

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES
ON
RACISM IN QUEBEC**

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FOREWORD

As part of its preparations for the *World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance*, held in Durban last September, the Conseil des relations interculturelles felt it was necessary to develop an original consideration of racism, which was one of the themes of the Conference.

An examination of the sources and causes of racism was seen as the inescapable starting point for any subsequent action by the Conseil. By offering this challenge to Mr. Jean-Claude Icart, sociologist and community worker, the Conseil's intention was to ensure that the various parties who may need to use this study can start from a common basis. It seemed important to situate the question within the dynamic of Quebec history, since many people who publicly intervene in this area lack the historical background needed to put both issues and needed actions in their proper context.

The approach proposed by Mr. Icart, and endorsed by the Conseil, was in no way intended to be an exhaustive scientific study of the phenomenon of racism. Rather, it was meant to be an original contribution towards identifying a shared starting point from which actions on this issue may be developed.

With this document, the Conseil provides the wider public with a means for better understanding the perception and the reality of racism, as well as the struggle needed to eradicate the various forms that racism may take in Quebec today. This initiative appears all the more desirable following the second Week of Actions against Racism (March 2001). Like many others, the Conseil believes that too often Quebec society refuses to address the issue of racism for fear of increasing its manifestations. On the contrary, we must identify the various forms that racism may take, from the most brutal to the more subtle, in order to combat them more effectively.

The Conseil des relations interculturelles is therefore happy to present for discussion this original reflection on the nature of racism and its place in the framework of Quebec history. Since racism is an obstacle to creating a pluralist citizenry, a citizenry that shows solidarity with those citizens who are excluded from full citizenship because they belong to a minority or racialised group, we felt it appropriate to initiate a debate of this nature in the context of Quebec Citizenship Week.

Now is the time for discussion and, especially, for action, so that Quebec, well known for its welcoming and its tolerant attitude, can continue its efforts in the struggle against racism and make progress in achieving true equality for all its citizens.

Arlindo Vieira
President of the Conseil

INTRODUCTION

From August 31 to September 7, 2001, Durban, South Africa, was the site for the third World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR), the previous two conferences having been held in 1978 and 1983. The conference highlighted the International Year of Mobilization against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, and was part of a series of world conferences held by the United Nations: the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), and the World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995).

The World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in June 1993, had noted an increase of intolerance, xenophobia, racism and discrimination in many countries and had emphasised the rights of minorities, women and indigenous peoples. On December 20, 1993, the United Nations General Assembly officially launched the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1994-2003), during which the international community sought mainly to determine the roots of racism and suggest the means necessary to prevent conflicts caused by racism and racial discrimination. The Durban Conference was intended to be a key moment of this decade.

The WCAR adopted the slogan: “*United to Combat Racism: Equality, Justice, Dignity*”, and a provisional agenda with five (5) themes:

- Sources, causes, forms and contemporary manifestations of racism, racial discrimination and related intolerance;
- Victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- Measures of prevention, education and protection aimed at the eradication of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- Provision for effective remedies, recourses, redress, [compensatory] and other measures at the national, regional and international levels;
- Strategies to achieve full and effective equality, including international cooperation and enhancement of the United Nations and other international mechanisms in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

The WCAR had planned to adopt a final declaration and a plan of action for measures to be used in the fight against racism and discrimination. It was also to be a unique opportunity to increase awareness of the issue of racism and to facilitate dialogue about

interracial issues. The United Nations Charter begins with these words: “We, the Peoples of the United Nations...” Similarly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and all the conventions that flow from it, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, are addressed not only to governments but also to all the parts of society.

This document is intended to be both a contribution and an invitation to a dialogue on racism. Its central idea is to start from the basic elements of the first theme on the WCAR provisional agenda in order to summarize how the issue stands in Quebec, and in the process attempt to develop some major strategic guidelines that could serve as the basis for an action plan for fighting and, especially, preventing racism. Such a plan could be informed as much by the results of the World Conference itself as by discussions within both government circles and civil society itself.

This text is written in the form of an essay in the hope that it will facilitate these discussions since, by definition, an essay is neither a treatise nor a comprehensive description or theory, and cannot claim either to exhaust a subject or lead to definitive conclusions. Essentially, it aims to present a number of elements of analysis dealing with the sources and causes of racism in Quebec. The focus will be placed on the ethnocultural communities and visible minorities, in keeping with the formal mandate of the Conseil des relations interculturelles as officially interpreted up to the present. However, the very subject makes it impossible to ignore the issue of the Native Peoples, which will, therefore, be touched upon, even if it is not explored as deeply as its importance warrants.

The first part of the text will be devoted to developing a conceptual framework that should make it possible, at a minimum, both to delineate the space occupied by racism and to put into perspective the often controversial uses made of this term in recent polemics. The second part will deal with racism through the course of Quebec history, because we believe that explanation for a social phenomenon must be sought in the system of historical relations of which it is a part, rather than in the representations of the phenomenon made by the actors involved. A brief conclusion will suggest some directions for action.

I wish to thank the Conseil des relations interculturelles for having made this study possible. I also wish to express, to the members of the CRI and its team of professionals, my gratitude for their helpful remarks and active encouragement.

CHAPTER I

RACISM: A UNIVERSAL PHENOMENON?

”On the evolutionary level, the human species is too young and its migratory behaviours are so varied, constant and recent, that it has quite simply not had the opportunity to divide itself up into separate groups or ‘races’, except in entirely superficial respects.”

(Dr Craig Venters, CEO of Celera Genomics Corporation, New York Times, 2001)

We are all descended from the first human beings who appeared in Africa and then colonised the planet over the past 100,000 years. There is still no true scientific proof supporting the notion that any essentially differences might exist between human groups and, on the whole, the scientific community considers that the human race is one. The problem here is that, in the words of Laënc Hurbon, “*racism ignores the question of race*”. Race is not a scientific concept, and racism invents any ‘races’ that it requires.

Human beings are social animals. Their will and capacity for freely joining into groups in order to pursue goals and objectives, even under the most difficult conditions, appear to transcend all frontiers. It therefore makes sense to speak of a universal drive towards forming groups on a variety of bases. This universal urge results from the struggle for survival that began at the very dawn of humanity. Natural selection has taught us that only those humans who were able to establish co-operative relations were able to survive in often hostile environments.

Establishing a group implies the possibility of defining that group, and all aspects apparent to common sense may be used to categorise human diversity: kinship relations, territorial distribution, language, religion, physical features, etc. There is a certain practical utility in being able to assign labels to human groups, and the human brain developed the capacity to perceive shadings, differences and details in the external characteristics of human beings, all of which may be used, in a given context, to define groups.

Establishing a group also implies the capacity to define who is a member of the group and who is not: “*Us*” and “*Them*”. The question then arises: what attitude should be adopted towards those who are not part of the ‘group’. In theory, a whole spectrum of

responses is possible, ranging from total rejection of the other to total acceptance. The most frequent responses, however, are hostility, fear or distrust. The formation of a group implies the possibility of distinguishing between members and non-members, and this distinction can quickly turn into ‘*casting out*’, ‘*isolating*’, ‘*separating*’, ‘*discriminating*’ or ‘*segregating*’, through the development what is called a ‘*group mentality*’, that is, a feeling of comfort when in the company of group members and discomfort in the presence of non-members. Such a ‘*group mentality*’ reinforces elementary reactions of distrust or fear towards the unknown or the stranger, which can even be observed in nature, to the point where these reactions eventually become almost innate defence mechanisms.

This ‘*group mentality*’ can thus, quite naturally, result in both a tendency towards self-preference within the group, and a certain intolerance towards other groups, along with a propensity to deprecate their ways of doing things. This is the basis for a universal anthropological phenomenon, found in all human societies, called ‘*ethnocentrism*’, namely, a certain “valuing of one’s own norms (and practises), accompanied by a deprecation of those of other groups”. To repeat an old observation: people assert themselves by taking an opposing stance and, as Montaigne wrote: “*Everyone calls barbarous whatever is not their own custom!*”

This ethnocentrism can, in certain cases, become aggressive and violent and may provoke grave conflicts. We then speak of *ethnicism*. Human history is replete with such conflicts. Racism builds on this basis of ethnicism but cannot be reduced to it.

“It is on the basis of more or less theoretically elaborate concepts of ‘Community’, and in the name of some tribal, national, cultural or religious identity, impervious to any outside inter-breeding, that the different versions of ‘racism’ are built”.

(Jacques Tarnero, 1995)

It is relevant to note that ethnocentrism develops in situations of contact (direct or indirect) between different groups. Many isolated groups designate themselves with names that signify ‘*human beings*’ or ‘*we, the humans*’, which implies that they are defining themselves in reference to the natural environment rather than to other human beings.

1- THE BIRTH OF RACISM

In the 15th century, the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) was the epicentre of two phenomena that would result in a significant transformation of ethnocentrism and give birth to racism in the true sense.

The first of these phenomena was the completion of the ‘re-conquest’ of the Peninsula by the Christians in January of 1492, which put an end to more than seven centuries of Muslim domination. The Jews and the Muslims (the Moors) were expelled in 1492, and those who stayed were forced to convert. Previously, the three groups had coexisted under the authority of the Muslim rulers, who had manifested a certain tolerance. The new converts were now assimilated by the Christian community, but faced suspicion about the sincerity of their conversion and the purity of their faith. In this context the Spanish rulers decided to make use of a religious tribunal created by the Catholic Church in the 13th century to repress heresy: the *Inquisition*. This institution disappeared almost everywhere during the 16th century, except in Spain, where it was used against Muslims, converted Jews and Protestants until the end of the 18th century!

In addition to the struggle against heresy, the Inquisition was used in all the European countries to repress political dissidence (generally associated with religious dissidence at that time) or new forms of spirituality. It had a special impact, however, in Spain. The Moors¹ and the Jews had different origins, and their physical differences were superimposed on their religious differences. Thus developed the myth of the ‘purity of the blood’, which became a sign of ‘purity of the faith’, and the obsession with the ‘stain’ (on the bloodline and, therefore, on the faith) contracted through intermarriage with descendants of the newly converted. This myth of the purity of the bloodline would be taken up elsewhere in Europe, including France, where Boulainvilliers used it to provide a basis for the doctrine of the Germanic origin of the French aristocracy, in his *Essay on the Nobles of France* (Amsterdam, 1732).

The second phenomenon, which truly marked the beginning of the modern era, was European expansion and especially the discovery of America, in that same year 1492, by an expedition financed by the Spanish royalty, in search of a route could provide spices from Asia without having to negotiate with the Moors, who controlled a quasi-monopoly of the trade at the time. That discovery led to encounters with previously unknown

¹ The Moors were the Arab-Muslim conquerors of the Maghreb and Spain. The term comes from the Greek word *amauros*, meaning ‘dark’ or ‘brown’.

human groups, the American native peoples. For Christopher Columbus and many others, there was no doubt that the American native peoples were indeed human beings. Pope Paul III asserted, in his bull *Sublimus Deus* (1537), that the Black peoples of Africa and the native peoples of America were indeed human beings, thus making official a position adopted as early as 1493. This position by the Church carried little weight, however, when faced with the greed of the *Conquistadores*. The debate continued, but the fundamental problem became, beyond the theological assertion of the unity of Mankind, how does one account for the diversity of the human species and the 'inequality' of human populations. The religious dogma that saw the common origin of Mankind result from the first mythical couple, Adam and Eve, made it difficult to accept or develop theories explaining the differences between human groups by positing different origins², that is, polygenesis.

In the meantime, the exploitation of the American native peoples proceeded apace, and the pillaging of their riches was conducted in the context of extermination pure and simple. The Isle of Hispaniola, occupied today by Haiti and the Dominican Republic, was the first Spanish colony in the Americas, and it was the cradle of racism. The American natives of San Domingo were the first victims. More than 200 000 strong when Columbus arrived, within 60 years no more than five hundred of the original inhabitants were left! They were human beings, perhaps, but they were also heretics and pagans, and some were even cannibals! (Tolentino, 1984).

As early as 1454, Pope Nicolas IV had authorised the Portuguese, who has begun to explore the African coast, to capture Africans as slaves, since they were pagans. These slaves were used especially in the development of Madeira Island. The Spaniards took their cue from this practice and, from the beginning of the 16th century, used slaves to replace the American native peoples they had massacred. The Black slave trade was organised systematically from as early as 1525. It greatly expanded with the development of the sugar industry in the Americas in the 16th century and reached its peak in the 18th century. As Montesquieu wrote in *The Spirit of Laws*, sugar would have been too expensive without slaves to raise the plant that produced it.

The conjunction of this system of exploitation with the myth of the 'purity of the blood', which had developed in Spain, became the basis for the institution of modern racism. The Portuguese, Dutch, French and English followed Spain's example, which was taken up all over Europe. Throughout this period, an old biblical myth resurfaced, the divine Curse of Ham:

² Which did not prevent some free thinkers, such as Voltaire, from asserting the opposite.

“Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father’s nakedness and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backwards and covered their father’s nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father’s nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, he said:

“Cursed be Canaan!

The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers!”

(Genesis 9:20-25).

Originally limited to Canaan in the Jewish tradition, this curse was extended by Muslims and Christians to all the dark-skinned peoples of Africa³ and, later, to all ‘peoples of colour’⁴.

Simultaneously, other important changes were taking place. The most far-reaching was no doubt the invention of the printing press in the middle of the 15th century. By enabling the rapid spread of ideas and knowledge and making them accessible to an ever wider public, printing made an exceptional contribution to the cultural, intellectual and artistic upheaval that Europe experienced in the 15th and 16th centuries especially, based on a re-appropriation of the knowledge of Antiquity. This Renaissance would lead to scientific inquiry concerning the human species. In the process, the search for an ideological justification for colonial exploitation would move from religion to science, and the influence of the environment would be the ground in which explanations were sought for differences between populations.

Originally, the term ‘race’ designated exclusively the great aristocratic family lineages of Europe, and the term retained that meaning for a long time. It was used especially, in both English and French, to refer to the groups that made up the populations of the emerging European states (Miles, 1989). In the 16th century, the term was used in French

³ One can also wonder about the influence of the notion of a ‘Chosen People’, part of Jewish monotheism, on the development of racism. Does the existence of a ‘Chosen People’ not imply a certain ‘damnation’ of the other, non-chosen, peoples, and therefore generate a certain hierarchy of differences? Is this element not to be found also, to some extent, in the other ‘Religions of the Book’, namely Christianity and Islam?

⁴ Another myth, that did not enjoy as much success, cast sub-Saharan Africans as the descendants of Cain.

to designate a subdivision of animal species made up of individuals combining a number of common hereditary features. Very quickly, some writers also attempted to classify human diversity, taking their inspiration from work done on plant and animal species. The basic idea was to project the classification systems used in the natural sciences onto human groups, despite the cautionary advice of Englishman John Ray, one of the founding fathers of modern botany and zoology, who as early as 1675 wrote

“...that there is no more reason to wonder about the differences in skin colour or the form of noses than about the fact that there exist white or black cats, or red, white or yellow roses”.

However, it was not before the middle of the 18th century that the first true ‘scientific’ classifications of human beings appeared. Swedish naturalist Carl Von Linné, in his *Systema Naturae* (1735), was the first to use skin colour to catalogue human diversity. Frenchman Georges Leclerc, comte de Buffon, explained the formation of the species without resorting to God in his *Histoire naturelle* (1749-1804). German Johann Friedrich Blumenbach became the father of physical anthropology after the publication, in 1775 and 1776, of his major work: *De Generis Humani Varietate Nativa*. The philosopher Kant also published, between 1775 and 1785, several texts dealing with the human races which, he believed, were based on heredity and skin colour.

The basic problem is that it is always extremely difficult to establish precise and rigorous categories when dealing with a reality that consists in fact of a fluid, often imperceptible progression. In mathematical terms, the problem is to “render a continuous order in a discrete manner”. In addition, the very complexity of the object of study makes possible an infinite variety of criteria for classification and, therefore, a multiplicity of categories: for some proponents of this approach, there were only three human races, whereas other counted as many as 60! In fact, there were as many classification schemes as there were authors. All sorts of criteria were used: skin colour, hair colour, hair texture, the shape of the cranium, individual height, the shape of the nose, the colour of the eyes, customs, etc. In other words, the descriptive element chosen as the criteria for classification is merely a question of preference or convenience. In addition to the difficulty of establishing coherent classifications⁵, this could only promote the development of mechanistic and narrow views of human diversity, with the classification criterion promoted to the status of an explanatory principle. It also allowed the use of classification schemes by

⁵ A recent example: in South Africa under *apartheid*, the Japanese were classified as Whites, while the Chinese were classified as Blacks! Nazi Germany enjoyed excellent relations with Japan (non-Aryan).

ideologies disguised with pseudoscientific language and designed to mask the true issues.

The Renaissance thus witnessed a reversion to a primitive form of identity and difference. One might change one's language, culture, religion or allegiance, but not one's 'race'. Never before had the physical dimension been so singled out as a basis for a classification of human groups⁶. Previously through history the differences used to delineate large human groups established boundaries as a matter of course, but these boundaries could be crossed through conversion or assimilation. The result was a complete somatization of human diversity. The colour of the skin became the visible index of the nature of the blood⁷. The darker the colour, the darker the blood, and the greater its power to contaminate. The difference became permanent and irredeemable. And because this served to justify the prevailing exploitation and slavery, the victim was left with no way out. For this rule to be truly absolute, it had to be based on the obsession against mixed blood and the rejection of persons of mixed race: in other words, on a whole 'mixophobic' imagery and mind-set that enshrined differences as sacred. The principle of classification thus made it possible to produce notional people who were beyond redemption, persons who could not be made civilised. This irredeemable inferiority was also a guarantee of security in a context of extreme aggression.

Slavery was an institution as firmly accepted and established in the Ancient World as in the New World. The 'miracle' of Ancient Greece co-existed with the enslavement of 'barbarians'. In the history of humanity, slavery appears with the development of agriculture, and evidence of it has been found as early as the end of the 4th millennium B.C. (in Sumer). The justification for slavery was either barbarism or paganism. The slave was usually a prisoner captured in war. Sometimes, people could also be enslaved for debt. In this period, however, both slaves and slave owners came from all human groups.

⁶ Which is not to say that previous civilisations were blind to physical differences between human beings, as proved by many Egyptian or Greek frescoes and statues. On a stele that the Pharaoh Sestoris III (1887-1949 av. J.C.) had erected at the second cataract on the Nile, the following inscription can be read: "South frontier: Stele erected in year VII of the reign of Sestoris III, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, who has lived since all time and for all eternity. Crossing this frontier by land or by water, in a boat or with a herd, is forbidden to all Blacks, with the sole exception of those who would want to cross it to sell or buy in some market". However, in Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, there was no total correlation between skin colour and negative prejudice. Besides, strangers were not generally described or represented exclusively on the basis of physical characteristics.

⁷ Ironically, the more widely the approach based on skin colour was adopted, evolving into an actual 'colorimetry', the more widely the darker-skinned South Europeans (including those on the Iberian Peninsula) became, in turn, victims of racism on the part of those from the North!

At the midpoint of the Middle Ages, the Muslim world was the largest user of slaves, and they had very diverse origins: Christians, Slavs, Turks, Mongols, Black Africans, etc. Later the kings of France would seek Muslim slaves for their galleys. Until the beginning of the 19th century, the Barbary States of North Africa resorted to piracy throughout the Mediterranean Sea to get their supply of captives. During the 16th and 17th centuries, the Ottoman Empire mostly used European ‘specialists’ as slaves. The word itself, *slaves*, is derived from the word *Slav*: up until the Middle Ages, the great cities of the Mediterranean mostly bought persons originating from the Balkans⁸, and Venice had specialised in the trade. Later, Europe would mainly develop forms of serfdom.

In the colonial situation, all the masters were white while the slaves were darker-skinned (African Blacks or American natives). The theory of innate racial inferiority was developed as result in order to ‘legitimise’ colonial slavery. At the basis of the system, therefore, was exploitation, economic greed, and the master-slave relation. By definition, colonialism is aggression.⁹ But aggression against others must be legitimised and excused. The aggressors need to be reassured and to reassure themselves, but also must maintain at arm’s length the ‘aggressees’, whom they need to ensure their material success.

2- THE DEVELOPMENT OF RACIST IDEOLOGY

Only during the 19th century was the classificatory approach replaced by approaches that attempted to explain the differences between human groups. We must keep in mind, here, the close relation between power and knowledge:

“...no power relationship exists without the correlative establishment of a field of knowledge, and no body of knowledge exists without there being instituted, at the same time, some form of power relation.”

(*M. Foucault: 1975, p. 32*)

This development occurred first in France, and its principal figure was Count Arthur de Gobineau. In his work *The Inequality of Human Races* (1853 and 1855), Gobineau totally

⁸ Already at the end of the first Millennium, the *Rus*, that Scandinavian people that gave its name to the Russians, traded in Slavs, whom they sold to the Khazars. Closer to our own times, the Slavs were also the victims of Nazi barbarity, which destined them to be the slaves of the ‘Aryan race’, along with the Gypsies!

⁹ Colonial slavery took up many forms of torture initially developed in the context of the Inquisition.

reduced the social to the biological and cast ‘race’ as the main motive force of history¹⁰. Gobineau did no more than systematise and give form to the prejudices of his time. These theses were very quickly reinforced by the application of the Darwinian idea¹¹ of the natural selection of plant and animal species to human beings, an idea that was completed by Mendel’s laws of heredity¹². The same ideas were used, in particular, by Georges Vacher de Lapouge, who attempted in his book *Sélections sociales* (1896) to apply the principles of Darwinian biology to the evolution of human societies.

“This is where the racist operation par excellence comes into play: by *projecting* the system’s effect upon the victim of the system, thus blaming the victim, and attributing to the victim the causality of evil.”

(P.A. Taguieff : 1998, p. 9)

After publishing his *Foundations of the 19th Century* (1899), which presented an extremely biased view of European history, Houston Stewart Chamberlain became an apostle of eugenics¹³ in order to protect the ‘Aryan race’. This ideological trend even gave rise to a racism of socialist inspiration, which essentially aimed to define the means for effecting a radical transformation of society on the basis of a social stratification consistent with the natural hierarchy of the ‘races’. Put forward in Germany by Hans Friedrich Karl Gunther (1891-1968!), whose major work was published between the two world wars, this school of thought became a notable inspiration for Nazism¹⁴. Classifications were based on the form and volume of the cranium, taken as indexes of intelligence. Later on, classifications came into use based on I.Q. tests (“intelligence quotient”), serology (blood groups) or genetics.

It is important to note that this systematisation of racist ideology occurred in the very context that witnessed the abolition of slavery in America, the establishment by the British of a different colonial system in Asia, and the partition and then colonisation of

¹⁰ As early as 1885, Anténor **FIRMIN**, a Haitian intellectual, refuted Gobineau’s theories in a book entitled: *De l’égalité des races humaines*. Despite its qualities, or rather because of them, this work was ignored by the European intellectuals of the time.

¹¹ **DARWIN**, Charles : *The Origin of Species*, 1859.

¹² Gregor J. **MENDEL** introduced his *Laws of Heredity* in 1865.

¹³ Eugenics was intended to be a new science, introduced by a cousin of Darwin’s, Francis **GALTON** (1822-1911) in his review *Biometrika*, and which aimed at protecting the ‘races’ at the ‘summit’ from any ‘pollution’ by the ‘inferior races’.

¹⁴ **CHAMBERLAIN** also wrote several papers on his father-in-law, German composer Richard Wagner, of whom he was a fervent admirer. He was also a great admirer of Hitler.

Africa. This colonisation made renewed use of an old myth that had become totally useless with the abolition of slavery:

“... in the 19th Century, a revisionist reading of the Bible cast Ham as the ancestor of the Whites of Africa. The Hamitic populations were considered, by colonialist historiography, as the descendants of an Aryan branch that had migrated into Africa at some indeterminate time, and was now of mixed blood, but whose racial superiority had made it possible for them to create centres of civilisation in Egypt and Ethiopia, and also in various kingdoms, such as Rwanda.”

(*Agnès Lainé, 2000*)

This revisionist reading of the myth allowed Europeans, who were to settling mainly in southern Africa, to ‘legitimise’ their presence. It also let them delegate powers to specific groups and to practice an effective form of indirect rule over certain colonies. A century later, this myth was still having tragic consequences, especially in Rwanda, where the Hamitic origin of the Tutsi had become a dogma firmly ingrained in the minds of too many people, even though the Tutsi had the same linguistic, cultural and genetic characteristics as the Hutu and the Twa (id).¹⁵ Racist ideology kills.

It is striking to note that, in the United States, the whole segregationist system was set up in the Southern states *after* the South’s defeat in the Civil War and after the abolition of slavery. While the institution of slavery had, by its very nature, ensured that the slave population was kept at arm’s length, other means to this end were needed very rapidly following the collapse of slavery.

“... the desire for some form of physical homofiliation arises when holistic societies become dislocated, leaving to co-exist, in a shared egalitarian and competitive space, individuals reduced to their visible characteristics, being judged and judging each other on the basis of their appearance, being classified and classifying each other according to essentialised categories improvised from phenotypical traits. They probably find therein a semblance

¹⁵ The population of Rwanda is in fact made up of one single tribe, the Banyarwanda, who are traditionally divided into three castes: the caste of the cattle owners, the Tutsi (14% of the population), the caste of the farmers, the Hutu (85%) and the caste of the workers and domestic servants, the Twa (1%). See: R. KAPUSCINSKI: *Èbène, aventures africaines*. Paris, Plon, 2000.

of transcendence: the unbroken, indefinite bloodline proceeding from the most remote ancestors down to their ultimate descendants, gives rise to a form of transcendence, the absence of which is cruelly felt in the modern social space dominated by individualistic and egalitarian values, which are utilitarian and competitive.”

(Pierre-André Taguieff, 1998)

This also makes it possible to understand how the ‘White Race’ was created in America.

The 19th century also saw the triumph of the nation-state as the ideal form of political organisation, and, as a result, the triumph of nationalism. From this perspective, any peoples not politically organised within the territorial frontiers of a state become suspect. Their members were perceived as individuals without allegiance and, therefore, within the states where they live, as enemies. This was, for instance, the case of the Jews in Europe. The problem was not that the Jews were different but, on the contrary, that they were very similar to the populations of the countries where they lived. They were the invisible ‘enemies’ within. It was therefore necessary to mark them, so that the difference was immediately visible, hence the yellow star during the Nazi period¹⁶.

Jew-hating was justified first by religious motives, then by economic considerations, later by a supposed Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy and, lastly, by a Zionist plot¹⁷. Once again, the justification for exclusion evolved and changed according to circumstances. The name for this hatred, ‘anti-Semitism’, was coined in 1879 by the German doctrinaire Wilhelm Marr. It was quickly adopted in France where it appeared in the dictionary as early as 1880. In Germany, anti-Semitism initially fed on fear and envy¹⁸ of the presumed intellectual superiority of the Jews, who had built a very strong community and whose members excelled in many fields of scientific, intellectual and artistic life. As well, anti-Semitism made it easier for Germans to transfer onto the Jews the frustration and humiliation they felt after Germany’s defeat in the First World War. The solution proposed by Nazism was the extermination, pure and simple, of the Jews and of all those who did not fit what was presented as the only authentically Aryan (German) and

¹⁶ Under Louis IX, it was the ‘*rouelle*’. Previously, in Germany and in Italy, it was the conical hat.

¹⁷ On the basis of a forgery written in Paris at the beginning of the 20th Century by a Russian émigré, Mathieu GOLOVINSKI, entitled *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

¹⁸ HERSCH, Jeanne: «Les droits de l’homme contre le racisme, pour la liberté et la diversité». (An article published in Switzerland at the end of 1973, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.)

therefore superior, racial type! Contrary to the situation that had prevailed in Spain after the 're-conquest', conversion was no longer an option. The difference had become unbridgeable.

It was only in 1930 that the word 'racism' first appeared in the *Petit Larousse* dictionary, just in time for it to be used to name and denounce the unequalled violence that would take place on the European continent, especially during the Second World War. The horrors and atrocities of that war moved the nations of the world to firmly condemn racism and discrimination, with the creation of the United Nations Organisation in 1946 and adoption of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in 1947, and to try to enact measures to prevent any repetition of such barbarity¹⁹. The body of research that had denounced the scientific pretensions of racism for more than a century has become increasingly difficult to ignore. A systematic effort was made to deconstruct the biological notion of 'human races'. As early as 1950, the newly-created UNESCO organised a number of major international scientific conferences that essentially aimed to demolish the theory that cultural differences between people were based on some 'racial heredity', and to prove that racism was a falsification of scientific knowledge of human beings.

The end of the Second World War also induced what Alfred Sauvy called a "reversal of the age-old current of migrations". A subtle change of register took place, a clever shifting from science to culture, and the emergence of a racism without 'races' that focused on cultural identity. The biological superiority of 'Whites' was replaced by the superiority of their 'mode of life'. This approach had appeared towards the end of the 19th century, particularly in the work of that bard of British imperialism, Rudyard Kipling, who spoke of the 'White Man's Burden' when referring to the peoples enslaved by 'Proud Albion'. In France (and in Belgium), they preferred to speak of their 'civilising mission':

"I repeat that there exists a right for the superior races,
since there exists a duty for them. They have the right to
civilise the inferior races."

(*Jules Ferry, Declaration of 29 July 1885 at the Assembly,
during the debate on the Tonkin*)

The father of Nazism was more direct, however, and his blunt language clearly revealed the true motivations of the colonisers:

¹⁹ Nevertheless, it was at the end of the Second World War that South Africa fully established its segregationist system of 'Apartheid'.

“Without the opportunity that was afforded the Aryan to employ men of inferior races, he would never have taken the first steps on the road that was to lead him to civilisation. The presence of men of inferior race was a primordial condition for the formation of superior civilisations; they compensated for the shortage of material resources without which it is impossible to conceive the possibility of any form of progress.”

(Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*)²⁰.

Racism, therefore, can operate on several fronts, and it will quickly switch registers when one line of justification has been destroyed, but always it must search for elements that will elicit a positive resonance within the dominant group:

“The strength of the prejudices that form the tissue of racism results from a principle of evidence commonly admitted by a significant part of the social body at a given moment in the existence of a society.”

(Tarnero, J., *op. cit.*)

This displacement of racial difference towards the cultural level has led to the development of a form of racism integrated with xenophobic nationalism and aimed mainly at immigration. By taking its inspiration and its vocabulary from the traditional sources of the nationalist lexicon (blood, land, fatherland, roots, identities), this new type of racism can operate without resorting to any notion of race and without making any explicit reference to hate. It uses ‘softer’ wording, even abandoning any notion of inequality, to try to position itself on grounds of simple difference (and, of course, to preserve the advantages of the dominant group):

“...no need to order differences into a hierarchy when it is enough to proclaim a radical heterogeneity. The difference in material power leads *in fact* to a hierarchy, which dispenses one from proclaiming it, or makes it a tautology.”

(Colette Guillaumin, 1992, p.15)

²⁰ Quoted by Jacques LECLERCQ in: *Le fondement du droit et de la société* (1958). Namur et Louvain: Éd. Wesmar-Charlier et Société d'études morales, sociales et juridiques, 4th Edition.

This neo-racism, as it is now generally termed, is therefore neither biological nor inegalitarian, but sees itself, rather, as differentialist and cultural. It is the racism of the neo-colonial era. It maintains the central postulate of racism, which is that physical or cultural differences between human groups are sacred and absolute.

3- RACISM AT THE DAWN OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Even though science can demonstrate the non-existence of ‘races’ as significant human categories, the fact of ‘race’ still has a very real existence in social reality. It results from an approach to human diversity that aims to legitimise practices that exclude or exploit a human group. The fact of race defines unequal and antagonistic relations. The dominant group can constitute dominated groups, regardless of how these groups view their own ethnic origins. That is a fundamental feature of racism: power. Racism begins when one group has the power to impose its prejudices upon other groups. The natural tendency, the law of the jungle, is the reign of the most powerful. The development of racism depends upon a context, rather than on the inclinations of the actors, and it always takes shape in interaction with other social phenomena such as slavery, colonisation, nationalistic mobilisation, war, etc.

Racism is generally complex and multidimensional. It includes:

- attitudes (opinions, beliefs, prejudice, stereotypes) that manifest themselves through various modes of stigmatisation: affronts, insults, appeals to hate, threats, etc.;
- social behaviour or practices (avoidance, discrimination, persecution...);
- exclusionary institutions;
- ideological views, related or not to political programs.

(P.A. Taguieff, op. cit.)

It expresses itself in living and complex societies and may therefore be combined with other forms of discrimination (sexual or economic, for example). It can be found in all the dimensions of social life: housing, transportation, the environment, health, social services, education, employment, leisure, sports, etc.

Beyond its complexity and diversity, however, racism always manifests a denial of identity and humanity by denying the common nature of human beings and by casting human differences as natural and absolute. Albert Memmi’s definition in the *Encyclopaedia Universalis* remains wholly pertinent:

“Racism is the generalised and definitive enhancement of differences, real or imagined, to the benefit of the accuser and to the detriment of his victim, in order to justify his privileges or his aggression.”

Racism shows itself as “a set of discriminatory practices institutionalised or in fact imposed”. Section 1(1) of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (CERD) defines racial discrimination as:

“any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.”

Discrimination can affect all rights, and the racial relation is a typical example of the indivisibility and interdependence of rights.

Today racism exists and persists, to some extent, in all societies and in all countries and regions throughout the world. Its manifestations vary depending on culture, context and period, but no region in the world is free of this scourge. This was the conclusion reached by the group of experts from all corners of the planet who met in Bellagio, Italy, from January 24-28, 2000, to prepare the World Conference Against Racism. Racism is an ongoing inheritance, a leftover of colonialism and slavery, whose historical iniquities and injustices have generated persistent effects. In many countries, discriminatory practices have been incorporated into bureaucratic processes in an entirely routine fashion, and have thus been assimilated into the very structure of the various institutions. This systemic and veiled character makes it possible for racism to continue even in the absence of any intentional or conscious design. At the same time, various international treaties have accelerated the institutionalisation of antiracist norms by state authorities, and today racism is a legal offence in most countries. This has resulted in two apparently contradictory, but in fact complementary, phenomena.

On the one hand, manifestations of racism have become indirect, implicit, unacknowledged and shameful. Racism has become hypocritical and insidious, exercised

diffusely and using various rhetorical strategies—equivocation, euphemism, dissimulation, circumlocution—to clothe old slogans in new suits, hiding behind these devices in order to mask racism’s intrinsic brutality. The point is to find ideologically acceptable, respectable, or apparently neutral formulations. In other words, it is essential not to return to the Nazi excesses which provoked the outlawing of racism! An example is a notorious document by France’s *Front national*, written for its members, which suggested:

“Do not say “Throw all the Blacks/Arabs into the sea” but, rather: “We must organise the return of Third-World immigrants to their own countries.”

(Front National)

Another tactic is to make use of all the resources of the management sciences, such as the perspectives opened by new forms of work organisation, supported by the potential of the new communication media (the Internet, for instance), to define categories that, while apparently neutral and objective, in fact have the pernicious effect of perpetuating exclusion.

On the other hand, the term ‘racism’ is now applied to virtually any circumstance, and has become a synonym for exclusion, discrimination, or rejection. Proponents of other causes may be greatly tempted to divert the term racism from its original meaning and apply it to all sorts of situations, no doubt reprehensible, so as to benefit from the strongly negative connotation and general rejection it currently evokes. Although this might suggest a ‘general racialisation of interpretation’, the excessive extension of the term and its polemical or demagogical application to all sorts of situations can only result in trivialising and confusing further the situation it names. If racism is everywhere, then it is nowhere.

“Nothing so compromises, weakens from within, and dulls the struggle against racism as this way of loosely applying the term (...) to almost any situation.”

(Cl. Lévi-Strauss, 1983)

Another factor that perpetuates racism is the internalisation of prejudice by the dominated groups themselves after a long period of oppression. These prejudices may then be transmitted to the children or used by the members of an ethnic group among themselves. This is racism’s surest and most devastating weapon, one that may affect the mental health of some people. This internalisation may also account for the development of

reverse racism, that is, the turning around and inversion of prejudice, which results from accepting racialisation and in the end reinforces it²¹.

Internationally, the levels of development of the various regions of the world run along the 'racial' lines traced by colonialism and slavery. Yesterday's colonies have become today's neo-colonies, labelled variously the 'Third World', countries of 'the South', 'under-developed countries', 'less-advanced countries' or 'developing countries'. Racism also permeates current models of economic globalisation: an intensification of the economic division between rich and poor (nations and populations) and an exacerbation of entrenched institutional racism. This neo-liberal globalisation also has another consequence:

“The defensive withdrawal of populations into group identities, provoked by the extension of planetary uniformity and the plunging of regions and groups into exacerbated competition are all the more violent as their historic and cultural base is more fragile (...). Globalisation, by liquidating cultures, induces the emergence of instances of tribalism, withdrawal and ethnicism, and not of coexistence and dialogue.”

(*Serge Latouche*, 1999, p.11)

A Western invention from the dawn of modernity, the 'dark side of the philosophy of the Enlightenment'²², racism has since become universal, and in this sense has been a glaring success. Many non-Western societies, doubtless dazzled by the West's material wealth, have begun to adopt the racist ideology, perceived as a key element of Western success, attempting to apply its modes of discrimination to their own differences. In India, for example, where the caste system had always been founded on a hierarchy based upon ritual purity, from which was absent any notion of an insurmountable otherness of the Other, the racist idea is beginning to emerge in the communitarian movement²³. The same is true of radical Islamism and religious fundamentalism in Israel. The recent withdrawal into group identities in the Balkans, whose experience in the Middle Ages gave the name to modern slavery, have often recalled the Nazi period.

²¹ See Frantz FANON: *Les damnés de la terre* (1967), Paris.

²² WIEVIORKA, Michel: *L'Espace du racisme*. Paris, Éd. du Seuil, p. 72.

²³ POUCHEPADASS, Jacques: "L'Intouchable et la modernité", in: *Le Genre Humain*, Fall-Winter 1984-1985, no 11, and *La société face au racisme*, Paris, Éd. Complexes, p. 53-72.

Racism continues to be linked with politics, of course, but also with science and religion. As a dynamic phenomenon, in perpetual transformation and constant renewal, it is capable in a given situation of standing on any one of these pillars, but it does not abandon the others for all that. These three foundations are parts of an integrated and functional system. At the dawn of the 21st century, all the great religions condemn racism, but it is still present in many sects and esoteric movements, which have taken up old myths or hypotheses to serve as a basis for polygenesis. Ordinary racism also finds new forms of expression in certain movements of the religious Right, mainly in the United States.

Coherent and sustained efforts are also being made on the scientific level. Not only has racism always used a scientific vocabulary to express itself, it has always sought in science some basis for social acceptability. The territory is far too important to be abandoned. While proving that ‘human races’ do not exist in any scientific sense is not enough to put an end to racism, it would be a mistake to stop researching such proofs. Since the 1950s, there has been increasing scientific proof of the African origins of Homo Sapiens. Even today, scientists in several major research projects, in Australia and China in particular, are searching for elements that might provide foundations for the theory of polygenesis, that Darwin himself considered. Starting from the early 1950s, the conclusions of several studies on blood groups were quite simply ignored, because they called into question previous classifications.

To this day, considerable budgets allow university teams to conduct research aimed at proving that differences between humans are absolute and based in nature. In January 1989, for example, Phillip Rushton, of the University of Western Ontario, presented a paper to the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) entitled “Biological Evolution and Transmissible Characteristics”, in which he attempted to update the main postulates of biological determinism. In 1994, Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein of Harvard University published *The Bell Curve*, attempting to prove that there exist measurable genetic differences in levels of intelligence between the races. These two publications raised a loud controversy. They had both received subsidies from the ‘Pioneer Fund’, whose avowed aim is immigration reform and which is generally considered to be a neo-Nazi group. Twenty-five years after their publication, Edward O. Wilson’s theories of sociobiology²⁴ still exert a real influence, and many scientists have not given up the search for a biological basis for human diversity, relying on biological determinism, Social Darwinism and ‘Natural Law’. The stakes are clear:

²⁴ WILSON, Edward O.: *Sociobiology: The new synthesis*. Cambridge, M.A.: Belknap Press, 1975.

“...human beings who are different by essence do not have the same needs, which means that they do not have the same rights, and even that some have rights over others.”

(Colette Guillaumin, 1984-1985)

Recent advances in the life sciences will make it possible for many of the old dreams of eugenics to come out of obscurity and show themselves in broad daylight. This is all the more likely since the balance of power at the international level no longer requires as much caution and forbearance as during earlier decades.

It is not a question of minimising post-war gains, but first and foremost, we must remember that “the beast is not dead, and its belly is fertile”. Money and power has always been able to make the unacceptable acceptable.

CHAPTER II

RACISM IN QUEBEC'S HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

From Nazi genocide to ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, from segregationist laws in the American South to the Apartheid regime in South Africa, from everyday discrimination in contemporary France to the neo-Nazi ideology of Jörg Haider in Austria, racism expresses itself in different ways in different periods and in different places. Nonetheless, while it remains a single, universal phenomenon, it is one that is concretised only a specific social contexts. It is therefore always shaped by a particular history, dynamic and cultural environment. Despite reservations raised by the necessarily reductionist, hence risky, character of the exercise, it seems indispensable that we provide an (all too) brief summary of the major stages of Quebec's history. We believe that this exercise is essential, all the more since this text is written from the perspective of a new Quebecer, one of many who

“...have boarded a train that has been in movement for many years, and who can alter neither its origins nor the route it has followed to the present.”

(G. Bouchard, 1999, Le Devoir).

We have seen that racism was born with the European colonial adventure in America. The Quebec of today is a direct outcome of the French colonial adventure in North America. Quebec, therefore, like all the European colonies in America, was born under the sign of racism and must, like all other Western societies, face up to the persistence of this reality.

1- NEW FRANCE

After Jacques Cartier's voyages in search of a North Atlantic route to Asia between 1534 and 1542, France decided, at the turn of the 17th century, to colonise North America, attracted by the furs that had become a much-sought product in Europe. It first established a settlement in Acadia²⁵ at Port-Royal. A few years later, Samuel de Champlain, searching for a more favourable site, founded the '*Habitation*' at Quebec in 1608. It rapidly became the centre of the French presence in North America and the hub

²⁵ After having established a first permanent trading post at Tadoussac in 1599.

of the fur trade. From Quebec, France launched expeditions that explored the Great Lakes region, the Canadian and American Prairies and the Mississippi Valley all the way to the Gulf of Mexico.

During the first stage, the French allied themselves with Amerindian nations (the Hurons and the Algonquins) who acted as intermediaries for them with the Western tribes. Their direct rivals, the Dutch, allied themselves with the Iroquois (the Five Nations). A series of armed clashes between the two blocs followed, until peace was restored in 1665. The French then sent explorers to make direct contacts with the Amerindian tribes in the North, South and West. This was the era of the 'Coureurs de bois'. As early as 1680, however, clashes between England and France in Europe had repercussions in North America. The 'Great Peace of Montreal' signed with the Iroquois in 1701 gave a clear advantage to the French, but one that was speedily quashed by defeats in Europe.

The Treaty of Utrecht (1713) forced France to cede to the British Hudson's Bay, Newfoundland and Acadia. In addition, the Iroquois found themselves under a British protectorate. As a result the French decided to establish settlements further inland, and built a whole series of forts on the Prairies and further south in order to circumvent the British. This situation did not last for very long:

“Peopled with no more than 80 000 souls, New France was unable to hold in a vice the thirteen American colonies, whose population exceeded one million inhabitants and who could rely on the support of a wealthy and dynamic metropolis. This territorial expansion masked the internal weaknesses of New France. When the Anglo-American coalition decided to loosen the pincers of the French vice, New France crumbled: Quebec capitulated in 1759 and Montreal surrendered in 1760.”

(Jean Hamelin and Jean Provencher, 2000, p. 19)

Once again, New France fell victim to the repercussions of clashes in Europe, this time paying the price for the Seven Years' War between France and England (1756-1763). The fate of New France was definitively sealed with the Treaty of Paris, which concluded the war in 1763 and for all practical purposes marked the end of the French adventure in North America. All historians agree that, despite the defeat, France might have kept New France, but in return would have had to give up Martinique and Guadeloupe. England, for

its part, opted for New France under pressure from the planters of Jamaica and Barbados, who feared the competition of sugar produced more cheaply in the French West Indies²⁶.

In fact, Canada did not fit well with France's colonial policy, which was more interested in the West Indies and Louisiana, both capable of providing the mother country with goods that she was unable to produce herself. As well, France was more aligned towards Europe, and its colonial policy aimed more at producing profit than developing colonisation.

“Between the early 17th century and 1760 (*sic*), the year when New France was ceded to England, no more than 10 000 colonists came, distributed about equally over these two centuries

(*Marcel Rioux, 1980, p. 21*)

Among other things, this explains Canada's small population, which had increased mainly because of the great fecundity of its families, rather than through any influx of colonists. The consequence was that the settlers increasingly called themselves 'Canadiens' in order to clearly differentiate themselves from the French from the metropolis. In the North American environment, they became more and more detached from the mother country and increasingly considered themselves as a distinct people. One may presume that, like their neighbours to the South, sooner or later this distinct people would have sought emancipation from the colonial authority and, therefore, that France would have lost this territory one way or another.

Unlike in the America colonies to the South, there was no slavery in New France nor were the Native peoples reduced to servitude. The main trade commodity, furs, instead required that commercial dealings be maintained with the Amerindians. However, the incorporation of the Amerindian economy into a commercial system completely foreign to it would result in harmful interference with relations between the Native nations, while undermining their development. As in America, the harm caused to their way of life would be almost beyond repair:

²⁶ It is important to note, however, that at the end of the Seven Years' War, “more than one English politician had recommended to cede Canada to France, “*in order to maintain the(American) Colonies in a state of dependence upon the Mother Country*”. Indeed, the fact that they needed the metropolis so much in order to successfully resist New France acted, for the Colonies, as an effective brake upon their ambition of liberty”. (LACOURSIÈRE ET AL: *Canada-Québec. 1534-2000*, Quebec: Septentrion, 2001, p. 179).

“The irruption of the Europeans along the Saint-Lawrence had heavy long-term consequences for the Indians (...) the contacts with the Europeans broke the balance between these nations, undermined their culture, decimated their numbers and drove them far away from the strategic regions.”

(*Hamelin, Jean and Provencher, Jean : op. cit. , p.10*)

While the Native peoples of the Saint-Lawrence Valley were not reduced to slavery, there were some Indian slaves in New France, generally Pawnees from Nebraska.

As for the other group targeted by the colonial racism of that period, African Blacks, they too were present from the earliest colonisation of New France. Mathieu Da Costa²⁷ was Samuel de Champlain’s interpreter with the Micmacs during the 1604 expedition, but his status was not very clear: was he a free man or Champlain’s servant? As early as 1628, the first purchase of an African slave, Olivier Le Jeune²⁸ is recorded in New France. In May 1689, after several requests, the King of France authorised the importation of Black slaves to New France, and slavery became official in 1709. These slaves came mainly from the colonies of the French West Indies—Martinique, Guadeloupe and especially San Domingo (today Haiti)—because at the time New France was a relatively secondary port of call in the triangular trade between Europe, Africa and America. Most of these slaves were assigned to menial tasks, as domestic help, stable boys and cattle breeders in the cities of Quebec, Trois-Rivières and Montreal. Remember that the economy of New France was based on the fur trade, and only subsistence agriculture was practised.

Black slaves, therefore, were less numerous and less harshly treated than in the European colonies to the South. There were no more than a few thousand throughout the history of New France, and they never made up more than 2% of the population of the colony. Nonetheless, slavery remains slavery, and even though it was never widespread in New France, still it was considered as part of the natural order of things. History recalls a few tragic episodes of that time, including the story of a female slave named Marie-Joseph Angélique²⁹ who, in 1734 in Montreal, was accused of having set fire to her master’s

²⁷ One hypothesis concerning Mathieu Da Costa: the European cod-fishing boats (including the French) regularly visited the Canadian coasts during the second half of the 16th Century, that is, long before any actual colonization took place. We also know that the Cape Verdians had always been very involved in the fishing industry. Was Da Costa originally from Cape Verde?

²⁸ A combination of the names of the General Clerk Olivier Le Tardif and of Father Le Jeune, a Jesuit who had become a sort of spiritual father for the young slave.

²⁹ On the historical account concerning Marie-Joseph Angélique, see:

- a) **BARIL**, Micheline: *L’esclave*. Montreal: Libre Expression, 1999, 389 p. (A novel)
- b) **JARVIS**, Michael: *Angélique*. Canada: Righttime Productions, 1999, 22 min. (A documentary).

house while attempting to escape. The fire spread rapidly and destroyed a number of buildings. The young slave was captured and hanged.

2- LOWER CANADA

From the outset, the British made clear their assimilationist vision. They attempted to reproduce their administrative model completely, going so far as to forbid the use of French in the courts and to restrict the practice of the Catholic religion. Some *Canadiens* even feared a repetition of the sad fate of the Acadians, who had been deported from Nova Scotia by the British in 1755 because their presence in English territory was perceived as a threat, given the clash that was coming to a head between Britain and France³⁰. The British would modify their policy, however, mainly because they feared the influence of their American colonies. The commitment to respect the French language became a guarantee designed to ensure the loyalty of the *Canadiens* (the francophones). The Quebec Act was proclaimed in 1774, the same year the uprising began in the Thirteen Colonies, which would become the United States of America two years later.

The Revolutionary War set off an exodus towards Canada by English from the Thirteen Colonies who wished to remain loyal to the British Crown (hence the name 'Loyalists'). Their arrival led the British authorities to amend the Quebec Act with the Constitutional Act of 1791, which divided Canada in two parts: Upper Canada (today's Ontario) and Lower Canada (today's Quebec) where the francophones were concentrated. The linguistic dualism was recognised by the courts, and in parliament, and French civil law was recognised in Lower Canada.

From that period on, many francophones in Lower Canada perceived themselves as a 'nation' with their 'homeland' the territory of what would become Quebec. We may therefore say that French Canadians became a 'national minority' with language as the main element of their identify. Their prime strategy was cultural survival, in order to gain acceptance of their particular modes of expression and activity. However, this society found itself deprived of a substantial part of its political, administrative, military and social elite, who either had been killed in the war or had returned to France after the defeat. The Catholic Church took over their role. It was especially well-placed to do so, having always played a major role in New France, where only French Catholics had been

c) **BROWN**, Paul F (1999): *Marie-Joseph Angélique. 1734*. Montreal: Éditions Les cinq continents.

³⁰ The Acadians refused to swear allegiance to the British Crown because, among other reasons, they did not want to have to take up arms against their compatriots of New France. Their exile led several a to the West Indies, including San Domingo.

authorised to settle since 1627. But it was now a Church on probation and under strict control, since Canada had become officially Protestant, and religious tensions were still very intense, especially in Europe. This Church nevertheless succeeded in forming a new elite, which turned mainly to the liberal professions. The colonial economy would favour relations with the new metropolis, which gave a clear advantage to the English, especially since, from the beginning of the 19th Century, wood exported to London replaced furs as the main commodity. The English also dominated the public administration.

The failure of the Americans' attempt to annex Upper and Lower Canada, in the course of the War of 1812 with England (1812-1814), led the English colonists to consider themselves more and more as Canadians and to consider a political union between Upper and Lower Canada. Many French Canadians realised that belonging to Great Britain protected them from annexation by the United States (and therefore from total assimilation by what was later called the American 'melting pot'). They did, however, want to benefit from the advantages of their majority status in Lower Canada. (Lacoursière et al., *Op.cit*, p. 221).

After the events of 1760-1763, francophones were victims of prejudice on the part of anglophones, who considered them "incapable of governing themselves". Later, there would be racist abuses committed against Lower Canada, and then against Quebec, in English Canada. The British regime opened Lower Canada to a certain level of immigration and, among other immigrants, the colony saw the development of a Jewish community, which did not become the object of any particular discrimination.

Approximately 30,000 Loyalists arrived from the Thirteen Colonies, and they brought with them some 2,000 Black slaves. They were also accompanied by about 3,500 Black Loyalists. These were Blacks (some of them free) to whom the British, fearing that the American Revolution would spread north of the border, had promised freedom and land if they fought alongside them against the American insurgents³¹. In Lower Canada, the newcomers settled in the Eastern Townships. Slavery continued under the British regime, but more and more voices were raised against it, and the first march against slavery took place in Montreal in 1793³². The last announcement of a slave sale in Lower Canada dates from 1798. In 1799, Joseph Papineau submitted a bill to abolish slavery. While his attempt was unsuccessful, from then on judges refused to condemn runaway slaves.

³¹ Canada respected its promise to recognise their freedom, but was so niggardly in giving out land that the Blacks à were forced to work as labourers for White farmers and merchants. Utterly disgusted, a thousand of them (from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick) left for Africa, where they founded Sierra Leone.

³² That same year, the Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe had a law adopted abolishing slavery in Upper Canada. It took several years, however, for that law to become effective.

(*Univers*, March-April 1999). In fact, slavery no longer served any particular purpose in the Canadian economy.

Another 2,000 Blacks from the United States arrived during the War of 1812. Slavery was officially abolished by an imperial law in London, adopted on 28 August 28, 1833. Immigration from Great Britain increased after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe.

3- UNITED CANADA

The struggle of the new French Canadian elite for an improved social and political position first expressed itself in the parliamentary arena. The Constitutional Act of 1791 had indeed created a Parliament, but one which had no great powers, involved no ministerial responsibility and was constantly at loggerheads with the Executive authority, considered arbitrary, exercised by the representatives of London. As soon as the War of 1812 was over, sharp tensions grew between Upper Canada and Lower Canada on the one hand and London on the other. After a period of turmoil that started in Lower Canada as early as 1834, this conflict culminated in an armed insurrection, the '*Patriotes*' Rebellion of 1837-1838. (It must be noted that several immigrants participated actively in the *Patriotes* movement.) During the same period, Upper Canada experienced similar events, which corresponded perfectly with the political liberalism of the time³³.

In Lower Canada, however, the movement, led by Louis-Joseph Papineau, would take on a nationalistic flavour. This was all the stronger because of a plan for the Union of Upper and Lower Canada, submitted by the anglophones of Lower Canada with the avowed goal of neutralising and assimilating the French Canadian majority. Although the plan was rejected by London, it left a very bitter after-taste. This worried London greatly, which delegated a special representative, Lord Durham, to make a report on the situation in the British provinces of North America (Upper Canada, Lower Canada, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia)³⁴. The report was presented in December 1838.

“For the political problem, Durham responded with ministerial responsibility; for the national problem, with the Union of the two Canadas, namely, with the political

³³ France and England experienced similar conflicts during roughly the same period, which also saw the independence of Belgium and Greece, and also the emancipation of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies in the Americas (*op. cit*).

³⁴ The West was at that time Amerindian territory administered directly by Great Britain.

subordination of the French Canadians and their eventual assimilation.”

(J. Lacoursière et al.: op.cit., p. 252)

Lord Durham had abandoned the idea of a federation of all the British colonies in North America, since this would have left the French Canadians with a political space that guaranteed them an automatic majority. In his view, such a federation would become possible only after the assimilation of the francophones. (id.)

Following the Durham Report, the Act of Union (of Upper and Lower Canada) of 1840 made English the only official language in United Canada, but the reaction was so negative that London restored parliamentary bilingualism in 1848 and accepted ministerial responsibility, in other words, a greater degree of internal autonomy (which Lord Durham had also recommended). The geographical distribution of the population of United Canada remained a major obstacle to assimilation.

The failure of the Patriotes' Rebellion of 1837-1838 had another major effect on the future of the French Canadians. It opened the door to a strengthening of the ideological hold of the clergy, which would last for more than a century. Catholicism would become the banner of the francophones, their rampart against linguistic assimilation (“Who loses his language, loses his Faith!”). The clergy saw its mission as the preservation of the language and culture of the French Canadians, and viewed itself as the main guarantor of the community³⁵. The clergy established a real ideological hold over the population, notably through its quasi-monopoly over the institutions of socialisation.

Around 1840, a significant number of ultramontane French clergy arrived in the colony. Ultramontanism was a doctrine that defended the temporal power of the Pope and according to which the authority of the Church should be exercised not only over spiritual questions but also in all other areas of life. It was an ideology that encouraged the rural and traditional life. Unlike in Europe, ultramontane ideology in North America took on a nationalistic coloration, but it was essentially a cultural nationalism.

During the same period, however, another monolithic ideology arrived, this time from England: Orangism. The Protestant Orange Order takes its name from Protestant King

³⁵ This ideology was no doubt at its peak in 1870, when more than 50 000 persons welcomed as heroes in Montreal a small army of French Canadians who were leaving to try (in vain) to prevent the annexion of Rome by the new Kingdom of Italy because “the forces directed against the Pope are, by the same token, attacking the nation.”

William III, Prince of Orange, called William the Conqueror, who defeated his Catholic rival, King James II, in 1690 at the Battle of the Boyne in Ireland³⁶.

“The society was formed in 1795 by Protestants from County Armagh in Ireland, for the purpose of perpetuating British authority and Protestant supremacy there. The Orangists were accused of anti-Catholic fanaticism and the British authorities forced them to suspend their activities in Ireland in 1836.”

(*Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 99*)

Numerous Orangemen then emigrated to Canada, bringing with them their anti-Catholic, and in their new environment therefore anti-francophone, fanaticism. They strongly contributed to the development of a ‘nativist’ ideology that preached Anglo-conformity and was hostile towards any peoples that deviated from that model.

After the failure of the *Patriotes’* Movement, the withdrawal of francophones into their national identity, concerned mainly with survival, lasted until the Quiet Revolution. This reaction by a population living in a virtually autarkic situation made possible a very high degree of homogeneity. According to some writers, the English encouraged this strengthening of the Church’s position because of its conciliatory attitude during the *Patriotes’* Rebellion (cf. Rioux, Marcel, *op. cit.*, p. 80-81), and also because this ideology was in no way a challenge to English economic liberalism.

Until the Quiet Revolution, immigration was totally controlled by the anglophones, while francophones relied on their exceptional fecundity to increase their population. Whereas francophones represented 78% of Canada’s population in 1760, anglophones became the majority group in Canada by 1840. Lord Durham wrote, besides:

“If the population of Upper Canada is rightly estimated at 400,000, the English inhabitants of Lower Canada at 150,000, and the French at 450,000, the union of the two Provinces would not only give a clear English majority, but one which [61] would be increased every year by the influence of English emigration; and I have little doubt that the French, when once placed, by the legitimate course of

³⁶ The Orangists still remain, to this day, a major piece on the Irish chessboard.

events and the working of natural causes, in a minority,
would abandon their vain hopes of nationality”
(The Durham Report)

This idea of using immigration to accelerate assimilation of the francophones advanced very quickly, as thousands of Irish people had to leave their country because of the Irish famine. They arrived in Canada in great numbers. In Quebec however, many Irish Catholics integrated into the francophone group.

Before the American Civil War, some 30,000 Blacks arrived from the United States via what was known as the ‘Underground Railroad’³⁷. Most settled in Ontario, although some reached Quebec.

4- QUEBEC

The progress of the Industrial Revolution led England to gradually abandon its protectionist policies, which included the preferential tariffs it had granted to the colonies. At the same time, the political system of United Canada, which had given equal number of representatives to both Lower Canada and Upper Canada, proved to be a failure, leading to parliamentary deadlock. There was increasing pressure to annex the West, still directly administered by London. Some voices were even asking that Canada be incorporated into the United States, the destination for an increasing number of Canadian emigrants. The American Civil War, which began in 1861, poisoned relations between Britain and the United States and raised the question of defence of the Canadian border. A planned railroad to connect all the Colonies and the Western territories was abandoned by Great Britain. All these factors taken together led to a realisation among both anglophones and francophones of the need for change, and during the 1860s politicians began to plan for the creation of federal state that would unite all of Britain’s North American colonies, namely United Canada and the Maritimes.

4.1 Confederation

From October 10 to 28, 1864, delegates met in Quebec City to draw up a plan for a Confederation that would then be discussed in each colony. In Canada East (former Lower Canada), some voices were raised to demand an independent state, fearing that the francophones would be an even smaller minority in the proposed new state. The majority of the population accepted the proposal, however, no doubt because it would re-create the

³⁷ This was not, of course, an actual railroad but, rather, a network of people who helped fleeing slaves to find refuge in Canada.

entity of Lower Canada as it had existed from 1791 to 1841. In other words, francophones would again obtain a political space where they would be a majority. Two of the Maritime colonies, however, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, refused to join the project. The representatives of United Canada, New-Brunswick and Nova Scotia went to London to negotiate Confederation, which was approved and put into effect on July 1, 1867. The *British North America Act* (BNA Act) created a new *Dominion* comprising four Provinces (Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick) and instituted two levels of government (provincial and federal). Although the new national state thus created was still largely unfinished, for Canada the Act marked the beginning of a long process of increasing political independence from England, a process that would last for more than a century!

The new state inherited all the unresolved problems left by European colonisation in North America and by the British victory in 1760. Not surprisingly, it adopted the liberal values of democracy and tolerance, while attempting to avoid what were seen as the 'excesses' of American democracy. Civil law established equality among citizens. But while for many anglophones Confederation was essentially a pact between provinces, many francophones considered it, rather, as a pact between two founding peoples.

The BNA Act recognised parliamentary and judicial bilingualism. Education was under provincial jurisdiction, as were health and social services, but the religious dichotomy in education between Catholics and Protestants was retained because, in fact, it coincided almost exactly with the linguistic dichotomy. Some special provisions protected the anglophones in Quebec. Overall, however, provincial powers were rather limited because London had transferred most powers to the federal government. In addition, the federal government had a 'right of disallowance' over provincial legislation, received the greater part of fiscal revenues, and could influence provincial legislation through the 'double mandate' (by which an elected representative could sit in both provincial and federal parliaments). The beginning was difficult and in 1868 Nova Scotia threatened to separate. The purchase of the Western territory that same year was not welcomed by its inhabitants.

By putting education and social welfare under provincial jurisdiction, the BNA Act in fact strengthened the position of the Church in Quebec. In a famous speech in 1877, the first francophone Prime Minister of Canada, Wilfrid Laurier, conceded practically total control over Quebec's social and cultural life to the Church, on the sole condition that it

remain neutral on political matters (one may reasonably presume that he had federal politics in mind!).

From 1867 to 1877, some constitutional provisions were adopted to establish bilingualism, but as early as 1880, Quebec politicians were demanding greater autonomy. Things worsened after the 1885 hanging of Louis Riel³⁸, the leader of the French-speaking *Métis*³⁹ in the West, who had revolted against the central government. That event was a severe test to recent and still-fragile Canadian unity. His death sentence, handed down after a botched trial where judge and jury were all anglophones, was perceived as a real injustice and an attack upon all francophones. In the following year, Honoré Mercier became Premier of Quebec, and he would argue for provincial autonomy. He initiated the first inter-provincial conference, which was held in Quebec in 1887, and the legal autonomy of the provinces recognised by Ottawa in 1896 was its most tangible result. Many historians believe that the approach traced by Honoré Mercier would inspire all Quebec premiers, up to the present day. Over time, francophones lost their schools in Ontario and the West. French was progressively restricted to Quebec and to the Federal government. From 1896 on, francophone protest became increasingly intense as they judged that their rights in matters of language, religion and culture were being abused.

In 1899, the Boer War, between the British and the Dutch colonists in South Africa, became another divisive issue. For most English Canadians, if Great Britain was at war, so was Canada. Most French Canadians, on the other hand, vainly resisted Canada's participation in the conflict. Their loyalty was to Canada first, and not to England. They criticised anglophones for their too great attachment to Great Britain and their lack of independence with respect to the British Empire. Canada's participation in the Boer War, sanctioned by a French Canadian Prime Minister, Wilfrid Laurier, was perceived as a moral commitment by Canada to participate in all wars waged by the British Empire. As a result the situation was repeated during both the First and Second World Wars. During the First World War, when francophones found themselves isolated after voting against conscription, a resolution (the Francoeur Resolution) was even submitted to Quebec's parliament proposing Quebec's withdrawal, pure and simple, from the Canadian Confederation.

³⁸ 1885 also saw the completion of the transcontinental railway, built by thousands of Chinese workers. The railroad marked the end of a way of life for the Indians and the *Métis* in the Canadian West.

³⁹ The *Métis* were the descendants of the *coureurs de bois* who had settled in the West and married Indian women. Excluding the Acadians, we can say that all francophones in Canada (Ontario and the West) are descendants of *Québécois*.

The 20th century in Quebec was marked by industrialisation, achieved mainly with American and British capital, which further strengthened the dominant economic position of anglophones in Quebec. Major emigration to the United States continued. It has been estimated that, between 1851 and 1901, some half a million Quebecers moved south, a movement that continued until the Great Depression of the 1930s. For a long time Church tried to preserve the emigrant communities in the United States, but generally they would be swallowed up by the American *melting pot*. The movement was not exclusive to Quebec, for all of Canada followed this trend. Industrialisation also led to greatly increased urbanisation, and the ideology of preservation preached by the Church, focused on agriculture, colonisation of virgin land and traditional values, corresponded less and less to Quebec's reality.

A group of intellectuals led by Abbé Lionel Groulx laid down the foundations for the transformation to come. They denounced the hold of foreign capital on the Quebec economy and the exclusion of francophones from the business world. They recommended strengthening the co-operative movement to counter this situation and, especially, they stressed that francophones should be able to rely on a strong state, stimulated by increased fiscal revenues, in order to gain some control over their economy. Although Abbé Groulx was himself a religious figure and the movement reached only a limited public, this trend of thought, described as 'mystic nationalism'⁴⁰, can be seen as the most serious attempt thus far to question the ideological monopoly of the Church. It would be the early Sixties, however, before society, ideology and politics evolved to match the transformations of the economy⁴¹. The Great Depression of the Thirties, with its business failures, farm bankruptcies and unemployment, plunged much of the population into poverty, greatly dampened any protest movement, and made people cautious. This period is generally identified by the name '*la grande noirceur*' (the 'great darkness'), because of its conservatism, and saw the regime of Premier Maurice Duplessis (1936-1939 and 1944-1959).

Also of note during this period was the Statute of Westminster, adopted by Great Britain in 1931, which recognised Canada's full autonomy in international affairs and law. London could no longer disallow a Canadian law, even if it was in contradiction with British law. For all practical purposes Canada had become completely independent, except for the fact that the BNA Act remained a British law.

⁴⁰ BÉLANGER, André-J.: «Le Nationalisme au Québec», in *Revue Critère*, no 28, Spring 1980.

⁴¹ This transformation was nevertheless begun during the brief administration of Adélard Godbout (1940-1944), a true glimmer of progress in the midst of the '*grande noiceur*'.

The Second World War and its aftermath saw a vigorous recovery of the Canadian economy in general and the Quebec economy in particular. Industrialisation (again, stimulated by American capital) and urbanisation continued apace. This increased development was remarkable between 1939 and 1956. The need to respond to new social problems caused by industrialisation and urbanisation led the Federal government to intervene in the social arena and lay the foundations of what would later be called the Welfare State. (The Quebec Government reacted more timidly by granting subsidies to the Church for social services and education.) Federal intervention led to greater centralization of power in Ottawa and above all contributed to the development of a view

“(…) of the federal Government, perceived as the central and fundamental institution for promoting social progress within a unified social space.”

(Bourque and Duchastel, 2000)

However, problems related to the construction of a Canadian political community remained.

4.2 Racism and Immigration

The British North America Act made immigration (like agriculture) an area of shared jurisdiction between the Federal government (the dominant partner) and the provincial governments. For all practical purposes, the Federal government exercised powers in this area alone until the end of the 1960s. For close to a century, immigration policy favoured persons of European origin. This approach was shared by all of Canada's prime ministers, from John A. MacDonald after Confederation to Louis St Laurent in the 1950s.

“...throughout the entire period, Canadian immigration policy was set within a largely unchanging view of the nation: Canada was understood by its leaders to be a new European and Christian nation in the Americas. This view was consistent with how the major world powers (Europe and the United States) viewed Canada. (...) Canada was rich in resources and a huge potential source of low-cost raw exports, but it was short of workers, farmers and financial capital. Europe had many unemployed workers and capital that it could export, but it was short of farm land and in need of low-cost resources, including grain for

food. There is little debate that these complementary circumstances were linked through Canada's imagined future, including its Eurocentred immigration, capital dependence on Europe and the United States, and exports to European markets."

(Simmons, Alan: "Racism and Immigration Policy", in: *Racism & Social Inequality in Canada*, Satzewich, Vic, ed., Toronto, Thompson Educational Publishing, 1998, p. 87-114; p. 93.)

The period from Confederation to the early 60s was therefore marked by immigration policies explicitly designed to exclude non-Whites and favour immigrants from Great Britain.

The result was a 'scale of racial preference'. At the top were immigrants from Great Britain, northern Europe and Australia, and 'Whites' from the United States. Then came the immigrants from eastern and southern Europe. Immigrants of colour (Blacks and Asians) were placed at the very bottom of the scale (Noivo, E., 1998). Freda Hawkins⁴² explains this approach as follows:

- The desire to remain British with respect to their political principles and institutions and to remain 'white' like their ancestors;
- The idea that other peoples, who had not participated in the initial efforts to develop the country, could come and benefit from it was considered anathema;
- Canada was created during the long period of the 'Pax Britannica'. The influence, the power and the prestige of Great Britain at that time were quite simply overwhelming;
- A profound ignorance of the non-European peoples and the fear of differences;
- The relative proximity of Asia and the fear of the 'Yellow Peril', which had initially crystallised in California after the arrival of many Chinese at the time of the 'Gold Fever', in the middle of the 19th Century;
- The profound belief in the superiority of the 'Whites', a belief developed following the successes of Europe's assault upon the world since the beginning of the 16th Century.

Remember that it was then that the main racist theories were formulated in Europe.

⁴² HAWKINS, Freda : *Critical Years in Immigration. Canada and Australia Compared*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. 1991, p. 16-25.

The first census, taken in 1871, indicated that Canada then numbered 1,082,940 inhabitants (31.1%) of French origin⁴³ and 2,102,000 (60.5%) of British origin⁴⁴. The third largest group was persons of German origin (202,000).

Up until the First World War, large numbers of immigrants arrived, mainly from Great Britain, the United States and Europe (especially northern Europe). It has been estimated that about two and a half million persons settled in Canada between 1896 and 1914⁴⁵. Close to half settled on the Prairies. This wave of immigration and the success of wheat growing in the West led to the creation of the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. However, this westward movement, while ensuring the prosperity of some, encroached upon Native lands and profoundly affected Native culture.

The whole period was marked by many racist provisions in immigration legislation. Nevertheless, for certain jobs, immigrants of colour were needed, although their presence was only tolerated, and they were generally kept on the margins of society. Chinese labourers, for example, greatly contributed to building the trans-Canada railroad around 1880. When the construction work was finished, a certain number emigrated eastward, and in Montreal they created Chinatown. However, as soon as the construction work on the railroad ended in 1885, an entry, or “head” tax of \$50.00 per person was levied on Chinese immigrants. It was later raised to \$100.00, then to \$500.00 in 1903⁴⁶. From 1923 to 1947, Chinese immigration was forbidden altogether. Certain provisions of the *Immigration Act* of 1910 made it permissible to exclude immigrants coming from Asia (mainly). On the one hand, an immigrant was permitted to arrive in Canada only following a non-stop voyage. Since at the time ships arriving from Asia (mainly from India and Japan) had to stop in Hawaii, they were automatically excluded (without any risk of insulting India, a member of the Commonwealth like Canada). On the other hand, an immigration officer had the power to forbid entry to any persons, of whatever ‘race’, judged to be unsuited to the Canadian climate and living conditions. Some special provisions targeted Japanese in 1927.

After Confederation, the growth of Montreal’s Black community was closely tied to the development of the railroads, when hundreds of Black men were hired as porters on the trains and baggage handlers in the stations. Initially, most were Americans, but over the following decades, some Caribbean and Canadian Blacks (from the Maritimes or

⁴³ Francophones made up 78% of the Canadian population in 1760. Today, they make up about 24%.

⁴⁴ Including 846,000 of Irish origin, 706,000 of English origin and 549,900 of Scottish origin.

⁴⁵ 1913 has remained, to this day, a record year: more than 400,000 immigrants arrived in Canada!

⁴⁶ Some calculations have shown that the Canadian government had then derived from this tax as much money as it had invested in the construction of the railroad!

Ontario) also arrived. A significant Black population settled along Saint-Antoine Street, in Little Burgundy, which offered low-rent housing close to the railway installations. This neighbourhood thus became the birthplace of Montreal's Black community, and some of this community's oldest institutions can still be found there. Although almost all Blacks and Chinese were anglophones, they remained on the margins of 'White' anglophone society and were completely isolated from the francophone community.

With the First World War, which saw a certain resurgence of British immigration, entry into Canada was restricted to persons of the 'White race' from Commonwealth member-countries and the United States. In 1919, entry was also forbidden to groups such as the Doukhobors, Hutterites and Mennonites. In the early 1920s, other provisions targeted Blacks from Commonwealth countries and the United States. A special program, however, allowed the entry of domestic help from Commonwealth countries in the West Indies. About 3000 settled in Quebec during the '30s. The reduction of immigration from Great Britain led the Government, in 1925, to entrust the railroad companies with the mandate of recruiting immigrants from eastern and southern Europe. The goal was still the settlement of the Prairies and British Columbia, but from the early Thirties on, with industrialisation, Ontario became the province that attracted the most immigrants.

The Thirties were marked by the Great Depression. They were years of uncertainty, fear, nervous caution and intolerance, which would lead to the development of narrow nationalism in most Western countries, still traumatised by the horrors of the First World War. During that decade the average number of immigrants did not exceed 15,000 annually. Canada remained completely closed to the European Jews, victims of persecution at that time. The anti-Semitism that developed during the period was illustrated by the notorious remark of a senior Canadian civil servant in early 1945, by which time the Nazi persecution and massacres were well known around the world. In answer to journalists who had asked if Canada was ready to accept any Jewish refugees he stated: "None is too many".

During the Thirties, a Fascist movement existed in Quebec. In the winter of 1934, the '*Parti national-socialiste chrétien*' (PNSC) was created under the leadership of Adrian Arcand, with English and French sections. The group benefited from a degree of relative tolerance on the part of Quebec authorities. It must be added that in 1929, Pope Pius XI had signed the Lateran Treaty with Mussolini, because the Church saw Communism as a graver danger than Fascism. So, when Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis passed the '*loi du cadenas*' (the 'Padlock Law') in 1937 against 'Communist propaganda', protests

were raised in the other Canadian provinces, but not in Quebec. After Pope Pius XI condemned Fascism in 1938, the Church and Premier Duplessis hardened their tone towards Arcand, whose group had merged at the beginning of the year with the Fascist groups led by J.C. Far in Ontario and Whitteker in Manitoba. Media interest in this phenomenon grew as the tension increased in Europe. Tolerance came to an end with September 1939 and the start of the Second World War. Arcand was imprisoned, and freed only on July 3, 1945. Of course anti-Semitism was not a Quebec monopoly. As early as the summer of 1933, several 'Swastika Clubs' were formed in Toronto, among other actions by other extreme Right organisations. Adrian Arcand's flamboyant personality may explain why his group has remained notorious among racist groups in Canadian history (Robin, *op. cit.*).

That Fascist movement developed, however, in a general atmosphere of anti-Semitism, for various reasons, which Gary Caldwell⁴⁷ and Morton Weinfeld⁴⁸ present as follows:

- The relations between Jews and francophones in Quebec are those of two minorities, each with its own history of struggles and having both suffered exclusion from key social and economic sectors, by the dominant Anglo-Saxon group;
- As early as the 19th Century, some Jews began to occupy small commercial businesses and textiles, which were sectors of activity left behind by the dominant Anglo-Saxon group. Occupying this position as intermediaries, they became a target of frustrations developed towards the dominant Anglo-Saxon group which, itself, remained invisible in the eyes of the majority of the population;
- In the following century, the Jews, having reached the highest levels of the middle class, were in turn frustrated at seeing Francophones occupy academic and professional positions to which they themselves could have aspired;
- In the Twenties, the French Canadian élite had perceived the wish of Montreal's Jewish community to obtain its own denominational school system⁴⁹, just like the Catholics and Protestants, as a threat tending to dilute its status as a founding people and its importance in Confederation;
- The European historic heritage of both communities was pursued in the Canadian context. The Jews hold the Catholic Church responsible for the wave of anti-Semitism in Europe in the 19th Century and guilty of having encouraged it in the

⁴⁷ CALDWELL, Gary: "La controverse Delisle-Richler. Le discours sur l'antisémitisme au Québec et l'orthodoxie néo-libérale au Canada". *L'Agora*, June 1994, vol. 1, no 9.

⁴⁸ WEINFELD, Morton: "The Jews of Quebec", in Brym, Robert et al.: *The Jews in Canada*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993 (quoted by G. Caldwell, *op.cit.*).

⁴⁹ At that time, Jews could not become elected members of school boards.

early 20th Century. Certain of the influential circles of the Church in Quebec, including l'Abbé Lionel Groulx himself, had in fact given voice to a certain European anti-Semitic rhetoric during those years. Quebec's Jews have therefore considered the Catholic Church as an adversary.

Generally speaking, anti-Semitic violence remained on a rhetorical level. At the same time, however, everyday systemic discrimination was evident, especially at the Universities of Montreal and McGill (Anctil, P., 1988)⁵⁰. We note this question in particular because it seems to us that it was the most widespread form of racism and intolerance in Quebec during that period (or at least the one that has been written about most extensively), without intending to minimise the difficulties faced by newer groups of immigrants from southern Europe (notably the Italians) and the difficult situation of the Chinese and Black communities. We also wished to emphasise a point to which we shall return, because it seems to merit greater attention, namely, nationalism. Paradoxically, the orientation of Adrien Arcand's Fascist movement was clearly federalist and pro-British, whereas nationalism is generally presented as the origin of any racist movement in Quebec, even when such a movement is anti-nationalist!

After the Second World War, the situation changed very quickly. In 1946, Canadian citizenship was clearly defined for the first time (*Canadian Citizenship Act*). On May 1, 1947, Prime Minister Mackenzie King defined what Canada's immigration policy should be for the next fifteen years. The goal would be to increase the population, improve the standard of living, contribute to developing natural resources, enlarge the domestic market and diminish the share of raw materials in Canadian exports. It was also important not to alter the ethnic composition of the population (Hawkins, F., *op. cit.*).

Between 1946 and 1952, Canada welcomed about 200,000 refugees and displaced persons in the aftermath of the war. The first were some 4,500 Polish soldiers who had fought alongside the Allies. There were even a few hundred 'Boat People' from Estonia, Poland, Finland, and Lithuania. The southern Europeans and the refugees who arrived in Canada after the Second World War had to become part of a society that was already strongly stratified along ethnic lines, and which has been described as a 'Vertical Mosaic'. They would face many obstacles, including prejudice and discrimination in the labour market (Porter, J., 1965).

⁵⁰ Pierre ANCTIL clearly showed the difference in treatment of anti-Semitism in the two universities: anglophone (complete silence) and francophone (a wide public debate).

Until the Sixties, immigrants would generally integrate into the economically dominant anglophone minority. As a result, opportunities for contact with the francophone community were rather rare, especially since the great majority of immigrants settled (and still settle today) in the Greater Montreal region, where linguistic demarcation lines were very clearly drawn.

Through this whole period, francophones also saw themselves, by and large, as victims of discrimination. During the Twenties, for example, the Ku Klux Klan, which traditionally attacked Blacks, Jews and Catholics, had received a substantial response in Canada. Certain Catholic institutions in Quebec were targets of a series of racist incidents at the end of 1922. During the same period, the Catholic St. James Church was desecrated in Sarnia, Ontario, and Collège St-Boniface was burned in Manitoba (Robin, 1998). Pierre Vallières wrote eloquent pages on the discrimination endured by francophones in his famous book entitled *Nègres blancs d'Amérique*⁵¹. To this day, reports still periodically denounce the discrimination faced by Francophones in Canada, notably in sports.

Nevertheless, one of the survival strategies of French Canadians has been the search for reasonable accommodation in the context of Canadian federalism. Therefore they have, to some extent shared power, even if it on a minority basis, and several prime ministers have been francophone. As participants in government, their representatives have supported numerous racist decisions taken by the Federal government. You can, at once, be both a victim of racism and guilty of it.

5- THE CONTEMPORARY PERIOD

5.1- The Quiet Revolution

Following an economic slowdown between 1957 and 1961, the election of Jean Lesage in June 1960 signalled a cultural transformation, the systematic secularisation and modernisation of Quebec society, and the establishment of Quebec's Welfare State. This period has passed into history under the name the 'Quiet Revolution'⁵²

“Within barely a decade, schools, hospitals, social service agencies, co-operatives and unions passed under the hegemony of new masters and underwent necessary and elaborate reforms. Democratisation, growth and

⁵¹ VALLIÈRES, Pierre: *Nègres blancs d'Amérique*, Montréal, Parti Pris., 1969

⁵² An expression used by some anglophone journalists and intellectuals to describe the changes were occurring in Quebec during that period.

development became the new *Leitmotif*. On all sides, projects multiplied. Wherever the State developed, the Church backed away, sometimes resisting, sometimes with relief.”

(Lesage, Marc and Tardif, Francine, Eds.: 30 ans de Révolution tranquille au Québec. Montréal, Les Éditions Bellarmin, 1989, 22 p.)

Accompanied by a powerful cultural rebirth and the growth of the women's liberation movement, this Quiet Revolution took place at the same time as a wave of de-colonisation in the Third World, a protest movement against the consumer society in the Western countries, and the ongoing work of the Second Vatican Council.

At the same time, francophones were increasingly concerned for their future. Urbanisation and industrialisation, which were the foundation for the Quiet Revolution and which made it possible for Quebec to catch up rapidly with other Western nations, were also the basis for a very rapid decrease in the birth rate that began the end of the Fifties. Issues related to bilingualism and Quebec's political status became so pressing that in 1963 the Federal government set up the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, co-chaired by André Laurendeau and Davidson Dunton. A preliminary report was submitted in 1965, and recommendations in 1967. The Commission emphasised the wide socio-economic gap between anglophones and francophones, especially in Quebec, and sounded the alarm for Canadian unity, speaking of a true crisis:

“Everything we have seen and heard has convinced us that Canada is going through the most critical period of its history since Confederation. We believe there is a crisis: This is a time for decisions and real change; there will result from it either a rupture or a new arrangement of the conditions of existence. We do not know if this crisis will be protracted or short-lived. We are, however, convinced that it exists. The danger signs are many and serious. In the eyes of a major part of the population, what is occurring in the great public and private institutions is a subject of profound discontent; but this situation leaves most other Canadians all the more indifferent that sometimes they do not even suspect it exists. (...)

We are convinced that it is still possible to redress the situation. But a major operation is required. It is the whole social body that appears affected. The crisis has reached the danger point where the will might begin to give up.”

*(Laurendeau-Dunton Preliminary Report)*⁵³

The Government implicitly acknowledged this situation when, following the 1967 report of the Royal Commission, it established an equal employment opportunity program (EEOP), the very first one in Canada, to facilitate the hiring of francophones in the federal public service. The main purpose of EEOPs is precisely to correct unequal treatment based on systems of practices, values or rules whose complex interaction results maintaining the members of certain groups in a situation of inequality, even when such an effect is not deliberately intended.

The Commission proposed the adoption of a Charter of the Official Languages based on their equality and the recognition of the two main cultural communities as two distinct societies. Elected in Ottawa in 1968, the Government of Pierre Elliot-Trudeau adopted in 1969 the *Official Languages Act* which provided that:

“(...) English and French are the official languages of Canada for every matter that comes under the authority of the Parliament and the Government of Canada; they are equal in status, rights and privileges with respect to their use in all the institutions of the Government of Canada”;

However, it rejected the dual character of the national culture and therefore the dual character of Canadian society. It opted instead for multiculturalism, which provoked the discontent in Quebec.

“The adoption of multiculturalism in Canada (...) was part of a strategy that was initially based on the refusal to grant a special status to Quebec within the federalist structure and that subsequently treated all Quebec’s demands within the framework of the recognition of a pan-Canadian Francophone group. In other terms, the federal Government wanted to de-contextualise and displace the Quebec

⁵³ Quoted in Lacoursière et al., *op. cit.*, p. 463.

question by translating it back into a Canadian national context.”

(Bourque, G. and Duchastel, J. : “Multiculturalisme, pluralisme et communauté politique : le Canada et le Québec”. In Elbaz, M. et Helly, D., Eds.: Mondialisation, citoyenneté et multiculturalisme. Québec: L'Harmattan and Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2000, p. 147-169)

For some writers, multiculturalism was the answer to various groups, especially from the Canadian West, who denounced the fact that the polarisation between the English and the French had overshadowed the contribution of other communities to the construction of Canada. We should note, however, that as early as 1962 Pierre Elliot Trudeau had written:

“How – without resorting to the absurd and retrograde idea of national sovereignty –, how might we preserve the national values of the French Canadians? I said it above: it is necessary to divorce the concepts of State and Nation, and make Canada a truly pluralistic and polyethnic society.”

(Elliot-Trudeau, Pierre, op. cit.)

Even taking this into account, the criticism from Quebec against multiculturalism was no less virulent:

“Multiculturalism, made into official policy in 1971, aimed explicitly to recognise and protect the country's ethnic diversity. But in so doing, it sanctioned the decline of French Canada, henceforth relegated to the rank of another ethnic minority, and so closed the door to the notion of two or three⁵⁴ Founding Peoples.”

(Bouchard, G. : La nation québécoise au futur et au passé. Montréal, VLB, 1999, p. 41)

The Federal government undertook a constitutional review and as early as 1971, at the Victoria Conference, submitted a constitutional proposal to the Provinces. The Conference failed because of Quebec's demands.

⁵⁴ The First Nations formed the third founding people in this approach.

Meanwhile, various nationalist forces had merged to form the Parti Québécois in 1968 and, under the leadership of René Lévesque, this party came to power in 1976, which raised a real commotion throughout Canada. In 1977, the Federal Government set up another commission on the Constitution, the 'Pépin-Robarts Commission' (from the names of its two chairmen, Jean-Luc Pépin and John Robarts). In their report, submitted on January 25, 1979, they recommended, among other things, a "decentralisation of Canadian federalism; the creation of a Council of the Federation instead of the present Senate, and the right for the provinces to legislate on linguistic rights." (*Lacoursière et al., op. cit., p. 464*)

The following year the Parti Québécois lost the referendum on sovereignty that it had committed itself to hold once elected. It then went ahead with the '*beau risque*' (the 'honourable risk') of negotiating a constitutional rearrangement, as promised by the Federal government during the referendum campaign. That wager too was lost, as Quebec found itself completely isolated during negotiations with the provinces over modifying the Constitution. It therefore refused to approve the *Constitutional Act of 1982*, which included a formula for amending the Constitution and a *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, because the new Constitution took away from Quebec certain historical rights (notably its right of veto). This constitutional 'patriation' of 1982 severed, in fact, the last political ties Canada had retained with England.

After that new failure, the Conservative Party led by Brian Mulroney came to power in Ottawa, with the support of both federalists and sovereignists in Quebec. The Mulroney government undertook to "bring Quebec back into the Canadian constitutional fold". The Meech Lake Accord was concluded to that effect with the other provinces in June 1987, on the basis of conditions laid out by Quebec⁵⁵. Newfoundland and Manitoba refused to ratify the agreement because they opposed any formal recognition of Quebec as a 'distinct society'. Other negotiations led the Charlottetown Agreement, concluded on 26 August 1992, which according to its opponents fell far short of Meech and Quebec's traditional demands. The populations of both Quebec and the rest of Canada, each of whom were consulted in separate referendums, rejected the agreement. The Parti Québécois returned to power in 1994, and one year later failed by a small margin⁵⁶ to secure majority approval in a new referendum on sovereignty.

⁵⁵ The five conditions are the following: 1) Recognition of Quebec as a distinct society, 2) Guarantee of an increased role in matters of immigration, 3) Participation in naming the judges on Canada's Supreme Court, 4) A limitation on the federal Government's power of spending, 5) Recognition of a right of veto for Quebec over any modifications to the Constitution (Hamelin and Provencher, *op cit.*, p. 125)

⁵⁶ The 'No' won, with 50.6% of the votes cast.

More than 30 years after the Bilingualism and Biculturalism Commission, the stalemate remains. Quebec has still not “returned to the Canadian constitutional fold” and, since 1982, no significant reform of the Constitution, that might allow Quebec to provide itself with institutions not necessary in the rest of Canada, has appeared possible. The fear seems to be that such a path could lead the way towards a ‘quiet independence’. Two attempts to open the way to sovereignty, combined with a commitment to maintain common institutions with the rest of Canada, have also failed. The crisis endures. Nevertheless, throughout this period, Quebec has attempted to occupy fully its areas of jurisdiction. It has been able to negotiate a few administrative arrangements with the Federal government that have allowed it to secure some leeway, as in the field of immigration. On the other hand, the Federal government seems to be questioning the provinces’ exclusive jurisdiction over areas such as Education.

The failure of the 1980 referendum marked, in fact, the end of a phase. After four years during which the Parti Québécois government completed the work of the Quiet Revolution, economic difficulties forced the suspension, if not the wholesale dismantling, of the welfare state in Quebec (as would occur throughout Canada soon afterwards). Later would begin the era of neo-liberal globalisation, with its host of new challenges. Nonetheless, this period saw the adoption of the Charter of the French Language in 1977 (Bill 101), which made French the official language of the Quebec state and prescribed its use in public life (Parliament, the courts, education, work, commerce, commercial signs). It also witnessed the emergence of an class of francophone entrepreneurs and business people who, with some support from the State and the co-operative movement (mainly the Mouvement Desjardins), were able to assert themselves both in the local market and the internationally, and gain a great degree of political influence (largely to the detriment of the trade unions). We can assert that, two centuries and a half after the defeat of 1760 and the surrender of 1763, francophones have once again become a sociological majority in Quebec. Recall that earlier we saw that racism is the power to impose one’s own prejudices upon others.

However, while political and sociological data may be modified, and history reconsidered, geographical constraints remain. Quebec finds itself, today as yesterday, in North America. Today as yesterday, Quebec remains a small francophone island in the middle of an anglophone sea. And today as yesterday, the francophone majority is aware of its minority situation in this wider world, and this dual status strongly influences its attitude towards Quebec’s own minorities.

5.2- New Immigration

Despite a few administrative changes, only in 1962 did a new law put an end to Canada's previous longstanding, racist immigration policy by eliminating all forms of exclusion based on colour, race or religious convictions. The relative exhaustion of the traditionally preferred sources of immigration may be seen as the reason for this change, but one must also remember the difficulty for Canada of operating in the context of the United Nations and a multiracial Commonwealth while continuing to apply an openly racist immigration policy (Hawkins, F. *op.cit.*). The 1962 law was completed in 1967 by the establishment of a selection system intended to be impartial and objective. These changes opened the door to immigrants from all the regions of the world. Today, immigrants of non-European origins form the majority of new arrivals in Canada⁵⁷ and they can be found in all occupational areas. In 1961, it is estimated that there were in Quebec about 20,000 persons of non-European origin. By 1991, their number was somewhere between 300,000 and 400,000. (Bataille et al, 1998). Currently, they are probably close to half a million. A majority of the members of these racially defined groups have, therefore, settled in Quebec during the recent waves of immigration.

Since the early Sixties, various racist incidents have made the headlines in Quebec. For illustrative purposes, we shall very briefly present three cases that drew the public's attention during this period, three cases that all involved new immigrants.

A- The Sir George Williams Affair

In the mid-Sixties, Montreal's universities were welcoming more and more Caribbean students. They were more numerous in the anglophone universities, McGill and Sir George Williams. In the United States, the Black Civil Rights movement was making progress. Leaders of that movement visited Montreal regularly. The nature of systemic racism was discussed. In February 1969, six Black students at Sir George Williams University lodged a complaint of racism against a professor. To advance their demands, the students occupied the University's computer centre. After two weeks, the police riot squad was called out to remove them. Some students then destroyed a part of the computer centre. About one hundred people, including forty-one Black students, were arrested. The affair had repercussions on Montreal's Black community that are still being felt today⁵⁸. It certainly changed the dynamics in that community in a radical fashion. It

⁵⁷ Some grey areas still remain, however, in the legislation. On this subject, see a document of the Canadian Council for Refugees: *Report on Systemic Racism and Discrimination in Canadian Policies on Immigration and Refugees*. Montreal: 1 November 2000.

⁵⁸ It also had deep repercussions in the English-speaking Caribbean. As well, some students were expelled from Canada.

must be noted that this affair took place mainly within Montreal's anglophone milieu, although some francophones also took part in it. Studies on racism in Quebec sometimes tend to underrate the anglophone dimension of the phenomenon.

B- Racism in the Taxi Industry

On July 16, 1982, the Human Rights Commission decided, on its own initiative, to hold an extensive public inquiry into the taxi industry in Montreal, because of a large number of allegations of racial discrimination involving many parties. The final report was submitted in the fall of 1984. The first part presented conclusions on direct and individual discrimination as well as systemic discrimination, along with recommended remedies. The second part presented an analysis of the legislative, regulatory and administrative framework of the taxi industry, and an examination of the operations of the government agencies involved. It also outlined some legislative and regulatory solutions. (CDPQ, October 1984). Significant governmental measures were taken following this inquiry, and these measures brought about a clear improvement of the situation in the taxi industry. Fundamentally, the inquiry revealed that racism in this industry had, quite clearly, been a means of unfair competition. It also demonstrated that racism was in this case merely a sign of structural problems that had bedevilled the industry well before the arrival of large numbers of Black drivers (mainly of Haitian origin). The different skin colour turned out to have been only an additional, confounding factor. By adopting corrective measures, such as the governmental taxi permit buy-back plan, the inquiry made it possible to improve the situation for all the members of the industry, and not only for the Black drivers.

C- Visible Minorities and the Police

In 1988, Quebec's Human Rights Commission held a new public inquiry into allegations of discriminatory treatment and racist behaviour by the police toward visible and ethnic minorities, as well as into the causes of tension between the minorities and the Montreal police. This inquiry came in the aftermath of increasing tensions between the Black communities and the police: interrogations, arrests, and deaths of youths subsequent to police operations. The final report presented designed to remedy situations and practices that produced discrimination and to enable lawmakers and regulators to adjust to the new reality of an increasingly multi-ethnic society. Lastly and most importantly, its recommendations aimed to create conditions conducive to improving relations between the police and a society that was founded on human rights and, especially, on equality of

rights regardless of ethnic origin⁵⁹. Three years after the report was submitted, and following the recommendation of a forensic medical examiner in his report on the death of a young Black, a task force on relations between the Black community and the Montreal city police was established. This committee submitted its report in December 1991⁶⁰.

There is relatively little systematic data on racism in Quebec, mainly because there really exist no appropriate tools for computing such data and, by definition, racism is a phenomenon very difficult to measure. Periodically however, surveys or monographs attempt to describe this phenomenon. The latest survey on the subject dates from March 2001 and was done by the SOM polling firm⁶¹. The results were published during the 'Week of Actions against Racism'. Without making a complete analysis, let us briefly mention a few results:

- 95% of respondents feel that they get on well with people in their work or study environment whose ethnic origin is different from their own;
- Close to 15% of respondents would not hire a Black or coloured person, if they were employers;
- Close to 80% of respondents feel that it is not unpleasant to have neighbours who belong to visible minorities;
- Close to 70% of respondents feel that they would not be bothered to see a member of their immediate family with a spouse from a visible minority;
- About 43% of respondents believe that youngsters from the cultural communities find it difficult to adjust to school in Quebec;
- 91% believe that immigrants should learn to speak French as the language of communication
- 37% believe that immigrants do not make enough efforts to integrate in Quebec society;
- Half of them believe that members of the cultural communities are less in favour of equality between men and women than people born in Quebec, whereas 73% believe that Quebec society favours that equality;

⁵⁹ COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE DU QUÉBEC, *Enquête sur les relations entre les corps policiers et les minorités visibles et ethniques. Rapport final.*, Montréal, 1988.

⁶⁰ CORBO, Claude (1992): *Une occasion d'avancer: Rapport du Groupe de travail du ministre de la Sécurité publique du Québec sur les relations entre les communautés noires et le Service de police de la Communauté urbaine de Montréal.* Montréal: Le Groupe.

⁶¹ *Le racisme: Sondage SOM/Radio-Canada/La Presse*, March 2001. A telephone survey done by SOM from March 8 to 16 2001. Overall, 1,304 interviews were completed with a representative sample of the adult population of Quebec, with a margin of error of about 3.2% and a confidence level of 95%.

- 46% believe that members of cultural communities commit some racial discrimination, while about 54% believe that people born in Quebec commit some racial discrimination.

The question on employment is most troubling, considering the fact that employment is no doubt the main factor in social integration, at least for adults. For younger people, that function is carried out, instead, by school. Overall, however, these few responses seem to confirm the analysis that the most prevalent forms of racism are relatively weak and mainly focused on groups who are relatively recent arrivals, who are culturally distinctive, and who are perceived as posing some possible threat to the cultural specificity of the receiving society. It is true that a distinction should be made between intercultural tensions and racism. It is also true that a further distinction should be drawn between temporary difficulties related to the settlement phase of newly arrived immigrants, and more permanent biases found at the level of institutional practices. However, the perception of these difficulties varies among groups:

“...established Southern Europeans have generally attributed their hardship and unequal standing to their immigrant status, and consequently develop instead an immigrant identity. (...) Many see that their descendants, by acquiring linguistic skills and sufficient education, will move up the social ladder and integrate socially and economically into Canadian society. These immigrant groups also develop an ethnic identity, but it is largely based on language and other cultural differences which, in their minds, accounts for their social underprivilege. Non-White immigrant groups on the other hand, perceive that they confront greater discrimination and so they are more susceptible to developing a racialized consciousness or engaging in anti-racist struggles.”

(*E. Noivo: “Neither ‘Ethnic heroes’ nor ‘Racial villains’”,
in: Inter-Minority Group Racism, p. 229.*)

The published works of Bruno Ramirez, for example, show that in the Thirties and Forties, citizens of Italian origin suffered greatly from discrimination in Montreal. And yet, a few years ago, a survey revealed that, in the eyes of the public, the Italian community was the one that had best adapted to Quebec.

This is an appropriate point to introduce the notion of *discrimination shock*.

“Culture shock is an obstacle to an immigrant’s integration as an individual, and it is in that capacity that he must adjust, on the basis of an inner transformation in terms of attitudes and emotional control (decentering).

Contrary to culture shock, it is not as an individual that the shock of being discriminated against is felt, but as the member of a group.

Discrimination shock is to feel that, regardless of the individual’s process of functional, social or cultural adjustment to his or her new environment, regardless of his or her mastery of the cultural referents or codes of the receiving society, he or she is at once differentially singled out (distanced, set apart) and made inferior (judged as less-performing, less competent, inadequate) on the sole basis of belonging to a group because of his or her ethnic or national origin, race, colour, religion, language or gender.”

(*Guy Drudi, Défi, 1997a.*)

It is also appropriate to remember here that socio-cultural differences are never definitive and irremediable, whereas the goal of racism is to maintain a definitive distance of inequality (Simon, P.J., 1970). The great fear of members of visible minorities is that their difficulties, temporary in the case of groups of European origin, may define a situation that in their case may become permanent.

For a non-negligible number of racialised minorities, a real situation of socio-economic marginality and tension exists (Bataille et al., *Op.cit.*, p. 123). For example, for the past twenty years community groups have routinely estimated the unemployment rate for visible minorities to be twice the official rate of general unemployment, and their estimates have been remarkably accurate. Thus, when society finds it scandalous that unemployment is roughly 15% for certain categories of young people, it should note that, for the equivalent categories of young people in visible minorities, the rate is now over 30%. Other factors must, of course, be considered in that higher rate, but the resulting marginalisation is aggravated by visibility and constitutes, in fact, a serious potential risk of upheaval. Therein lies a danger of engendering a neo-racist trend.

The withdrawal of the francophones into their cultural identity is no doubt the basis for ethnocentrism. The corollary of maintaining group homogeneity is that it leaves others with a very simple choice - assimilation or exclusion. This is all the more true since immigration was long perceived in Quebec as a demographic strategy used by the dominant Anglo-Saxon group to further confirm the minority position of francophones.

We subscribe, however, to the idea that:

“...modern Quebec is to be counted (...) among the societies where the logic of racism has not penetrated political life by crystallising ideologically in the form of a political party, and the social expressions of intolerance and rejection, while non-negligible, remain fragmented.”

Bataille et al., (1998): p. 122

The authors were referring here to the descriptive categories used by M. Wieviorka⁶² to analyse the levels and the logic of racism. Fragmented racism occupies the first two levels. It can be infraracism, a minor and unarticulated phenomenon that can be observed in the form of prejudices and opinions that are more xenophobic than truly racist, or tied to community identities more than truly racial ones. It may be more precise and more assertive, with discrimination becoming perceptible in social life or generally visible. The other two levels are racism that has become the guiding principle of a political or quasi-political force. It is true that in Quebec, organised racist violence is relatively marginal.

There are still a few racist organisations in Quebec, less numerous and less organised than elsewhere in Canada⁶³. They were active especially during the 1980-1995 economic recession. Among them are as many pro-independence groups as pro-federalist groups, including one pro-federalist group, linked to the Ku Klux Klan, in the most French-speaking neighbourhood of Montreal! What was most worrisome in the activity of these groups was less the risk that they would progress from fragmented racism to overtly political racism, than the influence that their members might exert inside established political organisations.

⁶² WIEVIORKA, Michel: *L'espace du racisme*. Paris, Seuil, 1991.

⁶³ See: -HUBERT, D. and CLAUDÉ, Y.: *Les skinheads et l'extrême droite*. VLB, Montréal, 1991, and
-MCANDREW, M. and POTVIN, M. (1996): *Le racisme au Québec: éléments d'un diagnostic*.
Collection Études et Recherches no 13, Montreal, MAICC.

In today's Quebec, prejudices may also be imported through international influences (Antonius, 1986, McAndrew, 1987). This situation is not new. In the Thirties, the phrase 'consular Fascism' was used to describe groups in the Italian and German communities who were strongly encouraged by their countries of origin. So it is important to emphasise that racism is in no way the exclusive preserve of Quebecers of French Canadian origin. Aside from inter-ethnic rivalries that may develop over participation in particular employment sectors, some more or less recent immigrants may also be guilty of racism, either because they arrived from Europe or elsewhere with their prejudices in tow, or because they see such attitudes as means for integrating into the new society, racism presumably facilitating the definition of a new 'Us' that includes them, while of course excluding others.

With respect to the Native Peoples (Inuit and Amerindian), remember that in Quebec, as throughout Canada, they were excluded from citizenship by the '*Indian Act*' until 1960! A study carried out for the Native Council of Canada recently showed that Quebec provided better treatment for its Native peoples than the other Canadian provinces. (Monière, 1992). However, although less than 10% of Canada's Native population lives in Quebec, the average proportion living on reserves is higher (70.7% vs. 58.0%). The main problem seems to be the territorial question, since in Quebec (as in British Columbia) there have been fewer treaties on territorial issues than in Ontario and the Prairies. (Lacoursière et al., *Op.cit.*, p. 530). The tragic Oka affair brought this back to mind about ten years ago.

6- NATIONALISM AND RACISM

We have seen that one important characteristic of Quebec is the nationalism that motivates a strong majority of its Francophone population. Now, one school of thought sees in any nationalism the potential for identity-driven excesses, upsurges of intolerance and the growth of racism.

“Nationalism, as an emotional movement that addresses itself to a community, can liberate unexpected energies. History teaches us that it is often called chauvinism, racism, jingoism and other such crusades, where reason and reflection are reduced to their most simple expression. It is possible that in certain historic circumstances, where oppression was limitless, misery unspeakable and every other avenue of escape blocked off, it may have been necessary to invoke nationalism to set off the liberating

revolution. Resorting to this passion was then an inevitable stopgap, and one then had to accept that the worse would come along with the better!”

(Pierre Elliott-Trudeau, 2000)⁶⁴

From this perspective then, nationalism is a real “school of hate, rejection, discrimination, exclusion and polarisation”⁶⁵. The two phenomena go together: racism is consubstantial with nationalism. E. Balibar, though he warns against making any deterministic link between the two phenomena, goes so far as to define racism as an “inner supplement to nationalism”⁶⁶. Thus from the start there appears to be a certain presumption, a sort of mortgage, weighing on any nationalist movement which, by its very nature, is a bearer of racist tendencies.

A distinction must be drawn, on the one hand, between a cultural approach to the nation, that is the maintaining of a cultural identity or an effort of collective self-assertion, and, on the other, a political approach to the nation, involving a specific project that may range from achieving greater political autonomy to gaining full political sovereignty and taking on the form of a nation-state. Basically, political nationalism can be defined as the “will to make a cultural specificity coincide with a political space”, the self-assertion of a majority endowed with the attributes of sovereignty, the movement of a people in search of self-determination.

Generally there are seen to be two, opposing concepts of the nation, one civic and one ethnic. The civic nation is in the French tradition. It is nationality based on place of birth, founded on the will to live together, on a community of sentiment and affinity grounded in a shared history. Its emancipatory vision makes it possible, through a shared citizenship, to maintain a certain distance from any particularistic origins, and it is therefore a free association open to the future. The ethnic nation, on the other hand, is in the German tradition. It is nationality based on parentage, founded on the natural organisation of a community of common origin, and grounded in affiliation to a group, ethnic community or language. Its particularistic and deterministic vision encloses it in a genealogical logic, and it sees itself as an encompassing totality linked to an immemorial

⁶⁴ TRUDEAU, Pierre Elliott, “La nouvelle trahison des clercs”, *Cité Libre*, 1962. Reprinted in *Le Devoir*, September 2000.

⁶⁵ Guy BERTRAND, quoted by Éric Desrosiers: “Nationalisme et racisme. Dix ans de discours du Parti québécois (1981-1990)”, *Politiques et sociétés*, vol. 17, no 3, 1998, p. 143-164.

⁶⁶ Étienne BALIBAR: “Racisme et nationalisme”, in É. Balibar and I. Wallerstein, *Race, nation, classe. Les identités ambiguës*. Paris: La Découverte, 1990, 310 p., p. 54-92.

past, as an extra-historic entity. Otto Bauer has shown that the opposition between these two concepts of nation is not absolute and that, in fact, we generally find some combination of the two approaches in all modern nations.

D. Juteau and M. Mc Andrew (1992) have suggested a third concept of nation, one that explains the tradition of countries that developed out of colonisation, mainly the United States, Canada and Australia. This concept is based on liberal citizenship policies and founded upon a certain dissociation between cultural and political reality. Its pluralistic vision makes possible a national consciousness and identity that can encompass multiple cultural identities. Nonetheless, even if we accept this hypothesis, we must return to Otto Bauer⁶⁷ and emphasise that, in actual fact, none of the ideal types are found in a pure form, rather they are found in combination, where one approach may occupy a greater place than the others, depending on each society's particular conditions of history, geography, and ethnic configuration

While nationalism has always been present in Quebec society, it has been expressed in various forms. For example, during the whole period of national withdrawal, the dominant form of nationalism took on a more religious, even mystical, character, without borders and encompassing all the French Canadians of North America. The nationalism of the contemporary period, on the other hand developed directly out of the Quiet Revolution and views itself as very close ideologically to the *Patriotes* Movement of 1837-1838.

Current nationalist discourse also bases itself on demographic considerations, since the lowered birth rate imperils even the renewal of generations. Immigration policy is intended to support a politically and socially desirable balance. Of course, immigration is not a new phenomenon in Quebec, and a certain percentage of immigrants have always joined the francophone majority. In his reply to P. E.-Trudeau's remarks quoted above, Hubert Aquin wrote in 1962:

“Population movements, immigration and assimilation (which Jacques Henripin accurately describes as ‘linguistic transfers’) have produced an inter-penetration of ethnic groups, of which one of the incontestable results, in French Canada for example, is the grouping of people not according to the criterion of ethnic origin (or ‘race’, as it was called only 25 years ago), but according to their

⁶⁷ **BAUER**, Otto (1987): *La question des nationalités et la social-démocratie*. Montreal and Paris: Guérin et Arcantère. 2 vol's. (1st Edition: 1905).

affiliation with a homogenous cultural group whose only verifiable specificity is to be found in a linguistic reality. We only have to look around us, among the people we know, to get a quick count of the number of 'old-stock' French Canadians: for they are not the only 'true' French Canadians! The Mackays, the Johnsons, the Elliots, the Aquins, the Molinaris, the O'Harleys, the Spénarts, the Espositos, the Globenskis, etc., have much to say about the French Canadian ethnic nation. The 'linguistic transfers' about which Henripin has written have occurred to our benefit as well as to our loss, so much so that the core group of immigrant colonists, who achieved their collective survival, now finds itself thoroughly mixed up, in ethnic terms, with all the contributions which immigration, or the random fortunes of love, have added to our national ethnic purity. As a matter of fact, there is no longer a French Canadian nation, but a cultural-linguistic group made homogenous by language".

(Hubert Aquin, 1962) ⁶⁸

When Hubert Aquin wrote that passage, however, the overwhelming majority of immigrants still joined dominant Anglo-Saxon group, so much so that, when we speak today about Quebec's "anglophones", we refer not only to the group of Anglo-Saxon origin but also to several other communities, of more recent immigration, who have merged into the anglophone sector. Since the Quiet Revolution manifested a desire on the part of francophones no longer to remain only a minority, even a privileged one, the integration of immigrants became for them a major issue. As early as 1968, Quebec became the first province to use the provisions of the British North America Act concerning joint jurisdiction and created its own Department of Immigration. During the next 15 years, Quebec displayed remarkable openness to immigration. This was shown eloquently in the solidarity manifested with the Haitian community, Latin American refugees and *Boat People* from South East Asia.

The Couture-Cullen Agreement, signed in 1978 (and which followed the previous Cloutier-Lang and Bienvenue-Andras Agreements) for the first time granted Quebec the

⁶⁸ From an excerpt published in *Le Devoir*, 30 September 2000, entitled: "Le séparatisme n'engendre pas le racisme".

power to significantly influence its immigration and to develop its own selection criteria. The Gagnon-Tremblay/McDougall Agreement, signed on 15 February 1991, recognised Quebec's exclusive responsibility for selecting immigrants in the 'independent' category as well as foreign refugees. In addition, Quebec obtained control of intake services and the linguistic, cultural and economic integration of newly arrived immigrants. In 1990, the National Assembly had unanimously adopted a *Policy Statement on Matters of Immigration and Integration*. The statement defined the terms of a 'moral contract' between Quebec and each new immigrant, based upon the following principles:

- French is the common language of public life;
- everyone is expected and encouraged to participate and contribute to this democratic society;
- multiple contributions are welcomed by this pluralistic society within the limits imposed by respect for fundamental values and the necessity of inter-community exchange.

The unanimous adoption of this policy statement could have meant that the integration of new immigrants was no longer "interwoven into a set of problems, at the core of the national question, from which it remains incapable of extracting itself". (V. Piché, 1992). Unfortunately, the action plan that followed the statement was not up to the expectations it had raised. Subsequently, citizenship became the new paradigm in matters of intercultural relations. The basic idea appears to be an emphasis on participation, that is, everyday shoulder-to-shoulder work on shared issues, as the main basis for integration. However, the task of mapping out "the space of respect for diversity that would make possible the emerging conjunction of multiple affiliations with an adherence to Quebec's common institutions and values"⁶⁹ still remains.

The conflict between the two frames of reference of citizenship in the current situation remains, affecting even elements common to both. This double frame of reference goes back to the two nationalisms, that of Quebec and that of Canada, since Canadian nationalism does exist, especially with respect to the United States. When it becomes political, Quebec nationalism enters into conflict with Canadian nationalism, which views itself as open and tolerant (even if, as M. Weinfeld noted, in 1991, there were six times fewer anti-Semitic incidents in Quebec than in Ontario, for example). In other words, nationalism is not racist in and of itself, either by definition or in essence. It simply follows the direction that nationalists give it.

⁶⁹ **MRCI** (2000): *Document de consultation. Forum national sur la citoyenneté et l'immigration*. 21-22 September.

Two elements appear to us to distinguish Quebec and Canadian approaches to citizenship with respect to the minorities resulting from immigration. On the one hand, the question of language: French in Quebec, French and English for Canada. On the other hand, the Canadian affirmation of multiculturalism asserts that there is no dominant culture in Canada⁷⁰. From the point of view of Quebec, this raises two difficulties. First, it can imply reliance on the 'laws of the market' in matters of culture, which in the more or less long term would work to the advantage of English and simply amount to a policy of assimilation. Secondly, if the official policy of bilingualism is not sustained by a policy of biculturalism, then in the more or less short term bilingualism cannot survive. This appears to be confirmed by studies on this question, with French being in constant decline throughout Canada, except in Quebec and the neighbouring regions (Acadia and Ontario).

One of the main goals of Bill 101 (1977) was to ensure the integration of new immigrants into Quebec's francophone majority. The results have been tangible. For example, whereas only 18% of allophones under 16 years of age were enrolled in French schools when the law was adopted, today the figure stands at 80%. This law was also an opportunity to manifest the determination to reject ethnic nationalism in favour of true territorial nationalism, so as to:

“shield Quebec nationalism from accusations of ethnicism, put an end to all and any forms of exclusion or discrimination, reinforce their *francophonie*⁷¹, and extend their culture to reach into broader horizons”.

(G. Bouchard, 1999)

A similar undertaking had already been initiated in 1975, with the adoption of Quebec's *Charter of Human Rights*. However, the more the immigrant population learns and uses French, the more it gains access to the social environment of old-stock Quebecers and the more it finds itself in direct competition with them, notably in the area of employment. Direct contact between different 'ways of living, ways of doing things and ways of being' can also create risky ground for the development of discriminatory attitudes. More contact can generate more friction⁷², and one source of friction is certainly the awareness

⁷⁰ TRUDEAU, P.E.: *Speech in the House of Commons*, 8 October 1971.

⁷¹ Translator's note: The word "*francophonie*" refers to the broad community of all speakers of French throughout the world, whatever their nationality or their ethnic affiliation and whether they use it as a first or a second language.

⁷² MCALL, Christopher, 1991.

that the language is not the culture, although it is one of its main underlying components. The temptation to repeat, with new immigrants, the exclusionary practices that marred relations between francophones and anglophones in the past may be great for some, who regret lost homogeneity.

Francophones in Quebec have a double status: they are a minority in North America and in Canada, and they are the majority in Quebec. Quebec's minorities must therefore take into account two majorities. One real concern is that some elements of the nationalist movement might come to see minorities as a hindrance to the cultural unity and social solidarity that the struggle for national emancipation requires, an obstacle to the achievement of its collective destiny and its full culmination⁷³. Several unfortunate statements by influential personalities have seemed to be moving in that direction in recent years. These remarks also demonstrated a certain measure of frustration with the unpopularity of sovereignty among recent immigrants, despite policies that showed much openness on the part of nationalist governments.

Despite its marginality, organised racist violence in Quebec must be considered worrisome, inasmuch as it feeds conflict between identities. Nonetheless, if current nationalism is an offspring of the Quiet Revolution, that same Quiet Revolution was also a source of openness towards the world, and has greatly contributed to diversifying Quebec's ethnic makeup and to creating the Quebec of today.

⁷³ BAUM, G.: "Le pluralisme ethnique au Québec", in *Relations*, May 1991, p. 117-119.

CHAPTER III

PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

Life is the main cause of death. What is born can die. To accept the theory of the 'School of 1492', and consider that racism is a product of European colonisation, is to believe that racism was born at a certain moment in history. It is also to believe that if racism was born, it also can die. It is to believe that racism is neither an inevitability nor a timeless law of the human condition. Racism may, of course, be based on various primary anthropological phenomena, but it cannot merely be reduced to them. 'Civilisation' is precisely the attempt to control such primary anthropological phenomena. In other words, humanity still has room to humanise itself.

- 1- Over the past 30 years, many measures have been adopted in Quebec to try to fight racism (cf. *Appendix*). The time has come to assess these measures, mainly the legal ones, but also those applied in education, social services and the media, in order to gain a more accurate idea of their effectiveness and the extent to which they have achieved the expected results.
- 2- The emphasis placed on citizenship as the main basis for the integration of new immigrants and minorities should not imply that targeted programs are of no use, especially those aimed at visible minorities. As we have stated elsewhere,

“there is a world of difference between the pure and simple denial of differences and the positive valuing of diversity, namely accepting the other as such. If we were to be content with simply affirming equality for all, the danger would be to cease pursuing a goal declared to have already been reached and, in so doing, to deprive ourselves of some of the very tools that we need, precisely, to get there. We therefore run the risk of missing our intended goal by hiding the real obstacles to the full participation of all.”

(Jean-Claude Icart, 1998)

- 3- One of the characteristics of Quebec is a strong community consciousness. Now, any community movement necessarily develops on the basis of a shared identity, and it is all the stronger when its members strongly identify themselves with cultural values. It is the place where the private and public spheres, the old and the new, join. It is the place where is shaped the social fabric of tomorrow, the inheritance that will be

passed on to future generations. Fighting racism is not simply a question of legislation. The community must be part of the struggle.

- 4- A knowledge of history is indispensable. As we have argued, racism can take root only in very specific social contexts. It is therefore always shaped by the special conditions of a particular history, dynamic and cultural environment. This understanding of history is as necessary for the minorities formed through immigration, because they need to understand Quebec's particular origins, as for the 'two founding peoples' themselves, because:

“the unresolved conflict between Anglophones and Francophones has led to a tacit silence concerning their respective statuses as colonisers and a selective blindness concerning the contributions of other peoples”.

(Juteau and McAndrew, 1992).

Sharing history is necessary to develop a desire to live together based on a community of sentiments and affinities.

- 5- Much effort has been expended on intercultural education during the last 30 years. It is necessary to understand the difference between intercultural education and anti-racist education, because the one does not necessarily include the other. Furthermore,

“...by dint of framing our questions solely in terms of intercultural, multicultural or civic relations, there is a great risk of not getting at the deep roots of racism, namely economic inequality and the arrangement of the public space as it currently exists.”

(M. Labelle, D. Salée and Y. Frenette, March 2001)

- 6- The Quebec Government recently adopted an Equal Employment Opportunity Program that has raised many hopes. The unfortunate results of a similar program, adopted in 1991 and almost unimplemented for 10 years, raises a certain amount of scepticism. The success of this new program would send a very clear signal of the Government's real intention to attack this question and fight the weakening of democracy that results from the marginalising of too many members of the 'visible' minorities.

APPENDIX : THE QUEBEC GOVERNMENT'S REPORT FOR THE CERD

(Convention for the Elimination of Racism and discrimination)

Québec

179. This report describes the action taken by the Government of Québec in application of the Convention. It completes, to May 1993, the information found in the previous reports.

General

180. The general legal framework prohibiting racial discrimination in Québec is laid down by the Québec *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* (R.S.Q., c. C-12). The details were presented in the earlier reports submitted to the Committee.

181. In addition to the Charter provisions, legal protection of human rights and freedoms is based on provisions of the Civil Code, which constitutes the *jus commune* of Québec. According to the new *Civil Code of Québec*, which came into force on January 1, 1994, it governs persons, relations between persons, and property "in harmony with the Charter of human rights and freedoms".

182. The Commission des droits de la personne has been given the responsibility for promoting and upholding, by every appropriate measure, the principles of the Charter. The *Act to Amend the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and Establishing the Tribunal des droits de la personne* (S.Q. 1989, c. 51), which came into force on December 10, 1990, changed the mandate and investigative procedure of the Commission des droits de la personne in discrimination matters. The Commission is now required to act on behalf of the alleged victim and to seek any evidence needed to determine the validity of the complaint. If the complaint is valid and a negotiated settlement is impossible, the Commission may submit the matter to the Tribunal on behalf of the victim.

183. The new legislation established a permanent specialized Tribunal in discrimination matters. An application may be submitted to the Human Rights Tribunal by the Commission as the result of an investigation, or by the victim himself or herself after the Commission has decided not to apply to the Tribunal. The victim may also submit an application at any time to an ordinary court of law.

184. Where immigration is concerned, Québec's policy prohibits any form of discrimination based on a candidate's race or geographic origin but instead considers his or her personal attributes (training, experience) and potential for adapting to a Québec society described as being multi-ethnic and Francophone.

185. The Government's most important and most comprehensive recent initiative in this sphere has been the adoption of the Policy Statement on Immigration and Integration [Énoncé de politique en matière d'immigration et d'intégration], which was published in

December 1990, and of the related plan of action. The Statement defines the general orientations on which the Government's activities in relation to integration and to intercultural and interracial relations are based:

- (a) the development of francization services and the promotion of the use of French by immigrants and by Québeckers of all origins;
- (b) increased support for the opening up of the receiving society and for the full participation, without discrimination, of immigrants and of all Québeckers in the economic, social, cultural and institutional life of Québec; and
- (c) interventions aimed at the development of harmonious intercommunity relations between Québeckers of all origins.

186. As for the plan of action, one of its goals is to adapt Québec institutions to the pluralist reality. A fund [the Fonds d'initiative] has been set up to help the Government's departments and agencies effect measures related to the plan of action and launch innovative projects: \$5.8 million will be allotted to projects for the adaptation of institutions over a four-year period. The most important of those measures will be to: i) adapt services, programs and policies, and to educate staff about the pluralist reality; ii) to hire Québeckers from the cultural communities; iii) to evaluate the accessibility of services; and iv) to adapt communications intended for clients from those communities.

187. The Government is also participating in a form of partnership involving associations from the cultural communities and from the receiving society, municipalities and the private sector. The new grant programs of the Department of Cultural Communities and Immigration are focused on four main objectives: i) reception and establishment of immigrants; ii) adaptation of institutions; iii) intercommunity relations; and iv) support for integration into the labour market. An amount of over \$7 million has been allotted for these purposes for the 1992-1993 fiscal year.

188. In terms of information on immigration in Québec, the following data update those supplied earlier, especially paragraph 91 of the tenth report. In 1989, 1990, 1991 and 1992 respectively, Québec received 34,171; 40,842; 51,707; and 48,377 immigrants, who came from the following main geographic regions:

	1989	1990	1991	1992
	Percentage			
Africa	11	12	12	12
Asia	50	54	50	49
Latin America	7	9	15	14
West Indies	9	7	7	7
Europe	21	16	14	17

Article 2

189. A new police code of ethics applicable to every Québec police officer came into force in September 1990. In addition, the Department of Public Security has adopted a policy on intercultural and interracial relations. That policy is supported by plans of action through which the Department's various entities, including the police forces and correctional services, undertake to carry out, among other things, training, consciousness-raising, adaptation and communication activities.

190. The Department of Public Security set up a working group whose mandate includes the submission of recommendations to counter or prevent racial discrimination or racism in the Montréal Urban Community's police force. The working group submitted its report on December 13, 1992. After the presentation of the report, the Minister decided as follows: i) to accept the Montréal Urban Community's plan of action as a necessary first step in the improvement of relations between the Community's police force and black communities; ii) to have the Department of Public Security participate in the annual review of the implementation of the Montréal Urban Community's plan of action; iii) to have a report drawn up on any projects on the exercise of police discretion that have already been carried out; and iv) to study any initiatives taken in relation to the continuing education of police officers on the subject of the police code of ethics.

191. In addition, the Department of Public Security has, for the correctional services, drawn up a plan to increase the awareness of its staff, established a network of identified resource persons to provide support for staff working with offenders from cultural communities, and held a large number of meetings, conferences and discussions in order to develop lasting and harmonious links with the communities and with their associations.

192. In March 1992, the Sûreté du Québec held a two-day meeting to consult with 18 leaders from 13 cultural communities to help it align its approach with the communities and their recruitment activities. It also offered nearly 20 summer jobs to students from cultural and aboriginal communities in 1992 and 1993. In addition, it set up a joint working group of police forces and cultural communities in March 1993 in order to develop a structure of consultation, which would enable possible crisis situations to be managed. The Sûreté du Québec has also taken action to increase the number of its Aboriginal staff members.

193. Where health and social services are concerned, all of the measures are, in accordance with the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*, aimed at ensuring that every person, no matter what his or her ethnic or racial origin or mother tongue may be, has equal access and can obtain services of quality.

194. The *Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services* (R.S.Q., c. S-4.2) contains specific provisions on cultural communities; their purpose is to permit access to health services and social services in conditions of equality within the meaning of the Convention. They concern, among other things, the organization of resources and of institutions; the priorities and orientations of institutions; service organization plans; and the accessibility of services.

195. In the same way, the Act contains provisions specific to English-speaking persons, which particularly relate to the right to receive health services and social services in the English language.

196. Aboriginal communities are also covered by the *Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services*. In addition, special legislative measures have been adopted in respect of the Cree and Inuit.

197. The Department of Recreation, Fish and Game has developed a program aimed at improving the socio-economic situation of Aboriginal people. Its purpose is to promote Aboriginal peoples' access to employment in the context of calls for tenders for the establishment of exclusive rights for outfitting operations. The Department's consultations with the Commission des droits de la personne have contributed to having the program respond in legal terms to the requirements of the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*. The Department's program went into effect in April 1991.

198. In the last full year covered by this report, namely 1992, the Commission des droits de la personne opened 125 new files, or 15.5 per cent of all the investigation files that the Commission has opened, in response to complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of race, colour, or ethnic or national origin. By sector of activities, those 125 files are distributed as follows:

SECTOR	NUMBER OF FILES OPENED
Employment	79
Accommodation	15
Access to goods and services	14
Access to public transportation and public places	11
Judicial rights	4
Other	2
TOTAL	125

199. It can be seen that employment is a key sector; most of the files opened in that sector concern allegations of discrimination in the victim's dismissal or conditions of employment.

200. Furthermore, a significant number of cases concern allegations of racial harassment or of harassment based on ethnic or national origin. In 1992, the Commission opened 28

such harassment files, or 17.2 per cent of all harassment files. Fifteen of them concerned the employment sector, while six concerned accommodation.

201. To promote the application of section 10.1 of the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*, which prohibits any harassment based on race, colour, or ethnic or national origin, the Commission des droits de la personne launched a Policy on Racial Harassment in the Workplace [Politique pour contrer le harcèlement racial en milieu de travail] in 1992. The Policy defines racial harassment as conduct in the form, for example, of repeated hurtful or contemptuous comments, acts or gestures based on race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or language. It regards racial harassment as an expression of racism and notes that both the harasser and the harasser's employer are legally responsible for such conduct. A model policy on racial harassment in the workplace is proposed for employers.

202. Still in 1992, the Commission brought 33 actions before the Human Rights Tribunal, or double the number of the previous year. Six of those actions alleged discrimination based on race, colour, or ethnic or national origin, including one involving racial harassment. Several of those actions are still pending. In addition, settlements were negotiated in a number of actions before trial.

[\(CONV](#)

12th report: [FED](#), [BC](#), [MA](#), [ON](#), [NB](#), [NS](#), [NF](#))

Article 4

203. Section 11 of the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* provides for protection from the publication, distribution or public exhibition of a symbol involving discrimination.

204. In 1990, the Commission des droits de la personne combined with non-governmental organizations working to promote rights and freedoms and intercultural rapprochement to establish the Comité d'intervention contre la violence raciste [Committee to Combat Racist Violence]. The mandate given the Committee was to analyse racial violence in Québec and to propose ways to combat it to the appropriate authorities.

205. The Committee published its report in June 1992. Entitled "Violence et racisme au Québec" [Violence and Racism in Québec], the report evaluates a consultation involving a number of ethnic, community, school, police and government institutions. It presents a sociopolitical analysis of the causes and symptoms of racist violence, which it considers to be a disturbing, although still marginal, phenomenon. The Committee expanded its examination of the subject by organizing a symposium on racist violence with 200 participants in March 1993. One of the symposium's goals was to propose, on the basis of

the working hypotheses presented in the Committee's report, concrete ways to combat racist violence in four sectors: community action, judicial action, education and the responsibilities of political institutions. The report of the symposium, which is now being prepared, will be sent to the political, social and community authorities concerned.

206. In parallel with these major activities of analysis and reflection, the Commission is also taking tangible steps against racist movements.

[\(CONV](#)

12th report: [JUR](#), [BC](#), [MA](#), [ON](#), [NB](#), [NS](#))

Article 6

207. At the judicial level, on April 8, 1993, the Human Rights Tribunal allowed the action brought by the Commission des droits de la personne in the first racial harassment case to be decided by a Québec tribunal. On the basis of section 10.1 of the Québec Charter together with sections 16 (right to equality in conditions of employment) and 46 (right to conditions of employment, which have proper regard for the worker's health safety and physical well-being), the Tribunal held that the complainant, who was represented by the Commission, had been the victim of racial harassment for which his employer was legally responsible. The complainant, a teacher, had been the target of several types of mockery and insults of a racial nature by his students. The Tribunal's judgment (which quotes the Convention and other international instruments at length) establishes the principle that the employer must provide the employee with a work environment free of harassment. This duty also applies when the harassment can be attributed to non-employees (students in the case in question). The Tribunal adds that the mere fact that the employer has adopted an anti-harassment policy is insufficient to release it from its responsibility, if the policy has not been adequately publicized or if vigorous action has not been taken to stop the harassment. The Tribunal awarded the victim an amount of \$10,000 as compensation for psychological injury.

[\(CONV](#)

12th report: [FED](#), [BC](#), [SK](#), [NB](#), [NS](#))

Article 7

Education

208. Since 1991, the Department of Education has included acquisition of the following skill among the educational standards for teachers: "the ability to detect and combat the various forms of discrimination, including those based on sex, race, religion or a handicap".

209. The Department has also completed the measures already in place prior to 1991. An educational document has been added to those already existing in respect of education as

to rights. Intended primarily for secondary teachers, it proposes a set of activities to enable students to learn about the various human rights concepts. Many of those activities deal with discrimination in all its forms and are, of course, intended to eliminate it. The document, which was completed in co-operation with Québec's Commission des droits de la personne, was distributed in all the school boards and secondary schools in early 1991. A similar document for elementary schools should be available in 1994.

210. In 1992, the Commission des droits de la personne reached over 2,500 persons in the 97 training sessions it gave on human rights and freedoms. Those sessions were intended, among others, for school boards, elementary and secondary schools, and parents' committees, and the topics they covered included racism in the school.

211. The Commission is also responsible for educational activities outside the school environment, in, for example, the workplace and the legal field.

212. Lastly, the Commission launched a training program on interethnic and interracial relations for its staff in 1992, and continued to provide it in 1993.

213. It should also be noted that the Sûreté du Québec has developed a training course on intercultural and interracial relations, which is available to all Québec police forces.

Culture

214. Three cultural community awards [prix des Communautés culturelles] are granted each year to persons or organizations whose actions have made a noteworthy contribution to the rapprochement of one or more cultural communities with the Francophone community. Two special mentions recognizing cultural rapprochement were also awarded in 1991.

215. Each year, the Commission des droits de la personne organizes the commemoration of Black history month in February ["Février, mois de l'histoire noire"], the purpose of which is to publicize the history of the Black community and how it has contributed to the building of our society. In 1992, the City of Montréal and the Department of Cultural Communities and Immigration also participated in the commemoration. The activities included, in particular, a panel of historians and legal experts on topics ranging from slavery in New France to the struggle for rights and the reality of Black women.

216. Lastly, the Government granted substantial financial and technical assistance to the Cree Nation Youth Council for the organization in July 1992 of the First World Indigenous Youth Conference. A number of that Conference's activities in fact concerned the improvement of interethnic understanding.

Information

217. In accordance with its information mandate, the Commission des droits de la personne provides wide distribution of information on rights and freedoms. More than 10,000 copies of the Charter were distributed in 1992 together with pamphlets on racial

discrimination and racial harassment. At the same time, the Commission continues to publish "Communication", a newsletter that reports on judgments and decisions related to discrimination, and its quarterly information bulletin "Forum Droits et Libertés".

218. In 1992, the Commission produced and launched a video on the difficulties faced by immigrants in finding a place to live. A teaching guide comes with the video for use in training sessions.

219. The Nouveaux Visages [New Faces] program implemented in 1989 by the Department of Cultural Communities and Immigration permits Québeckers from the cultural communities to do practical work terms in the print media, television and radio.

220. The Secrétariat aux Affaires autochtones [Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat] publishes a magazine entitled "Rencontre", whose purpose is to promote a better understanding of Aboriginal people by non-Aboriginals and to bring the two communities closer together.

[\(CONV](#)

12th report: [FED](#), [BC](#), [AL](#), [SK](#), [MA](#), [ON](#), [NB](#), [NS](#), [NF](#))

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