Open Secularism And The Place Of Religion In Public Education: A Historical Analysis Of Quebec’s New Ethics And Religious Culture Program

by

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Abstract

As a Spiritual and Community Animator with the English Montreal School Board, I have been fascinated by the fact that even though Quebec has marched forward in the school secularization process, it has chosen to provide mandatory religious instruction in a normative framework. This vision of secularism, namely “Open Secularism,” has been espoused by recent (1999-2008) government educational policies. The main question for this thesis is as follows – Why is religion still in the mandate of public education in Quebec? This thesis will follow the secularization process of the Quebec educational system which ultimately led to the establishment of the Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) program in 2008. Using the conceptual lens of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of Social and Cultural Reproduction this thesis will also examine how the school system itself perpetuates dominant class structure – an aspect of the Quebec secularization story that is missing from the educational historiography.
Acknowledgements

I could not have written this thesis without the meaningful contributions of close friends, family and academic advisors. I wrote this thesis over a long period of time with many wonderful and life-changing events taking place, including getting married, moving from Montreal and the birth of a son. I would like to sincerely thank my supervisor, Dr. Ruth Sandwell for her tremendous patience, invaluable source of advice and support while guiding me through the writing and research phases of my work. I would also like to thank Dr. Diane Farmer for her flexibility, support and encouragement as a member of my thesis committee and secondary reader. I extend my thanks to all my professors at OISE - especially my historiography professor Dr. David Levine, Principals Alice Buchanan and Susie Douranos of the English Montreal School Board who served as referees for my admission into the program, and Dr. Spencer Boudreau of the Faculty of Education at McGill University who greatly facilitated my development as a student scholar. Finally, I would be amiss if I did not mention the encouragement of Dr. Christopher Potvin and Dr. Paula Bush - both of whom I knew before they were “Dr.” and both of whom I am honoured to call “friend.”

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For as long as I can remember, my parents, John and Filipinas, have instilled in me the importance of education. I owe my success to the sacrifices made by them – so that my sisters Kelly, Laura, and I - could have the opportunity of university education.
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Dedication

For my wife Tegan and son Anton

My two “bookends” to this wonderful educational adventure - one entering my life at the beginning of the journey and one having arrived at journey’s end. You have been a source of inspiration and joy every step of the way.
Introduction

As a Spiritual and Community Animator with the English Montreal School Board for the past 10 years, I have been witness to great socio-religious educational change in the province of Quebec. What has been fascinating to me, and the main topic of exploration for this thesis, is the fact that even though Quebec has marched forward in the school secularization process (a transition from confessional to linguistic school boards), it has chosen to provide mandatory religious instruction in a normative framework. This new course, implemented in 2008, was made compulsory in all Quebec elementary and secondary schools and is entitled Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC). The ERC program is based upon an understanding of secularism, namely, “Open Secularism” that has been espoused by government educational policies and supported by the Bouchard-Taylor Commission on the Reasonable Accommodation of Religious Minorities in Quebec (2008). The ERC program is the culmination of a secularization process that aimed to make “the secular character of Québec’s public schools clear” and “affirm themselves as common, inclusive, democratic and open.”

The transformation of the Quebec public school system is a fascinating case study of secularization and its limits. Simply put, secularization refers to the decline in the influence of organized religion in society. The ‘classic’ secularization story posits that the decline in religion’s significance is historically inevitable, an invariable correlate of industrialization and post-industrial modernity. Proponents of this secularization thesis can be traced back to Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Sigmund Freud.

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1 Gouvernement du Quebec, Ministère de L’Éducation, Loisir et du Sport, Ethics and Religious Culture Program: Brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports (Québec, 2007), 16.
In the Quebec context, after being under centuries of Roman Catholic dominance, the province seemed to experience this type of secularization in the post-1950’s, especially during the period of the Quiet Revolution. The Church that was once “the core institution of the nation,” playing a central role in family life and government social services, had increasingly been relegated to the sidelines of everyday life. What has been unusual however, is religion’s persistence and influence in Quebec’s educational system. Although public confessional schooling no longer exists, religion seems to have been given an unusually prominent, if not altered role, in the Quebec public school system today.

This unusual aspect of Quebec’s educational system has caught the interest of historians and sociologists alike. The most common discourse to explain this “Quebec Anomaly” seems to consistently point to the historic relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and French Canadian national culture. Peter Beyer (1993) believes that Quebec nationalism, “stands as the dominant ideology among Québécois” but despite that Quebecers are still “taking their religion `a la carte”, and that “the dominant menu is still the old one…the one offered by the Catholic Church”. Historian, Preston Jones (2001) goes one step further, stating that Quebec’s Catholic history “was transformed into Quebecois separatism as a secular faith.” Whatever the case, it is understandable

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5 Beyer, “Roman Catholicism in Contemporary Quebec,” 141.
6 Beyer, “Roman Catholicism in Contemporary Quebec,” 155.
that the educational system would reflect these social realities. After all, Lemieux (1990) makes the point that while the Church in Quebec grapples “with its own quest for identity,” it very much “remains the natural referent in the quest for meaning of the very great majority.”\(^8\) Recent census data and other surveys seem to support this. Canadian sociologist Reginald Bibby (2007) points out that when regular mass attendance “was allegedly in the 80%-plus range in the 1960’s, 88% of Quebec residents described themselves as ‘Catholic.’ Today, with regular attendance closer to 20%, no less than 83% continue to identify with Catholicism.”\(^9\) Indeed, religion in Quebec has long been recognized as having “a very close link with national culture”\(^10\) and documented at length in the historical French-Canadian collective memory.

Jocelyn Létourneau (2005) defines historical collective memory as “a set of references including, among others, teleological schemes, clichés, stereotypes, ideas, representations of all sorts, reified characters, fragments of énoncés – all items through which the past, the present, and the future are not only decoded and constructed, but also anticipated.”\(^11\) Létourneau posits that in general, Québécois’ account of their own history is highly linear, revolving around a set of characters and events that intersect with the classical nationalist narrative of Quebec’s historical experience. The general features of this story include:

1. The arrival of the French into the St. Lawrence valley. Aboriginal people are around but the Europeans are driving the course of events.

2. The central event in the history of Quebec is the Conquest of New France by the British in 1759. From then on, the historical experience of Quebec is being expressed as a conflict between archetypal Francophones and Anglophones.

3. Characters such as Jacques Cartier, Samuel de Champlain, Louis-Joseph Papineau, René Lévesque and Lord Durham (a figure much detested by young Québécois) cast in the frame of the enduring conflict between the French and the English. Women, Aboriginals, and immigrants being secondary characters in the story of Quebec.  

But in terms of the question of religion’s persistence in Quebec schools – is there more going on than just the notions of ‘religious identity’ and ‘national historical culture?’ This thesis suggests that there is indeed more and argues that what is missing from the educational historiography of Quebec is how the school system itself resisted the secularization process, and how it continues, through ERC, to act as a conservative force that perpetuates the dominant social class - all the while proclaiming itself to be a religiously pluralistic and modern democratic force for social change.

This thesis is divided into three parts – each addressing a critical research question in the argument of this thesis. Part I examines the question – Why is religion still in the mandate of public education in Quebec? In this section I trace the development of the Quebec educational system from its religious roots to the recent implementation of the ERC program. Here I show how ERC is a reflection Quebec history and the historic purposes of education itself. From this history emerges my second research question in Part II – What are the policy problems inherent to the ERC program? In this section, I situate the ERC primary source documents into the

12 Adapted from Létourneau, “Remembering Our Past,” 74.
broader social landscape of Quebec, examining ERC from a policy point-of-view in the context of Canadian multi-culturalism, human rights, and religious freedom. This section will ultimately show a mismatch between Open Secularism ‘policy proposed’ and Open Secularism ‘policy implemented’ revealing an area that I believe is missing in Quebec’s educational historiography, namely, the role of the school system itself in the secularization process during the time period when the Proulx Report recommendations were being implemented (1999-2008). In Part III I attempt to fill in that historiographical ‘gap,’ using the conceptual lens of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of Social and Cultural Reproduction. Drawing again upon evidence from the ERC primary source documents I argue and describe how the Quebec school system acts as a conservative force, perpetuating historic dominant social class structure. How issues of religious identity are integrally connected to class privilege and social inequality will also be addressed in this chapter as I believe it sheds light into why Quebec, as a modern democratic nation, proposes social policies that seem to run counter to the very idea of diversity itself.

Methodology

This study will use qualitative research methodology based on the following three components:

1) A historical analysis of the Quebec secularization process culminating with the 1999 Proulx Report that became the basis for the Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) program that was implemented in all elementary and secondary schools in September 2008.
2) Historically situating key ERC primary source documents onto the social landscape on which the Quebec secularization process was conducted under the conceptual lens of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of *Social and Cultural Reproduction*.

3) A scholarly application of relevant secondary source literature regarding secularization and the place of religion in public education. I will especially make use of data gathered from the *Bouchard-Taylor Commission* report of 2008. For one year, Gerald Bouchard (political sociologist) and Charles Taylor (political philosopher) hosted public town hall meetings to listen to Quebecers’ views on religion, culture, and Quebecois values. Their final report on those meetings and presentations was released in May 2008 with the recommendation that Quebec adopt an official policy of “Open Secularism.”
Part One

Why is religion still in the mandate of public education in Quebec?

The secularization of the Quebec educational system and Quebec society in general, has its roots in religious history and tradition. The ERC program is the culmination of a long process in which the Quebec school system shifted away from confessional Catholic and Protestant control to secular lay structures. A perspective on the history of the secularization of the Quebec educational system is essential then, to address the first research question of this thesis – Why is religion still in the mandate of public education in Quebec? This section will examine this question in the context of the following four themes: Quebec’s Religious Roots, The Quiet Revolution, The 1999 Proulx Report and The Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) program.

Quebec’s Religious Roots

The history of Quebec began four hundred years ago when it was founded as a French colony (1608-1760). The French Régime was characterized above all else by the dominant influence of the Roman Catholic Church. From the very beginning of the colonization of Quebec, or New France as it was then known, religious orders such as the Jesuits, Recollects, Sulpicians, Brothers Hospitaliers of the Cross, Ursulines, Grey Nuns, and the Congregation of Notre Dame were key in the establishment and operation of the first schools in the colony.13 The original intent of these schools was not so much to provide schooling for the few colonists, but rather to bring the Christian faith to the

13 Spencer Boudreau, Catholic Education: The Quebec Experience (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1999), 9.
While this endeavour was far from successful, catechesis became inseparable from education in general and in fact was considered the most important element of any education.

The British conquest of New France in 1760 had profound political, social, and educational implications for the French colony and the Catholic Church. With the English conquest came a new church rival – the Anglican Church – laying the groundwork for a dual education system based on religious differences. Even though the Articles of Capitulation for Quebec and Montreal in 1759 and 1760 respectively, granted the inhabitants of those cities “the free exercise of the roman religion” educational endeavours for the French were stymied by the loss of church property, restrictions on the recruitment to the religious orders by the British authorities and the loss of clergy and religious who opted to return to France after the defeat. Despite all of this, the French resisted assimilation and stubbornly clung to their traditions and eventually, with the Quebec Act of 1774, the British Crown officially recognized their language, their Catholic religion, and their legal code. This meant that the Church gradually became the predominant provider of social and educational services to its own French-speaking population. Therefore, in return for the freedom to practice Catholicism, a religion that at

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16 Arthur Doughty and Adam Shortt, *Documents Relating to the Constitutional History of Canada, 1759-1791* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1907), 25.
that time was still banned in England, the Catholic Church in effect, was able to guarantee to the British, a ‘loyalty’ or at least a social co-operation of some sorts to the British crown. This arrangement suited both parties well, giving the British a ‘ready-made’ system of administrative control and for the French, who were completely cut-off from France, a protection for their language and culture in a hostile New World.

In terms of schooling, the Catholic Church resisted all attempts to let the responsibility for education fall into the hands of the State, fearing a centralized school system would eventually lead to the assimilation and “protestantization” of the French population. The Fabriques Act of 1824 seemed to mark the beginning of the British realization that not even political union could conceal the major religious and cultural differences between Upper and Lower Canada and that any system of public education in Quebec would have to incorporate the right of both French Catholics and English Protestants to co-exist. Thus, the Fabriques Act granted considerable autonomy to the fabriques (Catholic parish corporations) to use a portion of their budgets towards schools in each parish. In 1829, even more control was ceded to the local level through the Syndics Act, allowing parishes or towns to elect their own ‘school boards’ – a five-member board of commissioners to manage their local schools. And through the Education Act of 1846, Catholic and Protestant minorities won the right to dissent from any system of common schools in order to establish separate denominational school boards, known as ‘dissentient’ boards. These rights and privileges afforded to Catholics

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19 Burgess and Henchey, Between Past and Future, 32.
and Protestants in the Education Act of 1846 eventually provided the fundamental basis of Section 93 of the British North American (BNA) Act.

In 1867, despite the tensions between the colonies – one Francophone and Catholic, the other Anglophone and Protestant - their leaders were able to federate the colonies into a single Canadian dominion within the British Empire. The British North American (BNA) Act of 1867 included within it a constitutional guarantee protecting and privileging Catholic and Protestant schools. It also placed jurisdiction of education in Canada under provincial authority. Section 93 of the BNA Act stated that only the provincial legislature “may exclusively make Laws in relation to Education.” Furthermore, Section 93 went on to declare that: “Nothing in any such Law shall prejudicially affect any Right or Privilege with respect to Denominational Schools which any Class of Persons have by Law in the Province at the Union.”

In other words, the BNA Act of 1867 granted provincial jurisdiction over education while protecting the already existing legal educational rights of Catholics and Protestants to have confessional schooling. From the very beginning of confederation then, the school system in Quebec was divided along religious, not linguistic lines. But because the majority of the French-speaking population was Catholic and the majority of the English-speaking population was Protestant, there was also, de facto, a linguistic division. This separation of the two major religious and linguistic groups in the province of Quebec was further reinforced in 1875 when the responsibility for public confessional education was placed in the hands of the Catholic and Protestant Committees of the Council of Public Instruction. This placement of authority reinforced the dualism and religious character of Quebec

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20 See Appendix A for the full wording of Section 93.
education and “assured the virtual independence of the Catholic and Protestant systems from the political influence of the state.”

Until the major reforms of the 1960’s, these two committees determined the policy and direction of the two systems of public education. During this time period, the larger Catholic system was of course greatly influenced by the Catholic bishops who were sufficiently powerful to influence government in deferring to their wishes insofar as education was concerned.

The Quiet Revolution

The Quiet Revolution was a period of rapid socio-political change experienced in Quebec from 1960-1966. The election of Jean Lesage and his Liberal party in 1960 is generally considered the beginning of the Quiet Revolution. The main issue of the election was indicated by the slogan of the Liberal campaign, “C’est le temps que ça change” (It’s time for change). Quebecers decided to become maîtres chez nous (“masters of our own house”) which meant working in their own French language, being active managers in the business economy, and becoming modern, democratic North Americans but at the same time, remaining attached to their traditions. It was during the period of the Quiet Revolution when French culture began to reassert itself in response to the surrounding Anglo culture and Quebecers began to see “the importance of education as a source of cultural capital for their children.”

Discovering themselves as gifted people, creative in the arts and sciences, they harshly judged their own history, rebelled

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against their past conformity - particularly their inherited Roman Catholicism. The secularization of the Quebec school system had begun.

In 1961 the government established a commission of inquiry on education, which was chaired by Monseigneur Alphonse-Marie Parent. The resulting Parent Report recommended the creation of a department of education, questioned the role of the Catholic Church and aimed to create a modern school system accessible to the entire population. Following the recommendations of the Parent Report and for the purpose of standardization, the government shifted authority away from local school boards and the Church and centralized it in the newly created Ministry of Education in 1964. When the Ministry of Education was created, the Council of Public Instruction was abolished and the Superior Council of Education was established as an advisory body to the Ministry of Education. The Catholic and Protestant Committees remained part of this advisory body and through these committees the government and the Church thus now shared responsibilities for confessional education.

The Québec Liberal Party under Jean Lesage continued to make education their top priority as education was seen as playing a central role in the modernization of Quebec and an instrument to help French Canadians truly become maîtres chez nous. The Parent Report continued to modernize the education system by standardizing school curriculums, abolishing classical colleges, and building regional comprehensive high schools called “polyvalentes,” which provided both general and vocational programs. At the post-secondary level, Québec established tuition-free junior general and vocational colleges called CÉGEPs (College d’Enseignement Général et Professionnel) as well as
expanded university campuses. From the period of 1961 to 1971, the total number of students in secondary schools more than doubled.\textsuperscript{23}

The Parent Commission’s five-volume report reflected the new values that had taken hold in Quebec during the Quiet Revolution and the secularization of the Quebec educational system was well underway. A new public debate began questioning how Catholic and Protestant confessional schools were to be administered in a state that had unified and secularized all other social services that had once been in the domain of the Church.\textsuperscript{24} After decades of debate, the Quebec Government finally decided it was time to de-confessionalize the school boards and in 1997 obtained an abrogation\textsuperscript{25} of section 93 of the BNA Act that guaranteed the right to confessional education in the province. This allowed the government to introduce Bill 118 in June 2000 – a law transforming the school system from confessional to linguistic structures. In the meantime however, the place of religion in schools continued to be an emotional issue for many Quebecers and was something that still needed to be fully addressed.

The Proulx Report

In October 1997, then Education minister Pauline Marois established a task force headed by Jean-Pierre Proulx, an Education professor from the Université de Montréal, whose mandate was “to examine the place of religion in schools, to define relevant


\textsuperscript{24} During the 1970’s and 1980’s a non-confessional ‘moral option’ course was added into public schools for those parents of children who did not want religious instruction. As well, teachers acquired the right to be exempt from teaching religion. See Burgess and Henchey, \textit{Between Past and Future}, 82.

\textsuperscript{25} See Appendix B for exact wording of the amendment to Sec 93.
guidelines, and to propose methods for their implementation.”

Funding for research and legal experts was made available to examine the question of religion in schools in the context of both the Quebec and Canadian human rights charters. The major activity of the task force was conducting public consultations to listen to parents, school personnel and presentations by both religious and secular representatives. The report was over two hundred pages, articulated five equality “principles” and made fourteen recommendations which were all eventually implemented over the next decade by successive Quebec governments. The recommendations were as follows:

1) We recommend that the Government of Québec and the National Assembly confirm the primacy of the right to equality and freedom of conscience guaranteed in the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and, consequently, that they appeal or not renew the current notwithstanding clauses in education legislation which overrides the application of the Charters.

2) We recommend that legislation be enacted to establish a secular system of public schools dispensing preschool, elementary, and secondary education.

3) We recommend that the current denominational statuses held by public schools be revoked.

4) We recommend that the Education Act be amended to stipulate that the values and beliefs of religious groups cannot be used as criteria to set up a public school for the purposes of a specific project.

5) We recommend that the basic school regulations for elementary and secondary education provide for the study of religions from a cultural perspective in place of Catholic or Protestant religious instruction, and the study of religion be compulsory for all children.

6) We recommend that the programs of study of religions from a cultural perspective be developed and implemented in keeping with the guidelines and frameworks proposed by the Commission des programmes d’études of the Ministère de l’Éducation, and with the relevant provisions of the Education Act.

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7) We recommend that the Ministère of L’Éducation encourages flexible measures for teacher-in-service training for the study of religions from a cultural perspective and allocate the necessary financial resources for such measures.

8) We recommend that the Education Act authorize schools to provide common religious and spiritual support services for students of all faiths and that these services be publicly funded.

9) We recommend that the Government define the general objectives of religious and spiritual support services for students in the basic school regulations just as it defines those of other student services: that the local school governing boards draw up programs of activities in keeping with these general objectives; that the school boards set the criteria for hiring religious support specialists in keeping with these same objectives without discrimination.

10) We recommend that the Education Act stipulate that the local school governing boards, may, outside school hours, provide facilities to religious groups that wish to dispense religious instruction or offer services at their own expense to members of their faith attending the school; and that the Act stipulate that the governing boards must exercise this power without discrimination, taking into account any priorities they may legitimately set with the respect to the use of school premises.

11) We recommend that the provisions of the Act respecting the Conseil supérieur de l’éducation pertaining to the Catholic Committee and the Protestant Committee be repealed, that the provisions of the Act respecting the Ministère de L’Éducation pertaining to the associate deputy ministers for the Catholic and Protestant faiths also be repealed and, consequently, that the appropriate changes be made to the organizational structure of the Ministère de L’Éducation.

12) We recommend that section 41 of the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms be amended to recognize, as stated in article 18(4) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, “the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.”

13) We recommend that any other applicable legislative and regulatory provisions be amended in keeping with these recommendations.

14) The last point makes suggestions on how the recommendations should be gradually implemented with general and specific provisions.27

As previously mentioned, the Task Force also presented five “principles” which highlighted the importance of values such as the “equality of all citizens,” “openness to

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diversity,” and “a sense of belonging to the community.” The Proulx Report made clear that should religion have a place in schools it must remain consistent with the following five principles:

1) Québec is a liberal democracy that must, in all areas, uphold the principle of fundamental equality of all citizens.

2) Any Québec state policy on the question of religion in schools must be subject to the requirement of egalitarian neutrality.

3) Schools fall under the shared responsibility of parents, civil society, and the state. This partnership aims to provide all children with a well-rounded and high quality education.

4) Children have fundamental interests with respect to education that must be guaranteed by the state. These fundamental interests, in addition to the development of general cognitive skills, are generally translated into the right of children to be properly prepared for their lives as citizens in a liberal democracy. This type of education must include the development of personal autonomy and critical thinking, the capacity to reason, tolerance, an openness to diversity and a sense of belonging to the community.

5) Religion may have a place in schools, as a contribution to the development of the child as a whole person, provided its teaching is organized in a way that is consistent with the principle of fundamental equality of all citizens, and provided it promotes the attainment of the goals identified as necessary for educating citizens and forging the social bond.28

While the report of the task force was unanimous, the public consultations that preceded the final report and the hearings that occurred clearly indicated that a large percentage of the Quebec population were not at all happy with the recommendations to secularize the school system.29 As evidenced by the hundreds of articles on the subject of religion in schools that appeared in the province’s newspapers – many Quebecers, especially Francophones, feel that part of their identity was being attacked. The Proulx Report itself recognized the polarization caused by this issue while receiving briefs where

they described the atmosphere as sometimes being tense and even hostile toward the committee.\textsuperscript{30} It did not take long for the Quebec government however, despite the lack of consensus on the issue, to start implementing the recommendations of the Proulx report. The abrogation of section 93 of the Canadian Constitution in 1997 opened the door that allowed the abolition of confessional school boards and the establishment of linguistic (French and English) school boards in 1999. Finally a year later, on July 1\textsuperscript{st} 2000 all Catholic and Protestant public schools were abolished. Immediately, the Protestant and Catholic Committees were eliminated and replaced with a non-confessional Religious Affairs Committee (Comité sur les Affaires Religieuses). The committee – composed of parents, educators and experts on society and religion – were given no regulatory powers but can advise the Minister on all issues related to the place of religion in schools, including the current ERC program.\textsuperscript{31} A religious affairs office (Secretariat des Affaires Religieuses) was also created to be the senior executive unit in the Ministry that supports the Religious Affaires Committee and exercises the general responsibilities of the Ministry in regards to policy making, planning, and evaluation.\textsuperscript{32}

The political polarization on the issue seemed to have its effect on the government of the day as they decided, at least for that moment, the right for parents to choose Catholic or Protestant instruction in the new “secular” school system should remain. This one last vestige of the confessional system required students to choose between Catholic, Protestant, or Moral Instruction. The Education minister at that time, Francois Legault,

\textsuperscript{30} Gouvernement du Québec, \textit{Religion in Secular Schools}, 72.
\textsuperscript{31} Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de L’Éducation, Comité sur les Affaires Religieuses, \textit{Religious Rites and Symbols in Schools: Brief to the Minister of Education} (Québec, 2003), 93.
\textsuperscript{32} Gouvernement du Québec, \textit{Religious Rites}, 94.
stated that the government was following four guidelines in making these changes - “social”, “cultural”, “legal,” and “pedagogical” (in order to adopt a gradual approach consistent with the evolution of mindsets and environments). This reference to a “gradual approach” was a clear indication that there was no guarantee that the options for Catholic and Protestant religious education would be around for long. And indeed, in the spring of 2005, the Liberal government of Jean Charest introduced and passed Bill 95 in the National Assembly – the final step in the process of de-confessionalizing the school system. This bill amended the Education Act, making it no longer possible to choose, as of July 1st 2008, between Catholic, Protestant or Moral instruction, to be replaced of course by the new compulsory Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) program. Bill 95 also contained within it a delicate modification of section 41 of the Quebec Charter of Rights and Freedoms to take out the words: “in the public educational establishments” since confessional religious education in public schools was, under the original wording, still guaranteed.

The Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) Program

The new Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) program was up and running at the beginning of the 2008 school year and continues to be part of the Quebec school

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33 Gouvernement du Quebec, Ministère de L’Éducation, Loisir et du Sport, Quebec’s Public School: Responding to the Diversity of Moral and Religious Expectations (Québec, 2000), 4-5.
34 See Appendix C and D for a comparison of the exact wording of Sec 41 of Quebec Charter before and after July 1st 2005.
curriculum today.\textsuperscript{35} The content of the \textit{ERC} program is developed in cycles, not grade levels – which is consistent with the \textit{Québec Education Plan (QEP)}. The program has two main objectives: 1) The Recognition of Others 2) The Pursuit of the Common Good.\textsuperscript{36} There are three overall student competencies that are developed in all cycles: 1) Reflects on ethical questions. 2) Demonstrates an understanding of the phenomenon of religion. 3) Engages in dialogue.\textsuperscript{37} The program also emphasizes specific traditions associated with Quebec’s religious heritage, especially Catholicism and Protestantism. Overall, the aims and objectives of the program aim to reinforce the vision of the \textit{Québec Education Program (QEP)} as an educational process of reflection and questioning, not only with respect to students’ own world-views, their values and those of others, but also with respect to the major issues of living together with differences in modern society. This concern with modernization, which will be discussed in greater depth in Part Two, is reflective in \textit{ERC}’s use of such words as ‘dialogue,’ ‘respect,’ and ‘tolerance.’ On the surface therefore, it seems that the modern Quebec student is expected to master local and regional, as well as global, culture.

In the end, considerable governmental resources were invested in the establishment of \textit{ERC} – a process that took over 10 years to implement - all in the name of ‘equality’, ‘diversity’ and the need for a secularized school system. By tracing the development of the Quebec educational system from its historical religious roots this section has shown why religion still persists in the mandate of Quebec public education.

\textsuperscript{35} The full \textit{Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC)} program can be accessed in English at http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/en/contenus-communs/education/ethics-and-religiousculture-program.
\textsuperscript{36} Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de L’Éducation, Loisir et du Sport, \textit{Québec Education Program: Elementary Education} (Québec, 2008), 296.
\textsuperscript{37} Gouvernement du Québec, \textit{Québec Education Program}, 297.
today. Through its two primary objectives - “the recognition of others” and “the pursuit of the common good” – the ERC program represents a new orientation, based on the recommendations of the Proulx Report and inspired by the Quiet Revolution, that aspires to show fidelity to Quebec’s religious past and at the same time favour an education that respects diversity and an openness to “the practice of dialogue with others.”

For some, the Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) program marks a conclusion in the end of uncertainty regarding the future of religious education in Quebec schools. Some scholars however question if the deconfessionalization process has yet to be completed.

Whatever the future may hold, I believe the issue of ERC’s sustainability has only begun. As this thesis will show next, viewing ERC from a policy ‘point-of-view’ reveals inherent policy problems that do not seem to translate well into the realm of policy-making and Canadian jurisprudence.

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38 Georges Leroux, Éthique, Culture Religieuse, Dialogue: Arguments Pour un Programme (Québec, Canada: Fides, 2007), 31.
Part Two

What are the policy problems inherent to the ERC program?

The ERC Policy Problem

Quebec’s newly implemented Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) program may not be sustainable as a compulsory course because it operates on a philosophy of interculturalism. It therefore is a program that privileges French-Canadian Roman Catholic culture over the equal treatment of cultural and religious minorities. Besides possibly being in violation of Canadian multi-cultural policy and several Human Rights charters, Quebec’s ERC program will continue to be problematic due to the socio-political tensions inherent to Canadian social diversity.

Perhaps the most fundamental theme underlying any study of Quebec is that of the survival of a minority culture in an Anglo-majority North America. Quebec’s traditional “minority and survival mentality” speaks to the fundamental Canadian challenge, namely, “Unity in Diversity.” The ERC pedagogy, as we shall see in Part 3, is reflective of this Canadian problem because it specifically aims to promote Québécois cultural identity – all within a Canadian federation that has been operating from an official policy of multi-culturalism since 1971.

The challenges (and dangers) of this kind of socio-political interplay are described in Michael Ignatieff’s book Blood and Belonging (1993):

Many Canadian liberals...have argued that when a state protects collective rights, whether they be Québécois or aboriginal, the result is inevitably to infringe on individual rights. The cardinal sin of nationalism...is that it....

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40 Donald A. Burgess and Norman Henchey, Between Past and Future: Quebec Education in Transition (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1987), 33.
42 The 1971 Canadian Multicultural Act affirms the rights of Aboriginal people, the status of Canada’s two official languages, and the value and dignity of all citizens regardless of racial, ethnic, language, or religious affiliation.
invariably results in some form of majoritarian tyranny…Quebec may be an example of an ethnic state in the making.\textsuperscript{43}

The \textit{ERC} policy-problem is certainly reflective of this political dynamic and is worth examining because there is currently, according to the recent 2008 Bouchard-Taylor Commission Report, a “profound disagreement on the policy directions that the Québec State should now adopt in respect to secularism.”\textsuperscript{44} Putting it in an educational frame, historian Jocelyn Létourneau (2011) states that the current disagreement represents “an open conflict between partisans of two major politico-ideological currents, with the “conservatives” on the one hand and the “reformists” on the other, for the purpose of establishing the meaning of the story to be told about Quebec’s historical experience…”\textsuperscript{45} It was not the Bouchard-Taylor Report, of course, that created the \textit{ERC} program. However, the philosophical foundations of the program, as we shall see, are definitely in-line with the new collective representations of Quebec society offered by the Bouchard-Taylor Commission.

The Bouchard-Taylor Commission Report

In 2007, the Quebec government under Premier Jean Charest mandated political sociologist Gerard Bouchard and political philosopher Charles Taylor to host a year of public town-hall meetings across the province to address and gather data regarding Quebecers views on religion, culture, and Quebecois values. The process was generally praised nationally and internationally but criticized severely \textit{within} Quebec. Indeed, recent studies at that time

\textsuperscript{44} Gouvernement du Québec, \textit{Building the Future: A Time For Reconciliation} (Quebec, 2008), 141.
seemed to indicate there to be a growing intolerance to “accommodating religious diversity” in Quebec.\textsuperscript{46} The Commission itself noted this observation in their report however cautioning: “We must always be wary of imputing to racism certain attitudes or remarks that in actual fact stem from collective insecurity.”\textsuperscript{47} On May 22\textsuperscript{nd} 2008, the final report on those meetings entitled \textit{Building the Future: A Time for Reconciliation} was released with the recommendation that Quebec adopt an official policy of “Open Secularism.” Open Secularism is a new interpretation of secularism; one that does not “sacrifice the separation of State and Church neutrality towards religions for the benefit of believers’ freedom of religion” but aims to “achieve greater compatibility between the two purposes.”\textsuperscript{48}

Open Secularism

Historically speaking, religion seems to be managed in different ways by different societies based on different understandings of ‘secularism’. For example, the French Revolution produced an intellectual and constitutional tradition of secularism in France that academics generally consider ‘hard’ – in other words, suspicious and antagonistic to religion. This socio-political shift, associated with the French Jacobian tradition, arising from the historical reality of the \textit{ancien regime} was a “joint struggle against despotism and religion – the monarchy, and the Roman Catholic Church”\textsuperscript{49} and still continues today under the regime ‘laïcité’. The American Revolution on the other hand produced a ‘soft’ secularism

\textsuperscript{46} For more on the emergence of Canadian societal attitudes that explicitly reject the notion of accommodation of minority religious beliefs see Azmi (2007) \textit{Accommodation of Religious Minorities in Canada and the Growing Gap Between Human Rights Law and Society} and also Taylor (2007) \textit{Is Religious Diversity a Shared Value?}
\textsuperscript{47} Gouvernement du Québec, \textit{Building the Future}, 238.
\textsuperscript{48} Gouvernement du Québec, \textit{Building the Future}, 148.
characterized by a neutral state with an “indifference towards religion” but allowing for the “encouragement of religious pluralism” as promoted by Protestants of the early Republic. Canada rejected both these revolutions and so are heirs, I would argue, to a tradition not so much of the ‘separation of church and state’ but a tradition of the co-operation between the two. The historical perspective thus reveals an important difference of interpretation on the meaning of ‘secularism’ between France and the one that gradually developed over time in Quebec. As the Bouchard-Taylor Report put it:

In Quebec, secularism allows citizens to express their religious convictions inasmuch as this expression does not infringe other people’s rights and freedoms. It is an institutional arrangement that is aimed at protecting rights and freedoms and not, as in France, a constitutional principle and an identity marker to be defended. The neutrality and separation of the State and the Church are not perceived as ends in themselves but as a means to attain a fundamental twofold objective of respect for moral equality and freedom of conscience.

Thus, Open Secularism aims to “accommodate difference” but at the same time promote within Quebec, “an identity, a culture and a memory.” In this regard, the report contains two principles that underpin the commission’s views on building a conciliatory future for Quebec society. The first is that all Quebecers, including new Quebecers, must be able to recognize themselves in the idea of a (Quebec) nation. The second is that the role of the school will serve as “one of the instruments and places where social cohesion – a sense of belonging to Quebec society – can be developed in all Quebecers.”

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51 Gouvernement du Québec, Building the Future, 141.
52 Gouvernement du Québec, Building the Future (Abridged Version), 94.
Multi-culturalism vs. Inter-culturalism

The Bouchard-Taylor report also made clear that an official policy of “Open Secularism,” at least in Quebec, was to be best practiced based on the philosophy of ‘Inter-culturalism’ not ‘Multiculturalism’. As stated in the report, “Québec as a nation, as recognized by all Quebec political parties and the federal government, is the operational framework for inter-culturalism.” The report goes on to propose that the Québec government “adopt an official text such as a statute, a policy statement or a declaration that broadly defines inter-culturalism. This text would thus constitute a key component of the social blueprint and would serve as a frame of reference for the elaboration of policies and programs.”

Canada’s policy on multi-culturalism and Quebec’s inter-culturalism is an important distinction to understand. Many people in Quebec have a great deal of suspicion and anxiety about multi-culturalism, seeing it as a threat to the dominance of French culture in Quebec. Inter-culturalism on the other hand, is a notion that distinguishes between the host culture that deserves protection and the incoming cultures that deserve respect. In Quebec, inter-culturalism seeks to reconcile “ethno-cultural diversity with the continuity of the French-speaking core and the preservation of the social link.” This affords security to Quebecers of French-Canadian origin that French will remain the common public culture.

Political philosopher Gregory Baum (2010) describes succinctly the difference in experience between ‘multi-culturalism’ and ‘inter-culturalism’ in Canada, emphasizing both the religious and linguistic factors:

56 Burgess and Henchey, *Between Past and Future*, 214.
Progressive Christians in English Canada foster multiculturalism and wrestle against prejudice and discrimination without feeling the need to protect the English language and the Canadian identity. In Quebec, progressive citizens, both secular and Christian practice the double emphasis: they welcome plurality and at the same time defend and foster the host culture, lest the inherited identity be blown away with the wind.\(^{58}\)

The province’s priority in protecting their cultural identity perhaps explains why newer immigrant spiritualities are sometimes perceived as more of a threat than perhaps they would be in other provinces. For example, recently the Quebec National Assembly unanimously, by a vote of 113 to zero, adopted a motion supporting the decision to bar four Sikhs who came to the Assembly to testify on Bill 94 (concerning the issue of Islamic face covering) because they were wearing kirpans.\(^{59}\) This was in light of the fact that in 2006 the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously ruled that the kirpan is not a weapon but a religious symbol.\(^{60}\) In applauding the exclusion of the Sikh delegation, Louise Beaudoin, the Parti Quebeçois MNA who presented the motion, clarified the position of her party: “Multiculturalism might be a Canadian value…But it is not a Quebec one.”\(^{61}\)

The notion of sacrificing ‘personal’ rights for ‘collective’ rights has always been a tension seen in the Canadian story. Most notably in Quebec’s recent history was the passage of Bill 101 in 1977, also known as the “Charter of the French Language,” passed by the Parti

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\(^{60}\) Justice Louise Charron wrote in her decision: “A total prohibition against wearing a kirpan to school undermines the value of this religious symbol and sends students the message that some religious practices do not merit the same protection as others.” See Azmi (2007).

Québécois government. Bill 101 was a comprehensive law that made French the official language of government, the courts, business and work, signs and posters, professions and institutions such as education. Francophone Quebeckers rejoiced in this as a victory for the human right of ‘cultural self-determinism.’ Anglophone Quebeckers felt however that Bill 101 limited their personal human rights, especially in regards to access to English language schools. Since then, there have been continuous court challenges to the constitutionality of the law especially in light of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms proclaimed in 1982. In this context and especially in the social context of inter-culturalism it is perhaps easier to understand why the Quebec government decided - despite the criticism that ‘collective’ rights were usurping ‘personal’ rights - that ERC would and should be mandatory for all students. After all, the ERC program is not just about learning about various religious cultures – it is about promoting the “common good.” In a province where the majority of its citizens speak French and where over 83% of the population have an identity of reference to the Roman Catholic faith – ERC I believe is a reflection of the fundamental challenge of balancing both collective and personal rights.

Loyola High School vs. Ministère de L’Éducation

Since its implementation, there have been various criticisms of the ERC program – both secular and religious. On one side of the debate, secularists believe that grouping ethics, religious culture, and secular worldviews in a single course necessarily involves dealing with

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62 Burgess and Henchey, Between Past and Future, 29-30.
63 See Appendix F for Religious Demographics in Quebec (2001 Census).
moral issues from a religious perspective. On the other side, some Christians denounce the program as too secular or relativistic, basing their arguments on the principle that the compulsory nature of the program violates Charter rights regarding the freedom of conscience. One of the most prominent cases was one that involved Loyola High School, a private Jesuit high school in Montreal. Their position was that private religious schools should be exempt from the new ERC program or at least be given some leeway in the pedagogical approach to the implementation of the competencies with their own “equivalent” program. The Ministry of Education refused this and the school referred the matter to the courts. In his testimonial report, expert witness for the school Douglas Farrow argued before a Quebec superior court judge, that a private Catholic school such as Loyola should be exempt from teaching the new ERC program because “the imposition of this curriculum (with its mandatory pedagogy) on Catholic schools constitutes…a breach of fundamental rights.” In his testimony, Farrow argues that a “universal imposition” of a secular system not only deprives “parents of their right to choose…it fundamentally subverts the democratic process by subjecting all young citizens to a compulsory spiritual formation designed and delivered according to a state-approved ideology.” He argues further that this re-contextualized “state-approved” religion course goes against the Canadian and Quebec Charters as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that “expressly recognizes that parents ‘have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.’” The case was heard in June 2009 and a decision in favour of Loyola’s request to teach an equivalent course from a Catholic

65 For a good summary of all sides of this debate see Ronald W. Morris, “Cultivating Reflection and Understanding: Foundations and Orientations of Québec’s Ethics and Religious Culture Program,” Religion & Education 38 (2011): 188-211.
67 Cour Supérieure, On the Ethics and Religious Culture Program, 17.
68 Cour Supérieure, On the Ethics and Religious Culture Program, 17.
perspective was rendered a year later in June 2010. The judge sided with Loyola concluding that the Ministry’s imposition of the ERC program on a private Catholic school violated Article 3 of the Quebec Charter which guarantees freedom of religion.\textsuperscript{69} The judge compared the Ministry’s attempt to impose the teaching of ethics and religion from a secular perspective to the “order given to Galileo by the Inquisition to renounce Copernican cosmology.”\textsuperscript{70} However, the government appealed and now the Supreme Court of Canada has decided to hear the case and so the final outcome is yet to be determined.

The Loyola court case highlights how religious freedom actually imposes limits on the extent to which public schools can promote students’ sympathetic imagination for other religions. This is the paradox of religious freedom – that religiously intolerant beliefs as opposed, for instance, to racially intolerant beliefs – are entitled to a most scrupulous protection. According to the ERC secondary guidelines for instance, students “must demonstrate openness, curiosity and a critical sense in order to weigh different ways of thinking, being and acting or to consider moral references different from their own.”\textsuperscript{71} And, in a list of “processes that hinder dialogue,” students are encouraged to consider how appeals to authority can be problematic.\textsuperscript{72} Such recognition in and of itself is not problematic. The problem is not knowing how exactly this emphasis would be communicated in the classroom. So for example, critiques of appeals to authority would not necessarily be accompanied by the recognition that reliance on traditional or scripturally based moral views could be beneficial for

\textsuperscript{70} Cour Supérieure du Québec, \textit{Loyola High School et John Zucchi Demandeurs}, 62 (translation by author).
\textsuperscript{72} Gouvernement du Québec, \textit{Secondary education update}, 512.
both the individual and society. The resulting impression for students (and their parents) may be that their particular school favours religions that are open-ended rather than the more conservative ones that rely more on authority and tradition. The Loyola court case highlights tensions that aptly place the “ERC Policy Problem” in the frame of human rights and religious freedom.

Human Rights and Religious Freedom

The divide between law and society relating to religious creed represents a significant challenge to both Canadian society at large and the human rights community within. Historically speaking, in Canada, religious liberty under the law has not been an issue that emerged as the state matured; rather it is an issue that has been at play since the country’s inception. Never stemming from any constitutional declaration or statue that was explicitly devoted to it, religious tolerance, especially in Quebec, was dictated more by the need of the British Regime to ensure some degree of collaboration and cooperation by its Catholic subjects.\(^73\) The concept of religious freedom and secularism in Quebec gradually became a mode of governance rather than a product of a political philosophy. However, this kind of secularism today faces new challenges stemming from Quebec social diversity and a culture of human rights that gradually asserted itself in Quebec and Canada in the second half of the 20\(^{th}\) century through the Canadian Bill of Rights (1960), the Quebec Charter of Human Rights (1975), and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982). Given the unique cultural history of the province, religious liberty in Quebec, according to the 2008 Bouchard-Taylor Commission, cannot simply be understood through simple and unequivocal formulas such as, “the separation of Church and State,” “state neutrality towards religions” or “the removal of

\(^{73}\) Gouvernement du Québec, Building the Future (Abridged Version), 140.
religion from public space” - though they may all contain part of the truth. In the commission’s view, religious freedom will depend on a Quebec secularism that “recognizes the need for the State to be neutral (statutes and public institutions must not favour any religion or secular conception) but it also acknowledges the importance for some people of the spiritual dimension of existence and, consequently, the protection of freedom of conscience and religion.” It is in light of this definition of secularism, Open Secularism, that the commission agreed with the 1999 Proulx Report that the Quebec school system, instead of completely ousting religion from the curriculum, should provide “a program that allows students to acquire the knowledge necessary to understand the religious phenomenon and its expressions in Québec and elsewhere and to develop the skills necessary for cohabitation in the context of a diversified society, objectives that are found in the Ethics and Religious Culture Program.” In the Human Rights and Religious Freedom frame of debate however it remains to be seen if the ERC program can remain sustainable. How will ongoing religious accommodation issues before the courts affect current educational policy? Could stricter interpretations on the meaning of “secularism” be on the horizon? Will the ERC program (and Quebec society for that matter) be able to resist the kind of Quebeçois ethnic nationalism that seems incompatible with universal human rights? From a policy point-of-view, Open Secularism seems to be a policy that is difficult to implement because Quebec, though striving to preserve its culture and traditions, is also part of the modern “global village.”

74 Gouvernement du Québec, Building the Future (Abridged Version), 135.
75 Gouvernement du Québec, Building the Future (Abridged Version), 140.
76 Gouvernement du Québec, Building the Future (Abridged Version), 141.
Big Policies/Small World

Against the backdrop of globalization, reform has become a central item on most educational agendas. In Quebec, as in most countries and federal provinces, educational reform stands out as a strategic area for intervention that can promote the “modernization of nations, enhance the viability of economic systems within world markets, and link macro issues of regulation with micro patterns of socialization and child rearing.”77 Therefore, instead of making students “specialists” in the Catholic or Protestant faith as Quebec religion programs aimed to do so in the past, this new ERC approach makes connections between religion and globalization.

“Globalization” refers to the formation of world systems, as distinct from “Internationalization” which presupposes nations as the essential unit. Globalization, according to Martin Albrow, “refers to all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, global society.”78 One of the most common interpretations of globalization is the idea that the world is becoming more uniform and standardized, through a technological, commercial, and cultural synchronization emanating from the West. Another common notion is that a key aspect of globalization, being tied up with modernity, is a “linguistic, cultural and ideological convergence.”79 Seen in the context of globalization, it is theoretically possible for a state to be secular and the population largely religious and conversely for a state to be religious and its population to be secularized. Even

though, “over the long haul of democracy, there is a logical tendency for the superstructure and the substructure to align”\textsuperscript{80} eventually leading toward convergence and consensus.

However, Stephen J. Ball in his article \textit{Big Policies, small world: an introduction to international perspectives in education policy} (1998) argues that globalization does not always lead to convergence because big policy ideas can and are often re-contextualized locally. Ball states that, “while it may well be possible to discern a set of principles or a theoretical model underlying policy – neoliberalism, new institutional economics, public choice theory or whatever – these rarely if ever translate into policy texts or practice in direct or pristine form.”\textsuperscript{81} The purpose for fully secularizing the school system according to the Proulx Report was clear: “In 1975, the National Assembly enthroned the right to equality and freedom of conscience and religion to the \textit{Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms}. Like the National Assembly, we believe that this right and this freedom, with the other fundamental rights guaranteed in the Québec Charter, are the ‘foundation of justice and peace.’ We have come to the conclusion, that to provide for the full exercise of these rights, Québec must replace its current denominational school system by a secular school system and consequently redefine the place of religion in schools.”\textsuperscript{82} Applying Ball’s globalization theory to the context of the Quebec school secularization process, we can see how Open Secularism, as a ‘big’ policy idea was re-contextualized by the school system, despite the principles outlined in the 1999 Proulx Report, to manifest itself pedagogically in the form of the current 2008 \textit{ERC} program – a \textbf{mandatory} course in all elementary and secondary schools, with an emphasis on the Christian (especially Roman Catholic) tradition.

\textsuperscript{80} Kosmin, “Public Opinion and Support,” 11.
\textsuperscript{82} Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l’Éducation, \textit{Religion in Secular Schools: A New Perspective for Québec, Abridged Version} (Québec, 1999), 85.
What this reveals then, from a policy point-of-view, is a mismatch between Open Secularism ‘policy proposed’ and Open Secularism ‘policy implemented’. This interesting observation shows not only how Quebec educational policy-making was affected by its cultural and historical contexts but also how the Quebec school system seemed to both embrace and resist secularization at the same time. As Ball states, “there is no essential determinacy to the ways in which globalization pressures work, since for various globalization pressures there are sites of resistance and counter movement.” The Quebec secularization historiography seems to be a good example, educationally speaking at least, of how globalization is not the only process that affects the nation-state.

By analyzing ERC from a policy point-of-view, this chapter has introduced the notion that the school system itself can be a site of resistance, act conservatively, and be - as shown in the context of ERC - a limiter of secularization. And although the policy documents surely indicate that the program is oriented to respecting the freedom of religion of all citizens; it is also possible nonetheless to draw evidence from the curriculum itself that the program is attempting, to some extent, to superimpose a particular view of religion/religions on pupils. This aspect of the Quebec education secularization story is what I believe is missing from its historiography. In the next section I attempt to fill in that historiographical ‘gap’ through the conceptual lens of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of Social and Cultural Reproduction.

Part Three

How does the Quebec school system, and the ERC program in particular, perpetuate Quebec dominant social class structure?

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance. The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things consciousness, and therefore think. Insofar, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch.

Karl Marx, The German Ideology (1845)

Culture is central to the maintenance and reproduction of society. Cultural reproduction refers to the transmission of existing cultural values and norms from generation to generation and by the mechanisms by which continuity is sustained across time. The concept of Social and Cultural Reproduction was first developed by French sociologist and cultural theorist Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) who saw the function of the education system as reproducing the culture of the dominant classes, thus helping to ensure their continued dominance. Bourdieu built upon Marxist theory by stating that “not only are the ‘ruling ideas, in every age, the ideas of the ruling class’, but that the ruling ideas themselves reinforce the rule of that class, and that they succeed in doing so by establishing themselves as ‘legitimate’, that is, by concealing their basis in the

(economic and political) power of the ruling class.”

His ideas radically transformed the field of the Sociology of Schooling by challenging the idea of educational systems as instruments of social mobility. Bourdieu presented formal schooling, rather, as a conservative force, an instrument used to legitimate social hierarchy. In this third and final section, using the conceptual lens of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of *Social and Cultural Reproduction*, I address what I believe is missing from the current educational historiography of the Quebec secularization story – namely, how the school system acts as a conservative force and how it (and the *ERC* program in particular) perpetuates dominant social class structure in Quebec. First however, by way of introduction, a brief discussion on what Bourdieu means by “social class.”

**Social Class**

Bourdieu’s usage of “social class” remains implicit in much of his work, never being presented as an explicit formulation of class typology. What is clear however is that for Bourdieu, social class is “formed as a group and mobilized” with “real social and historical effects.”

Bourdieu posited that clusters of individuals that make up social classes develop cultural peculiarities and these differences can result in symbolic struggles “in which members of those clusters seek to establish both the superiority of their peculiarities and an official sanction for them.” In terms of schooling, class struggles are actually, as we shall explore later in this chapter, symbolic struggles because the “educated are powerful in virtue of the official

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87 Crossley, “Social class,” 94.
legitimacy of their (educated) culture and they use their power to maintain its legitimacy.”

Control over the knowledge that is valued, sanctioned and rewarded within the education system is thus an important aspect of social class and key in understanding Bourdieu’s analysis of social and cultural reproduction processes.

Social and Cultural Reproduction

Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of *Social and Cultural Reproduction* posits that education plays an important role in reproducing social inequality and social exclusion. His theory suggests that a lack of familiarity with the dominant culture (due to the absence of the proper disposition that typically comes from such familiarity) serves as a barrier to upward mobility for the non-dominant lower class. The reproduction of this inequality is facilitated in schools by teachers’ pedagogic actions that promote the cultural capital of the dominant class by rewarding students who possess such capital and by penalizing others who do not. Success in the education system is therefore facilitated by the possession of cultural capital and of a higher-class or dominant class habitus that working-class pupils and newcomers (i.e. immigrants) do not generally possess. Simply put, according to Bourdieu, schools function in such a way as to legitimate class inequalities and are thus central agents of social exclusion and reproduction. It is the school’s relative autonomy that enables it to reproduce the structure of class relations so effectively and discreetly.  

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88 Crossley, “Social class,” 94.
Cultural Capital and Habitus

*Cultural capital* is widely recognized as one of the late Pierre Bourdieu’s signature concepts. According to Bourdieu (1977), *cultural capital* refers to the familiarity with the dominant culture in a society. It consists “mainly of linguistic and cultural competence and that relationship of familiarity with culture which can only be produced by family upbringing when it transmits the dominant culture.”\(^{90}\) Because the school system assumes the possession of the dominant *cultural capital*, it makes it very difficult for newcomers or pupils raised outside of dominant class culture to succeed in the school system if they feel they just don’t ‘fit’ in.\(^{91}\) As Bourdieu states, education “is in fact one of the most effective means of perpetuating the existing social pattern, as it provides an apparent justification for social inequalities and gives recognition to the cultural heritage, that is, to a social gift treated as a natural one.”\(^{92}\) In sum, children exposed to the dominant culture at home benefit in schools where teachers recognize and reward this advantage, which inversely subjects pupils from the non-dominant class to a system of ‘symbolic violence’ that only rewards the dominant cultural class.

Theoretically speaking, *habitus* is a “system of dispositions which acts as mediation between structures and practice.”\(^{93}\) Like *cultural capital*, *habitus* is transmitted in the home. The difference being however that *habitus* is a set of attitudes and values whereas *cultural capital* consists of the possession of legitimate knowledge. The term *dominant habitus* refers to a set of


\(^{91}\) For an interesting study on the feeling of “fitting in” and university drop out rates, see Wolfgang Lehmann, “‘I just didn’t feel like I fit in’: The role of habitus in university dropout decisions,” *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 37 (2007).


\(^{93}\) Bourdieu, “Cultural Reproduction”, 487.
attitudes and values held by the dominant class. An example of this would be the positive attitude towards education that make up part of the dominant class habitus: “…the system of dispositions towards the school understood as a propensity to consent to the investments in time, effort and money necessary to conserve and to increase cultural capital.”94 According to Bourdieu then, non-dominant class students are more likely to self-exclude from school than middle or upper-class students precisely because they have a non-dominant or working-class habitus: “…the negative predispositions towards the school which result in the self-elimination of most children from the most culturally unfavoured classes and sections of a class – such as self-depreciation, devaluation of the school and its sanctions, or a resigned attitude of failure and exclusion – must be understood as an anticipation, based upon the unconscious estimation of the objective probabilities of success possessed by the whole category…”95

The concept of dominant habitus is an important one in the Quebec ERC context because, as stated by the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, the beginning of the “development of a feeling of belonging to Québec society”96 starts “with the schools, because of the role they play in socialization.”97 This point brings us naturally to Bourdieu’s concept of “social space” or, as he named it, Field.

The Field of Quebec Education and its ERC Pedagogical Implications

There are many analogies and notions regarding Bourdieu’s idea of Field. The most important notion being, I believe for in the argument of this thesis, the idea that there are multiple social fields (i.e. the economic field, the education field, etc…) and that “collectives of people

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94 Bourdieu, “Cultural Reproduction”, 495.
95 Bourdieu, “Cultural Reproduction”, 495.
97 Gouvernement du Québec, Building the Future, 91.
occupy more than one social field at a time.”

Bourdieu posited that large fields could be divided into subfields, and each, while following the overall logic of its field, could have its own “internal logics, rules and regularities.”

Fields and subfields are thus inter-dependent, operating in a “mutual process of influence and ongoing co-construction.”

Applying Bourdieu’s notion of field to the ERC-Quebec context, it is important to recognize that the educational field is actually a subfield of the Quebec political field – a field that includes the politics of cultural identity (including Quebec sovereignty) intensified by the pressures of globalization and an increasing diversity.

Just as I described above the interconnection between habitus and cultural capital, there is a similarly important close dynamic between habitus and field. Bourdieu describes this dynamic as a social reality existing, “so to speak, twice, in things and in minds, in fields and in habitus, outside and inside social agents. And when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it is like a ‘fish in water’: it does not feel the weight of the water and it takes the world about itself for granted.”

Over time then, the school system according to Bourdieu, “reacts to the solicitations of the field in a roughly coherent and systematic manner.” For Bourdieu, Education was the field that “reproduced itself more than others, and those agents who occupied dominant positions were deeply imbued with its practices and discourses.” Under the Bourdieusian lens of Field, one can see how the Quebec educational field, being a subfield of the political field, produced ERC conservative pedagogical manifestations, specifically:

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99 Thomson, “Field,” 70.
100 Thomson, “Field,” 69.
102 Bourdieu and Wacquant, An Invitation, 18.
103 Thomson, “Field,” 74.
1) A mandatory framework:

In this context, the Ministère intends to determine the type of instruction the school should provide to all students on ethical and religious issues. This responsibility cannot be avoided.\(^\text{104}\)

2) An emphasis on Christianity:

In this regard, emphasis will be placed on Québec’s religious heritage. The historical and cultural importance of Catholicism and Protestantism will be given particular prominence.\(^\text{105}\)

3) An ethical component that aims to transmit a common Quebec culture based on the two main objectives of the ERC program – the “Recognition of Others” and “Pursuit of the common good”:

These two objectives take into account diversity, and contribute to further enhancing community life and to encouraging the construction of a truly common public culture, that is, to sharing the underlying principles on which community life in Québec is based.\(^\text{106}\)

The implementation of a common ethics and religious culture program for all students in Québec is rooted in the government’s will to best serve the interests of everyone involved (students, parents, school staff and society as a whole). This decision attests to the government’s intent to respect contemporary sensitivities with regard to equal treatment of people and groups and not to perpetuate a system of exceptions that contravenes the fundamental rights recognized by the Charters, while contributing to transmitting Québec culture, which has particularly been shaped by Catholic and Protestant traditions.\(^\text{107}\)

From the above quotes, one can begin to see the problematic nature of ERC, as it strives to implement a policy of secular neutrality while at the same time actively cultivate a French-Canadian tradition of social solidarity or “common good” through religious heritage. The key questions thus become – What is the “common good” for Quebec society? Who decides and

\(^{104}\) Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de L’Éducation, Loisir et du Sport, Establishment of an ethics and religious culture program: Providing future direction for all Québec youth (Quebec, 2005), 4.

\(^{105}\) Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de L’Éducation, Loisir et du Sport, Québec Education Program: Elementary Education (Québec, 2008), 293.

\(^{106}\) Gouvernement du Québec, Québec Education Program, 296.

\(^{107}\) Gouvernement du Québec, Québec Education Program, 4.
whose ethics, values, and morals shall the school system promote? A possible interpretation of the statement that the government will not “perpetuate a system of exceptions” may in fact manifest itself as a low tolerance for any kind of religious accommodation of diversity. For example, how will new immigrant spiritualities be incorporated into Quebec common culture if there are to be no “exceptions?” How can immigrant students from non-Christian religions truly feel included participating in a mandatory ERC course whose principal aim is “transmitting Québec culture?”

Would they not feel like ‘fish out of water’ or as exceptions to the ‘norm?’

This seemed to be recently played out in Quebec with the Parti Québécois’ “Charter of Values” social policy proposal, also known as Bill 60. The bill aimed to place limitations on the displaying of religious symbols and especially the wearing of religious symbols and clothing by those working in government, including teachers and nurses. Many in the media and in academia called the policies of the “Charter of Values” xenophobic, believing that it would eventually drive newcomers arriving in Quebec to leave in fairly short order for more “accommodating” pastures. The proposed “Charter of Values,” was controversial because while it would ban religious people from wearing headscarves, turbans, and kippas during work hours in the interest of fairness and equality – it would allow particular symbols such as Christmas trees and crucifixes to remain on display or be worn. However, it is important to note that in regards to Bill 60 there were strong divisions within the government and ultimately, after losing the confidence of Québec voters on the issue, the Parti Québécois suffered a significant defeat in

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108 Gouvernement du Québec, Establishment, 4.
109 Bill 60 was officially tabled on November 7, 2013 under the formal title: Charter Affirming The Values Of Secularism And The Religious Neutrality Of The State, As Well As The Equality Of Men And Women, And The Framing Of Accommodation Requests.
the 2014 election. The issue of course is far from over as it is clear that Quebec politicians, even within Nationalist parties, will continue to debate whether the Canadian Charter or the Sovereignty option would best protect Quebec identity.\textsuperscript{111} Comparing the “Charter of Values” social context to the \textit{ERC} situation is helpful because in doing so, one could ponder if the “underlying principles on which community life in Québec is based” might similarity include all the Catholic cultural meanings and nuances of French-Canadian Catholic culture to the exclusion of others? Interestingly this would also suggest, some sort of \textit{co-operation}, at least to some extent, between the government and the Catholic Church - the religion of the dominant social class in Quebec. In the next section, I return to the primary source documents to explore this idea.

\textbf{Catholic Leadership “Non-interference”}

While the primary documents show strong resistance to the implementation of \textit{ERC} on the part of Catholic lay groups\textsuperscript{112}, they also show, interestingly and surprisingly, little opposition from the leadership of the Church, namely, the Assembly of Québec Catholic Bishops (AQCB). At the time, a coalition of religious groups (mainly Catholic) was formed to pool their resources and voice a united opposition to the government’s plans. The group was called “La Coalition en


\textsuperscript{112} One of the earliest attempts of resistance to \textit{ERC} came from within the Ministry of Education itself - the Catholic Committee – the committee that the Proulx report recommended be abolished. They made a counter-proposal to the Proulx Report recommendations suggesting that rather than abolishing the right to religious education, a better solution would be to extend the right to religious education to other religious groups while continuing to offer a moral education course (non-confessional) for those parents who preferred this option.
Faveur du Droit des Parents de Choisir l’École de leur Préférence” and listed 66 members consisting of various groups such teacher and school administrator organizations, the Quebec Association of Independent Schools, university Theological departments, and diocesan offices of Education from across the province. “La Coalition” raised strong arguments against the ERC program in the belief that the State should not intervene in the area of “religious culture.” They felt that the State (or the Ministère) would fail to respect students’ right to freedom of conscience and religion as guaranteed in the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.*

Conspicuously absent from list of 66 was the Assembly of Québec Catholic Bishops. Theirs was a very nuanced position in contrast to “La Coalition.” The Catholic bishops, while having some reservations about the new ERC program, stated quite clearly that religious freedom was actually not being violated: “the program makes a serious, praiseworthy effort to ensure freedom of conscience, but we still have doubts concerning its implementation. The program, in itself, generally respects students’ freedom of conscience, given that it does not promote any one religion and opens students’ minds to other, non-religious viewpoints.” The AQCB response went on to say that it wished to remain in a “spirit of vigilant collaboration” with the government and hoped that they would be “kept informed on ongoing assessments of the program’s implementation.” Seen from a Bourdieusian perspective, a “non-interference” position by the leadership of the Catholic Church seems to make sense with an ERC program implemented by the school system that would continue to maintain and promote the dominant-class religious culture of Quebec anyway. In the next chapter, I use the ERC curriculum itself to bear evidence

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113 See Appendix E for a complete member listing of “La Coalition.”
on this point. Key to the argument that the school system acts conservatively maintaining
dominant-class religious culture - despite secularization - is the understanding of what exactly the
term “religious culture” means in the ERC curriculum.

“Religious Culture” in the ERC Curriculum

Whenever the term “religious culture” is used in the ERC curriculum, it is in most places
followed up with a clarification that Quebec’s culture “has particularly been shaped by Catholic
and Protestant traditions.”¹¹⁷ This perspective is an inductive approach to teaching that
familiarizes students with Quebec’s religious heritage and then to other religions. As the
curriculum states, “Students will learn and increase their knowledge of the important aspects of
Catholic and Protestant Christian traditions, based on their manifestations in Québec culture.”¹¹⁸

A special “Reminder” for teachers in the “Teaching Guidelines” explains the approach in this
way:

Reminder

This program devotes special attention to the religious heritage of our society. The historical and cultural importance of Catholicism and Protestantism in Québec is especially highlighted, while Judaism and Native spirituality, which have also marked this heritage, are also covered, along with other religions and spiritual traditions that contribute to present-day Québec culture and that inspire different ways of thinking, being and acting.¹¹⁹

Because “other” religions are presented as “different”, what seems to be an open and inclusive
intention to teach about different faiths runs the risk of being exclusive, regionalistic, and
nationalistic. A careful read of the ERC curriculum reveals that quite a lot of space is used to
present Christianity as “culture” whereas “other religions” are treated as just that – “religious.”

¹¹⁷ Gouvernement du Québec, Establishment, 4.
¹¹⁸ Gouvernement du Québec, Establishment, 8.
¹¹⁹ Gouvernement du Québec, Québec Education Program, 341.
For example, in terms of compulsory content, Christianity (and its cultural importance) is the only religion that must be covered “throughout each year of a cycle.” Other religions may be covered over the course of a cycle but “depending on the reality and the needs of the class.”

Furthermore, while cycle themes may indeed be compulsory, the religious content provided is not. So while the curriculum does provide examples of non-Christian religious content for teachers to teach, the guidelines are clear: “The examples regarding related content are not compulsory.” These details of the ERC curriculum are important to note because what this means is that religions not considered to be ‘cultural’ or ‘religious’ heritage in Quebec, do not necessarily ‘stand in their own right’ in the ERC program, so to speak. For example, Buddhist ‘celebrations’ might only be studied in terms of Christian ‘celebrations.’ Or in studying the theme of ‘Family celebrations,’ Buddhism need not even be mentioned. The danger of this pedagogy is obvious - the doctrines, myths, and rituals of non-Christian religions are optional in ERC and are thus potentially alienated from the Quebec-Canadian context. This forms a dichotomy where Christianity (especially Quebec Catholicism) is naturally presented as “our” culture reflected by “our” common history; whereas other religions, especially newer immigrant spiritualities, are presented as “their” religion and “different.”

**ERC: A Production of Common Sense**

Seen through the conceptual lens of Bourdieu’s theory of *Social and Cultural Reproduction*, it is not hard to see how the ERC program serves as a conservative force as well as a form of symbolic domination. Symbolic domination is, in the words of Bourdieu, “something

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120 Gouvernement du Québec, *Québec Education Program*, 341.
121 Gouvernement du Québec, *Québec Education Program*, 341.
122 See Appendix G for a listing of the compulsory religious themes and related content.
123 Gouvernement du Québec, *Québec Education Program*, 341.
you absorb like air, something you don’t feel pressured by; it is everywhere and nowhere, and to escape from that is very difficult.”

ERC is arguably a particularly insidious form of violence because of its subtleness and “common sense” feel of it. It is a program promulgated by the government, through the school, in a way that legitimizes itself as a true representation of the ‘common culture’ or at least what the ‘common culture’- according to the dominant class – believes it should be. This thesis is arguing in essence, that ERC has framed the majority religion in Quebec, Christianity, as ‘culture and heritage’ while labeling others –Sikh, Muslim, and Jewish – as ‘religious.’

Common Sense and Symbolic Domination

In his book Language and Symbolic Power, Bourdieu (1991) states that symbolic capital has formidable social power because it can take people’s “disquiet, anxiety, expectation, worry” and bring it into an explicit existence, an explicit consensus of common sense. The resulting social practices, including social policies, may not make sense in the rest of Canada – many being seen as infringements on individual rights - but in Quebec it may make “common sense” in the context of a habitus of cultural preservation. The Charter of the French Language (Bill 101), the Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) program, and the recent “Charter of Values” are just a few examples. What they all seem to represent is what Bourdieu calls the “symbolic struggle for the production of common sense.”

In the words of former Quebec Premier Bernard Landry speaking at forum organized by the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste, a Quebec

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126 Bourdieu, “Social Space,” 239.
sovereignist group, the proposed “Charter of Values” is “full of common sense.” What his statement shows, in the context of Bourdieu, is that the provincial government not only is affected by Quebec *habitus* but in turn reproduces it – thus affirming to the public that they (the government) are the *legitimate* and *obvious* protectors of Quebec culture. This is the “common sense” narrative of symbolic domination as it is used to shape and influence society, especially seen in the history of schooling.

**Schools and the Shaping of Society**

Educational historians have long recognized how schools in Canada have been involved in the state’s mission to influence society – especially when it comes to the shaping of its values and ethics. Educational historian Stuart Schoenfeld writes that the “moral dimension of civil society is taught in various places, but a central location has been the public school.”

Introduced in the middle of the 1800’s, public schools were considered instrumental for shaping what school promoter Egerton Ryerson referred to as “the state of public mind.” Education was indeed more than just about the building up of the nation-state – it was also about providing children with a kind of canon for good citizenship and the building up of a common Christian culture that, as educational historian Joan Sangster writes, “encapsulated the twinned aims of Canada’s nation-building project: to civilize and acculturate both the poor and the colonized to

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middle-class, Western, white and Anglo norms.”

And in Quebec, where Catholic Church leaders were very cautious about embracing any Protestant-dominated government ideologies, this had the effect of solidifying the Catholic Church’s power “to wield tremendous influence in defining and regulating morality” – especially in their schools. Educational historian Bruce Curtis argues that the British conquerors of New France believed that “schooling was a sort of machine that could create solidarity across differences of language, ethnicity, class, and religion by fostering interpersonal familiarity and by promoting a generic Christian morality.”

Shaping the “Habitants”

In his book, Ruling By Schooling Quebec: Conquest to Liberal Governmentality – A Historical Sociology (2012), Curtis explores a variety of educational plans conceived by the British colonial authorities to effectively render the French-Canadian “habitants” into a governable British ‘civilized’ state. One of the most studied of such plans was Lord Durham’s 1839 Report on the Affairs of British North America where schooling is described as the most powerful instrument of nationalization. Noted in Curtis’ book is the ferocity with which the Catholic clergy were prepared to oppose what they saw as Protestant incursion into its religious and educational domain. An incursion into the educational domain meant an incursion into the “church as a transmitter of values.”

Early attempts to create ‘Common’ or ‘Normal’ (non-

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131 Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo, Making Good: Law and Moral Regulation in Canada, 1867-1939 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 147.
133 Curtis, Ruling By Schooling Quebec, 18.
denominational but still generically Christian) schools were seen by the Church leadership as potential breeding grounds for “moral corruption, especially for children and young people from the countryside.”

In the end though, Lord Durham’s grand project of ruling Quebec by schooling it in the elements of British civilization ultimately failed. Because schools were recognized as being significant shapers of society, any notion that they should be controlled by anyone but the Church, was generally met with systematic and successful opposition. In the next section, I return to the modern school and the ERC context in particular, to discuss how these historic beliefs about the role of the school shaping society still exist today.

The Myth of the “L’école Libératrice”

In *Public Schools and Political Ideas: Canadian Educational Policy in Historical Perspectives* (1994), Ronald Manzer explains that schools are still seen as public instruments because the expectation is that they will socialize children into a particular culture. Today, in the ERC context, the Quebec provincial government clearly sees itself as the agent of ‘public good’ with the authority (agency) to develop, promote, and manage a particular view of what Quebec society ought to look like: “The implementation of a common ethics and religious culture program for all students in Québec is rooted in the government’s will to best serve the interests of everyone involved (students, parents, school staff and society as a whole).”

If schools serve the ‘public good’ as ‘public instruments’ then schools themselves become ‘political symbols’ that develop and promote a particular view of what society ‘ought’ to look like. Embedded then within school policy are beliefs - beliefs that have political and cultural force. The issue then becomes whether the school is a place of transformational change or a conservative force that

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aims to maintain and reproduce the dominant status quo. This thesis has argued, using Bourdieu’s theory of Social and Cultural Reproduction, for the latter in the case of late-twentieth century Quebec. In The school as a conservative force (1974), Bourdieu suggests that it is probably just “cultural inertia which still makes us see education in terms of the ideology of the school as a liberating force (‘l’école libératrice’) and as a means of increasing social mobility, even when the indications tend to be that it is in fact one of the most effective means of perpetuating the existing social patterns…”\textsuperscript{137} The notion that the school system itself, as the legitimate holder of cultural capital, played a key role in perpetuating historic French-Canadian social class structure - despite the government’s original aims to secularize and break free from it – is a part of the educational historiography of the Quebec secularization story that this thesis has attempted to fill in. The intent of the 1999 Proulx Report was clear:

…the main issue lies in whether or not religious traditions, and more specifically Catholicism, should be given a normative status in our society in general and in our public education system in particular. There is a strong argument for not giving Christian religions a normative, policy-shaping status in public education. Indeed, in the sociological perspective we have just described, Quebec society is divided into “us,” those who belong to the tradition of the majority, and “them,” those who do not belong. And this perspective hampers our goal of fostering in all Quebeckers a feeling of solidarity and of belonging to Québec society. This polarization into “us” and “them” could even lead the majority to consider itself “us,” as a static entity that must be protected from extinction, when this entity is in fact experiencing tremendous change, as evidenced in the last 40 years.\textsuperscript{138}

And while the Proulx Report acknowledged the very important influence of the Catholic tradition in Quebec society the report was adamant that in terms of Quebec education the time had come where “it cannot be recognized as the ‘norm’ for public schools without calling into question the principle of equality for all, nor can it be given a status that would, in practice,

\textsuperscript{137} Bourdieu, “The school as a conservative force,” 32.
\textsuperscript{138} Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l’Éducation, Religion in Secular Schools: A New Perspective for Québec, Abridged Version (Québec, 1999), 34.
Therefore, what this thesis has argued is that there seems to be something in the nature of mass schooling itself that perpetuates the status quo, whatever the acceptable rhetoric of the day may be. This thesis has attempted to explain this phenomenon using the conceptual lens of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of Social and Cultural Reproduction arguing that the school system itself, as the legitimate holder of cultural capital, played a key role in perpetuating French-Catholic dominant social class structure in Quebec. The pedagogical situation that the Quebec state was attempting to avoid seems, after all, to have occurred.

139 Gouvernement du Québec, Religion in Secular Schools, 35.
Conclusion

ERC, Secularism, and the Modern Paradox

It is said that we live in a ‘secular’ age. To live in a secular age, at least in the Western world means to live in a society where belief in God is no longer axiomatic. In his book *A Secular Age*, philosopher Charles Taylor describes the general societal shift in Western society from a place where “belief in God is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among others, and frequently not the easiest to embrace.” This optional nature of religion is in stark contrast to Christendom’s past where religion was “interwoven with everything else, and in no sense constituted a separate “sphere on its own.” Modernity, on some accounts, would permanently remove religion from the public sphere. Globalism too has sometimes been approached through notions that have relegated religion to the sidelines or simply to the past. But today’s secular society is made up of believers and non-believers alike. Therefore, the modern paradox of the secular state seems to be that even though the State has no religious conviction – many of its citizens, if not the majority, still do. In terms of public spaces, the meaning of secularity today seems to have become a place where one can engage fully in the political without ever encountering the notion of religion. But is this really true? Is religion in the public realm passé? The November 2007 issue of *The Economist* focused on the subject of politics and religion, suggesting that the influence of religion on world politics was on the rise:

“As our special report explains, the idea that religion has re-emerged in public life is to some extent an illusion. It never really went away – certainly not to the extent that French politicians and American college professors imagined.

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Its new power is mostly the consequence of two changes. The first is the failure of secular creeds: religion’s political comeback started in the 1970s, when faith in government everywhere was crumbling. Second, although some theocracies survive in the Islamic world, religion has returned to the stage as a much more democratic, individualistic affair: a bottom-up marketing success, surprisingly in tune with globalization.”

In Canada, the most recent studies into the demographics of religion seem to reveal two prevalent trends. The first, the rise of the non-Christian population owing to immigration, and the second, the continued increase in persons reporting no religious affiliation. Whatever the future may hold, policy-makers in Canada charged with the management of diversity will need to take into account these evolving religious demographics. For the present time, at least in terms of the field of public education in Quebec, this thesis has shown that religion still plays a very important and influencing role.

The Debate Continues

Educational philosopher Maxine Green says that a “public space” is “defined by principles that enable diverse human beings to act in common and to be recognized for what they do.” Educational jurisdictions will continue to debate what constitutes “public space,” especially regarding the place of religion in schools. Many have decided not to include a religious component whereas others are including it as a response to a growing diversity and new immigrant spiritualities in their society. Quebec has chosen, at least for now, a model that includes a place for religion in public education ensuring some form of heritage education so that

schools “will not be an empty space from the standpoint of norms symbols.” In the words of Georges Leroux, University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM) philosophy professor and early promoter of the ERC program:

“A society can choose to let that heritage prosper all by itself, and consider it as history that all people can discover according to the opportunities that may be placed in their path, but it can also make such transmission an educational requirement. This is the choice we have made, by opening society to the whole field of universal religions, proposed here to young people according to a progressive approach consistently anchored in history and culture.”

ERC and The Classic Canadian Challenge

This thesis has examined the ongoing evolution of the meaning of ‘secular’ in Quebec society, and in particular, Quebec’s newly implemented ERC program in the public school system. By examining the ERC situation from a historical perspective as well as from a policy point of view, this thesis has shown why religion is still in the mandate of public education in Quebec today. This thesis has also exposed a mismatch between Open Secularism ‘policy proposed’ and Open Secularism ‘policy implemented’ revealing an area that I believe was missing in Quebec’s educational historiography, namely, the role of the school system itself in the secularization process during the time period when the Proulx Report recommendations were being implemented (1999-2008).

Using the conceptual lens of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of Social and Cultural Reproduction this thesis has attempted explain this Quebec phenomena by showing how the Quebec school system acts as a conservative force, perpetuating historic French-Canadian

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social class structure. Social change is never conceived or carried out in a vacuum but is always reflective of the values and the social structures of society – especially the dominant class, whose ideas and values are reproduced in schools. In this frame, the school system itself serves to reproduce the cultural capital of the dominant class - contrary to the very idea of diversity itself.

Quebec is presently living through a transitional period – a period of tension and ambiguity between its ancient symbolic representations and founding myths, which continue to structure its memory and collective identity – and the new emerging myths that have yet to find their legitimate place in the public square. For the past several years, educational historians such as Gérard Bouchard, Jocelyn Létourneau, Ronald Rudin, and Ruth Sandwell\(^{148}\) have studied these new re-founding myths of Quebec nationhood and their ramifications for history and citizenship education, especially as it pertains to Quebec within a Canadian federation. This brings us back to the classic Canadian challenge: how can we as Canadians promote diversity and at the same time cultivate a common identity? In the words of historian Jocelyn Létourneau, “How do you regenerate a culture and identity without having its heirs become alien to that culture and identity in the process of transformation?”\(^{149}\)

Against the backdrop of multi-culturalism, globalization and national as well as transnational discussions about citizenship education in public schools, the ERC program, and the public and academic discussions and controversies surrounding it, have a relevance that I believe extends well beyond Quebec and Canada. By examining the historical, pedagogical, legal,


political, sociological and religious issues that have arisen from the implementation of ERC this thesis seeks to contribute to the scholarly understanding of a) ways of responding to increasing religious diversity in public schools and b) the relationship between religion and citizenship education in pluralistic and globalized democratic societies.

How can we listen to religiously diverse voices and make collective decisions in the field of education and, in society in general? Are we prepared as a country to “move from a wholly secular multiculturalism that is limited to a sometimes begrudging accommodation of differences of recent new-comers to a deeper and more profound acceptance of religions diversity?”150 The responses to such inquiries will determine what we mean by tolerance, diversity, and religious freedom in Quebec and Canadian secular society.

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Appendix A: Sec 93 of 1867 BNA ACT

Source: Office of Research on Educational Policy (OREP), McGill University
Appendix B: Constitutional Amendment to Sec 93 of 1867 BNA ACT

APPENDIX B

EXCERPTS FROM CANADIAN INSTRUMENTS

Constitution Act, 1867
(30 & 31 Vict., c. 3)

93. In each and for every Province the Legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to Education, subject and according to the following Provisions:-

(1) Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any Right or Privilege with respect to Denominational Schools which any Class of Persons have by Law in the Province at the Union:

(2) All the Powers, Privileges, and Duties at the Union by Law conferred and imposed in Upper Canada on the Separate Schools and School Trustees of the Queen's Roman Catholic Subjects shall be and the same are hereby to the Dissentent Schools of the Queen's Protestant and Roman Catholic Subjects in Quebec:

(3) Where in any Province a System of Separate or Dissentent Schools exists by Law at the Union or is thereafter established by the Legislature of the Province, an Appeal shall lie to the Governor General in Council from any Act or Decision of any Provincial Authority affecting any Right or Privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic Minority of the Queen's Subjects in relation to Education:

(4) In case any such Provincial Law as from Time to Time seems to the Governor General in Council requisite for the due Execution of the Provisions of this Section is not made, or in case any Decision of the Governor General in Council on any appeal under this Section is not duly executed by the proper Provincial Authority in that Behalf, then and in every such Case, and as far only as the Circumstances of each Case require, the Parliament of Canada may make remedial Laws for the due Execution of the Provisions of this Section and of any Decision of the Governor General in Council under this Section.

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Constitution Amendment Act (Québec)
(Canada Gaz., Pt II Extra, no.8, vol.131 Dec 22, 1997)

1. The Constitution Act, 1867, is amended by adding, immediately after section 93, the following:

"93A. Paragraphs (1) to (4) of section 93 do not apply to Québec."

2. Citizens of Canada of whom any child has received or is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in English or French in Canada, have the right to have all their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the same language.

3. The right of citizens of Canada under subsections (1) and (2) to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of a province

(a) applies wherever in the province the number of children of citizens who have such a right is sufficient to warrant the provision to them out of public funds of minority language instruction; and

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This appendix has been prepared for the convenience of the reader only. For accurate reference, recourse should be made to the official texts of the instruments reproduced.

Source: Office of Research on Educational Policy (OREP), McGill University
Appendix C: Sec 41 of The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (pre-July 1st, 2005)

CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS
WHEREAS every human being possesses intrinsic rights and freedoms designed to ensure his protection and development;
Whereas all human beings are equal in worth and dignity, and are entitled to equal protection of the law;
Whereas respect for the dignity of the human being and recognition of his rights and freedoms constitute the foundation of justice and peace;
Whereas the rights and freedoms of the human person are inseparable from the rights and freedoms of others and from the common well-being;
Whereas it is expedient to solemnly declare the fundamental human rights and freedoms in a Charter, so that they may be guaranteed by the collective will and better protected against any violation;
Therefore, Her Majesty, with the advice and consent of the National Assembly of Québec, enacts as follows:

PART I
HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

CHAPTER IV
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS

39.

40.

41. Every person has a right, to the extent and according to the standards provided for by law, to free public education.

1975, c. 6, s. 40.

Source: Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII).
Appendix D: Sec 41 of The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (current)

Québec
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Chapter C-12

CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS
WHEREAS every human being possesses intrinsic rights and freedoms designed to ensure his protection and development;
Whereas all human beings are equal in worth and dignity, and are entitled to equal protection of the law;
Whereas respect for the dignity of human beings, equality of women and men, and recognition of their rights and freedoms constitute the foundation of justice, liberty and peace;
Whereas the rights and freedoms of the human person are inseparable from the rights and freedoms of others and from the common well-being;
Whereas it is expedient to solemnly declare the fundamental human rights and freedoms in a Charter, so that they may be guaranteed by the collective will and better protected against any violation;
Therefore, Her Majesty, with the advice and consent of the National Assembly of Québec, enacts as follows:

PART I
HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

CHAPTER IV
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS

39.

40.

41. Parents or the persons acting in their stead have a right to give their children a religious and moral education in keeping with their convictions and with proper regard for their children's rights and interests.

1975, c. 6, s. 41; 2005, c. 20, s. 13.

Source: Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII).
Appendix E: « Membres Actuels de la Coalition en Faveur du Droit des Parents de Choisir l’École de leur Préférence ».

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numéro</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Association Québécoise des Professeurs de Morale et de Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Conférence de la Pastorale Scolaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Assemblée des Directrices et des directeurs d’office Diocésain d’Éducation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Direction chrétienne Inc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Association Québécoise des Conseillères et des conseillers au Service de l’Éducation Chrétienne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>English speaking catholic council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Conférence des paroisses italiennes de Montréal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Catholic Women’s League of Canada (section Québec)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Les Chevaliers de Colomb du Québec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ordre des Filles d’Isabelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Table provinciale de la pastorale familiale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Association Marie-Reine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Association of Catholic Retired Administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Department of Theological Studies, Loyola Campus, Concordia University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Association of Moral and Religious Educators of Québec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Provincial Association of Teachers of Ethics and Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Fédération de l’Âge d’Or du Québec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Jeunesse du Monde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mouvement des Cursillos Francophones</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Catholic Civil Rights League</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste du diocèse de Valleyfield</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Mond’Ami</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Communauté des Grecs-Melkites</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Serena Québec</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Service d’Orientation des Foyers</td>
</tr>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Association des Parents Catholiques du Québec</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Service de Préparation à la Vie</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Couple et Famille National Inc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Joie de vivre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Rendez-vous (croissance et couple)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Knights of Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Québec Association of Independent Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>McGill Newman Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Thomas More Law Students Association</td>
</tr>
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<td>35</td>
<td>Fondation des Amis de l’Institut Catholique de Montréal</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Association des juristes catholiques du Québec</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Ordre du Saint-Sépulcre de Jérusalem</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>Association des Communautés Scolaires Franco-Protestantes du Québec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Table de concertation protestante de l’Estrie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Le mouvement ecclésial Communion et Libération</td>
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... 2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fraternité nationale du Canada de l’Ordre Franciscain Sécoulier (section Québec)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse d'Amos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Baie-Comeau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Chicoutimi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Gaspé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Gatineau-Hull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Joliette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Mont-Laurier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Nicolet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Québec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Rimouski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Rouyn-Noranda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Saint-Hyacinthe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Saint-Jérôme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.</td>
<td>Office de l'éducation du diocèse de Sherbrooke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56.</td>
<td>Office de l’éducation du diocèse de Trois-Rivières</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.</td>
<td>Office de l’éducation du diocèse de Valleyfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58.</td>
<td>Congrès National des Italo-canadiens au Québec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59.</td>
<td>Regroupement québécois des responsables diocéens de la pastorale jeunesse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.</td>
<td>Groupe de réflexion et d’action communautaire et chrétienne de l’Université de Sherbrooke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62.</td>
<td>Conseil d'administration de l'Association Féminine d'Éducation et d'Action Sociale (AFÉAS) - Région de l'Estrie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63.</td>
<td>Association Féminine d’Éducation et d’Action Sociale (AFÉAS) - national</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Le mardi 23 novembre 1999

*Source: English-Speaking Catholic Council (ESCC)*
**Appendix F: Religious Demographics in Quebec (2001 Census)**

**Selected Religions, for Canada, Provinces and Territories - 20% Sample Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>7,125,580</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>5,930,380</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion</td>
<td>400,325</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>108,620</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>141.8%</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>89,915</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>-8.0%</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglican</td>
<td>85,475</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>-11.0%</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant not included elsewhere (2)</td>
<td>64,040</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian not included elsewhere (1)</td>
<td>56,750</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Church</td>
<td>52,950</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>-14.6%</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Orthodox (3)</td>
<td>50,020</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>-7.3%</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>41,375</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox not included elsewhere (4)</td>
<td>37,600</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>35,455</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah's Witnesses</td>
<td>29,040</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>-13.1%</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>24,530</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecostal</td>
<td>22,675</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>-21.7%</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>9,635</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>-10.0%</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>8,770</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>-53.5%</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>8,220</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>81.7%</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Missionary Church</td>
<td>7,575</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>87.3%</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventist</td>
<td>6,690</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)</td>
<td>4,420</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian Catholic</td>
<td>3,430</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-14.0%</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pagan (7)</td>
<td>1,330</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>533.3%</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist (6)</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian Orthodox</td>
<td>985</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-25.1%</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbian Orthodox</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>152.1%</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal spirituality</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>332.4%</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brethren in Christ</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-36.2%</td>
<td>38.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-denominational (5)</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mennonite</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-74.3%</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-65.6%</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian and Missionary Alliance</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-37.6%</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Change</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
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<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Reformed Church</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-20.7%</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutterite</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-100.0%</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religions selected for this table represent counts of 20,000 or more for Canada.

(1) Includes persons who report "Christian", as well as those who report "Apostolic", "Born-again Christian" and "Evangelical".

(2) Includes persons who report only "Protestant".

(3) In 1991, included counts for Greek Catholic.

(4) Includes persons who report "Orthodox". Also includes Armenian Apostolic, Bulgarian Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox and Macedonian Orthodox.

(5) Includes persons who report only "non-denominational".

(6) Includes persons who report "Methodist". Excludes Free Methodist and Evangelical Missionary Church.

(7) Includes persons who report "Wicca".

Source: Statistics Canada (2001 Census)
## Appendix G: Religious Culture: Compulsory Themes and Related Content (Elementary)

**Source:** Québec Education Plan (QEP)

### APPENDIX C - RELIGIOUS CULTURE: THEMES, TEACHING GUIDELINES AND RELATED CONTENT (ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY)

#### Elementary Cycle One

**Family celebrations**
- Help students discover family celebrations, rites and rituals and make them aware of the fact that families celebrate key events in a variety of ways.
- Draw upon the fact that a child’s first contact with religious celebrations generally takes place in a family setting in order to help students explore forms of celebration in their own families and in those of others.
  - Celebrations
  - Rituals associated with birth

#### Elementary Cycle Two

**Religious practices in the community**
- Help students explore the main aspects of community celebrations and become familiar with appropriate vocabulary for discussing the religious realities they observe.
- Draw upon the students’ discoveries about different religious practices in various communities to help them recognize important aspects of the celebrations that take place there, the places of worship where they are held, and the objects and symbols associated with these practices. Familiarize students with the sacred words and writings that inspire these communities, along with spiritual guides and practices such as prayer and meditation.
  - A time for celebrations
  - Places of worship, religious objects and symbols
  - Spiritual guides for believers
  - Words and writings related to religious traditions
  - Practices of prayer and meditation

#### Elementary Cycle Three

**Religions in society and the world**
- Help students become aware that Québec’s religious traditions often originate elsewhere in the world and that they have been marked by influential figures and founding events.
- Draw upon the religious traditions found in Québec society to help students explore the geography and demography of the great religions of the world and the way time is represented in the various religions. Help them relate forms of religious expression, such as celebrations, objects and rituals, to the history and mission of influential figures.
  - Religions in the world
  - Founders
  - Ways of representing time

**Stories that have touched people**
- Familiarize students with narrative traditions of different religions and the forms of religious expression associated with them.
- Draw upon the fact that stories provide a way to understand the realities around us to introduce students to a variety of simple stories. Take into account the fact that these stories are sometimes related to religious celebrations or key figures, and sometimes to stories of birth and origins. Explore the cultural references associated with them.
  - Stories that have had a major influence
  - Stories about key figures

**Forms of religious expression in the young person’s environment**
- Help students become aware of the religious heritage in their environment and make simple connections between cultural references and the religion associated with them.
- Draw upon the many forms of religious expression in the students’ environment and in the media to help them recognize Québec buildings, monuments and toponymy, as well as symbols of stories about the origin of the world, artistic and community works, and cultural events influenced by religion.
  - The physical environment
  - Community and cultural forms of expression
  - Stories about the origins of the world

**Religious values and norms**
- Help students recognize that religions embody values and norms that dictate the behaviours and attitudes to be adopted toward oneself and others in order to foster community life.
- Draw upon examples from key writings, as well as practices related to food and clothing or individuals who, by their values and beliefs, are considered exemplary, to help students explore the moral dimension of religions.
  - Values and norms
  - Exemplary individuals and their works
  - Practices related to food and clothing