutions. The sovereignty of Christ was Groulx's social agenda, so that he sought a socially omnipresent role for the church in society.

Intellectuals must maintain the proper relationship of the spiritual and the temporal by subjecting their expression and endeavors to Christian moral standards. In practice this means self and public censorship. The intellectual must serve moral interests. Intellectuals are public figures, and in a Catholic society they are responsible to demonstrate Christian morality in their work. Groulx held all public figures -- politicians, the intelligentsia and artists -- responsible to maintain Catholic moral standards in society. Since Catholicism is a social phenomenon, public figures have to maintain it publicly. Groulx admired Henri Bourassa as a politician who integrated Catholicism as a political leader and as founder and editor of *Le Devoir* in 1910.

¹⁹"On ne saurait concevoir une Église indifférente à ces facteurs terrestres ou humains dont dépend largement le succès de sa mission. .. Indifférence d'autant moins concevable qu'il ne s'agit point seulement ici de la mission de l'Église et du rachat de l'homme, - et cela encore les derniers Papes n'ont cessé de le proclamer - mais il se trouve, qu'au nom de son universel empire, le Christ-Roi requiert de plein droit l'hommage de toutes les réalités terrestres de tout l'univers créé, de tous les peuples, de toutes leurs institutions" (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 154).

7.4 Political Nationalism

Groulx envisioned a Christian Canada, a nation whose laws and mores would reflect the primacy of the spiritual. Christian politics would derive from the right relationship of the spiritual and the temporal in society. The government would have to legislate and enforce morality, just as much as the church has the duty to teach it publicly. Groulx's understanding of Christian politics was therefore largely moralistic. In his political scheme the state is the civil arm of morality. The role of the state is to implement Christian morality in society. For Groulx, to realize a Christian nation, Quebec would have to separate from White Anglo-Saxon Protestant Canada, or at least entrench its own Catholic 'distinct society.' His ideal of French-Canadian society was largely moral. Social catholicism attempts to inform society through legislation that enforce Catholic moral principles. In *Orientations*, Groulx called on Quebec's civil authorities to legislate morality so as to translate the primacy of the spiritual into social reality:

I believe everyone would agree that Christian legislation will not become law by itself in Canada. Yet what right do we have to expect such legislation from the federal parliament when we ourselves in Catholic Quebec do not first show them the way? Moreover, how can we expect the rest of the country to understand the proper relationship between the spiritual and the temporal when in our own province we take lightly such matters? Indeed, who will Christianize civil life and mores in the Dominion if the intelligentsia of its only Catholic province consider public morality unimportant, or worse still, serve to vitiate it?²⁰

²⁰«L'on admettra, croyons-nous, qu'une législation chrétienne ne se rédigera pas toute seule au Canada. Mais cette législation, de quel droit l'attendre au parlement fédéral, si nous-mêmes, dans le catholique Québec, ne savions commencer, servir d'éclaireurs? Ou encore comment demander au reste du pays d'entendre, selon l'ordre, les rapports du spirituel et du temporel si, dans notre province, nous ne savions que traiter légèrement ce même ordre? Par qui enfin les moeurs et la pensée publique parviendront-elles à

The 'distinct society' of Quebec lay in its civil legislation, which enforces Christian morality. The moral revolution of the 1960s is the bane of Groulx's nationalist vision. He constantly exhorted his people to maintain high moral standards. His is a biblical, indeed Old Testament concept of a separate, that is to say, a holy people. Groulx based the viability of a state on the independence of the spiritual. A national state serves as an auxiliary to assure the collective spiritual well-being of a people. In this light alone can one understand his 1937 declaration that French Canada would have its own state. The telos of that state lies in making Quebec a spiritual homeland for French-Canadians, a spiritual nation. An independent state thus becomes an imperative in order to assure the primacy of the spiritual French-Canadian society. Only an independent state would have at its disposal all the means necessary to preserve the primacy of the spiritual in French Canada as it faces the seemingly relentless onslaught of materialist Americanism.

In the 1920s and 1930s, through *L'Action française* and Catholic Action, respectively, Groulx argued for the spirituality of the national. However after World War II he insisted that the national be subsidiary to the spiritual. This is due to his increasing concern to contribute to the spirituality of French Canada. He wanted to stem the tide of a nationalism unbridled by the spiritual, a secular nationalism which has no higher aim than the nation-state. Profoundly affected by the nationalist debacle of World War II, in 1953 he warned:

Forbidding the means to an end from becoming an end unto itself does not undermine the means; by the same token our culture need not seem less significant to us because it serves as a bastion of the faith. Furthermore, has not contemporary history

se christianiser si, dans l'unique province catholique de la Puissance, les intellectuels se désintéressent de la morale ou pis encore, travaillent à la corrompre?" (L. Groulx, *Orientations*, pp. 34-35).

taught us that no one can deify a human being, nation, or fatherland without paying the price? By virtually deifying humanity, or at least instituting a religion of Humankind, Karl Marx sought to free humanity from the shackles of capitalism. Yet in effect he chained it to the hellish depths of communism. Nor can we forget the catastrophic consequences when other political leaders vainly sought to aggrandize the nation or fatherland by deifying it.²¹

This quote reveals Groulx's simultaneous rejection of both communism and fascism and categorically contradicts Esther Delisle's Nietzschean, Fascist concept of Groulx's deification of man. Groulx put nationalism in its place, yet at the same time he affirmed its validity as a vehicle for attaining the spiritual. Nationalism that abuses others, as in World War II, does not mean that the national is intrinsically evil in and of itself. The significance of the nation derives from its relationship to the spiritual.

Groulx's argument concerning Roman Catholicism and the French-Canadian nationalist movement naturally shifted focus over the years, because the task of the apologist is to render the faith relevant to contemporary society. In the wake of World War II, Groulx insisted on a corrective for nationalism. When he believed the church needed to adopt a nationalist position he promoted it; when he believed the nationalist movement in Quebec was secularizing, he sought to subject it to Roman Catholicism. This makes him appear equivocal, which is typical for the Christian apologist: his message changes as the times do. Throughout the rapid evolution of Quebec and

²¹"Ce n'est pas affaiblir un moyen que de lui interdire de se substituer à la fin; notre culture ne se déprécie nullement à nous apparaître ... comme un contrefort de la foi. Au reste, l'histoire contemporaine ne nous a-t-elle point appris qu'on ne déifie pas impunément ni l'homme, ni la nation, ni la patrie? En déifiant l'homme en quelque sorte, ou en tout cas, en instituant une religion de l'homme, Karl Marx prétendait bien le libérer des servitudes capitalistes. Il n'a fait que l'enchaîner au fond de l'enfer du communisme. D'autres chefs de peuple, que nous n'avons pas oubliés, ont tenté de déifier la nation ou la patrie, pour le faux espoir de les grandir; ils les ont acheminées vers les tragiques catastrophes" (L. Groulx, *Pour bâtir*, p. 159).

Western society in the twentieth century, Groulx sought to apply Roman Catholicism to these changes in the specific context of Quebec. He evolved with the times, which explains in part the enigmatic character of his thought and work.

Groulx attacked communism first, rather than fascism. He did so because, while fascism was apparently defeated in World War II, communism came out with a firm grip on Eastern Europe and China, which resulted in the Cold War. By 1953, when Groulx published *Pour Bâtir*, Stalin had ruled the Soviet Union with an iron fist for some twenty-five years. This is a remarkable statement in light of Groulx's militant nationalist perspective. It indicates how he reevaluated his nationalist commitment in the tragic aftermath of World War II. This is one of the instances when Groulx refers to *chefs* (leaders) in a distinctly negative sense. The nationalist travesty of Hitler and Mussolini forced him to abandon the myth of the *chef*, at least for the time being. Groulx reviled the *chef* of the nation in sacrilegious terms of deity and deification.

He rejected nationalism which virtually became a religion and presented itself as the ultimate reality, so that it replaced religion as the finality of society and the epicenter of human existence. He supported the nation as the means to a Christian end rather than nationalism as a secular religion fundamentally contrary to Christianity. Groulx emphasized the disastrous consequences of nationalism elevated to the religion of the state and accepted nationalism insofar as it represented a form of Christian humanism. For him nationalism could be Christian if it led to the spiritual or was informed by Catholicism, or it could be secular, an end unto itself, in which case it is deviant and dangerous. If the nation becomes the final end, nationalism becomes idolatry. Yet nationalism remains useful only to the extent that it brings humanity to its spiritual finality, but it is destructive when an individual, a *chef*, sets himself or the

nation as the finality of collective human existence and thus usurps that transcendence which belongs only to Christianity, by setting itself up as a religion. Groulx circumspectly delineated the parameters of nationalism by subjecting it to Christianity. He did this in the aftermath of World War II, not in the midst of the Great Depression, especially not in his debate with Georges-Henri Lévèsque, where he virtually equated the spiritual with the national in Quebec in the aftermath of the condemnation of *L'Action française* in order to prove his orthodoxy.

By 1953, Groulx saw nationalism as secularism in patriotic garb -- which of course paralleled the way many perceived it -- consequently refusing to give it Catholic sanction. The nation rests valid to the extent that it buttresses Catholicism. If it detracts therefrom, it must be rejected. The elevation of the nation and the *chef* to supreme finality is the antithesis of Christianity and is disastrous for humanity. Supreme finality belongs only to the divine, the transcendent. The nation and the *chef* cannot be objects of faith. Groulx critiqued nationalism on a religious basis, just as he had previously defended the nation on the basis of the faith. His nationalist rationale stayed consistently religious.

Groulx believed the common denominator of Communism and Fascism lies in the fact that both are secular religions. Both glorify collective humanity, the nation or a social class, as independent from God, faith, and any authority higher than themselves. As such they are forms of atheism or paganism. The nation and the *chef* must be accountable to the spiritual. Otherwise they become unethical, immoral, and destructive to humanity. Groulx argued for a transcendent religion. He considered Karl Marx a *chef*, but along with Hitler and Mussolini, an evil *chef*. The *chef* can be as great a villain, as he is a hero, hence the sacrilegious terms in which he describes such *chefs*.

As long as he believed the spiritual and the national were symbiotic Groulx promoted the French-Canadian nationalist movement. However, once he realized nationalism was secularly asserting itself to the detriment of Catholicism, he distanced himself from it. In *Chemins de l'Avenir* (1964), his open letter to 'Quiet Revolution' Quebec and its younger generation of secular nationalists, Groulx attempted to bring them and their movement back within the pale of Catholicism. Beginning in the early 1950s, Groulx's pursuits became increasingly sacerdotal. He led spiritual retreats, which he collated in his book *Rencontres avec Dieu* (1955). He lamented more and more that he had not given enough attention to preaching and the parish ministry. He undertook his memoirs as an "apostolic work." Moreover he came to feel almost intolerably estranged from the nationalist movement because of its blatant secularization, indeed anticlericalism. Thus, on October 20, 1952, Groulx wrote to François-Albert Angers:

I cannot deny that like many seniors involved in our ACTION NATIONALE, its state deeply concerns me. André [Laurendeau] insists on resigning as editor of the JOURNAL. Who will succeed him? I see none among the younger set with enough authority and discernment to assume the editorship. The prevalent attitude of this group seems disconcerting to me. Such anticlericalism cannot secure the future of a journal over half of whose subscribers are people of the Church. Nor do I believe that the time has come in French Canada when a nationalist movement can succeed if it flaunts a thinly veiled anticlericalism. Moreover, when that day comes it goes without saying that I will no longer be on the nationalist side.²²

²²"Je ne vous cacherai pas qu'avec plusieurs aînés, je suis fort inquiet au sujet de notre ACTION NATIONALE. André veut absolument quitter la direction de la REVUE. Qui lui succédera? Dans l'équipe des jeunes, je ne vois personne d'assez d'autorité et de jugement pour assumer la succession. La tournure d'esprit en ce camp-là ne me paraît guère rassurante. Ce n'est pas avec de l'anticléricalisme qu'on peut assurer l'avenir d'une Revue dont la bonne moitié des abonnés sont gens d'Église. Je ne crois pas, non plus, que le temps soit venu où un mouvement nationaliste ait chance de réussir au Canada

There was an obvious generation gap between Groulx and the young French-Canadian nationalists. These heady nationalists had little respect, if not actual scorn for the Church. As of the 1950s, Groulx argued that it was inopportune to promote publicly nationalist aspirations in an anticlerical vein. On the contrary, he counseled nationalists to assume a Catholic appearance in order to make inroads into religious and educational circles. This was his advice to Barbeau. Such a tactic was not simply a matter of strategy for promoting the French-Canadian nationalist movement; it was the non-negotiable condition for Groulx's public support of that movement. As far as Groulx was concerned there would never come a time when it could free itself from Catholicism. Groulx pretended it was a matter of pragmatics, so as to secure the movement's success. In reality it reflected Groulx's own religious concern. He worked all his life to prevent the divorce of Catholicism from French-Canadian nationalism and he never wanted to force French Canadians to choose between the two. Ironically that choice was now foisted on Groulx himself. Circumstances in Quebec had become such that he himself could not avoid being forced to choose between them. For Groulx this represented a cruel dilemma because he attempted to hold the two together for over half a century. Groulx offered his counsel for the good of the nationalist movement. He also did so as a Catholic priest, so that he would not be caught in an insufferable dilemma. He did not want to be placed in the untenable position of promoting secular nationalism; all the while he professed his commitment to the primacy of Catholicism in society.

français, en affichant des sentiments anticléricaux plus ou moins camouflés. Quand ce jour-là sera venu, du reste, je n'ai pas besoin de vous dire que je ne serai plus du côté nationaliste" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to François-Albert Angers, 20 October 1952).

7.5 The Realization of the Kingdom of God in the Nation

Christ established the primacy of the spiritual through the principle of seeking first the kingdom of God. Groulx equated the establishment of the kingdom of God with the maintenance of the primacy of the spiritual. Civilization, as he defined it in 1950, was functionally equivalent to the kingdom of God, the final outcome of the primacy of the spiritual in the nation:

Seek above all ... in the first place we forget the importance of *above all*, whereby Christ sought to affirm the primacy of the spiritual. We then fail to agree on the meaning of *kingdom of God*, which comprises not only a heavenly, but also a worldly kingdom. We must make the eternal kingdom a reality here on earth. If Catholic nations do indeed have a mission it is undoubtedly to establish a Catholic culture or civilization here on earth. Such an international, or in some respects universal *civilization*, has never been achieved outside of a national framework. The task before Catholics is to further the Incarnation of Christ in the temporal sphere, to infuse institutions with justice in every sense of the word ... As Catholics we, above all others, have a responsibility to live the Christian faith in all realms, to ensure the Incarnation of Christ in temporal realities.²³

For Groulx, the kingdom of God is in time and space, not only in eternity. Not contradicting the eternal kingdom of God, it is a continuum from the temporal and spatial to the eternal. He did not conceive the national and the universal as contradictory

²³“Cherchez d’abord ... on oublie d’abord de retenir *d’abord* par quoi le Christ a voulu simplement affirmer la primauté du spirituel. On néglige ensuite de s’entendre sur le sens de *royaume de Dieu*. Pas seulement le royaume là haut - mais le royaume ici-bas. C’est ici-bas que se conquiert le royaume éternel. Si les nations catholiques ont vraiment une mission, c’est bien d’établir ici-bas une culture, une civilisation catholique. Cette *civilisation* - internationale, universelle en quelques-unes de ses notes - ne s’est jamais réalisée que dans le cadre national. L’oeuvre des catholiques - c’est de poursuivre l’incarnation du Christ dans le temporel, dans les institutions, y intégrer la justice - dans tous les sens du mot... et parce que catholiques - tenus plus que personne à la vie chrétienne totale - à l’Incarnation du Christ dans le temporel” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, “Relations de foi et patriotisme” [période 1950-1960], *Spicilèges* 1950).

nor mutually exclusive. The kingdom of God is necessarily a national and universal phenomenon.

The mission of Catholicism is to incarnate the spiritual in the temporal. Groulx conceived Incarnation as an on-going process. The perpetuation of Christ's incarnation demands Catholicism to inform the entirety of human existence. Catholics must vicariously incarnate Christ temporally and spatially. Groulx referred specifically to the institutionalization of the faith, not to an abstract principle. Incarnation is a social construct in Groulx's scheme, not an individual phenomenon or a personal matter. Groulx insisted it must inform the infrastructure of society. He resorted once again to the 'total' metaphor, which in this context clearly means the spiritual informing all temporal realities. The Incarnation of Christ initiates the assumption of the temporal by the spiritual and thereafter, through the church and Catholic nations, the Incarnation extends the spiritual into all temporalities. The Incarnation begins a process, which must continue until the spiritual assimilates all temporal phenomena. Christ is the microcosm of the spiritual completely assuming the human condition. Incarnation therefore is not only a divine accomplishment, but long-term undertaking which Catholics must complete. Incarnation is incumbent on all of the faithful. It must be realized through them. Incarnation is not solely a divine one time, one place event, but the essence of Christian mission.

Mission is a leitmotif of Groulx's thought. He devoted an entire study to it as his last major scholarly work in 1962. To assert that the primacy of the spiritual is applicable only to the celestial kingdom of God is pointless. Christ did not establish this principle for heaven but for earth. Superfluous in heaven, it is an absolute necessity for the human community. The kingdom of God is temporal and spatial in that the

incarnation of the spiritual in the temporal must be realized here and now. This understanding of the kingdom of God is not unlike that of the Presbyterians in the turn of the twentieth-century Canada, as dealt with by Brian Fraser in *The Social Uplifters*. Akin to the social Gospel understanding of the kingdom of God, Groulx's scheme of the kingdom of God has temporal and spatial referents.

Biblical Israel, seventeenth-century France, and New France throughout its existence, are all archetypes of the kingdom of God realized in time and space. To realize the kingdom of God is practically equivalent to establishing the primacy of the spiritual over the temporal. This is the task of mission and civilization. Groulx argued that historically the kingdom of God always had been realized only within a national framework and therefore its future establishment would necessarily be national. Indeed Groulx looked to the post-Catholic Reformation nation, namely seventeenth-century France, rather than to medieval Christendom, as the archetype of the kingdom of God. Although he studied and admired the Middle Ages, Groulx did not even mention them as an example of the social realization of the primacy of the spiritual.

His understanding of the kingdom of God is essentially social since he equated Christ's incarnation in the temporal with the integration of justice into social institutions. This social orientation explains why Groulx insisted on the establishment in time and space (*ici-bas*) of the kingdom of God. Morality and ethics are likewise defined by the primacy of the spiritual. Immorality, injustice, unethical practices are the result of the domination of the spiritual by the temporal.

Mission is critical to Groulx's ecclesiological scheme, because it provides the means for the geographic expansion and socio-cultural development of the church through its incarnation/inculturation in peoples, societies, and nations. Mission remains

a necessity for the church, because it constitutes the praxis of incarnation and only the incarnation of Christianity, through inculturation, can effect the redemption of all humanity as envisaged in the Christian scriptures. Groulx could not accept the accusation that he had a narrow, provincial outlook, in view of the fact that he so thoroughly promoted the endeavors of French-Canadian missionaries to needy peoples around the globe. On the contrary, he argued that mission safeguards him against nationalist tunnel vision by providing a window on the world which constantly reminded him of the global scale of the redemptive enterprise. The principle of mission informs the thought and work of Groulx to such an extent that although highly critical of him, the inveterate secularist Maurice Blain nevertheless recognizes in Groulx a man so unmistakably imbued with a religious sense of mission and considers him a missionary to increasingly secular and modern Quebec society.²⁴

In keeping with this traditional vision of French Canadians as a missionary people, Groulx devoted the final decade of his life to reaffirming their allegedly apostolic vocation. Indeed to substantiate this claim he spent years gathering historical, demographic, and geographical facts about French-Canadian missionary endeavours around the world. He systematically collated this mass of material into a comprehensive overview of the missionary outreach from French Canada to the four corners of the earth. Entitled *Le Canada français missionnaire* (1962), this monograph not only stands as Groulx's last major scholarly work, it soon proved to be a source book for Canadian missionary literature, so that a decade later, John Webster Grant, a leading Canadian church historian wrote, "In a class by itself among general surveys is Lionel Groulx, *Le*

²⁴M. Blain, *Approximations: Essais*, (1967), p. 235.

Canada Français Missionnaire.²⁵ For all its contribution to the scholarship of the day, Groulx's study represents much more than an academic pursuit. By marshalling the results of his extensive research into an armada of facts, figures, and statistics on the history and contemporary status of worldwide missionary undertakings based in French Canada, Groulx offered apparently overwhelming, concrete evidence that French Canada constituted nothing less than "a land of apostles," as Groulx put it.²⁶ Furthermore, the historical method and factual tenor of Groulx's argument in *Le Canada français missionnaire* lends credibility to its fundamental contention that French Canadians form a missionary nation. This thesis is strengthened by the fact that Groulx carefully correlated the historical development of French Canada to the course of Christian mission and thus interprets French-Canadian history within a missiological frame of reference. Through historiography Groulx attempted to impart intellectual legitimacy to the claim that French Canadians possess an "apostolic spirit,"²⁷ or ethos, whence their collective calling to engage in Christian mission.

Catholics must realize the kingdom of God on earth by integrating the spiritual in the temporal through the establishment of social justice. The historic event of the Incarnation initiated this process, while Christian mission extends it throughout time and space. Based on the assumption that Protestantism does not insist on the integration of the spiritual and the temporal, much less the primacy of the spiritual over the temporal, Groulx concluded that Protestants to all intents and purposes marginalized the spiritual in society and thus undermined the establishment of the kingdom of God. Protestantism is not integral to Christianity. The mission of Catholics is to continue and

²⁵J. W. Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era: The First Century of Confederation*, (1972), p. 230.

²⁶"*Pays d'apôtres*" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 291).

complete the incarnation of the spiritual in the temporal, because, as Groulx understood it, their integration is the essence of redemption. The Incarnation is not only God becoming human, but also more basically the spiritual assuming the temporal. Not merely a theological event, it is also a precept applied to the relationship of the spiritual and the temporal in society. As Christ historically incarnated God, so too all Catholics must incarnate the spiritual in society. In effect then, the incarnation represents a social doctrine for Groulx.

Both the clergy and laity must establish the primacy of the spiritual in all temporal realities. The kingdom of God is immediately realizable, because it is not primarily an eschatological event, or even an elaborate social program to be implemented. Rather it is a singular principle which must be established and maintained. Groulx readily believed it had been realized in seventeenth-century France, as well as in New France. Little wonder he considered it feasible for contemporary French Canada. His concept of the kingdom of God requires no extraordinary divine intervention for its realization. The Incarnation had already begun the process and now human beings must effect the rest. Not a remote possibility in the far distant future, it was ready to be realized here and now. The Incarnation of Christ must be extended through Catholics, who are the temporal and spatial body which continues and expands the Incarnation until God thereby becomes all in all (I Cor. 15:28). The Church is the incarnate vicar of Christ. This includes all collective entities, such as Catholic cultures, peoples and nations. The laity by virtue of their proximity to the temporal are particularly responsible to incarnate the spiritual in the temporal. Groulx called for such

²⁷“Esprit apostolique” (L. Groulx, *Le Canada français missionnaire*, p. 9).

a morally rigorous laity. He specifically mentioned social institutions as the object of the kingdom of God because they are the bastions of the temporal.

Mission is not only evangelism; it is also the integration of the spiritual in the temporal. Protestants are half-Christians because they virtually deny the applicability of the spiritual to the temporal. They minimize the spiritualization of the temporal. Groulx therefore classed them with agnostics. Catholicity as Groulx understood it, is the universal assumption of the temporal by the spiritual. Incarnation is the *raison d'être* of Catholicism.

Le Canada français missionnaire was written in 1962, a period of Groulx's life when he was definitely more oriented toward defending the spiritual to those who were temporally minded. This contrasts with his pre-World War II orientation, which emphasized the temporal to those who were exclusively oriented to the spiritual. The primacy of the spiritual came to the forefront of Groulx's thought with the impending secularization of Quebec. While always present in his scheme, it became more pronounced after the condemnation of *l'Action Française* and Jacques Maritain's response to it. Groulx's public confession of orthodoxy in the last years of his life was a defense against the inroads of secularism in French Canada. The kingdom of God was not a preoccupation for Groulx prior to World War II, rather he sought to shore up the spirituality of his people. After World War II Groulx's concept of the kingdom of God was not other-worldly. He saw the kingdom of God as the imperative to establish an integrally Catholic society here and now. Certainly that is what Groulx meant when he referred in 1937 to French Canada inevitably having its own nation which would be its "spiritual home." A simple survey of Groulx's speeches, lectures, writings, books in the 1950s and 1960s clearly indicates the religious, spiritual orientation and preoccupation

of his thought in his latter years, as evident in *Rencontres avec Dieu, Le Canada français missionnaire, Chemins de l'avenir, Marie de L'Incarnation*. As he recalled in 1961:

When an inferior element unduly takes precedence over others it acts as a poison which sows the seeds of degeneration and death in the heart of a people. Christian civilizations, like all others, perish when they fatally lapse into materialism or false beliefs. Where then can we find a transcendent agency to maintain the proper social order? Where do we look for a guardian of the harmony essential to society? Once again the witness of history and its confirmation by current events attests that only a living, integral Christianity, can serve as supreme overseer because it alone attributes to the temporal and the eternal, the natural and the spiritual, their appropriate roles.²⁸

The Scylla and Charybdis of society are materialism on one hand and heresy on the other. The role of the Church is to steer the nation straight through these great social evils and temptations. Groulx often used terms such as balance, equilibrium, or synthesis. The Incarnation is the archetype of equilibrium and thus became a model for social order, a leitmotif of his thought. Although he operates with polarities, Groulx is not Manichean, as his validation of the temporal makes clear, contrary to Gaboury's assertion. He seeks to qualify the temporal, not to negate it. He was religious, even pietistic, but not an ascetic as many living witnesses are quick to attest. His

²⁸“Qu'un élément inférieur l'emporte indûment sur les autres, et c'est le poison, un germe de décadence ou de mort introduit au cœur d'un peuple. Les civilisations chrétiennes périssent comme les autres lorsqu'elles se laissent sombrer dans la fatalité de la matière ou de l'erreur. Où donc trouver le souverain régulateur qui maintiendra l'ordre bien en place? Où chercher le mainteneur de l'essentiel équilibre? Cette fois encore l'histoire témoigne et le spectacle du monde contemporain n'infirme pas le témoignage, seul le christianisme, un christianisme vivant, intègre peut tenir ce rôle souverain du suprême régulateur, parce que seul il répartit justement la part du terrestre et de l'éternel, du naturel et du spirituel” (CRLG, L. Groulx, “Religion et humanisme,” *Spicilèges* 1961).

understanding of Christianity was not that of self-effacement. On the contrary, as his militant nationalism indicated, his faith affirmed the collective self.

Like his Protestant contemporaries, Groulx turned to the Christian faith to provide answers to pressing social issues. He did so with the intent to integrate Christianity into contemporary society. Groulx believed this could not be realized in the rest of Canada, because it simply was not practicable in a pluralistic society. It was possible in French Canada because of its virtual religious homogeneity. At this point Groulx differed with “progressives” of the Social Gospel.²⁹ As a Catholic he did not perceive the individual as the prime referent for the creation of a Christian society. Such an emphasis on the individual is indicative of the spirit of both Protestantism and philosophical liberalism. Groulx believed a Christian society would be achieved only through the Catholization of the state, public and educational institutions. Collective means were essential to Christianize society; the church and state must work together to this end. The nation, not the individual, is the *locus classicus* of Christian social reformation in Groulx’s scheme. Unlike Americans who insist on social salvation first, or the Canadian Protestants, who concentrate on the individual conscience, Groulx conceived salvation as national.

Groulx shifted the focus on mission and evangelism to those outside the faith. Since French Canadians are baptized believers, he concentrated all his energy on Christian moral and social reform in Quebec to assure that French Canadians would not be merely nominal Catholics. He pushed for an integral Catholicism in Quebec. The

²⁹See Brian J. Fraser, *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915*.

attainment of Christian perfection through society made it unacceptable to dichotomize individual and social salvation.

Although not in the modernist sense, Groulx would agree with Paul Tillich's well-known statement that "religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion,"³⁰ and he would intend this in an incarnational sense. Culture is the incarnation of Catholicism. By the same token, Groulx believed religion to be the foundation of French-Canadian culture. Indeed he believed there could be no civilization apart from Christianity, and he applied the paradigm of the Incarnation to all issues, not simply to doctrinal questions. Here one can refer to Groulx's incarnational world view, rather than simply his incarnational theology.

Secularism introduced a dualistic principle, according to Groulx; it dichotomized Christianity. Groulx used the words *organique* and *unité* to refer to the holism of Catholicism. Although he recognized the distinctions between the profane and the sacred, because of the teleological perspective of his thought he insisted that ultimately they share the same spiritual end. Groulx decried secularism because it posits religious neutrality, or the adiaphoric nature of much of human existence:

How rare today those full-orbed Christians in whom the same spirit informs every facet of their lives and all that they do contributes to the same end, so that even the most seemingly commonplace and profane acts take on supernatural significance ... Yet, instead of such wholesome unity in their lives one routinely finds an entrenched, ruinous dualism, thus establishing a neutral zone which covers the greater part of human existence.³¹

³⁰Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture*, p. 48.

³¹"Combien rares aujourd'hui ces vies chrétiennes organiques où tout s'inspire du même esprit, de la même fin, où les moindres actes, les plus profanes en apparence, prennent une valeur surnaturelle ... Au lieu de cette féconde unité de la vie humaine, l'habitude s'établit d'un dualisme désastreux où la zone neutre de l'existence occupe le plus de place" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 202).

All must be directed towards its spiritual finality, where the spiritual and the temporal are united in the Incarnation. What appears to be profane is ultimately sacred. This reinforced his conviction that he was more Catholic, more orthodox, than those who were ready to abandon the nation, culture and society to secularism, rather than claim them for Catholicism.

8 -- THE GREAT DEBATE

Groulx's critique of American and Protestant Canadian society as well as the economy and nationalism, reveals how he viewed societies in which he believed the temporal had primacy over the spiritual. We will now examine his critique of Catholic Action and what he believed took place when the spiritual is so otherworldly as to be divorced from the temporal. Catholic Action is an early twentieth century expression of social Catholicism, a means for the laity to engage in the apostolic work of the Church while adapting to social needs and realities. This movement of the laity under the guidance of the Catholic hierarchy carries out organized religious activity of a social, educational or quasi-political kind. For Groulx, Catholic Action in French Canada was not a tool for nationalism, but the vehicle for Catholicism to adapt to the nationalist reality of Quebec society.

What Groulx decried in Catholic Action was a notion of the spiritual that is irrelevant to temporal realities, specifically to the nationalist concerns of Quebec. Here he believed the Catholic Action movement emphasized the spiritual to such an extent that it was out of touch with the temporal concerns of contemporary society, namely nationalism in French Canada. Groulx was so consumed by this movement that, even after the Great Debate in 1939, he carried on a theological discussion of Catholic Action until the end of his life. His book, *Chemins de l'avenir* (1964), elaborated his critique of Catholic Action. The last volume of Groulx's memoirs, and his other writings, speeches and correspondence reveal a scathing indictment of Catholic Action

as the main culprit responsible for the secularization of French Canada, the Quiet Revolution with its marginalization of religion and secular nationalism.

Like Henry Edward Manning,¹ the English ultramontanist in mid-Victorian Great Britain, Lionel Groulx, himself a late Victorian French-Canadian ultramontanist, shared the conviction that the church must not force the faithful to choose between religion and patriotism. Manning told Crehan: “one should never allow the faithful to be maneuvered into a position where they had to choose between their faith and their patriotism. That had been fatal in Reformation England.”² It is intriguing that Manning, at the heart of the imperialist British empire, and Groulx, a French-Canadian nationalist in a former colony of Britain, had the same conviction. By virtue of their ultramontanism, these two had much in common. For them forcing their compatriots to choose between their faith and their country would be suicidal for the church. Their mutual ultramontane commitment to Catholicism is that the church held the keys to the welfare of society. As a result they shared a social consciousness to meet these needs through Catholicism.

Like many Christian apologists, Groulx spent much of his life standing in the breach trying to hold together Christianity and contemporary ideological movements. In the early 1930s a debate arose between Groulx and George-Henri Lévesque.³ They

¹Henry Edward Manning (1808-92). Catholic archbishop of Westminster. At the First Vatican Council (1869-70) he was a leader of the ultramontane move to define the dogma of papal infallibility. He consistently promoted Catholic social consciousness, with particular concern for the condition of the poor and working class. After 1875, when he was made a cardinal, Manning championed social work of all kinds.

²Joseph H. Crehan, “Modernism,” in *A Catholic Dictionary of Theology*, 7: 289 (1971).

³Georges-Henri Lévesque (1903-1999), professor of moral theology at the Dominican College in Ottawa (1933-1935). Lévesque went on to become professor of economic philosophy at the University of Montreal (1935) and in the department of philosophy at the Université Laval in Quebec (1936); first director of social science department at the Université Laval in Quebec (1938); cofounder and first president of Conseil supérieur de la Coopération (1939); founder and director of the revue *Ensemble*

thrashed out the nature of Catholic Action. For Groulx the debate over Catholic Action represented a battle against secularism and became all the more fierce when clerics such as Lévesque, and later prominent lay figures such as Claude Ryan, seemingly led the assault against the primacy of the spiritual in all social issues. Would it have been proper to prevent Catholic Action from addressing the nationalist concerns of Quebec, as Lévesque contended? Or should Catholic Action, by virtue of its social mandate, have spoken to the concerns of the nationalist movement, as Groulx insisted? For Groulx the question of an acceptable nationalism was the preeminent social issue. If the church could not deal with nationalism it could not deal with the heart of the French-Canadian nation. His fundamental criticism of Catholic Action was that it tended to downplay the temporal at the expense of the spiritual. and in this way, to denationalize Catholicism and equate it with disincarnate Catholicism. To its own detriment, Catholic Action kept Catholicism out of nationalist concerns. For Groulx, Catholic Action let secularism through the front door of nationalism, the most burning issue in Quebec. If Catholicism could not be relevant to the heart of French-Canadian society, the church was doomed to insignificance in Quebec. The essence of the debate was that Catholic Action separated Catholicism and nationalism and thus forced people to choose between their faith and their country.⁴

(1940); social advisor for the Corporation des Agronomes (1940-1949); member of Conseil supérieur du Travail for the Province of Quebec (1941-1951); member of the Conseil d'Orientation économique for the Province of Quebec (1942).

⁴See Yvan Lamonde et Claude Corbo, *Le rouge et le bleu: Une anthologie de la pensée politique au Québec de la Conquête à la Révolution tranquille*, p. 414-415, for a brief introduction to the correspondence between Groulx and Lévesque on the relationship of Catholic action to contemporary nationalist youth movements in Quebec.

See Georges-Henri Lévesque, *Souvenances* 1: 257, where Lévesque affirms that the debate over Catholic action and contemporary nationalist youth movements in Quebec marked the turning point in his relationship with Groulx: "À partir de ce jour, nos relations devinrent moins cordiales, entachées d'une gêne feutrée que manifestent, du reste, les propres mémoires de l'abbé."

8.1 The Role of the Clergy

Groulx did not want not only Catholic lay movements, but also the clergy to be excluded from nationalism and even from any social dimension in the name of a pure, more spiritual Catholicism. In his October 27, 1935 letter to Georges-Alexandre Courchesne (1880-1950), bishop of Rimouski (1928-1946), Groulx deplored the implications of such developments:

If one persists in countenancing those Catholic youth organizations, which in the name of Catholic action forbid nationalist pursuits, logically speaking must not the same ban apply to every cleric? How does the episcopate see this new line of thinking? It in effect obfuscates what the faith and patriotism represent for our people. It will split the youth into two camps, one Catholic, the other patriotic. In its wake will come lay secondary schools. I meet many model Catholic laypersons who have no intention of passively accepting what amounts to the denationalization of their children. Indeed who can, in the name of Catholicism, ask them for such a sacrifice? I frankly believe we have never entertained a line of thinking so profoundly inimical to our existence. I know several lay and ecclesiastical circles find this most disturbing. It appears the bishops have not yet sanctioned this approach. Is it not rather strange that in such a grave matter as this case they seem to have given a blank check to some mavericks? I still ask myself how one can consider nationalist pursuits on the same plane as political activities, and how we will survive without nationalist activism.⁵

⁵“Si l’on laisse se continuer ces organisations de jeunesse catholique auxquelles on interdit l’action nationale, sous prétexte d’action catholique, la même interdiction ne devra-t-elle pas frapper logiquement tout ecclésiastique? Que pensent les évêques de cette nouvelle orientation? Voilà donc la foi et le patriotisme brouillés chez nous. Voici venir deux jeunesses: la jeunesse catholique et la jeunesse patriote. Et voici venir les lycées laïcs. Car je rencontre beaucoup de laïcs et d’excellents catholiques qui n’entendent pas tolérer sans résistance cette dénationalisation pratique de leurs enfants. Peut-on d’ailleurs, au nom du catholicisme, leur demander pareil sacrifice?... Franchement je ne crois pas que jamais aussi grave, aussi périlleuse, orientation ait été donnée à notre vie. Je sais bien des milieux laïcs et même ecclésiastiques fort inquiets. On nous dit que les évêques n’ont pas encore approuvé cette orientation. N’est-il pas un peu étrange, en ce cas, qu’en une aussi grave affaire, ils se donnent l’air de laisser carte blanche à des gens sans mandat? J’en suis encore à me demander comment on peut mettre

However, less than one month after Groulx's letter to Mgr. Courchesne quoted above, in which he incited the bishop and the hierarchy to insist on the conjunction of Catholic Action and *action nationale*, he wrote to Georges-Henri Lévesque in the opposite vein. He expressed his belief that the hierarchy would rule in favor of Lévesque's strict distinction between Catholic Action and *action nationale*. Yet behind the scenes he did all he could to influence his episcopal friends, Courchesne and Villeneuve, to prevent this from happening. Groulx professed his concern that the dissociation of Catholic Action and *action nationale* would exclude him from pursuing *action nationale*, since it would mean his work would be profane. He went so far as to suggest that a parting of the ways between Catholic Action and *action nationale* would compel him to retire from active life to pursue more sacerdotal goals. Such contradictory letters belie Groulx's crocodile tears.⁶

Groulx contended that *action nationale* and *action politique* did not occupy the same plane. Yet without *action nationale*, and its corollary, *action politique*, French-Canadian *survivance* had no future. Although the clergy could not get involved in *action politique*, they could contribute to *action nationale* in order to maintain the status of the church in nationalist Quebec. Through the caveat of distinguishing clearly between *action politique* and *action nationale*, Catholic clergy and even laity could participate in national activism, which they could not have done if it were portrayed as

sur le même plan action politique et action nationale, et comment, sans action nationale, nous avons chance de survivre" (CRLG, L. Groulx's papers, L. Groulx to G.-A. Courchesne, 27 October 1935).

⁶CRLG, L. Groulx Papers: L. Groulx to Georges-Alexandre Courchesne, 27 October, 1935; L. Groulx to Georges-Henri Lévesque, 24 November 1935; L. Groulx to Georges-Henri Lévesque, 8 December 1935; L. Groulx to Rodrigue Villeneuve, 24 January 1936.

political partisanship, much less political activism. Such involvement would surely entail censorship from the Catholic hierarchy.

Groulx argued that Catholic Action and *action nationale* must go hand in hand. Indeed, Catholic Action was supernatural, as Lévesque maintained. But, and this is the crux of his reasoning - he insisted that French Canada is an entity *sui generis*. Quebec was an exception to the rest of Canada. Unlike all others, the spiritual included the national in French Canada. Indeed Groulx maintained that in Quebec, as nowhere else in the world, the spiritual and the temporal existed interdependently. So much is French Canada surrounded by antagonistic forces that, unlike any other Catholic entity, national and religious *survivance* are one and the same. Groulx took Bourrassa's argument of 'language as guardian of the faith' and expanded it to include not only language but the entire French-Canadian nation.

8.2 Fusion or Division?

For Groulx no Catholic culture could exist unless it were anchored in a nation; Catholic Action, therefore, had to support a nation which incarnated Catholicism. He called for realism in Catholic Action, as well as relevance to the French-Canadian nationalist concerns. Salvation is social and concrete so that the thrust of Catholic Action had to be national. Catholic Action provided the corrective necessary to prevent nationalism from becoming secular, or indeed fascist. Groulx was convinced that his view of Catholic Action was based on orthodox theology and philosophy. There was an essential link between his social concern, moral theology, and nationalism, not surprisingly then nationalism represented a moral issue for him. The referents of his nationalism are three-fold: philosophy, theology, and morality. He did not realize that a

conservative morality does not necessarily assure orthodoxy. This is one reason he, like many of his contemporaries, had been attracted initially to fascism. His article, *Veut-on nous faire fasciste?*, refers in no way to political nationalism, but to the rigorous, authoritarian social morality of fascism.

Whereas Lévesque distinguished between the spiritual and the national, Groulx integrated the two. Their separatism in Quebec would precipitate the greatest crisis in French Canadian history, and to Groulx the Quiet Revolution seemed the fulfillment of this apprehension. Groulx considered nationalism the thin edge of the wedge whereby secularism would cleave French-Canadian society. He implicitly asked Lévesque not to diminish the status or influence of the church by sequestering it from the nationalist realm. He found inconceivable that clerics such as Lévesque publicly declared the church inappropriate to deal with the national. This explains his vehemence towards “unmandated clerics” such as Lévesque who pontificated on these matters.

8.3 Rightly Dividing the Word of God, or Theological Semantics?

In his letter of November 24, 1935 to Lévesque Groulx readily acknowledged:

As for me, I must confess that I am like a man who needs to get his life back on track. I had no qualms about what I was doing as long as in the minds of our people Catholic and nationalist activism so informed one another that the two appeared inextricably connected. Now that they will develop in separate spheres no one can keep the people from perceiving them as fundamentally disparate. In such circumstances to devote my energies to an essentially nationalist enterprise would hardly seem to me in keeping with the priesthood. I have suffered a great deal these last twenty years having found myself chained, indeed condemned to teach what is

ultimately profane. I can plead that at the university I am simply fulfilling my clerical duty since I neither requested nor sought this type of ministry. The same excuse cannot apply in the case of the Review. Perhaps this will at last afford me the long-awaited opportunity to withdraw from all such pursuits and concentrate on my historiographical work. I ask the Good Lord to enlighten me.

Rest assured nevertheless that I hold no grudge against you because of your viewpoint; I merely would have liked to know it earlier. You may well be right. In fact I tend to believe that our bishops will call for the dissociation of these spheres of activity. Where will this lead? To a new, if not the most serious crisis in the existence of our people. Our laity are not ready nor have they been prepared to take care of their national interests on their own. There is no infrastructure, especially not among the youth, and our educators are ill disposed to set up these structures. We can still count on Providence, but only It.⁷

The words *imbriqué*, and *compénétré* are indicative of the inextricable relationship of Catholic and national action in Groulx's view. Groulx patronized the laity by depicting them as incapable of assuming sole responsibility for the future of Quebec as a nation.

⁷“Quant à moi, je vous l'avoue, je suis comme un homme qui aurait à redresser l'axe de sa vie. Tant que les deux actions, catholique et nationale, ont paru, à l'esprit de notre peuple, parfaitement imbriquées, compénétrées l'une par l'autre, je n'ai pas ressenti de scrupules à faire ce que j'ai fait. Maintenant que les deux actions évolueront en des cadres dissociés, vous ne pourrez faire qu'en l'esprit de notre peuple, elles n'apparaissent très profondément dissociées. Me donner d'une façon active, en pareille occurrence, à une oeuvre d'action nationale au premier chef, me semblerait peu sacerdotal. J'ai beaucoup souffert, depuis vingt ans, de me voir condamné, cloué, à un enseignement en réalité profane. À l'université je garde au moins l'excuse du devoir d'état, n'ayant ni sollicité ni choisi cette sorte de ministère. L'excuse ne vaut point dans le cas de la Revue. Peut-être aurai-je enfin trouvé l'occasion que j'ai bien souvent souhaité; celle de me retirer de toute vie active pour me confiner à mes travaux d'histoire. Je prie le Bon Dieu de m'éclairer.

Soyez persuadé toutefois que je ne vous en veux nullement de votre attitude; j'aurais tout au plus souhaité la connaître plus tôt. Il se peut que vous ayez raison. Et j'incline à croire que nos évêques se prononceront pour une division des cadres. Qu'en résultera-t-il? Une nouvelle crise et peut-être la plus grave dans la vie de notre peuple. Nos laïcs ne sont pas préparés et n'ont pas été préparés à se charger eux seuls de leurs intérêts nationaux. Les cadres n'existent point, surtout dans les milieux de jeunesse. Et ces cadres, nos éducateurs ne sont pas enclins à les former. Il reste la Providence, mais rien qu'Elle” (CRLG, L. Groulx's papers, L. Groulx to G.-H. Lévesque, November 24, 1935). See Y. Lamonde et C. Corbo, *Le rouge et le bleu*, pp. 419-420. See also, G.-H. Lévesque, *Souvenances* 1: 267, where Lévesque states, in reference to this letter from Groulx: “Le reste de sa lettre laisse entrevoir un homme angoissé, tiraillé, nettement pessimiste.”

At the same time he was prophetic because what he had anticipated did take place during the Quiet Revolution, when the French-Canadian nationalist movement definitively parted ways with the Catholic Church. He often used the term *imbriqué* to refer to the integration of Catholic Action and *action nationale*, as though the two were inseparable. For him, as long as the two went hand in hand, a cleric could pursue *action nationale*. If they were dichotomized, the clergy, like himself, could not participate in *action nationale*.

Georges-Henri Lévesque contended that according to papal doctrine, Groulx did not adequately distinguish between *action nationale* and Catholic Action. For Lévesque nationalism constituted a purely political movement. His December 2, 1935 letter sharply refuted Groulx's argument. Couched in Scholastic distinctions, Lévesque's rebuke illustrates that Thomism informs his thought as well as Groulx's. Their divergent positions represent two different interpretations within the same theological framework. Lévesque had no doubt he had 'rightly divided the word of truth' (II Tim. 2:15) when he drew a sharp distinction between Catholic Action and *action nationale*, and unequivocally associated the latter with *action politique*:

We simply affirm, in accord with the Pope, that they both [i.e. national and political activism] belong to the same natural, human and temporal realm, unlike Catholic Action, which belongs to the supernatural, religious, and divine realm. - Furthermore, you must realize that we know as well as anyone else how to distinguish the different subdivisions within the natural and temporal realm, specifically that which pertains to national activism and that which pertains to political activism.

In sum, national activism and political activism each have their own distinctive features, which make little difference to Catholic Action. Yet both share a

common attribute, that of belonging to the natural and temporal realm; it is above all this latter characteristic which disqualifies them both from Catholic Action. (By this we still mean of course national activism and political activism in the sense of direct involvement).⁸

Groulx conceived secularism as the subjugation of the spiritual to the temporal, so that once having admitted the principle of secularism, it would inevitably gain sway over society, thus rendering the spiritual in general, and the church in particular, subservient to temporal ends. He contended that by keeping aloof from nationalism the church virtually relegated itself to insignificance by ignoring to all intents and purposes the most pressing issue in French-Canadian society. From Groulx's perspective then, if the church shunned the nationalist movement it would not only forfeit a hold on the French-Canadian people, but worse still would condemn itself to irrelevance in Quebec society.

Groulx adamantly opposed an exclusively spiritual interpretation of Catholic Action, along with a solely temporal notion of *action nationale*. In order to justify its appropriateness for Catholic Action, he argued that *action nationale* belonged to the realm of the spiritual, or the supernatural, to use Lévesque's term. He took great pains to argue that *action nationale* was integral to Catholic Action, and he identified the national with the spiritual on the basis that the national expressed concretely the

⁸"Nous voulons uniquement dire avec le Pape que les deux sont sur le même plan naturel, humain et terrestre, à la différence de l'action catholique qui est sur le plan surnaturel, religieux et divin. – D'autre part, comprenez aussi que, à l'intérieur même du plan naturel et terrestre, nous savons distinguer aussi bien que quiconque des sous-plans différents, v.g. celui de l'action nationale et celui de l'action politique. En résumé, l'action nationale et l'action politique ont des caractères propres distincts, et cette distinction importe peu à l'action catholique. Mais toutes deux ont *un caractère commun*, celui d'être d'ordre naturel et terrestre: c'est principalement ce dernier caractère qui exclut les deux actions de l'action catholique. (Bien entendu, il s'agit toujours d'action nationale et d'action politique entendue dans le sens d'action directe). (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, G. H. Lévesque to L. Groulx, 2 December 1935). See Y. Lamonde, C. Corbo, *Le rouge et le bleu*, pp. 414-415, for a brief introduction to the correspondence between Groulx and Lévesque on the relationship of Catholic Action to contemporary nationalist youth

spirituality of a people. Since he equated the national with the spiritual, rather than the temporal, he was prepared to excise *action politique* from Catholic Action. In his view, *action nationale* was on the transcendent side of the balance sheet with Catholic Action, whereas *action politique* was exclusively temporal. This rejection of a dichotomy between the temporal and the spiritual compelled Groulx to argue for the essential affinity of Catholic Action and *action nationale*.

In his December 8, 1935 letter to Lévesque Groulx professed to have revised his position: "Already for several days now ... I have considered your opinion. For many years the political and national will be mixed up. It is necessary for the youth to organize itself in totally free structures."⁹ Groulx ostensibly conceded Lévesque's distinction on the basis of the theological watershed between the supernatural and the natural. He undoubtedly acquiesced in order to prevent a public, ecclesiastical polemic, which would expose his teachings to dogmatic scrutiny, a prospect he dreaded throughout his controversial clerical career. This agreement satisfied the doctrinally punctilious Dominican.

In this letter Groulx's theological repentance to Lévesque once again seemed more apparent than real. In fact, he thereby accommodated French-Canadian nationalism. He equated *action politique* and *action nationale* on practical, not theological grounds, thus practicing what might be called *theopolitik*, i.e. a political agenda that realized theological imperatives. *Realpolitik* in Quebec required *action nationale* to supersede Catholic Action, and warranted its recourse to *action politique* as well. The nationalist

movements in Quebec, pp. 415-418, for a previous letter (18 November 1935) to Groulx which Lévesque wrote in a similar though somewhat less theological vein.

concerns of French Canada justified the autonomy of *action nationale* from Catholic Action. This steeled the political will of Quebec and inadvertently contributed to the secularization of its nationalism.

Groulx attempted to portray both clerical and lay insistence for the conjunction of *action nationale* and Catholic Action. Obviously this was a defense of *L'Action nationale*, a publication to which Groulx contributed heavily and which he influenced. He was convinced that nationalism without Catholic spirituality might become the Pandora's box of secularism in Quebec. Once the secular principle was released in French-Canadian society through nationalism, the entire social fabric of Quebec would be secularized.

His remarks to a fellow cleric indicate his patronizing attitude toward the laity. They needed the church to lead them to the 'Promised Land' of nationalism. For their benefit, French Canadians needed to see the integration of Catholic Action and *action nationale*. He believed that nationalist interests were properly the object of the church and that Catholic Action could help accomplish this. Lévesque called for a fundamental distinction between the national and the spiritual, so that they would not be on the same plane at all, but rather as far apart as the natural is from the supernatural. Hierarchy meant liaison for Groulx, but Lévesque interpreted it as the strict dissociation of these elements. Groulx proposed a Catholic means to achieve nationalist ends. His clerical paternalism led him to believe that the French-Canadian nationalist movement needed the church. Catholic Action allowed Groulx to be both

⁹“Voilà déjà plusieurs jours que ... je me suis rangé à votre avis. Politique et national seront trop mêlés en notre vie, d'ici de longues années. Il faut que la jeunesse s'organise en des cadres absolument libres.” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Georges-Henri Lévesque, 8 December 1935)

clerical and nationalist, to serve the church and the nation, yet to give the church primacy.

On January 24, 1936, two months after his letter to Lévesque, Groulx wrote in the opposite vein to Cardinal J. M. Rodrigue Villeneuve:¹⁰

Several friends, including a few *bishops*, have requested that I write to you in Paris or Rome about the debate over Catholic Action and national activism which has somewhat troubled people ... The position we took at *L'Action nationale* appears to me quite reasonable. In keeping with what I would call my totalistic conception of Catholicism, I for one deemed it essential to prevent creating two bodies of youth in our society. It seemed to me that whether individually or collectively, Catholics must not feel themselves hindered from fulfilling any of their duties, not even to the nation. Some reflection, and the latest provincial elections in particular, has opened my eyes. I believe that for now and a long time to come in our province, national and political affairs will inextricably mesh to such an important, indeed critical degree, that young members of Catholic Action will find it virtually impossible to participate directly in national activism. Moreover, I can attest that due to recent events young people have already begun to take matters into their own hands. Everywhere I look I see them organizing exclusively nationalist, political clubs, which rival the local youth chapters of Catholic Action. In view of this rift will we continue to share the same moral vision? Will the youth wing of Catholic Action know how to deal with patriotic young people in such a way as to exercise a strong, positive influence on them? There clearly exists a danger that our leading youth will split into two factions, and much worse, that a narrow-minded perspective will deter many young people from Catholic Action itself. The letters I receive about this from various college instructors and senior students tell a sad story. Some of the chaplains in Catholic Action seemingly do their best to confuse the issue and disturb impressionable young people by displaying utter contempt for nationalist concerns. If I

¹⁰J. M. Rodrigue Villeneuve (1883-1947), o.m.i., was archbishop of Quebec from 1931 to 1947.

may be so bold, I would propose that the episcopate take an unequivocal stand on this subject at its next assembly. We cannot allow any of the youth to believe that in the name of Catholic Action they must renounce their nationalist orientation and activism."

His subsequent actions and letters belie any intention of his retirement to a cloistered life. He denounced Lévesque's concept of Catholic Action to Villeneuve and tried to convince the cardinal to decide in favor of *action nationale* as the proper object of Catholic Action. He particularly wanted to silence those who declared the two were separate. He artificially created an atmosphere of crisis, which he entreated the cardinal to resolve by pronouncing in his favor. He held forth the specter of a lay reaction against the church if it rejected *action nationale* as integral to Catholic Action. The notion of the faith as totalistic could hardly lack appeal for this latter-day ultramontanist, particularly since it meant the primacy of the Church over the temporal. Since the nationalist issue was the most important in Quebec, the Church could not abandon it to secularism. Groulx's use of the word totalistic indicates his holistic

"Plusieurs amis, et quelques-uns *épiscopaux*, m'avaient prié de vous écrire à Paris ou à Rome, au sujet du débat à propos d'action catholique et d'action nationale qui a ému un peu les esprits ... La position que nous avons prise à l'Action nationale s'explique, ce me semble, facilement. J'ai cru, pour ma part, qu'il fallait empêcher à tout prix, chez nous, la naissance de deux jeunesses - avec ma conception que je dirais totalitaire du catholicisme, il me semblait que le catholique, soit individuellement, soit en groupe, ne pouvait se sentir gêné par l'accomplissement d'aucun de ses devoirs, fût-ce le devoir national. Quelques réflexions et surtout les dernières élections provinciales m'ont ouvert les yeux. Il me paraît qu'en notre province et d'ici longtemps, le national sera tellement mêlé au politique, et de façon si urgente, si impérieuse, qu'il est bien impossible que la jeunesse d'action catholique s'occupe activement d'action nationale. Sous la poussée des événements, je constate, au surplus, que la jeunesse a déjà pris le devant d'elle-même. Et partout je la vois s'organiser, à côté des jeunesses d'action catholique, en des cadres strictement nationaux et politiques. Garderons-nous, avec ce dédoublement, l'unité morale? La jeunesse d'action catholique saura-t-elle se ménager sur la jeunesse patriote une action bienfaisante et puissante? ... Là gît le danger de division en deux camps dans notre meilleure jeunesse et le danger aussi, par étroitesse d'esprit, de dégoûter toute une portion des jeunes, de l'action catholique elle-même: ce qui est infiniment plus grave. Des lettres qui me viennent de collégiens âgés et de quelques éducateurs sont tristement révélatrices à ce sujet. Il semblerait que des aumôniers d'action catholique s'appliquent de leur mieux à brouiller les cartes et à troubler les jeunes esprits - par le mépris qu'ils affichent pour tout ce qui est national. Si j'osais, j'émettrais le vœu qu'à leur prochaine réunion, les évêques se montrent bien catégoriques sur ces points. Il ne faudrait pas laisser dans l'esprit d'aucune jeunesse que sous prétexte

conception of Catholicism. He perceived no cleavage between the national and the spiritual because Catholicism addressed the gamut of the human condition; comprehensive, it provides the answers to all questions, resolves all issues, and pertains to every sphere of human existence. His expression 'moral unity' reveals his conviction that Christian morality must have the primacy in all spheres of society, including the political and national. Groulx wrote to bishop Courchesne and archbishop Villeneuve, so that they would pronounce in favor of his definition of Catholic Action and by implication oppose officially that of Lévesque.

As Groulx's correspondence reveals, he said one thing to Lévesque and the opposite to Villeneuve and Courchesne. His protagonist was not unaware of Groulx's duplicity as Lévesque's memoirs inform us.¹² Lévesque was also convinced that Groulx was theologically incorrect to transpose Catholic doctrines from the supernatural plane to the natural. According to him, Groulx misapplied, not to say abused, theological principles by erroneously equating the natural and the supernatural. He considered Groulx's thought "an indiscriminate mishmash of national and religious issues."¹³ Groulx, on the other hand, felt justified to do so on the analogy of the Incarnation.

Writing on June 22, 1939, barely two months before the outbreak of World War II, Groulx responded to a letter from the Reverend Father Maurice Laplante. In this letter Groulx gave his own succinct definition of Catholic Action and its working relationship with the Quebec nation, as he envisaged it. Reflecting on Catholic Action and what he considered its failure in Europe, Groulx expressed his desire to save

d'action catholique, on lui demande de se désintéresser de sa formation nationale et de l'action nationale..." (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to J.-M. Rodrigue Villeneuve, 24 January 1936).

¹²G.-H. Lévesque, *Souvenances* 1: 264-269.

¹³"une confusion abusive du national et du religieux" (G.-H. Lévesque, *Souvenances* 1: 257).

Quebec from a similar fate. This letter shows beyond a doubt that he always maintained the same position concerning Catholic Action and Quebec nationalism:

I have not in the least changed my opinion. Someone has told you a tall tale. I still accept, as I always have, the definition of Catholic Action given by Pius XI. I believe it has thoroughly spiritual aims and should intervene in the temporal realm only to defend its own interests. However, I also believe that in our country, French Canada, the temporal and spiritual spheres interface more than anywhere else. The national and spiritual domains in particular mesh almost inextricably with one another. I maintain therefore that because the national domain comprises some of the vital interests of Catholic Action, it must intervene so as to protect, strengthen, and watch over the national domain. I readily concur that it should intervene only on spiritual grounds. Yet spiritual imperatives dictate that Catholic Action must not only intervene on a few momentous occasions, but at all times, otherwise it risks appearing quite incapable of sustaining the life and vision of a Catholic people. We are a small people of three million and represent perhaps the only ethnic group in the world surrounded by a consorted host of some 150 million Protestants or agnostics. No small people in central Europe or elsewhere lives in so perilous circumstances, nor face such a behemoth. The loss of our national character would not only amount to tearing down one of the foremost walls of defense which continue to shield us from insidious influences, but it would also entail breaking faith with France, which still serves as the source of our finest Catholic teachings and spiritual doctrines.

Nor do I subscribe to the theory of those who claim to minister only to the souls of people. How preposterous to seek to save souls alone, as if one could save souls alone, as if one could save the souls of people without regard for the milieu in which they live! Surely everybody must know that we live on earth, that human beings have roots in their native land, and that humans cannot hermetically seal themselves off from the ambience or ethos of their native land. The task of Catholic Action consists not only in saving individual

souls, rather it must also endeavor to preserve and shore up our country as a Catholic nation. It must strive to create a Catholic culture and civilization. As far as I know there does not exist a single civilization on earth so insularly Catholic that it has no links to some nation or country. If we wish to create the Catholic civilization and culture on which our spiritual development hinges, then we must secure its foundation, namely its French-Canadian basis. The error of those you call 'Separationists' or abstract Catholics lies in their failure to see this glaring reality. Due to the woeful education they received they so lack national bearings that they do not perceive the exceptional nature of our situation. In our country the issue of culture and civilization represents something quite different than it does for France, Italy, Spain, or Belgium. Their heritage remains so vibrant that one need only live there to retain their French, Italian, Spanish or Belgian culture. Can we say the same for our country? Does not the future of our culture constantly hang in doubt? Must we not still determine what it will be? These remain my steadfast opinions. I cannot broadcast them in public for obvious reasons. However, every chance I get - such as I did again most recently with Jesuit theology students at Immaculate Conception - I do not hesitate to affirm that we stand to lose the best young members of Catholic Action because our leading youth cannot accept that in a country like ours one would deal apathetically, if not inimically with what they call the 'national.' Each day harsh reality reminds them of the importance, indeed the spiritual significance of these matters. I have said it many times: if there arose in Quebec a genuinely national movement headed by a charismatic leader, the youth of this province would empty the ranks of Catholic Action. What would occur here would parallel what took place in Germany, to a certain degree in Italy, and what would also have happened in Spain if, in this last country, the episcopate had not had foresight.¹⁴

¹⁴"Je n'ai nullement changé d'opinion. On vous aura collé quelque légende. J'accepte toujours comme dans le passé, la définition donnée par Pie XI de l'action catholique. Je crois qu'elle a des fins rigoureusement spirituelles et qu'elle ne doit intervenir dans le temporel que pour y défendre ses propres intérêts. Mais voilà: j'estime que chez nous au Canada français, le temporel est lié au spirituel plus que partout ailleurs. Le national, en particulier, est très étroitement attaché au spirituel et le spirituel au national. En conséquence je soutiens que l'action catholique doit intervenir dans le national, s'en préoccuper, le défendre, le fortifier, parce que quelques-uns de ses suprêmes intérêts y sont engagés. Elle

As on previous occasions Groulx insisted that Catholicism must control nationalism to prevent upheaval in Quebec. Catholic Action would provide the means to retain French Canada for Catholicism and safeguard it from the nationalistic excesses that plagued contemporary Germany. Groulx signaled the dangers of nationalism going awry in Quebec, should Catholic Action fail to keep the nationalist movement within its pale.

Groulx turned to Esdras Minville, a layperson, to promote his concept of Catholic Action. Groulx perceived the layperson as the epitome of the spiritual engaged in the temporal. He mocked “airplane” Catholics, those who divorce the spiritual from

n’y doit intervenir, je le veux bien, qu’au nom du spirituel. Mais le spirituel exige qu’elle intervienne non en quelques grandes occasions, mais constamment, si elle ne veut pas s’avérer manifestement impropre à maintenir la vie et l’idéal d’un peuple catholique. Nous sommes peut-être le seul groupe ethnique au monde - petit peuple de trois millions - qui sont encerclés par une immense agglomération presque entièrement protestante ou agnostique de près de 150 millions d’âmes. Aucun petit peuple du centre de l’Europe ou d’ailleurs ne vit dans une situation aussi périlleuse, n’affronte pareils colosses. Perdre notre nationalité, c’est abattre l’une des hautes barrières qui nous protègent encore contre les infiltrations mortelles, c’est rompre avec la France d’où nous vient encore le meilleur de notre enseignement catholique, de notre doctrine surnaturelle.

Je ne crois pas, non plus, à la théorie de ceux qui prétendent ne s’occuper que des âmes. Ne vouloir sauver que des âmes, comme si l’on pouvait sauver des âmes en se désintéressant du milieu où elles vivent! Chacun doit pourtant savoir que nous vivons sur terre, que les hommes ont des racines dans un terroir et que l’homme ne peut s’abstraire totalement ni de la qualité de ce terroir ni de son atmosphère. L’action catholique n’a pas seulement pour tâche de s’occuper des âmes individuelles; elle doit viser à fortifier et à sauvegarder, chez nous, une nation catholique. Elle doit viser à créer une culture et une civilisation catholiques. Or, il n’existe point, que je sache, de civilisation au monde qui soit exclusivement catholique, qui ne soit en même temps liée à une nationalité, à un pays. Si nous voulons donc créer une civilisation et une culture catholiques, conditions de notre essor spirituel, il nous faut nous occuper de l’élément de base, je veux dire, l’élément canadien-français. Le tort de ceux que vous appelez ‘Séparateurs’ ou catholiques abstraits c’est de ne pas voir ces réalités qui crèvent pourtant les yeux. Trop dépourvus de sens national par suite de la triste éducation qu’ils ont reçue, ils ne voient pas le caractère exceptionnel de notre situation. En France, en Italie, en Espagne, en Belgique, la question culture ou civilisation ne se pose pas comme chez nous. Il suffit de vivre dans ces pays tellement leur passé est vivant, pour rester de culture française, italienne, espagnole ou belge. En est-il ainsi chez nous? L’avenir de notre culture ne se pose-t-elle pas tous les jours? N’avons-nous pas encore à décider quelle elle sera? Voilà ce qui reste toujours mes opinions. Je ne puis pas les crier sur les toits, vous devinez pourquoi. Chaque fois que l’occasion, pourtant, s’en présente, - je le faisais encore tout récemment chez les scolastiques jésuites de l’Immaculée-Conception, - je ne crains pas de dire que l’on fait fausse route, que l’on est en train de détacher la meilleure partie de notre jeunesse de l’action catholique, parce que les meilleurs de nos jeunes gens ne peuvent pas admettre que, dans un pays comme le nôtre, l’on traite, avec indifférence, sinon avec hostilité, ce qu’ils appellent le ‘national.’ Tous les jours, la dure réalité les avertit de l’importance même spirituelle de cette question. Je l’ai dit bien des fois: s’il survenait, dans la province de Québec, un mouvement vraiment national, ayant à sa tête un chef magnétique, la jeunesse viderait les cadres de l’action catholique. Il se passerait ici ce qui s’est passé en Allemagne, ce qui s’est passé un peu en Italie, ce qui se serait également passé en Espagne si, en ce dernier pays, l’épiscopat n’avait pas vu clair” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Maurice Laplante, 22 June 1939).

the national in their concept of Catholic Action. Groulx had to find a theological basis which not only allowed but also actually incited Catholic Action to nationalist involvement. His thought thus represents a synthesis of theology and ideology. In reference to *Le citoyen canadien-français* (1946) by Esdras Minville, Groulx wrote:

We must stop creating Catholics without roots, ill-suited, if not totally unadapted to their milieu, so that they have no idea of the spiritual benefits conferred by this milieu, nor their consequent civil duties to it. Since we foster aerial Catholics it comes as no surprise that such people all too easily fail to keep their feet on the ground.

At a time when some leaders of Catholic Action do their utmost to segregate the national and Catholic spheres, it seems fitting that a layman should enter the fray to remind us that inasmuch as the temporal and spiritual realms overlap in the human soul, our cultural heritage constitutes a virtually untapped source of enrichment.

Catholics without roots do not nor will they ever exist - rather they live first and foremost in their immediate milieu, with their closest coreligionists.

... One wishes that the leaders of Catholic Action, particularly those attempting to set up some sort of abstract Catholic society, alien to all the temporal structures of our Catholicism, as well as its societal and cultural structures, would read this book in its entirety. Herein they might find the key to many of their failures, namely, that doctrines too far removed from down to earth and human realities have little hold on young people.¹⁵

¹⁵“Qu’on cesse de nous former des catholiques déracinés, mal ou point adaptés à leur milieu, ignorants des valeurs spirituelles encloses en ce milieu, et par conséquent de leurs responsabilités terrestres ... Quand on forme des catholiques d’avion, il n’est pas étonnant que ces sortes de gens perdent si facilement pied sur terre.

Dans un temps où certains dirigeants d’action catholique s’emploient à opérer le divorce entre le national et le catholique, il n’est pas inopportun que ce soit un laïc qui vienne nous rappeler, avec les imbrications, dans l’âme humaine, du temporel et du spirituel, les richesses trop peu explorées de notre patrimoine culturel. Le catholique n’est point et ne saurait être un déraciné – mais d’abord de son milieu immédiat et de ses frères les plus proches.

While Groulx professedly distinguished between *action nationale* and *action politique*, he carried on both simultaneously. He did not hesitate to influence *action politique*. Indeed, he justified his interference on the principle that nothing is secular, not even politics. Rather Catholicism must inform politics. Although the church could not be a political leader, it could orient politics towards Catholic objectives. His correspondence with the leaders of the *Bloc populaire canadien*¹⁶ revealed his political dealings. In his August 10, 1942 letter to André Laurendeau,¹⁷ Groulx orchestrated the inaugural public presentation of the *Bloc* and its leader, Maxime Raymond:¹⁸

Mr. Raymond came to my house yesterday...He has to all intents and purposes *jumped* on the bandwagon. A few details remain to discuss, including the date to announce officially the movement ... perhaps you could invite him to preside over the evening ... so that he could publicly assume the role of leader. I also conveyed to him that the platform would be more a manifesto and serve less to 'specify a political agenda than to orient it.' He accepts this watchword. As for the *Devoir* he seems quite confident about it. He cited facts and pledges which warrant such confidence ... I give you permission to repeat to Mr. Gouin and Mr. Chaloult whatever you deem expedient to tell them. I confess that I myself have prayed and had prayers said in order for us to come to this point. I ask you yourself to pray ... so that this lofty aim may at last clearly become a reality.¹⁹

... Il est à souhaiter que ce livre soit lu et médité par les dirigeants d'action catholique, par ceux-là en particulier qui tentent d'édifier je ne sais quel ordre catholique abstrait, étranger à tous les cadres temporels de notre catholicisme, à toutes nos structures sociales et culturelles. Ils y découvriront peut-être le secret de trop de leurs échecs, le manque de prise sur la jeunesse de doctrines trop détachées du terrestre et de l'humain" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Esdras Minville, 31 December 1946).

¹⁶1942-1949.

¹⁷1912-1968.

¹⁸1883-1961.

¹⁹"M. Raymond est venu chez moi hier ... On peut le considérer comme *embarqué*. Quelques points resteraient à débattre, entre la date à laquelle annoncer le mouvement ... vous pourrez peut-être lui offrir la présidence de la soirée ... pour permettre au chef de paraître ... Je lui ai alors parlé d'un programme qui serait plutôt un manifeste et qui serait moins 'la définition d'une politique que l'orientation d'une politique.' Il accepte le mot ... Un mot à propos du *Devoir*. Il me paraît assez rassuré de ce côté. Il m'a cité des faits et des paroles qui justifient cette assurance ... Je vous autorise à en livrer à M. Gouin et M.

Groulx did not hesitate to create a *chef* when necessary, nor did he see any contradiction between a priest engaged in prayer, on one hand, and in political schemes, on the other hand. He had a keen sense of political opportunism, so that he timed the revelation of the *chef* to coincide with the conscription crisis of World War II. Hastening to secure the support of the press for his political enterprise, Groulx used his key contacts to act as power broker for the nascent party. As a priest his political praxis needed a theological basis to justify, indeed to sanctify his political interventions. Catholic Action provided his rationale for Catholic support of the French-Canadian nationalist movement. Groulx's hidden political manoeuvres certainly belie A. J. Bélanger's contention that Groulx's nationalist scheme was apolitical.²⁰

Groulx conceived Catholic Action as a corrective to secularism, which assumed the guise of nationalism. Groulx spoke of Catholic Action which detemporalized and dehumanized. His point was that such an interpretation of Catholic Action amounted to an atrophied Catholicism, out of touch with the nationalist reality of French-Canadian society. The objective of Catholic Action was to provide the means for Catholicism to address relevantly the contemporary issues of society. This theme is evident in Groulx's letter to Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger,²¹ March 24, 1958:

There is another matter, your Excellency, which I broach with the utmost reticence: under the pretext of bringing our youth to practice an ostensibly '*pur*'

Chaloult ce qu'il vous paraîtra opportun de leur en dire. Je vous l'avoue: j'ai prié et fait prier pour en arriver à ce résultat. Je vous demanderai de prier vous-même ... pour que ce grand espoir devienne une solide réalisation enfin!" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to André Laurendeau, 10 August 1942)

²⁰ A. J. Bélanger maintains this thesis in his monograph, *L'Apolitisme des idéologies québécoises: le grand tournant de 1934-1936*.

²¹ Paul-Émile Léger (1904-1991), born in Valleyfield, Quebec, was educated in Canada and France and ordained a priest (Sulpician Order) in 1929. He founded the Sulpician Seminary in Fukuoka (Japan) and taught philosophy there (1933-39). Rector of the Pontifical Canadian College in Rome (1947-50), he was appointed archbishop of Montreal in 1950, and was created a cardinal in 1953.

Catholicism, have we not gone so far as to detemporalize and thus dehumanize both the concept itself of Catholic Action and religious training in preparation for it? I have always believed that Catholicism addresses the entire human being and must take hold of all of their person, not only their spirit, but every facet of humanity which they possess by virtue of their temporal and historical roots. In my humble opinion Catholic Action has overemphasized the individual or a class at the expense of attaining the whole social milieu.²²

Catholic Action could be anchorless Catholicism if it had no temporal referent and was uninformed by its milieu. Groulx admired *Jeunesse Laurentienne* rather than the seemingly more Catholic and religious Catholic Action because the former addressed the temporal reality of French Canada, whereas Catholic Action was atemporal. *Jeunesses Laurentiennes* stood for affirmative nationalist action. In his memoirs Groulx contrasted *Jeunesses Laurentiennes* with Catholic Action in order to highlight the superiority of the former because of its affirmation of the temporal. For him *Jeunesses Laurentiennes* was what Catholic Action should have been.

In *Le Canada français missionnaire* and his letters to Victor Barbeau, Groulx tried to fill old wineskins with new wine, pointing to Catholic Action as the proper means to achieve nationalist aspirations. In his letter of January 4, 1962, to Raymond Barbeau, labeled *strictement personnelle*, Groulx proposes a totally outmoded expression of Catholic Action and French-Canadian nationalism in order to respond to the new realities of the Quiet Revolution:

²²“Autre cause que je n’aborde, Éminence, qu’avec crainte: sous prétexte de faire pratiquer à notre jeunesse un catholicisme qu’on prétendait ‘plus pur,’ n’aurions-nous pas trop détemporalisé, et par conséquent trop déshumanisé la formation religieuse et même la notion de l’action catholique? J’ai toujours cru que le catholicisme s’adresse à tout l’homme et doit saisir tout l’homme, non seulement son esprit, mais tout ce que l’homme peut-être de par ses racines historiques et terrestres. L’action catholique a trop insisté sur la conquête de l’individu ou de la classe sociale, pas assez, à mon humble avis, sur tout le milieu” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Paul-Émile Léger, 24 March 1958).

As a matter of fact, why not revive the old ACJC? Its erstwhile program led straight to a solution like yours. Moreover, it respected the highest principles of the moral order. Under the auspices of an ACJC you would easily gain entrance into all our secondary educational institutions, whereas with a solely political agenda you will find it difficult to get a foot in the door of colleges and convents. Furthermore, if I were in your shoes, I would immediately stir up the young generation by calling for economic liberation. It seems to me that this constitutes the first and foremost issue to resolve. It also carries enough explosive potential to galvanize the youth.²³

Groulx did not realize how much Quebec had changed since his own involvement in *ACJC* early in the century. He was quick to exploit social injustices to incite the youth towards a militant nationalism to achieve what he believed was necessary for the Church and the nation. He realized nationalism had to work with the Church, not against it, in order to gain credibility and support in a society where the Church was traditionally prominent. Again and again Groulx directed Catholic Action back to its comprehensive endeavor at the beginning of the century.²⁴

In the 1960s Groulx continued to speak sarcastically of a so-called 'pure Catholicism,' which he believed some used as a pretext to exclude the church from the nationalist movement in Quebec. He decried the allegedly false doctrines of Catholic Action which, according to him, had promoted the secularization of Quebec. Groulx

²³"Et pourquoi ne pas recréer notre ancienne ACJC? Son programme de jadis menait tout droit à une solution comme la vôtre. Et ce programme s'adaptait à la plus parfaite hiérarchie des valeurs. Avec une ACJC, vous pourriez sans peine pénétrer dans toutes nos institutions d'enseignement supérieur, au lieu que vous aurez beaucoup de peine à vous faire ouvrir les portes des collèges et des couvents avec un simple programme d'action politique. Et, à votre place, j'essaierais de soulever tout de suite la jeune génération, au nom de la libération économique. Il s'agit là du problème initial à résoudre, ce me semble, avant tout autre. Et il y a là-dedans assez de passion explosive pour remuer une jeunesse" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Victor Barbeau, 4 January 1962).

²⁴"La nation manquera d'une école comme celle de 1904 où former une élite pour l'action temporelle, nationale, politique, économique, sociale, culturelle et même catholique au vrai et beau sens du mot" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 220).

indicated that he specifically wrote his last book, *Chemins de l'avenir* (1964),²⁵ as a critique of Catholic Action. The title is significant because Groulx believed French Canada to be at the crossroads of Catholicism and secularism. He did not realize that Quebec had already crossed the Rubicon and moved into modernity. He seems aware but unwilling to acknowledge this lest he be forced to forfeit his dream of a godly nation in North America, which he had worked all his life to achieve. Catholic Action remained the crux of his religio-nationalist schema. In this light one understands the importance of the Catholic Action debate for Groulx. It acts as the lynchpin of his social Catholicism. He complained in reference to *Chemins de l'avenir*:

They berated my critique of ... the angelic, Claude Ryan model of Catholic action ... No, I will never forgive this school or form of Catholic action. How can one so lead astray a generation, rob them of the ground on which they stood, their homeland, raise them as though there existed no earthly pursuits worth the investment of their lives, and try to make them live an intemporal and vague Catholicism! Yet every human being lives in this world, and while their spirit must dwell in the faith, nevertheless, the spiritual nature of this faith does not absolve it from meeting the temporal needs of its milieu. Moreover, the work of God also consists in striving for harmony, justice, beneficence, and all that constitutes those lasting values that serve to improve the temporal city.²⁵

²⁵“On me reprocha ma critique ... de l’Action catholique à l’angélisme ou à la Claude Ryan ... Et que j’en veux à une certaine école ou forme d’Action catholique. Que l’on peut donc dérouter une génération en lui dérobant le sol de ses pieds, en l’élevant comme s’il n’existait point pour elle de tâches temporelles qui valussent la peine d’y engager sa vie, en essayant de lui faire vivre un catholicisme intemporel et anonyme! Tout homme vit sur terre. Son esprit doit baigner dans la foi. Mais cette foi spirituelle ne saurait se déprendre des exigences temporelles de son milieu. Et c’est encore travailler pour Dieu que de travailler pour l’amélioration de la cité terrestre dans l’ordre, la justice, la charité et pour tout ce qui en constitue les valeurs réelles” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 302).

In a letter written to Gérard Filion²⁶ March 26, 1963, concerning the editorship of *Le Devoir*, Groulx blasted Claude Ryan:

I do not in fact see anyone who can replace you at the helm of the ship, especially not that wiry Mr. Claude Ryan. Through his disincarnate, denationalized scheme of Catholic action (a scheme which, I acknowledge, he alone did not devise) this man, perhaps more than all others, helped give rise to one, if not two generations of rootless young people, ripe for recruitment by our newfangled revolutionaries.²⁷

Since Groulx wrote *Mes mémoires* during the Quiet Revolution, they mirror his reflections on the disavowal of Catholicism and the concurrent affirmation of its nationalism by contemporary Quebec. At the end of the last volume of his memoirs he vented all his anger on Catholic Action. He imputed the polarization of Catholicism and nationalism in modern Quebec to the atrophied development of Catholic Action. He bemoaned the direction Catholic Action took from the mid-1930s on:

As I have already said, and too often repeated, back then Catholic Action operated in the stratosphere with consummate aloofness, if not outright hostility, towards everything national ... In the name of the *universal* Church they exorcised all national spirit from the younger generations whom they rendered transient, unrealistic Catholics, ready, willing and waiting for the day they could prove themselves high and mighty by revolting against the specious mentors who made them misfits in their own milieu.²⁸

²⁶Gérard Filion (1909-) who served as editor of *Le Devoir* from 1947-1963 was seeking a successor for this newspaper.

²⁷"Je ne vois pas, en effet, qui peut vous remplacer à la barre de la barque, pas surtout le filandreur M. Claude Ryan, l'homme qui, plus que personne peut-être, par sa formule d'Action catholique (dont je le confesse, il n'en est pas le seul responsable), formule de catholicisme désincarné et dénationalisé, aura contribué à jeter dans la vie une, et peut-être deux générations de petits déracinés, recrues fatales de nos révolutionnaires d'aujourd'hui" (CRLG, L. Groulx's papers, L. Groulx to Gérard Filion, March 26, 1963).

²⁸"Je l'ai déjà dit et trop dit, l'Action catholique d'alors oeuvre dans la stratosphère parfaitement indifférente, sinon même hostile, à tout ce qui est national... Au nom de l'Église *universelle* on vide les jeunes générations de tout sentiment national, on jette dans la vie des catholiques déracinés, autant dire d'un catholicisme irréel, magnifiquement préparés à se transformer, dès les premiers contacts avec la vie, en petits esprits forts, prêts à se révolter contre les mauvais maîtres qui les ont désadaptés de leur milieu" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 219).

In reference to Catholic Action in the 1940s, Groulx stated:

How misguided this Catholic Action which, due to the inadequate religious and intellectual training of its well-intentioned chaplains, sought to inculcate in youth an unrealistic Catholicism akin to angelicalness and devoid of any vital relevance to human, temporal concerns. This astrological Catholicism floated between earth and sky ... One leading chaplain went around the classical colleges glibly boasting: 'We will make our young people practice a pure Catholicism, uninfected by the disease of nationalism.' Who could not foresee the end result? Nobody can try to act like an angel without paying a price.²⁹

According to Groulx, here was a Catholic movement, that was so heavenly minded it was of no earthly good, although its slogan boasted of a *Conversion to the Real!*³⁰ One notes his insistence that Catholicism must be relevant to temporal issues in order to meet human needs. Indeed it is quite clear in the above quote that Groulx associated the human condition with temporal realities, which he believed the faith must therefore address. To do otherwise would be not unlike the ostrich sticking its head in the sand to avoid danger. Groulx was fond of celestial metaphors to caricaturize what he considered the spiritual orientation of Catholic Action, which he believed, rendered the movement irrelevant to the pressing issue of nationalism in French-Canadian society.

²⁹"Étrange Action catholique qui, par la faute d'aumôniers, braves gens, mais de formation religieuse et intellectuelle insuffisante, s'efforcera d'inculquer à la jeunesse un catholicisme irréel, une sorte d'angélisme, sans prise valable sur l'humain, sur le temporel. Un catholicisme d'astrologue, entre terre et nuages... Un aumônier, et non l'un des moindres, s'en ira par les collèges, ce mirifique propos à la bouche: 'Nous ferons pratiquer à notre jeunesse un catholicisme pur, débarrassé de l'infection du nationalisme.' Le résultat, qui ne l'entrevoit? Nul ne s'essaie impunément à faire l'ange" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4 : 14). See L. Groulx, *Chemins de l'avenir*, p. 42: "Et c'est ainsi qu'on inclina vers une sorte d'angélisme et qu'on vit éclore le plus irréel des catholicismes, un catholicisme d'astrologues sans prise sur la jeunesse."

³⁰"Conversion au réel" (Montréal : Fides Publ., 1941) was the title of the book written by Germain-Marie Lalonde, c.s.c., a leading chaplain of JEC (Jeunesse Étudiante Catholique) at that time.

Groulx held the teachings of Catholic Action responsible for the anti-clericalism of the Quiet Revolution. The chaplains of Catholic Action had forced the laity to choose between Catholicism and nationalism. He went so far as to say that they had not sufficiently considered the doctrine corporeal resurrection as proof that God is as concerned about the temporal as about the spiritual dimension of the human condition. In reference to the chaplains of Catholic Action Groulx stated:

Lacking a more enlightened philosophy and theology, they proved themselves unable to achieve a synthesis of the natural and the supernatural, the earthly and the spiritual, the temporal and the eternal. They did not grasp that Christians have a two-fold calling: as Christians yes, but also as human beings since they are humans before they are Christians.³¹

For Groulx the fundamental problem with Catholic Action was its fragmented theological method. At the same time, the leaders of Catholic Action did propagate, to the detriment of Catholicism, a truncated ecclesiology so fixated on the universal church that it ignored the different socio-national contexts of the church, which require diversity and adaptation to its various and sundry milieus. The church, through its own teachings and clergy, was practically accelerating the secularization of French Canada. Groulx never forgave Catholic Action and its leaders for this. G.-H. Lévesque, Claude Ryan and others had given the deathblow to a spiritual nation. This explains the acerbic judgements Groulx pronounced on them in his last volume of *Mes mémoires*. He did not blame nationalism. His charges against such a dichotomized interpretation of

³¹“Il leur manquait une philosophie et une théologie plus éclairées. Ils se sont révélés impuissants à faire la synthèse du naturel et du surnaturel, du terrestre et du spirituel, du temporel et de l'éternel; ils n'ont pas aperçu la double vocation du chrétien: celle de chrétien, mais aussi celle de l'homme et qu'il faut être homme avant d'être chrétien” (L. Groulx, *Chemins de l'avenir*, p. 41). See L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 14. “Faire la synthèse du surnaturel et du temporel, du religieux et du profane, saisir les valeurs humaines du culturel et du national, effort qui dépasse l'intelligence des nouveaux directeurs de la jeunesse.”

Catholic Action became a lament. In reference to the mid-1930s, Groulx bemoaned this dichotomization over twenty years later:

Those were the days when self-styled theologians began to split up national activism and Catholic Action. This lamentably shortsighted approach cost us dearly as it profoundly disoriented an entire generation of young French Canadians while predictably failing to make them better Catholics... The contrivance of such a dualism between the patriotic citizen and the Catholic has regrettably caused us more harm than I can say. Even now as I write these lines in October, 1958, I have just come from Saint-Timothée where I delivered an address on the sinister effects of this outlandish doctrine in the life of our people.³²

As evident in his own memoirs, G.-H. Lévesque fully realized that he represented the primary target of Groulx's vindictive against Catholic Action. He held Lévesque largely responsible for this false doctrine. Almost with an 'in your face' attitude, Lévesque retorted to Groulx's critique of the relationship between Catholic Action and *action nationale*, "One could write many pages refuting such a summarily categorical treatment of an intricately complex issue, and perhaps then we would see who is the makeshift theologian, if not indeed a simpleton."³³

Just as the last volume of his memoirs opened with a frontal attack on Catholic Action, so Groulx ended this literary testament with a broadside attack on

³²"C'était le temps où des théologiens plus ou moins improvisés commençaient d'opposer l'action nationale à l'action catholique. Vue courte, vue malheureuse qui nous aura fait tant de mal, aura déraciné toute une génération de jeunes Canadiens français, sans les rendre, pour cela, il fallait s'y attendre, plus catholiques... Hélas, deux fois hélas, et encore une fois, qui dira le mal que nous aura fait l'invention de ce dualisme entre le patriote et le catholique. À l'heure où j'écris ces lignes, octobre 1958, je viens de dénoncer, dans un discours à Saint-Timothée, les conséquences funestes, à travers la vie de notre peuple, de cette singulière doctrine" (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 3: 287). See G. - H. Lévesque, *Souvenances* 1: 268-269, where he - not without reason - interprets Groulx's pejorative expressions 'théologiens improvisés', 'mauvais primaires' etc., as thinly-veiled references to Lévesque himself.

Catholic Action, after assessing the state of Catholicism in contemporary Quebec. Groulx surveyed the history of the Church in Quebec and tried to point out the errors that led to the alienation of the French-Canadian people from Catholicism. He called Catholic Action to task for the abandonment, indeed the rejection of church by Quiet-Revolution Quebec. Catholicism in Quebec was paying the price for the social irrelevancy of Catholic Action. The social and doctrinal needed to be integrated, but Catholic Action had fatally divorced the two, so that secularization was inevitable. What was causing French Canadians to leave the church in droves, and to consider it irrelevant to their lives? Groulx attributed the massive defection from the church to its dichotomized doctrine. The church had undermined its own role in French-Canadian society. It is significant to remember that Groulx wrote this last volume in the heat of the Quiet Revolution as people denounced the church. He thus attempted to come to terms with what happened to bring about such disaffection with Catholicism and the concomitant anticlerical vendetta. Throughout this period he reserved his harshest criticism for Catholic Action. In the closing pages of this last volume he summed up his conviction that Catholic Action had committed a fundamental error which led to the marginalization of religion in modern Quebec. He stated in this regard:

I noticed that each issue repeated the same old Catholic Action mantra which I roundly criticized in *Chemins de l'avenir*. This doctrine promoted an unrealistic, intemporal, disincarnate Catholicism, which perceived the Church as such an ethereal institution that it could not identify with a particular people, espouse their concerns and work with them towards the realization of their destiny, thus

³³“On pourrait écrire des pages et des pages pour réfuter un jugement aussi court et définitif sur une question joliment complexe, et peut-être qu'alors on verrait où se trouvent les théologiens improvisés, sinon les vrais primaires...” (G.-H. Lévesque, *Souvenances* 1: 269).

concretely laying the groundwork for the kingdom of God in their midst.³⁴

In the end Groulx believed the Catholic Action movement went awry because it abandoned the incarnational basis of Catholicism. He affirmed, “Our religion is one of incarnation. Our leaders of Catholic Action have too often forgotten this.”³⁵

³⁴“À chaque numéro, j’y reconnaissais la vieille formule de l’Action catholique, celle que j’ai dénoncée dans *Chemins de l’avenir*, qui a fait si peu, hors nous faire tant de mal, doctrine d’un catholicisme irréel, intemporel, désincarné, qui ne voit dans l’Église qu’une institution planant au haut des airs, incapable de s’attacher à un peuple particulier, d’embrasser ses problèmes, de s’associer à son destin, d’y préparer concrètement le royaume de Dieu” (L. Groulx, *Mémoires*, 4: 328-329).

³⁵“Notre religion est une religion d’incarnation. Nos aumôniers de l’Action catholique l’ont trop oublié” (L. Groulx, *Chemins de l’avenir*, p. 43).

9 -- CONCLUSION

IN THE FACE OF THE QUIET REVOLUTION

9.1 The Spiritual and the Temporal

Groulx's social schema revealed his concept of civilization as the primacy of the spiritual in the temporal, mediated through the church. Although he operated with polarities, Groulx was not Manichean as his validation of the temporal made clear. He sought to qualify the temporal, not to negate it. Although deeply religious, even pietistic, Groulx never pursued asceticism, as many living witnesses are quick to attest. His understanding of Christianity was not that of self-effacement. On the contrary, as his militant nationalism indicated, his faith affirmed the collective self. This reinforced his conviction that he was more Catholic, more orthodox than those who were ready to abandon the nation, culture and society to secularism, rather than claim them for Catholicism.

Groulx interchangeably referred to Quebec as a province, state, and country, almost as though French Canada was already a nation. Evidently he did not believe it had yet achieved an integrally Catholic society. His religio-nationalist thought was complex, which makes his exact view of French-Canadian independence difficult to clearly define. Like realized eschatology, Groulx maintained that the Catholic nation exists here and now, but at the same time awaits its full realization. The integral catholicization of Quebec as a nation remained Groulx's primary concern. Political independence represented first and foremost the means to attain this religious goal. His nationalist vision was not exclusively spiritual. On the contrary he insisted on the

economic liberation of French Canada. However his national ideal was fundamentally religious in that he called for the establishment of French-Canadian society integrally on Catholic principles. As early as 1915 Groulx insisted that the adherence of French-Canadians to the primacy of the spiritual in all realms, constituted the watershed between them and other Canadians:

We are the citizens of a Catholic province, a province isolated by virtue of its faith, yet we daily rub shoulders with people of other beliefs or no faith at all. We live and work side by side with those who, unlike ourselves, do not recognize whatsoever the right of the gospel and morality to govern every human act. As a result we see all around us compromises, if not negations of the truth and morality, which has undermined our consciences so that we have perhaps acquired the insidious habit of conducting human affairs, especially politics and business, apart from Christian morality.¹

Groulx deplored the failure of Protestants and nominal Catholics to incarnate Christianity in all human pursuits. Their presence inevitably involved compromises, if not negations of Catholic moral standards. Groulx premised the independence of French Canada not primarily on language nor even culture, but on religion. He feared French Canadians would become like their Protestant contemporaries or nominal North American Catholics who did not apply their faith to temporal spheres such as economics and politics. The thrust of Groulx's thought thus inexorably tended towards

¹"Nous sommes les citoyens d'une province catholique; mais d'une province qui par sa foi est une isolée. Mis en contact quotidien avec des hommes d'autres croyances ou de nulle croyance, qui ne reconnaissent point comme nous sur toutes les formes de l'activité humaine l'hégémonie de l'évangile et de la morale, mêlant nos actions aux leurs, ébranlés dans nos consciences par les compromis et quelquefois les négations que subissent autour de nous la vérité et la morale, nous avons peut-être contracté une tendance funeste à faire de la science des lettres, surtout de la politique et des affaires en marge de la morale chrétienne." (L. Groulx, "Le devoir des universitaires," *Le Devoir* 7 octobre 1915: 1-2).

the conclusion that only by means of independence could French-Canadian society fully live out its Catholicism.

Groulx associated doctrine with an economic program, and he would not discuss economics apart from moral considerations. On the contrary, he affirmed the interdependence of the economic and the moral, so as to render morally responsible economic policy and practice. Nationalist economics were not an end unto themselves. For Groulx nationalism never came down to a matter of dollars and cents. Economics consequently could not serve as the basis of French-Canadian nationalism. Groulx endeavored not merely to nationalize, but more to prioritize economics on the basis of moral and ethical principles. Of course he considered economic imperialism fundamentally immoral. He did not want Quebec to go the materialistic way of the United States. Economics must not absorb French Canadians.

9.2 Nationalism as Liberation Theology

Groulx saluted the birth of new nations in Africa and Asia as they rose out of the ashes of European colonialism, free market economy, and globalization, which exploit small nations and peoples in the name of the global community:

Are these huge economic and political entities so new a phenomenon that they should cause such alarm? For at least one hundred years now world history evidences two parallel, even correlative series of developments: on one hand the rise of vast, insatiable, monster States which devour the vital areas around them and across the globe; on the other hand, the universal awakening if not insurgence of small nations in reaction to imperialistic voraciousness. Much ill has been said about this burst of nationalisms ... Yet how many of these uprisings do not after all simply represent human striving for freedom from unbearable

oppression, indeed the retaliation of human beings for the inhuman politics which all too often characterize large States? Many have attributed these nationalist stirrings to the revitalization of historic cultures and small peoples' renewed consciousness of their cultural heritage. Why not call a spade a spade and acknowledge that these movements back to the historical roots and traditions of an ethnic group arise from the profound desire and irrepressible impetus of human beings to seek individually and collectively, a free, full life?²

The above quoted words were written in the 1920s, during a period of material prosperity. Why was economics such an issue for Groulx if Quebec was experiencing material wealth? In effect, it was a moral dilemma for Groulx because he believed prosperity tempted French Canadians to place economic welfare above moral considerations. How could they experience such economic wealth and not become materialists? Groulx was convinced this had happened to the United States. He sought to subject economics to moral priorities and spiritual imperatives. Prosperity had to serve moral and spiritual welfare.

Long before the 'Quiet Revolution' nationalism represented more than a revival of culture, a cultural movement. It was a struggle for emancipation from the grip of imperialism, a matter of human rights and freedom. Nationalism ultimately was

²⁴"Les vastes concentrations économiques et politiques sont-elles un phénomène si nouveau et dont il y ait lieu de tant s'effrayer? Voilà cent ans au moins que l'histoire du monde nous présente ces deux séries de faits parallèles et l'on peut dire corrélatifs: d'un côté, la constitution de vastes Etats, ogres toujours affamés, dévorant autour d'eux et de par le monde l'espace vital; de l'autre, et en réaction contre la gloutonnerie impérialiste, le réveil général et parfois l'insurrection des petits peuples. L'on a dit bien du mal de l'explosion des nationalismes ... Mais combien de ces explosions n'ont été, après tout, que des réactions de la liberté humaine contre l'oppression trop lourde, des revanches de l'homme contre le caractère trop souvent inhumain de la politique des grands Etats? Le réveil des nationalités, on l'a attribué à des réveils de culture historique, à la prise de conscience, par les petits peuples, de leur vieux fond culturel. Pourquoi rester à mi-chemin, et en ces retours vers le passé et vers les traditions de la race, pourquoi ne pas reconnaître un sentiment, un élan qui sourd de plus loin et qui n'est rien d'autre que l'aspiration indestructible de l'homme vers la vie libre, et vers la vie pleine, vie individuelle et vie collective?" (L. Groulx, *Constantes de vie*, pp. 108-9)

to be pursued for this reason as a moral crusade, an ethical struggle, an endeavor to secure the rights and freedom of a minority, a small people, as Groulx was fond of saying. Groulx confined nationalism to minorities, to minority peoples. Only thus did he consider it a valid, indeed necessary phenomenon.

9.3 The Ecumenical Movement

Groulx contended that he took up the cause of French-Canadian nationalism in order to advance Catholicism in Quebec. He rejected a minority position for Catholicism in French-Canadian society. He argued that only in French Canada did the Catholic Church occupy its rightful place at the head of society. Among political entities north of the Mexico border, in Quebec alone did Catholics constitute a majority. Moreover, in Quebec as nowhere else on the continent, the church informed all collective life. Catholicism outside Quebec was forced to assume a minority status, which was contradictory to its Catholic nature.

Towards the end of his life Groulx specifically juxtaposed the absolute magisterium of the Catholic Church to religious pluralism. Groulx could not reconcile the two. Although he was sympathetic to the linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and religious minority status of French Canadians in the larger Canadian context, he rejected a minority status for Catholicism in Quebec. He believed ecumenism and religious pluralism relegated Catholicism to an inferior position in French-Canadian society. A religious minority status was incongruent with the catholicity of the faith. The Catholic communion was a distinct society; it was not like other religions, nor even other Christian denominations.

Throughout his long clerical career Groulx followed with interest, albeit not without criticism, the growing ecumenical movement, as evident in his observations on contemporary developments in ecumenism. Take for instance his exhortation to fellow Catholics in the wake of the founding assembly of the World Council of Churches of Amsterdam in 1948. Groulx challenged his fellow Catholics to emulate the faith of ecumenicists concerning the future of the church, and to surpass their vision for its role in the modern world. He rhetorically asked:

At the opening of their recent assembly in Amsterdam the leaders of the Protestant, schismatic, separated churches, made this declaration: 'In a hopeless world the only hope lies in the Church of Jesus Christ ... We hold this gathering because we belong to the Church of Jesus Christ and believe that it stands above all other realities.' Will we Catholics, the legitimate children of the Church of Jesus Christ, allow such faith to surpass that of ourselves?³

9.4 Groulx's Historiography and Its Critics

Groulx vigorously reacted to the criticism of younger, *québécois* historians, often his former students, that he had spiritualized all of French-Canadian history; hence, he produced a subjective, invalid historiography. Rather he interpreted it all solely in religious, spiritual terms like predestination and apostolicity, all summed up as what Michel Brunet called 'messianism.' History as revelation of human predestination was Groulx's Christian philosophy of history. History reveals what God had ordained

³"À l'ouverture de leur récente réunion d'Amsterdam, les chefs des églises séparées, protestantes et schismatiques, faisaient cette déclaration: «C'est sur l'Église de Jésus-Christ que repose la seule espérance d'un monde désespéré ... Nous nous réunissons parce que nous croyons que l'Église de Jésus-Christ est la plus haute des réalités et que nous lui appartenons.» Catholiques, enfants légitimes de l'Église de Jésus-Christ, nous laisserons-nous dépasser par cette foi?" (L. Groulx, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, p. 62)

for an individual or a people to accomplish. Not only did Groulx believe in revelation, but he believed revelation continues--that is to say--God continues to reveal the divine will and purposes through history.

On the eve of the Quiet Revolution Groulx believed he can no longer cooperate with the younger generation of French-Canadian nationalists. He considered the gulf unbridgeable between himself and the secular nationalists of the 1950s. The crux of their disagreement lay in their different philosophies of history and accordingly divergent conceptions of French-Canadian society. Groulx held that only within the framework of divine redemption could one understand French Canada and its national mission as a Catholic people. This was not the interpretation of the contemporary secular nationalists who skeptically referred to Groulx's 'messianism.' This bitterly offended Groulx who regarded such an epithet as a scornful caricature of his life's work as an historian and nationalist. He believed the Redemption was the epicentre of both Catholicism and French-Canada. Quebec had survived in order to bring salvation to the rest of Canada, North America, and ultimately the world.

Groulx's correspondance with the younger historian Michel Brunet, one of his former students, brings into relief the spiritual-secular gulf which separated Groulx from his own protégés at the advent of the Quiet Revolution. The Quiet Revolution gave Groulx no room for hedging, no chance to straddle the fence between the spiritual and the national, as he had done for most of his career. In a letter to Brunet Groulx protested:

My dear Michel, I tell you in all honesty, my life and work have often seemed hard to me, but if anything has sustained me it is this thought, this belief in the spiritual dignity of a people who,

though small in number, deserve the care and help they need to survive because of their mission as well as the role they play in the Church.⁴

Brunet was right in that he realized Groulx's historiography was fundamentally religious in comparison to his own secular philosophy of history. The gulf was most apparent to Groulx because of Brunet's proximity to him, which explains why they clearly perceived that the crucial difference lay between the spiritual and the secular. Those close to Groulx, such as Brunet and Frégault, realized how great the gap was because of the primacy of religion in Groulx's philosophy and historical work. They acutely sensed the unbridgeable chasm between them and their former master. French-Canadian historiography and its practitioners had come to a fork in the road. Groulx remained on the path of providentialism, while his former disciples took the new path of modernity and a secular understanding of the history of Quebec. In the post-Quiet Revolution era of Quebec one did not fully realize anymore how irreversible, how irreconcilable, how absolute the differences were between Groulx and his former students.

Groulx declared Brunet's secular interpretation of Quebec history erroneous, even inimical to French-Canadian *survivance*. He could not accept the history and survival of French Canadians as anything less than sacred, not unlike the Jews who survived against all odds, despite continual oppression by many of the greatest powers in world history. Despite the rapid secularization of Quebec and the consequent secular reinterpretation of its history, Groulx nevertheless affirmed the religious mission of

⁴"Je vous le dirai en toute franchise, mon cher Michel. Si quelque chose m'a soutenu dans ma vie et dans mon travail, qui souvent m'a paru dur, c'est cette pensée, cette foi en la dignité spirituelle d'un petit peuple qui, pour sa mission, son rôle dans l'Église et devant Dieu mérite qu'on s'occupe de lui et qu'on l'aide à survivre..." (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to Michel Brunet, 20 August 1957).

French Canada as a reality not only predestined by God, but proven by history. With a view to his detractors Groulx publically protested in a 1957 article:

I do not believe in every messianism, but I did and still do believe in the apostolic mission of our small French-Canadian people. This constitutes neither a fictitious nor optional mission, much less a flight of fancy due to childish vanity, but something revealed by history and resulting from the foremost demands of the faith. One can of course put this mission or vocation on hold for awhile. Yet I declare that no matter how undeserving nor small in numbers, a baptized people cannot renounce their historic destiny without repudiating themselves, that is to say, without betraying the most profound and sacred elements of their being.⁵

It was all too obvious by 1957 that Quebec was secularizing, and giving way to modernity. This forced Groulx to restrict his interpretation to Catholicism and to reduce his premises to the professionally religious, namely the clergy and missionaries. In the 1920s and 1930s Groulx could assume the spirituality of French Canada as a society. On this basis he preached its generalized mission, literary, and artistic. By the 1950s, cultural developments such as the *Refus global* (1948) would no longer allow for such an interpretation of Quebec. Its undeniable social evolution categorically disproved all such assumptions of its inherent religiosity. Groulx had to bow to the evidence that artistically and literarily French Canada was not fundamentally religious, and he concluded therefore that it did not have a cultural mission. Contemporary artistic, literary, cultural developments in Quebec profoundly disappointed, if not shocked him.

⁵“Je ne crois pas à tous les messianismes. Mais j’ai cru et je crois encore à la mission apostolique de notre petit peuple canadien français. Mission non fictive, ni facultative, ni rêverie d’un puéril orgueil, mais révélée par l’histoire et issue des plus hautes exigences de la foi. Sans doute, cette mission ou vocation, la peut-on mettre parfois en veilleuse. Mais si petit et si indigne qu’il soit ... je professe qu’un peuple baptisé ne peut renier sa prédestination historique, sans se renier soi-même, je veux dire, sans trahir ce qu’il y a de plus profond et de plus sacré en son être.” (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, “Je crois

He fell back on the principle of providentialism as the paradigm whereby one could understand French Canada and its history. It was clear in his argument with Brunet that he considered this to be self-evident. Groulx's reaction to secular nationalism was intimately tied to his reaction to secular, modern historiography: "I do not criticize the young generation for its interpretation of our history. They claim to found it on fact ... I would only chide them for not daring to draw from their philosophy of history its inexorable implications."⁶

9.5 The Emphasis on Spirituality

Groulx was particularly conscious that there was a widening gulf between the generations in contemporary Quebec. The youth demanded freedom from the dark ages of Duplessis. The revolution Groulx called for was to be orthodox and doctrinal, a philosophical renewal in the sources of Christian humanism. Quebec needed a spiritual renaissance according to Catholic principles because the spiritual was the fountainhead of French-Canadian society. Groulx's argument concerning Catholicism and the French-Canadian nationalist movement naturally shifted focus over the years inasmuch as the task of the apologist consists in rendering the faith relevant to contemporary society. In the wake of World War II Groulx insisted on a corrective for nationalism. When he believed the church needed to adopt a nationalist position he promoted it. On the other hand, as he witnessed the secularization of the Quebec nationalist movement he sought to subject it to Catholicism. This made him appear equivocal. Throughout the

encore en la mission apostolique du peuple canadien-français" *La Patrie*, April 30, 1957, *Spicilèges* 1957, FLG).

⁶"Je ne reproche point à la jeune génération son interprétation de notre histoire. Elle prétend l'appuyer sur les faits ... Tout au plus lui reprocherai-je de ne pas oser tirer les ultimes conséquences de sa philosophie de l'histoire. ..." (CRLG, L. Groulx's papers, L. Groulx to F. A. Angers, 8 December 1958, pp. 1-2).

rapid evolution of contemporary Quebec he endeavored, albeit with little success, to apply relevantly the general principles of Catholicism to the specific social changes taking place in modern Quebec. In a sense he evolved with the times, which explains in part the enigmatic character of his thought and work. His journal as a young man coupled with statements throughout his life, indicate Groulx's perennial fear of imminent anticlericalism. Guy Frégault affirmed that the French influence provides a key to understanding Groulx's mentality. He feared anticlericalism in Quebec even when the position of the church in French-Canadian society seemed as secure as it was prominent. This was the raw motivation behind Groulx's insistence that the church had to embrace the nationalist concerns and to prove itself an ally of the nationalist laity in French Canada. While writing his memoirs Groulx expressed certain misgivings about his lifework, as though it had been too temporally oriented, whereas now in the eve of his life he set his sights on spirituality. In a letter of Dec. 8, 1958 he readily declared:

Without the slightest hint of repentance, I also accuse myself of having reminded this same people of their mission as a Catholic people...In any case, no matter what others think, I refuse to fall into this heresy which teaches that a Catholic, and how much more so a Catholic people, need not consider their responsibility for the outcome of Redemption in the world. If that constitutes ludicrous messianism, then too bad for messianism. There you have, my dear Mr. Angers, what I did and still do believe with all my heart...I confess that after more than a half-century of witnessing the course of events and every kind of defeatism, I have but a fragile faith in humans. Yet my faith in prayer and Providence remains steadfast.⁷

⁷"Je m'accuse également et sans le moindre repentir, d'avoir rappelé à ce même peuple, sa mission de peuple catholique...Quoi que l'on pense, en tout cas, je refuse de me faire l'adepte de cette hérésie qui voudrait qu'un catholique et à plus forte raison un peuple catholique, n'auraient pas à se tenir responsables pour leur part, du sort de la Rédemption du monde. Si c'est du messianisme risible, tant pis pour le messianisme. Voilà, cher monsieur Angers, ce que j'ai cru et ce que je crois toujours et de toute

To all intents and purposes Groulx perceived the modern, secular French-Canadian nationalist movement as heretical. This was unacceptable to him as a priest. He privately disassociated himself from it in the strongest possible terms. He did not do so publicly because so much of his life's work would have seemed in vain. He did issue a severe reprimand through his book *Chemins de l'avenir* (1964). Had Groulx lived much longer he may not have had any choice but to go public and denounce it.

Embittered, Groulx's vision of an orthodox, moral, missionary people, like ancient Israel, fell prey to secularism and modernity. His incarnational religious-nationalist ideal seemingly lay in ruins. He retreated to an almost exclusively spiritual position. His bitterness previously centered on those like Henri Bourassa, who had not lived up to his nationalist expectations; now he most resented those nationalists who abandoned Catholicism. However Groulx's letter to Angers in December contained more bark than bite since in his subsequent correspondence Groulx moderated his criticism.

At this point Groulx could no longer consider the nationalist movement in Quebec a spiritual work, as he had contended in debate with G.- H. Lévesque in the mid-1930s. Any pretense that this movement was Catholic, much less integrally so, was now dissipated. Convinced now that the nationalist movement was secular, even anticlerical, Groulx disassociated himself from it; he could only resign himself to the unorthodoxy of contemporary French-Canadian nationalism and pray for its renewal through the spiritual elite of Quebec, namely the clergy and missionaries. This

mon âme ... Le spectacle de plus d'un demi-siècle d'évolution et de lâchages de toutes sortes ne me laisse plus, je l'avoue, qu'une foi fragile aux hommes. Mais ma foi reste intacte en la prière et en la Providence" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to F. A. Angers, 8 December 1958, pp. 1-2).

explained why he retreated to ecclesiastics in *Le Canada Français Missionnaire* as the hope for Quebec *survivance* and proof that they were God's people, albeit 'the faithful remnant.' In his most specifically religious work, *Rencontres avec Dieu*, Groulx dealt with the church at length, as he did in no other work. The book was written in the last decade of his life, the period in which he dwelt most on religious subjects, as *Le Canada français missionnaire* also attests. After so many years in the apparent service of temporal, national matters, Groulx now as never before, turned his thoughts and energies to the service of the church. He did not substantially change his thinking about the temporal and national. Rather he shifted his focus, and attempted to bring his nationalist concerns directly into line with the church. Groulx sought once again to be the intermediary between Catholicism and nationalism in Quebec. Whereas early in his life, he was concerned to defend the validity of French-Canadian nationalism, now in the last years of his life he defended Catholicism in modern, secular Quebec.

9.6 Groulx the Prophet?

With the advent of the Quiet Revolution, Angers et al. look back to Groulx who prophet-like had announced in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s the coming realization of the French-Canadian nation. In the 1930s younger French-Canadian nationalists such as André Laurendeau considered Groulx *le chef* and *le maître de l'heure*. Not surprisingly several regarded Groulx as the precursor of the Quiet Revolution, indeed its harbinger. In this vein, the day after his death Claude Ryan referred to Groulx as "the spiritual father of modern Quebec."⁸ Yet Groulx squarely rejected this title and disassociated himself in no uncertain terms from the Quiet Revolution. He wanted no

part of it. Indeed he repudiated it in his last book *Chemins de l'Avenir*. While Barbeau, Angers, Ryan, et. al. attributed the paternity of the Quiet Revolution to Lionel Groulx, he unequivocally denied that it was any child of his. He went so far as to consider the Quiet Revolution a bastard because it abandoned the faith.

Yet in a sense Wallot, Angers and Ryan were right. Despite himself, Groulx midwifed this secular nationalist movement. His affirmation of the temporal and the national legitimized the latter. His rationale allowed the temporal to take precedence in Quebec. The younger generation heard his affirmation of the national, but they ignored his simultaneous insistence on the spiritual. In a sense G.-H. Lévesque was also right. He foresaw that the validation of its nationalist movement would create a force in Quebec which would develop and grow with such a temporal orientation so as to become a movement against the church which had nurtured it. Lévesque was rightly wary of promoting nationalism in Catholic garb. He realized it could turn such a spiritual rationale to its own temporal ends. Groulx retorted to Angers and the young nationalists who hailed him as their “spiritual father,” “Furthermore, you have no idea how much I loathe repeating myself so that I seemingly play the role of a herald or prophet.”⁹ Ryan seemed to attribute the spirit of modernity to Groulx, although there was a gulf between the spiritual as Groulx conceived it, and Ryan’s concept of it. In accord with Catholic Action, Ryan distinguished sharply between the spiritual and the national. Consequently he, along with many others, misinterpreted Groulx’s incarnational affirmation of the national as legitimization of the watershed between the spiritual and the temporal. That distinction rightly belonged to G.- H. Lévesque. To be

⁹“le père spirituel du Québec moderne” (*Le Devoir*, May 24, 1967).

called the 'prophet' of the secularization of Quebec represented a cruel irony to Groulx. Although the young nationalists and intelligentsia borrowed the language of Catholicism, they divested such terms as 'prophet' and 'spiritual' of their narrow, Catholic content, infusing them instead with a broad, secular meaning. This added insult to injury. He and his former disciples used similar terms but in reality were speaking a different language. Groulx consciously sought to convert young French-Canadian intellectuals and nationalists to a Catholic concept of Quebec.¹⁰ Although he conceded that French Canada did not have a cultural mission *per se*, he could not bring himself to believe it had no spiritual mission. Groulx no longer equated the distinctiveness of French Canada with its culture, but only with its religion. The Quiet Revolution made it necessary for Groulx to discard the spiritual interpretation of French-Canadian culture he had employed throughout the 1920s and 1930s. It forced him to distinguish between religion and culture in Quebec. This belies the interpretation of Groulx by Wallot and Anger, who claimed he virtually equated the two. Contrary to the secular nationalism of today, Groulx primarily located the 'distinct' society of Quebec not in its culture, but in its religion. This was ultimately the sole basis for its 'distinct society.' The Quiet Revolution, however, compelled Groulx to identify religion in Quebec with the transcendent, and culture with the immanent. Previously he considered French-Canadian culture to be spiritual. Now, he argued Quebec no longer had a cultural mission in North America. In the 1920s and 1930s, he argued that it did. Although he was prepared to revise his belief in the cultural mission of French Canada, yet he would not go so far as to deny that it still had a spiritual mission. Without a

¹⁰"Vous ne sauriez croire du reste, combien il me répugne de me répéter et de paraître poser au précurseur et au prophète" (CRLG, L. Groulx papers, L. Groulx to F. A. Angers, Outremont, 5 January 1963).

transcendent reason for the *survivance* of French Canada Groulx believed Quebec could not justify its continued existence. He could not understand a secularly motivated *survivance* or nationalist movement.

By the end of his life Groulx found himself engaged in a two-front battle. On one hand lay secular nationalism and the other ‘angelic theology,’ as he called that contemporary school of thought which he believed divorced doctrine from present social realities and national concerns. Groulx’s memoirs clearly evidence that right up to the end of his life he grounded his national action squarely in theology. This was completely consistent with Thomism. He insisted that nationalist action was not independent of moral philosophy or theology, as was the case with the Quiet Revolution. At the end of his life the only thing left for him to do was to direct his nationalist as well as Catholic readers to Thomism. He believed it reconciled theology and national action through its first principle of the complementary relationship between the natural and the supernatural.

Although a priest, incredibly Groulx is seldom associated with the church, much less theology, which is remarkable when one realizes that Groulx conscientiously articulated his nationalist theory within the parameters of Catholic theology. He did so as a trained theologian, and it is important to see Groulx within the context of his own theological worldview. Although his preoccupation with nationalism stemmed from his desire, as an apologist, to render the faith relevant to French Canadian society, he is not associated with the church or theology; he is perceived through a post-WWII, post-Holocaust and post-Quiet Revolution prism rather than as a late Victorian, French-Canadian Catholic nationalist who was already a senior citizen by the time of these

¹⁰ CRLG, L. Groulx’s papers, L. Groulx to Michel Brunet, 20 August 1957.

previous events. Groulx was theologically educated in the wake of Vatican I and more accurately represents a child of *Aeterni Patris* and *Rerum Novarum*. His thought uniquely represented the conjunction of ultramontanist, Thomist, social catholicism and French-Canadian nationalism.

In 1965, literary critic Maurice Blain wrote a scathing review of Lionel Groulx's recently published diatribe on the Quiet Revolution, *Chemins de l'avenir*.¹¹ Blain likened Groulx to Cassandra, the cursed prophetess of classical mythology whose prophecies, though true, were fated never to be believed, and whose name had consequently come to symbolize a person who vainly prophesied impending disaster. For all its acrimony, this analogy aptly portrayed Groulx's vestigial role in Quiet Revolution Quebec, which spurned his antiquated, religious visions of French Canada and turned a deaf ear to his damning indictments of its frenzied rush towards secular modernity. By the end of his polemical career, which spanned more than half a century, Groulx had taken on the aura of a sententious prophet of doom, leftover from a troubling era which Quebec sought to put decisively behind itself. Groulx's once prophetic stance in French-Canadian society now seemed nothing but irksome, unreasonable railing against Quebec's long overdue modernization. Painfully conscious that many dismissed his message as a throwback to French Canada's dark ages and considered him obsolete, Groulx's memoirs attest that the last years of his life brought home to him the bitter truth that "a prophet hath no honor in his own country" (John 4:44).

¹¹Maurice Blain, *Approximations: Essais*, pp. 233-236.

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