

The Jesuit Journal *Relations*, 1959-1969: Modernity, Religion and Nationalism in Quebec

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In this paper I wish to trace the development of the relationship of religion and nationalism in *Relations*, a journal produced since 1941 by a group of French-speaking Montreal Jesuits. In particular, I would like to examine the influence of the social modernization represented by Quebec's "Quiet Revolution" of the 1960s and the Catholic Church's own wrestling with modernity which found expression in the Second Vatican Council. These two dramatic events introduced a painful period of transition for the Jesuits of Quebec since the secularization of Quebec politics and society diminished their status and power while the redefinition of the church that was called for during the Second Vatican Council challenged their conservative Catholicism. Because the writers of *Relations* hoped to remain faithful to their heritage while adapting it to new circumstances, one can note a constant effort to redefine both Quebec Society and Catholicism.

During the 1960s, the Jesuits refused to abandon the corporatist orientation of traditional nationalism which marked the first twenty years of the journal. However, they did not simply restate the corporatist policies of the 1930s which had been discredited by the actions of right-wing governments in the 1940s. The Jesuits of *Relations* transformed corporatism from a concrete political strategy into a philosophical basis for their criticism of the modernization of Quebec society as it was defined by the liberals, social democrats and socialists who supported Quebec's Quiet Revolution. I wish to argue that this nationalist opposition was not opposition to modernity itself as some might argue (see Tiryakian and Nevitte

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1985, 73, 79), but to the *étatiste* definition of modernity of the supporters of the Quiet Revolution. The Jesuits of *Relations* were nationalists who supported the modernization of Quebec society but under a different sign, a conservative ethos of co-operation that would transcend the ethos of competition inherent in capitalism and the ethos of conflict inherent in socialism. This conservative ethos, which was rejected by the leaders of the Quiet Revolution, arose out of their commitment to Catholic social teaching that was critical of capitalism and socialism and promoted corporatism. As the 1960s progressed, however, the Catholic reform which led to the Second Vatican Council challenged the religious foundations of this same conservatism.

"Relations": A Conservative Critique of Duplessis

The journal was founded by Père Joseph-Papin Archambault in 1941 to support and disseminate the work of *l'Ecole sociale populaire*. Because of the prestige of the Jesuit order, its subscriptions grew from 1,000 to 15,000 within seven years. For a religious journal that addressed itself to a small number of educated French Canadians, this number of subscriptions was extraordinarily high (Richard 1982, 91). The editorial position of the journal was established by an editorial committee which consisted of six to ten Jesuits and a number of lay Catholics. Issues were discussed and hotly debated in editorial meetings but the editor (always a Jesuit until the late 1980s) had the final word over the contents and editorial position of the journal. However, since the editor relied on the editorial committee for their labour and goodwill, consultation and consensus were the preferred means of coming to decisions. It must be remembered that *Relations* did not represent the official position of the Jesuit order in Quebec or Canada, nor were the authors all Jesuits. Still the editorial team and especially the editor was responsible to the provincial head of the order.

Unlike its contemporary, *l'Action nationale*, *Relations* was fundamentally religious and social, rather than nationalist, in its focus. It had arisen out of two historical developments. The first was the Great Depression which hit the Quebec economy with particular severity. Suffering, especially in Montreal, was acute. Dominated by an economic liberalism, the governments of Taschereau and Duplessis refused to intervene in the crisis. The second development was the evolution of a certain interpretation of Catholic humanism and social teaching defined by the papal encyc-

icals *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931). Both Catholic humanism and social teaching were formulated in opposition to the secular humanism, laissez-fair liberalism and socialism. *Quadragesimo Anno* especially inspired the Jesuits to challenge laissez faire liberalism and its main competitor socialism.

While most immediately concerned with the suffering, chaos and social issues which industrialization had brought to Quebec society, *Relations* has remained “nationalist” throughout the years. The authors presupposed that the “imagined community” (to use the fortunate term of Benedict Anderson), the *nous*, or collectivity to which they felt they belonged and whom they addressed, were strictly Catholic French Canadians until the later-1960s and then francophone Quebeckers, groups which they did not hesitate to define as a people or a nation. Furthermore, they argued that, like devotion to one’s God and family, nationalism was not only natural but a duty. Finally, the editorial team overtly supported a succession of nationalist positions in important questions ranging from language legislation to federal-provincial constitutional negotiations.

The editorial content of the first eighteen years of *Relations* (1941-1959) was marked by a dynamic version of traditional “clerico-nationalisme”, a vision of French-Canadian society as an organic, hierarchical society created naturally through a common history, a shared language, the Catholic faith and French culture. The Jesuits’ version of religious nationalism was marked by its conservative opposition to the Union Nationale of Maurice Duplessis, a political party which agreed with the social conservatism of traditional nationalism but also encouraged economic liberalism and the unrestrained industrialization of Quebec led by American and English Canadian capital. The bewilderment and outrage of the Jesuits of *Relations* over the inactivity of their government during the 1930s and 1940s has left its stamp on the journal. However, their positions on state intervention, which followed the tone and general outlines of the *Programme de restauration sociale* adopted by the E.S.P., were never socialist. In fact, during this period, the Jesuits of *Relations* dedicated an inordinate amount of editorial space to denunciations of communism and socialism (neither movement was ever a real social force in Quebec).

Relations was founded to awaken French Canada to the forces which threatened it socially, culturally, religiously and nationally. As the first editorial makes plain, these challenges were inter-related and stemmed from modernity’s rejection of the spiritual in favour of the material, a

movement introduced by the Reformation, developed by liberalism and taken to its logical conclusion by communism (Richard 1941, 1). The journal's mission was to mobilize the population behind a moral, intellectual and social elite to combat this degeneration so evident in the decline in the Catholic faith and French language in Quebec. This call to mobilization had a heavy moral emphasis and a voluntarist attitude. This orientation influenced the nationalist discourse of *Relations* which tended to be voluntarist, elitist and apolitical. It focused on personal morality and social structures rather than political parties. This emphasis on the personal and social realm meant that conservative nationalism of *Relations* more social and cultural than political.

Their conservative ideology lead them to support the colonisation movement which sought to encourage francophones to establish traditional rural, parish-based communities in Quebec's hinterland as an alternative to urbanization and industrialization. After it became apparent that these latter two trends were irreversible, the journal dropped its articles on colonization to give exclusive focus to *corporatisme*, the social, political and economic organization of society promoted by conservative ideology. Blessed by Catholic social teaching, particularly the papal encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno* (Archibald 1984), corporatism was the dominant ideology of *l'Ecole sociale populaire*.

Politically, the writers of *Relations* supported a conservative interpretation of Canadian Confederation that would allow Quebec the social space to pursue its Church-led paternalistic corporatism. Thus they supported the demand of the Duplessis government for greater provincial autonomy and protested the interference of the federal government in provincial matters even when that meant opposing socially progressive legislation on pensions, family allowances, welfare and hospitalization insurance. However, they were not opposed to better social services and a growing social bureaucracy. Hubert Guindon has argued that in the twentieth century, the clergy in Quebec had become bureaucratic overlords of an immense urban-based system of social institutions (schools, hospitals, orphanages, hospices for the elderly, etc.). This involvement in modern bureaucracy meant that these ordained professionals had their own institutional self-interests and were increasingly socialized into modern rational, utilitarian, bureaucratic thinking. Increasingly, in the 1950s, *Relations* became involved in the rhetoric of competence, efficiency and rationalization. It found itself in direct conflict with the Union Nationale

which rejected “bureaucracy” and relied on personal contacts and informal arrangements. Hence out of ecclesial self-interest, learned bureaucratic values, concern for human welfare, and what Guindon called “sheer structural location” (Guindon 1988, 22-23), the editors of *Relations* promoted modernized social bureaucracies which, they complained, were underfunded by a callous, pro-business provincial government.

The Victory of Liberalism in Quebec, 1960-1969

The death of Maurice Duplessis in 1959 and the election of the Liberal Party of Quebec represented a great change in Quebec society. The Quiet Revolution and its supporters brought about the secularization of Quebec society through the growth of state power. While scholars do not agree on the extent and exact nature of this secularization (see Nevitte 1978; Nevitte and Gingras 1984), they do agree that by the 1970s on the levels of public institutions and the symbolic self-definition of society there was a profound change in orientation. As Guindon wrote less than two decades after the death of Duplessis: “Retrospectively, it is now clear that what was revolutionary about the Quiet Revolution was the liquidation of the Catholic church as the embodiment of the French nation in Canada” (1988, 104). More and more, nationalists looked to the state for the well-being of the nation, for the maintenance of the education, social welfare and health care systems, and also as the instrument of national liberation, responsible for the collective destiny of French Canada (Balthazar 1986, 130-34).

This new reliance on the state apparatus meant that nationalists began to focus on *l'Etat du Québec*, the only state over which French Canadians had the control of a majority, as “*l'expression politique du Canada français*,” to use Jean Lesage’s term (Balthazar 1986, 131). This meant that the “imagined community” moved from French-speaking Catholics of North America to French Canadians or to the “*Québécois*.” The politicization of French Canadian nationalism had meant a redefinition of the nation itself.

A certain clarification is necessary about nationalism and federalism in Quebec politics. Largely because of media interpretations, it is commonplace to identify the Parti Québécois as the nationalist party and the Liberal Party of Quebec as the federalist party. But these positions are only relative. In the 1960s, as Louis Balthazar has pointed out, Québécois

nationalism inspired the Liberals to pursue the nationalization of hydro-electric power, part of an aggressive program aptly described by the party's election slogan *Maître chez nous* (1986, 162). One might also note that when Pierre Trudeau moved into federal politics to fight the absolutizing trend of Quebec nationalism, he was referring to Lesage's Liberal Party and not the growth of the independence movement (Trudeau 1967, v). The Quiet Revolution represented the liberalization of Quebec society but it was also, to a very large degree, a nationalist awakening (Balthazar 1986).

"Relations" and the Conservative Critique of Liberal Modernity

For conservatives, the Quiet Revolution posed a great opportunity and a great threat. Like many Quebecers of the middle class, they rejoiced at the announcement of Duplessis' successor Paul Sauvé that *désormais* (from now on) the state would fund the semi-public clerical bureaucracies in a predictable, rational and more generous manner. Universities, hospitals, social agencies, schools and government bureaucrats would all benefit from the new orientation of the Union Nationale (Guindon 1988, 23, 30). However, they were worried that the Liberal Party would replace these institutions with secular, state-run ones. In a parallel development, they also worried about the new *étatiste* orientation of the nationalist movement which would mean its politicization and the end of its embodiment by the Church.

Led by Richard Arès, a well-known and influential conservative nationalist who edited the journal between 1956 and 1969, the team of *Relations* had difficulties reacting to the sweeping changes in Quebec society. Deeply committed to a conservative and corporatist vision of Quebec, they reacted with uncertainty to the various demands for state intervention in Quebec and the politicization of nationalism (see e.g., Arès 1961). While happy with some of the initiatives of the new government, they remained loyal to their conservative interpretation of Confederation as a pact binding two distinct nations which assured the autonomy of the Catholic Church in the social realm in Quebec. Hence many of the campaigns begun in the 1950s were continued in the 1960s, including the "bon parler" column of Joseph D'njou and wide coverage of francophone minorities in Canada. However, these traditional campaigns were overshadowed by new nationalist issues arising out of the secularization and dynamism of the Quebec state, especially those of the role of the state,

education, language policy, and the new orientation of federal-provincial constitutional negotiations.

Education and the Growth of the State

Nowhere was the Jesuits' worry over state growth more evident than in their reaction to the government's plans to reform the education system, an issue which dominated the journal (as much as any one issue did) during the early years of the 1960s. As guaranteed by the BNA Act, Quebec had two boards of education, one English and Protestant, the other French and Catholic. There was no Minister of Education since this was a realm that social conservatives felt should be left to the churches and private organizations. The PLQ wanted to bring the school system under direct government control, democratize it, improve accessibility to it, introduce new curricula and generally adapt it to modern, urban, industrial society with an economy dominated by capitalism, science and technology (Dion 1967).

The writers at *Relations* opposed these reforms as a threatening growth of state power, an interference of the purely political into the social realm. They were not opposed to education reform in itself and in fact actively promoted wider government investment (but not participation) in education. The role of the state, they felt, should be to promote the nation and its minorities through private agencies, to offset the worst abuses of capitalism and industrialization, to direct resources to education, social welfare and health care, to secure the French language in Quebec but not to move beyond its proper realm. The Jesuits had come to accept liberal democracy and were, during the 1960s, no longer dedicated to the political realization of a corporatist society. Yet they still clung to corporatist ideals of the subsidiary state, one which promoted co-operative, intermediary bodies but which limited its intervention to the bare essentials.

Arès especially found Bill 60 threatening. In a classical conservative condemnation of liberal modernity, he argued in a 1964 editorial, entitled "Le bill 60 et la démocratie totalitaire", that liberal democracy could become totalitarian because it sought to eliminate all bodies between the state and the individual (Arès 1964). At that point, social life was dominated completely by politics and the state. Only the confessional committees proposed by bill 60 offered any real guarantee against this type of totalitarianism.

Arès also objected to the assumption that rational technique applied to schools by trained bureaucrats. Classical education had developed over the centuries and was part of organic human nature, he argued, and it would be ill-advised to force a hastily constructed, mechanical, technocratic reform of it (Arès 1965, 36). The February 1965 issue of *Relations*, which was dedicated to the Parent Commission's report, showed that mistrust of educational reform was generalized amongst contributors to *Relations*. They saw it as a wilful act of state technocracy, an assault against the Church's rightful position in society, the undermining of culture and morality and a violation of the rights of parents to choose a Christian education for their children. But as Arès made explicit in an article for *l'Action nationale*, the issue of education was also a struggle over the soul of a nation. If schools were the primary mode of socializing youth into a French Canadian identity and the very core of that identity was inextricably linked to Roman Catholicism, then the schools had to remain confessional (Arès 1969, 315-348).

The State, the Language and the Nation

This is not to say that the editorial team of *Relations* was opposed to every development of the Quiet Revolution. They supported a dynamic state when it came to securing the rights of the French Canadian community in Quebec and Canada. Partly this was a result of new demographic information provided by the 1961 census which showed that the French-Canadian community was losing ground to anglophones across Canada. Most disturbing was the high rate of assimilation of francophones outside of Quebec (Arès 1963a, 65-8). In Quebec, the situation was also disturbing. While francophones largely remained loyal to their language and culture, a significant number assimilated to the language and culture of the English minority (Arès 1964a, 47-8). More importantly, most immigrants adopted English as their language, especially if they lived in Montreal (Arès 1964b, 74-6). Coupled with a low fertility rate among French-Canadians, nationalists could see a time when francophones could be reduced to a numerical minority even within the province of Quebec.

The nationalists at *Relations* argued that the provincial government had to act decisively to protect the French language in Quebec (D'Anjou 1962; 1963a; 1963b). This position differed significantly from traditional nationalism since it relied on state intervention rather than moral will.

Furthermore, the Jesuits argued that the provincial government had to negotiate a tough deal with the rest of Canada to protect francophone minorities outside of Quebec. They supported the position of the provincial government in asking for more power during constitutional negotiations during the 1960s and protested the federal government's intransigency when Trudeau took power in 1968.

These negotiations took on a new orientation with when the Lesage's Liberal Party came to power. No longer satisfied with Duplessis' strategy to bolster "provincial autonomy", the Liberals now defined the provincial state apparatus as a national state. Thus the relationship between Quebec and Canada had to be one of *états associés*. If *l'Etat du Québec* was to be the political expression of French Canada and that society required a modern interventionist state, then the Quebec government needed to acquire the powers of a real state. The positions taken by the writers of *Relations* were somewhat more modest. While they supported the government positions, they did so from their own perspective, the conservative interpretation of Confederation as a pact between two nations (Arès 1960).

In comparison to the new secular and Christian independence movements which were founded in Quebec in the 1960s, the position of *Relations* was cautious. This is partly because they refused, unlike the secular *Ralliement d'Indépendance nationale* (RIN) or the Christian-democratic *Regroupement national* (RN), to redefine "the nation" as Quebec rather than French Canada. Arès himself was never able to abandon francophone minorities outside of Quebec. For him they were the key; if English Canadians would respect their rights, then the Quebecois could see that Confederation was a pact within which they could thrive (Arès 1963, 68). Only Joseph D'Anjou was at all open to considering the logic of *séparatisme* (D'Anjou 1960).

With the rare exception, positions taken in the journal were consistently federalist, hoping for a renewed and fair federalism based on the two-nation hypothesis which was the basis of the *Report of the Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (Editorial 1965, 101). The Jesuits still promoted the independence of the Canadian state from Britain, protesting the Queen's 1964 visit to Quebec as a sign that Canadians were still unwilling to be their own country (Editorial 1964, 314). Moreover, they refused to support separatism even as a bargaining chip that would force the federal government to alter Confederation as was proposed by the

leader of the conservative Union Nationale in his book *Egalité ou indépendance* since it would leave the fate of francophone minorities unclear (Arès 1967, 295-97). Needless to say, they rejected the violence of the independentist *Front de la Liberation du Québec* (FLQ), arguing that Christian love demands positive engagement in society and not violent revolution (Arès 1963b, 212).

This conservative definition of Confederation, we noted above, dovetailed neatly with the social role of the Church in Quebec, a role the Jesuits felt was guaranteed to it by the terms of Confederation. The secularization and modernization of Quebec nationalism, which is to say its politicization, its redefinition in terms of the territory of Quebec, and its adherence to Keynesian liberalism, meant the end of the Jesuits' uncritical support for the nationalist movement as a political movement. However, the authors of *Relations* never questioned, as did some of the authors of *Cité Libre* after 1960, the social nationalism of French Canada. They never imagined Canada, bilingual and multi-cultural, to be the true *patrie* of French Canadians.

The Religious Challenges of Vatican II

It was not only the political and social conservatism of the Jesuits of *Relations* that was challenged during the 1960s. There were great religious changes in the Church itself which undermined their religious orientation. The Second Vatican Council presented a difficult challenge to conservative Catholics because they had relied so heavily on the rhetoric of obedience of the church hierarchy in their anti-liberal and anti-socialist ideology. Now the Magisterium of the Church was opening itself to themes of modernity and changes were coming from above. Only a small fraction of Catholics, such as the Lefevbrists and their Quebec followers, were willing to dismiss the hierarchy and the changes of the Council. Other conservatives had to accept, ignore, or reinterpret the statements of the Council by focusing on its more conservative elements.

The Council presented a challenge to the religious justification of clerical nationalism in Quebec, especially the triumphalist doctrine which defined the Church as a deposit of spiritual truth, above the contingencies of material self-interest, politics and human history. This spiritualist, moralistic and hierarchical Catholicism which had supported traditional nationalism had been severely criticized (see Grand'Maison 1970,

1:133ff). Furthermore the Council introduced the principles of egalitarianism, democracy and participation into a church that had been ruled by the conservative rejection of those values (Hamelin 1984, 269ff.). A new respect for individual conscience and freedom undermined the hierarchical infrastructure of the conservative ideology. Finally, the acceptance of the autonomy of the political order meant that no longer did the Church occupy a privileged place in political discourse nor was Christian morality the privileged terms of political decision-making among Catholics.

In Quebec, the two most powerful bishops, Mgr Maurice Roy of Quebec and Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger of Montreal actively encouraged the redefinition of Quebec Catholicism. Their influence was important in the transfer of education, health care and social services to the state (Hamelin 1984). This influence was especially important in the battle over Bill 60, since traditional nationalists rallied around this issue as the most important battle between conservatives and liberals. While they demanded important concessions from the Lesage government, the moderate position taken by the bishops of Quebec (led by Roy and Léger) on the creation of a Minister of Education put a damper on the most vocal conservative opponents to Bill 60 (Dion, 1967, 138-40). In their response to the secularization of the social realm and its transfer to the welfare-state, the Bishops admitted that the state rather than the Church was the political expression and embodiment of the French Canadians of Quebec.

The Jesuits of *Relations* wrestled with the reform of Catholicism. They published special issues on the important papal encyclicals *Mater et Magistra* in 1961, *Pacem in Terris* in 1963, *Populorum Progressio* in 1967 and on the opening of the Council itself in 1962. However they tended to see these events as being more in continuity with traditional Catholic social doctrine than as being a radical departure. Throughout the 1960s, their critique of modernity continued to be rooted in the conservatism of the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadregesimo Anno*. In the important issues of education reform and secularization they lagged behind the hierarchy.

Conclusion

The 1960s marked a difficult period for the Jesuits of *Relations*. Their hopes of a dynamic Quebec under Paul Sauvé's renewed Union Nationale were dashed by his untimely death. The Liberal Party of

Quebec's aggressive *étatisme* challenged their conservative understanding of society, particularly in the domain of education. While the Quiet Revolution did satisfy some of their demands for state support for education and French culture, the Jesuits saw themselves moved from their position as influential critics of the Duplessis regime to the margins of society as Quebec developed into a secular, bureaucratic welfare-state. It was clear that Quebec would modernize under the model of secular, liberal, capitalist modernity rather than Catholic, conservative, corporatism.

The Jesuits at *Relations* were not ready to give up their dream of a conservative and Catholic French Canada. In doing so they provided a critique of the liberal universalism of those leading the Quiet Revolution. For example, they consistently uncovered the assumptions, presuppositions and values of so-called "neutral" schools and the allegedly neutral, scientific method of the Parent Commission. As well, they consistently opposed the integration of French Canada into a depoliticized, individualistic consumer culture. On the other hand, they did not extend this ideology critique to their own outlook. They failed to appreciate the constructive elements in the liberal and social democratic reforms in the realm of politics, economics and social organization, and the religious reform of the 1960s, which is to say the principles of egalitarianism, democracy and participation.

Near the end of the decade, the attitude of the Jesuits began to change in response to sociological reality and the coincidence of the Second Vatican Council which challenged conservative Catholicism's orientation to the rest of society. The important documents of the Council redefined the Church in the modern world as one actor among many, as one who searched for truth rather than possessed it, as one open to dialogue and learning rather than monological teaching. This religious reform undermined the religious authority of traditional Catholic nationalism in Quebec.

As the decade progressed, the Jesuits at *Relations* wrestled with the religious reforms of the Second Vatican Council. One sign of this change was that *Relations* published significant excerpts from Grand'Maison's stinging criticism of conservatism in 1969 (Grand'Maison 1969a; 1969b; 1969c). But it was not until the change in the editorial committee in September 1969, and the replacement of Richard Arès with Père Irénée Desrocher, that a new spirit was to infiltrate the pages of *Relations*.

During the 1960s the journal *Relations* remained more conservative

in the face of secularization than the Catholic hierarchy in Quebec. Unlike the reactionary positions taken by the Catholic Church in France, Mexico, Spain or Portugal in the face of similar modernization and secularization, the Church hierarchy in Quebec did not reject the new society and its new secular nationalism. Instead the hierarchy handed over control over many social institutions with relative serenity (Baum 1991, 15-47). Increasingly the bishops of Quebec even abandoned their triumphalist stance in moral and social teaching, much to the chagrin of many Catholic, conservative nationalists writing for *l'Action Nationale* (Brueghel 1965, 1966; Angers 1960, 1967; Genest 1970, 954-56). The Church hierarchy had come to a watershed. It had come to realize that practising Catholics were now a minority even in Quebec, that loyal Catholics wanted, for the most part, to be addressed as free citizens on political issues and not as obedient believers, and that the Church had become one voice among many in Quebec society, and not the dominant voice at that. Partly these realizations had come about over the fight over the reform of the education system (Dion 1967). Certainly the concessions made by the Bishops to the new minister of education announced that they had accepted the priority of the state of Quebec as the political expression of French Canadians.

Gregory Baum has argued that it was the coincidence of the political modernization of Quebec and the religious reforms of the Second Vatican Council that allowed some Catholics to become critical of their Church and support projects that were proposed by secular thinkers and parties (1991, 15-47). Despite their efforts, the Jesuits of *Relations* could not come to terms with the reforms of the Quiet Revolution and the Second Vatican Council. This inability was rooted in their deep conservatism. This same conservatism promoted a certain *apoliticisme*, one that was reinforced by the fact that their definition of the nation did not coincide with the political borders of Quebec, home of the new state apparatus of French Canadians or, as more people were beginning to say, *les Québécois*. In an era where state intervention had become the primary means of addressing social issues, the positions taken by the writers of *Relations* appeared reactionary.

This conservatism became particularly apparent in their positions on education reform and secularization. It was also the issue of education reform which best reveals the combination of traditional Catholicism, ecclesial self-interest, ideological conservatism and, one must say, deeply committed social activism which provided the influential framework for the synthesis of religion and nationalism in *Relations* during the 1960s.

Because education was given over to the Catholic Church by the terms of the BNA Act, the Jesuits of *Relations* remained deeply committed to Canadian confederation. The education system, which was dominated by the clergy, was also the primary means of socializing French Canadians into a traditional, nationalist ideology. Through their control of the education system (and the rest of the social bureaucratic infrastructure of modern Quebec) before 1960, the Church occupied a privileged position in Quebec society and politics. A conservative interpretation of Confederation and a strong sense of clerical nationalism were the key ideological elements which held this particular conservative, socio-political vision together and served to legitimate the religious, political and social project of the Church and the Jesuits of *Relations*.

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