CANADIAN FACES OF REASON
PART VII

"It is difficult to speak of French Canadian philosophy," Venant Cauchy begins, "because there are no truly great names around which to organize an account of philosophical thinking," adding that "the history of our philosophy thus tends to be rather a history of the teaching of philosophy[1] Cauchy calls both – philosophy and the teaching of philosophy – as "embodying philosophical principles and ideas the evolution of which underlies the development of society."[2] Not a modest man, Cauchy then asserts that it is "philosophy which animates the literary, religious, political or economic activities of a community," suggesting that "in a relatively self-sufficient or autonomous society, formal philosophy follows closely upon or influences more directly the concrete embodiments of philosophy in culture," – ah, here comes the rub – "whereas a society such as our own tends to be mesmerized by the philosophical traditions of other countries." [3] While not "excluding the salient names and contributions underlined by historians belonging to other influential societies," Cauchy continues, "the historian tends to organize the data of philosophy according to conceptual models which reflect the situations obtaining in his own society."[4] Such an organization can lead to comparison; Cauchy compares "French, British, and American histories of philosophy such as those of Chevalier, Brehier, Collins, and Copleston, or the history of medieval philosophy as seen by an Arab, a Jew, and a Christian," a series leading him to conclude that "we should at least approach even the best histories of philosophy with caution."[5] And apparently there is a second cause for caution:

> In a small developing society such as Canada or French Canada has no chance at all of imposing its own abstract model of the development of philosophical thought even if we tried to devise one on which basically all of us agreed. The result is a certain alienation of our formal philosophy, which tends to root itself in alien traditions rather than uncover and develop its roots in the past and in the concrete problems of our own society. This is to say that it very often becomes artificial and unreal. The problem here seems to consist practically in deciding which foreign trend to latch on to.[6]

Canada is not so small, not geographically at least, and neither is Quebec; is Cauchy being disingenuous here? Nor do I see any reason why a "small" and/or "developing society" can't produce its own "abstract model of the development of philosophical thought."

Disingenuous he may have been, as Cauchy quickly acknowledges that French society in Canada does have its own language, its "own religious, social and political experiences," its own "historical background … economic structures and problems," all of which implies, Cauchy continues, a conception of humanity, French Canada's

"insertion in the North American environment, … destiny, and … potential for progress.[7] To understand this distinctiveness, "we need to uncover the meaning of our past and to become conscious of the philosophical principles underlying the complex society in which we live and think," adding: "More than anything we need to develop faith and confidence in our inherent worth, in our ability to think through to the basic issues of human experience and to make genuine contributions to the progress of thought."[8] Despite the leaps in logic, I couldn't agree more – to which these research briefs and the CSinC Project testify.

"French Canadian philosophy may be divided into six periods," Cauchy reports, (1) the beginnings, 1635-1725, (2) growth, 1725-1760, (3) trial and uncertainty, 1760-1800, (4) hope, 1800-1880, (5) dogmatism and illusion, 1880-1940, (6) pluralism and increasing self-affirmation, 1940 to the time of this writing (mid-1960s). He admits these "divisions tend to be somewhat arbitrary, since they reflect changes in culture and society generally rather than in philosophy alone."[9] There's a difference between Cauchy's project and mine: while, at least at first, I plan to proceed topically – the first volume published in association with the Curriculum Studies in Canada Project (CSinC) concerns the fields "present preoccupations,"[10] the second (in preparation as I write) on the "Indigenous challenge" – if I do periodize, it will be according to shifts in curriculum studies, not in "culture and society," although obviously the latter is reflected in the former.

"Secondary education and the teaching of philosophy during the French regime" – the first period: 1608[11]-1725 – "centered around the College des Jesuits in Quebec,[12] which was founded in the year 1635, a few years before Harvard in New England."[13] (Actually, Harvard was founded only one year later, in 1636.). Mgr de Laval,[14] the first bishop of Quebec, embodied "a direct link" between the College de la Fleche[15] and the College des Jesuits at Quebec; Descartes had attended La Fleche from 1604 to 1612 and Mgr de Laval enrolled in the college at the age of nine in 1631 and stayed there until the year 1641.[16] "At Quebec," Cauchy tells us, "philosophy was taught according to the methods and programs set forth in the Jesuit *Ratio studiorum* which was the document governing education in all Jesuit Colleges."[17] The "first public disputation in philosophy was staged at Quebec," held not in French but in Latin.[18] The curriculum over which students were being examined was dominated by "Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and scholastic philosophy in general," although a "Cartesian influence was not absent."[19] Pedagogically, formal lectures were the order of the day, those "coupled with weekly, monthly, and annual disputations in Latin on pre-determined questions."[20] Cauchy considers it a problem – he uses the adverb "unfortunately" – when he notes that "many of the Jesuit professors merely resided at the college long enough to learn the Indian dialects before going on to the missions."[21] He reports there were "complaints," but he doesn't say made by whom; students weren't yet "customers" – or were they then as well? In any case, he suggests it was these "complaints" that "may have brought about the

establishment of lectures in philosophy at the Seminaire de Quebec towards the end of the French regime," where the "teaching of philosophy alternated with that of theology, two years being devoted to philosophy and two years to theology."[22] He reports that in "the1720s or 1730s the governor requested that this periodical interruption in the teaching of philosophy be stopped, but nothing was done about it."[23]

Cauchy starts his depiction of the second period – "growth" (1725-1760) – by telling us that "the old College had become too small for the needs of New France," and so a "new impressive building was constructed 'to last for centuries'."[24] Apparently the College des Jesuites had been "the only institution under the French regime, in eighteenth-century Canada, which gave a complete course of classical studies, including philosophy," and "many schools taught Latin."[25] But not only classical studies, as the Seminaire de Montreal also offered hydrography and mathematics as well as courses prerequisite to the study of philosophy, but those interested in studying philosophy had to go to Quebec to do so. Father Guesnier, who had taught philosophy at Caen in France, was named professor of philosophy and theology at Quebec in 1731; he composed "a *Cours de Morale generate,*[26] a general course in morality. Like George Blewett,[27] he died prematurely at the age of 40 in 1734."[28] In 1757, Father Labrosse wrote a text on logic that is preserved in the archives of the Seminaire; Cauchy reports that in it a "Cartesian influence is noticeable."[29]

The fact that French Canada was settled by pre-revolutionary French did not insulate the area from what would occur in France at the end of the eighteenth century. Cauchy puts it this way: "France was in the throes of a philosophical upheaval which was to contribute to the French Revolution," – he terms "Montesquieu,[30] Rousseau,[31] Diderot,[32] Voltaire[33] "the prophets of the day" - adding that "the administrators and the military newly arrived from France carried the intellectual ferment of the old continent to the shores of the St. Lawrence. "[34] Cauchy tells us that the "libraries of New France were well stocked with the latest philosophical books," citing Benjamin Sulte[35] to say that there may have been more 60,000 volumes in the libraries of New France, a figure Antoine Roy[36] judged "too conservative," as there were "some private collections [that] contained as many as 3000 and 4000 books."[37] We're told that within these libraries "the philosophers of the eighteenth century were well represented," in particular Voltaire, whose "influence on French Canadian thought continued through the change of regime and increased well into the nineteenth century."[38] More than a century before the Quiet Revolution,[39] "there arose in French Canada a spirit of opposition to Church influence and authority which has been an important aspect of French Canadian society and thought ever since."[40]

The third period – "trial and uncertainty (1760-1800) – Cauchy begins by characterizing French Canadians as becoming "demoralized," that "due to from

corrupt administration and interruption of commerce with the mother country, the threat posed by the British invaders to the language, laws, and customs of the people, [and] the desertion of its political and religious elite." Bishop Inglis of Nova Scotia,[41] whose Anglican diocese now extended West, made elaborate plans to establish an English Protestant university in Quebec, a university "to be financed with income derived from the Jesuit properties which had been confiscated along with those of the Sulpicians in Montreal."[42] Taken aback by the opposition he encountered from French Canadians, Bishop Inglis complained to Lord Dorchester: "I fear that Canadians act like spoiled children. They seem to look upon themselves as different from the English. No method seems better adapted to making good subjects of them than to instruct them in English, to establish an English school in each parish."[43] He thought that by converting the College at Quebec into an English Protestant institution and installing English schools in the rural regions with funds derived from the confiscation of the Jesuit properties, "the French language and culture could be eliminated in a period of from 15 to 20 years."[44] Then Cauchy reports (with understatement), that "other difficulties plagued the educational system and the College des Jesuits," one of which was that "most of the professors returned to France after the conquest."[45] And "to make matters worse, the Jesuit order was banished from France in 1764 and suppressed entirely in 1773," forcing Father Glapion[46] to close the College in 1768.[47] In 1770, "a rather pathetic petition was addressed to the British government through Governor Carleton asking that the College at Quebec be reopened, and that the properties of the Jesuits be restored to their original purpose which was to support the College."[48] Also requested was the "entry into Canada" - "pour une fois seulement" (for once only) - of "six competent professors capable of teaching the higher sciences."[49] The "petitioners even offered to rename the institution the Royal George College."[50] The petition was ignored.[51]

The Seminaire de Quebec[52] and the Seminaire de Montreal[53] took on the responsibility of secondary education relinquished by the College des Jesuites, but neither enjoyed sufficient financial support or the personnel required to provide "competent" education.[54] The Seminaire de Montreal lost twelve Sulpicians[55] after the conquest and the consequent "confiscation of their own properties in Montreal."[56] In 1785, Mgr d'Esgly[57] reported to the Bishop of Cork that "philosophy had degenerated considerably in Canada, because of a lack of teachers."[58] Mgr Briand[59] requested but was denied permission to import professors from France.[60] Concerning the curriculum at the Seminaire de Quebec, Cauchy reports it was "somewhat eclectic," moving among "Locke, Malebranche, and Descartes.[61] The library of the Seminaire contained books by Leibniz,[62] Malebranche, Bayle,[63] Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Descartes.[64] Until 1789, when a chair of philosophy was established at the Seminaire de Montreal,

philosophy was taught only in Quebec; after 1789 (1790 specifically), Montreal offered the following courses in philosophy: "logic, metaphysics, physics and mathematics."[65]

The "opposition to the Catholic Church" and the "suppression of the monarchy" that had occurred during the French Revolution "deeply revolted a great many French Canadians and affected their attitude towards France for over a century," Cauchy reports.[66] Some number of expelled French clergy made their way first to England, then to Canada, "where they contributed much to the renaissance of classical studies and philosophy which marked the beginning of the nineteenth century."[67] Citing "an interesting Master's thesis in history by Marc Lebel," Cauchy notes a five-volume course in philosophy, first published in France in 1763, sent to the Seminaire de Quebec in 1766, entitled *Institutiones philosophiae ad usum Seminarii Tullensis* and commonly referred to as the *Philosophie de Taul*, a course focused on the "different theories advanced by modern philosophers since the time of Descartes."[68] Still citing Lebel, Cauchy takes note of an influential two-volume work published in France in 1784, *l'Abrege latin de philosophie* by Hauchecorne, "though respectful of Descartes … abandons the system of innate ideas in favor of Locke's empiricism"[69]; this book taught by Father Raimbault ("one of the priests exiled from France at the time of the Revolution") at the Seminaire de Quebec.[70] The Compendium of Metaphysics by Father Robert in 1792 as well as Father Castanet's course in 1795 both followed Hauchecorne; their students' notebooks show that the curriculum was comprised of the " three proofs of the existence of God, a discussion of atheism, long refutations of the systems of Strato, Epicurus, Spinoza and the Immaterialists, and finally a study of the attributes of God."[71] There was curricular attention paid to political philosophy - inspired by Bossuet[72] - wherein students studied "the divine origin of power and condemned rebellion even against a prince who was cruel and hostile to religion.[73] When Vaucy earlier reported that "administrators and the military newly arrived from France carried the intellectual ferment" associated with the Revolution, I thought maybe they carried at least some appreciation for the Revolution, but I see now there was almost no appreciation at all.

The next period – "hope" (1800-1880) – accompanies (or it is perhaps prompted by) a "tremendous surge of activity" at the turn of the nineteenth century, as the population increased, and the "old Colleges were strengthened and new vigorous institutions were founded in which the teaching of philosophy flourished along with the arts, letters, and sciences."[74] The "philosophy curriculum, spread over a period of two years, included mathematics and the sciences," and the "logic class or first year of philosophy also covered courses in metaphysics and ethics."[75] The second year curriculum – taught by the same professor – focused on mathematics and the sciences." [76] Not until 1834 did the philosophy become sufficiently specialized as to be "distinguished from the sciences at the Seminaire de

Quebec, and philosophy was henceforth designated by the expression 'intellectual and moral philosophy'."[77] Like the phrase curriculum studies, philosophy too was once, it appears, an almost administrative designation, representing several subjects in addition to the academic specialization it became.

In 1800 "there appeared an outstanding figure who was to dominate the philosophical scene in French Canada for the next half-century," a man named Jerome Demers[78] who, Cauchy tells us, "probably studied philosophy in Montreal under the private direction of his uncle, Jean Demers, who was a Recollet priest."[79] Demers' biographers "praise his profound and almost universal knowledge," a remarkable claim that leaves one incredulous until one reads that "he was an architect who designed the Seminaire de Nicolet and wrote a treatise of architecture," that "he composed a treatise on physics which kept abreast of the science of his day," as well as demonstrating interest in astronomy while being "considered the outstanding mathematician in French Canada."[80] In 1835, Demers published a philosophy textbook 'that was still being used at the Seminaire de Quebec in 1847."[81] In *Institutiones Philosophicae ad usum Studiosae juventutis* (which Cauchy translates as Philosophical Principles or Doctrines for Students), Demers divides philosophy into logic, metaphysics, ethics, and physics; logic is divided according to the Cartesian conception of the operations of the mind into (1) thought or perception, (2) judgment, (3) reasoning, and (4) method.[82] While he considered 'all knowledge as originating from God," Demers focused on "how" it is communicated to us, summarizing "Descartes' theory of innate ideas and Locke's doctrine of the origin of ideas in sense experience," including "Condillac's modification of Locke's empiricism" as well as De Bonald's rejection of Condillac.[83]

What Cauchy characterizes as Demers' "most elaborate chapter" concerns the "seven criteria of infallible judgments," which are (apparently) the (1) inner sense, (2) evidence, (3) the testimony of the senses, (4) the testimony of men, (5) memory, (6) divine revelation, and (7) analogy.[84] On the matter of "sensation," Demers references "Descartes, Malebranche, Bayle, Berkeley, and Kant … one of the few places where Kant is mentioned."[85] Oddly, Thomas Aquinas "is never mentioned or quoted."[86] Demers divides metaphysics into (1) general metaphysics or ontology, and (2) particular metaphysics or pneumatology, with "ontology deal[ing] with being in the abstract, whereas pneumatology studies beings separated from matter or spirits."[87] Pneumatology is comprised of (1) theodicy or natural theology, and (2) psychology, and (3) the three standard types of arguments – "the moral, the physical and the metaphysical" – provided to prove the existence of God.[88] "None of this," Cauchy tells us, appears "to be very original."[89] The section on "atheism, on the systems of the Academics, of Epicurus, of Spinoza, and of the Immaterialists, as well as the section on the divine attributes, are reminiscent of Hauchecorne's *Abrege latin de la philosophie*, mentioned above, which was in use at the Seminaire de Quebec as early as 1784."[90]

What could be construed as "original" was Demers' inclusion of "modem and contemporary philosophers," as well as the (then) contemporary psychological emphasis upon "the active nature of the human mind."[91] Demers' second chapter presents "five proofs of human freedom," wherein he quotes the article on liberty in the French Encyclopedia."[92] Concerning the matter of mind and body, Demers delves "into the nature of their union,"[93] acknowledging that "*haec quaestio, sicut innumerae aliae, plurimas habet difficultates*" [this question, like innumerable others, has many difficulties], despite which, Demers concludes (citing the "physiologists") "there exists a most strict, albeit unexplainable connection between our body and the thinking substance within us."[94] That is followed by fourteen pages on "the Cartesian conception of animals as automata."[95] The final section of the textbook turns attention to "ethics," which Demers divides into "general" and "special" ethics," the former focused on "properties and rules, the end of human life and happiness," the latter on one's "obligations" to oneself.[96] There is also attention to politics, where Demers "rejects Hobbes's theory of man's enmity towards man … because, on the contrary, social life is natural to man."[97] Concerning "political authority," Demers "firmly holds that political power is of divine origin and not from the people," quoting at length La Mennais' "refutation of Rousseau's social contract theory,"[98] affirming "it is never permitted (*nunquam licitum esse*) to rise or rebel against the ruler, or against Political authority," adding: "To rise against the ruler is to rise against the power established by God."[99] Cauchy returns to the issue of originality; he "suspect[s] that Demers may have borrowed rather heavily," especially from Hauchecorne's work. Mgr Louis-Adolphe Paquet[100] refers to an 1800 Demers' manuscript by Demers that is "similar" to an 1835 publication.[101] Cauchy cites other such instances, concluding with the question "how can we explain the high regard for Demers as the outstanding exponent of philosophy in Canada if his book contains so little that is original?"

Cauchy then turns his attention to "another outstanding teacher of this period," Monsieur Isaac-Stanislas Desaulniers[102] (1811-1868) who taught philosophy at the Seminaire de St-Hyacinthe, "a famous institution founded at the beginning of the nineteenth century." After twenty years (1831-1855) of his philosophy being "influenced by La Mennais and to some extent by Cartesianism, he became increasingly convinced of the value of Aquinas' thought and of the 'uselessness' of modern philosophy."[103] He came to consider St. Thomas to have been a "gigantic thinker," indeed, "the greatest philosopher" of all time.[104] However, Desaulniers' "students' notebooks of the 1860s register a Wolfian division of metaphysics into general and special metaphysics,"[105] the latter "being further subdivided into cosmology, neology … and theodicy."[106] Apparently Aquinas ascended again, as "in the 1860s Laval University adopted a textbook by the Jesuit Tongiorgi whose teaching was largely Thomistic."[107] Aquinas' influence also shows up in an 1853 book entitled *Essai de Logique judiciaire*, "published by a professor of law named François Bibaud in Montreal."[108] Applying logic, Bibaud "deplore[d] the confusion of English and French

laws in Canada," quoting from Aquinas and Bentham.[109] On the inequality of women suffering Bibaud "quotes Kant," attributing the inferiority of women to "medieval prejudice."[110]

Before discussing the "Thomistic period in French Canadian philosophy," Cauchy makes reference to those "philosophical trends which were not prominent in the Colleges but which nonetheless had great influence on men, events, and institutions."[111] He attributes the rebellion of 1837[112] to "a desire for representative government which was quite at odds with the formal political philosophy taught in the schools."[113] He suggests that the "political leaders of the time were imbued with the ideas of the French Encyclopedia and of the French Revolution which stressed freedom and democracy and gave short shrift to the divine rights of kings."[114] Cauchy then characterizes the 1844 founding of the *Institut Canadien*[115] as "another philosophically significant event," as "its purpose was to diffuse liberal ideas, to set up a learned library and to arrange lectures."[116] In 1847 it published a newspaper that advocated "separation of Church and state" as well as "a form of socialist democracy and freedom in all matters," ideas and actions that "soon ran up against direct opposition from Mgr Bourget, who threatened Institute members "with excommunication."[117] Bourget ordered books "condemned by the Church" to be culled from the Institute Library, a directive declined, resulting in many members resigning and the remaining members excommunicated. When one member named Guibord[118] died, he was refused burial in the Catholic cemetery, prompting his widow to bring suit against the Church. While she eventually won legally, her deceased husband (Cauchy suggests) could be said to have lost spiritually, as his place of burial was then deconsecrated by Church officials.

Cauchy calls the next phase "Dogmatism and Illusion -1880-1940," explaining that the "successful recovery from the effects of the conquest, the numerous colleges, the increasing population, [and] the growing participation in missionary activities gave rise to messianic delusions in French Canada."[119] Astonishingly – given an ongoing sense of victimhood among many in Quebec[120] – then, "in the eyes of many, the fall of New France had been an unmitigated blessing, a God-sent grace by which French Canada had been saved from the impiety, wickedness, and anarchy of post-Revolutionary France."[121] In an article entitled "Our Faith," Mgr Louis-Adolphe Paquet, whom Stanley French[122] named "French Canada's national philosopher," states that the "French Canadian situation makes the powers of hell jealous with envy."[123] According to H. Bastien,[124] Thomism is the "instrument by which we can hope to come to the aid of a troubled civilization, despite our relatively small population."[125] Thomism "received tremendous support from the publication in 1879 of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical letter *Aeterni Patris* [Eternal Father] recommending the teaching of Aquinas' philosophy in Catholic schools."[126] In a document published in 1880 - entitled *Cum hoc sit* [Since this is] - the Pope declared that "St. Thomas had known everything that had been truthfully said or disputed with wisdom before him....

He seems to have left us only the possibility of imitating him, but taken away the power to surpass him."[127] Pius X[128] – Pope from 1903-1914 – cautioned Catholics to be on guard against the other "Catholic doctors."[129]

Moreover, Cauchy reports, the "religious structure of our educational system made it practically mandatory for the colleges to teach the philosophy of St. Thomas," but, he continues, the curricular suppression of "other philosophical interests or viewpoints simply … was to the detriment of Thomism itself."[130] Cauchy faults Mgr Louis·Adolphe Paquet for this dogmatism; in "a long study devoted to Anglo-Canadian philosophy, he evaluates differing philosophical views in terms of their degree of incompatibility with Thomas Aquinas," even urging :Anglo-Canadians to extend their search for national unity to the field of philosophy by switching to Thomism."[131] Moreover, Paguet's positions "on social problems such as the rights of women, slavery, and the relevance of modern philosophy are quite disconcerting even for his time."[132] His repudiation of "modem thinking" extended to Kant, for whose philosophy he had "contempt," a view he also held of German Idealism[133] generally, views that "may have considerably hampered serious study of German philosophy in French Canada during the first half of this century."[134] "Mgr Paquet," Cauchy cautions us, "should definitely not be considered a true representative of Thomistic thought or of philosophy in French Canada."[135]

Leo XIII – Pope from 1878 until his death in 1903 – had "sought to obviate the ill effects of philosophical eclecticism and to provide a firm foundation for theological studies by imposing Aquinas' philosophy in the Seminaries and Pontifical universities," the "the net effect" of which "was to weaken the competitive strength of Aquinas by curtailing serious study of contemporary and modern philosophy and by divorcing philosophy from the problems of the day."[136] The school curriculum, Cauchy reminds, "were subject to the authority of the Church," without an "independent lay system in which philosophy could develop unhindered by the dictates of the church."[137] Then Cauchy backs up, writing that he did not intend to imply that "the imposition of Thomism by the Church, though philosophically speaking ill-advised, had no positive effects."[138] In addition to "stimulating considerable interest in the large corpus of Aquinas' works and in medieval and ancient philosophy generally, it brought about the definition of rigorous norms for faculties of philosophy in Catholic universities."[139] The papal document *Deus Scientiarum Dominus* [1931, God, the Lord of Knowledge[140]] stipulated that universities employ "at least one professor for each of the major divisions of philosophy and of the history of philosophy," a demand that required universities had to increase the number of their philosophy professors beyond the number they would normally have had without papal inducement."[141]

The final period – "1940 to the present" [meaning the 1960s] - Cauchy characterizes as one of "self-affirmation," one in which there was "growing opposition to the scholastic approach to philosophy," one wherein "detailed common programs of study have disappeared."[142] In fact, he continues, the "pendulum has swung in the

other direction," including "a considerable surge of interest in contemporary French and German philosophy."[143] Pedagogical methods have shifted too, moving from the "expository" to the "Socratic," philosophy "less as a search for truth and more "a tendency … for sharpening the mind."[144] Cauchy complains that the "recent Report of the Parent commission on education overstresses this utilitarian aspect and fails to acknowledge the importance of philosophy as a search for solutions to man's fundamental problems," a criticism shared by a 1965 critique of the "new humanism proposed by the Parent Commission" made by André Naud.[145] In Cauchy's words, "Naud insists on the importance of the spiritual component in man's nature and on the necessity to define education in terms of the ends of human life rather than solely in terms of efficiency, material comfort, economic advancement or technical proficiency."[146] Still, Thomism is not the absolute truth, or so Cauchy appears to admit: "A more careful study of the works of Thomas Aquinas and of other medieval thinkers served to enhance the conviction that no philosophy can be considered a definitive statement of man's nature or of the world in which he lives. It became evident that St. Thomas propounded his philosophy in response to a concrete situation and in terms of problems which are not our own."[147] Cauchy credits the *Institut d'Etudes medievales* - founded in Ottawa but moved to the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Montreal[148] in the early 1940s – with having contextualized medieval thought, its publications "among the best in the field of medieval studies."[149]

Two other changes – Cauchy terms these "major" - that occurred during the "last twenty years" (again 1940s-1960s) were increased "acceptance of the idea that all levels of education must be open to everyone according to ability," and a "vast increase in the number of lay professors in all fields," meaning a "declericalization of the schools and universities."[150] Curiously, Cauchy ascribes the past dominance of the Catholic Church not to its importance to the French-speaking people of Quebec but to "the economic weakness of French Canada since the fall of New France," a weakness that "had made it practically impossible for the task of education to be assumed by any but the clergy."[151] Then he bypasses secularization and other cultural developments to attribute the shift to "the urbanization of French Canada and the increase in the number of students applying for education," both of which made it "necessary for the clergy first to ask the support of lay teachers, and then to relinquish the direction of most educational institutions."[152] The "net effect of all this is that the teaching of philosophy has ceased to be, as it had often been in the past, a temporary activity which was part of larger pastoral duties: it has become a life-work."[153] Ignoring the infamous "publish or perish" ethos that accompanied university expansion in 1960s North America and persists to this day, Cauchy notes that "the number of scholarly philosophical books published in French Canada is too great even to enumerate here" but which, at least "most of them, I believe, are at least equal in quality to the philosophical literature produced in other countries of the world."[154]

That generalization is followed by others, among them that (1) "philosophers have become increasingly wary of old distinctions such as that between object and subject," that there is now (2) "a tendency to frown upon any systematic attempt to categorize man and the world," that it is now recognized that (3) "there is an inner reality which it is the function of philosophy to unveil," that (4) "science stays at the surface of things," that (5) "the phenomenological approach is generally considered the best way of attaining authentic philosophical knowledge of the concrete, that (6) "the need for a transcendent reality, if posited at all, is believed to be discoverable only from the standpoint of human consciousness and finiteness," that (7) "proofs of God's existence, however logical and formally acceptable in a theoretical context, carry little weight," that (8) "the approach to the problem of God in metaphysics tends to proceed more and more from an experience of the sacred as manifested in the positive religions of the past and the present," and that (9) "after a period in which a philosophy was more or less imposed upon the schools by official examinations and programs, academic freedom is now valued as one of the most essential requirements of philosophical teaching."[155] In fact, Cauchy continues, a "code of ethics recently adopted by the *Association des professeurs de philosophie de l'enseignement collegical* [Association of Professors of Philosophy of Public Education[156]] stresses [that] the freedom of self-determination … be assured to students in the teaching of philosophy."[157]

Despite that emphasis upon present shifts in the field, "long contact with ancient and medieval philosophy tends to render most people sceptical of the claim that worthwhile philosophy is restricted to the modern period," a generalization Cauchy contradicts when he adds that "the problems of modern French Canadian society has led many young philosophers to adopt Marxist viewpoints."[158] Apparently Cauchy is altogether sympathetic, as he writes that contemporary – recall he is writing in the mid-1960s, presenting this as a lecture at Dalhousie University in 1967, publishing the piece in 1968 - "philosophical pedantry and Marxist dogmatism, [re]presents an impassioned plea against religious and political institutions that breed poverty and oppression.[159] At the same time, "mention must also be made of the first major efforts to effect a rapprochement between the entirely independent philosophical traditions of French and English Canada," as "in 1957, the Canadian Philosophical Association was established to provide a forum for meaningful philosophical exchange between philosophers of the two cultures."[160] Five years later the "Association established a quarterly which has been well received throughout the world and has made known beyond the borders of Canada our philosophical capabilities."[161]

Cauchy then circles back to where he began, emphasizing "the need to acquire a better knowledge of our philosophical past,"[162] a "need" the CSinC Project takes as fundamental, one which Cauchy considers "a real problem for small societies such as our own,"[163] apparently because "small societies" tend to import concepts from "more influential societies," concepts that "usually omit or by-pass significant elements which

are necessary to understand our present needs and personalities."[164] That is not to say, he continues, that "we" should be able to "receive outside influences in terms of the needs of our concrete situation in Canada," but philosophy must also be in "touch with our own personal problems or the problems of the community in which we live."[165] Cauchy must be confining his comments to French Canada when he reports that "it would appear that the philosophical trend is towards a more concrete phenomenological approach to our own reality … reality [that] involves at least two important dimensions which have been present from the very beginning of our history, though relatively unexamined, the political and the religious."[166] He concludes:

> The task of philosophy appears to consist primarily of evolving a philosophy of religion and a political philosophy, rooted not in the problems of other times or other places, but in the situation that is developing in French Canada today. With respect to religion we need to redefine the manner in which it is to affect our lives, and the function which it can fulfil alongside art, science, and philosophy in our new society. In politics, we need to examine realistically the requirements for our continued life and growth. Whatever the outcome, may our two cultures not forgo the advantages that can accrue in the future from a close association in mutual respect and dignity!

That flourish at the end – emphasized with the use of an exclamation point – is surely aspirational, as the Quiet Revolution was well underway at the time, accenting political tensions between Quebec and Anglophone Canada,[167] accented the year of the Cauchy's lecture when the Charles de Gaulle made his famous call for Quebec independence.[168] On the intersection between religion and politics Cauchy does not comment, but it is that intersection – on occasion their synergistic relationship (as in Liberation Theology[169]) – that has so influenced the two – and curriculum theory[170] - in the decades that followed.

REFERENCES

Burns, James P. 2024. *Curriculum and the Problem of Violence: Biopolitics, Truth, History and Fascism*. Routledge.

Cauchy, Venant. 1968. Philosophy in French Canada: Its Past and Its Future. *Dalhousie Review* 48 (3), 384-401.

Phelan, Anne M. and Pinar, William F. Eds. In press. *Curriculum Studies in Canada: Present Preoccupations*. University of Toronto Press.

Pinar, William F., Reynolds, William M., Slattery, Patrick, and Taubman, Peter M. 1995. *Understanding Curriculum*. Peter Lang.

Endnotes

[1] 1968, 384. You'll recall that Armour and Trott organized their study of philosophy in English Canada according to names not ideas, something I hope to avoid in forthcoming volumes associated with the CSinC Project.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid. Curiously, Cauchy doesn't call this colonialism.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid. I suppose here he's acknowledging the cultural and historical specificity of philosophy.
[6] 1968, 384-385.
[7] 1968, 385.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Phelan and Pinar in press.
[11] The discrepancy in dates is in the original.
[12] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/college-des-jesuites
[13] Ibid.
[14] 1968, 386. His full name was François Xavier Laval-Montmorency: http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/encyclopedia/MgrFrancoisdeMontmorencyLaval-QuebecHistory.htm s
[15] "On the banks of the Loire, between Angers and Tours, the small town of La Flèche prides itself on having formed the spirit of the most famous French philosophers: René Descartes attended from 1607 the college founded there three years earlier by Henry IV. He had bequeathed the family property where it was said to be designed to the Jesuits, which was responsible for transforming it into an institution intended to *"teach the youth and make them amorous of the sciences"*. https://www.philomag.com/articles/la-fleche-france-le-college-de-descartes-et-de-hume
[16] 1968, 386.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] 1968, 387
[27] See research brief #110.
[28] 1968, 387.
[29] Ibid.
[30] https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/montesquieu/

[31] https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rousseau/
[32] https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/diderot/
[33] https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/voltaire/
[34] Ibid.
[35] http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/sulte_benjamin_15E.html
[36] https://www.geni.com/people/Antoine-Roy/6000000006422300432
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/quiet-revolution
[40] 1968, 387.
[41] https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-Inglis
[42] 1968, 387-388.
[43] Quoted in 1968, 388.
[44] 1968, 388.
[45] Ibid.
[46] http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/glapion_augustin_louis_de_4F.html
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/seminaire-de-quebec
[53] https://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/grand-seminaire-at-the-heart-of-montreals-history
[54] 1968, 388.
[55] https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/sulpicians
[56] 1968, 388.
[57] http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mariauchau_d_esgly_louis_philippe_4E.html
[58] Quoted in 1968, 388.
[59] http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/briand_jean_olivier_4E.html
[60] 1968, 388.
[61] Ibid. Concerning John Locke, see: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke/ Concerning Malebranche, see: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/malebranche/ Concerning Descartes, see: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/descartes/
[62] Concerning Liebniz, see: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/leibniz/
[63] https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/bayle/
[64] 1968, 388.
[65] 1968, 388-389.
[66] 1968, 389. Concerning the French Revolution: https://www.britannica.com/event/French-Revolution
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Quoted in 1968, 389.
[70] 1968, 389.
[71] Ibid.

[72] https://www.britannica.com/summary/Jacques-Benigne-Bossuet
[73] 1968, 389.
[74] Ibid.
[75] 1968, 390.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.
[78] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/jerome-demers
[79] Ibid. Concerning the Récollets, see: https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/recollets
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid. In the textbook, Cauchy notes, Demers, quotes "approvingly De Bonald's theory of the innateness of the ideas in society, i.e. in language, which is absolutely necessary if we are to form a mental representation of the idea. Concerning Condillac, see https://plato.stanford.edu/Archives/fall2019/entries/condillac/
[84] Ibid.
[85] 1968, 391.
[86] Ibid. Concerning Thomas Aquinas, see: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aquinas/
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid. Regarding the French Encyclopedia, see: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Encyclopedie
[93] Ibid.
[94] Quoted in 1968, 391. Concerning the "physiologists," see: https://www.thefamouspeople.com/french-physiologists.php
[95] 1968, 391.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid. Concerning La Mennais, see: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Felicite-Lamennais
[99] Quoted in 1968, 391-392.
[100] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/louis-adolphe-paquet
[101] 1968, 392. Nothing unusual here, as there are contemporary curriculum scholars who write the same article over and over again.
[102] http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/lesieur_desaulniers_isaac_stanislas_9E.html
[103] 1968, 392.
[104] Quoted in 1968, 392.
[105] https://plato.stanford.edu/Archives/Spr2013/entries/wolff-christian/
[106] 1968, 392. Concerning neology, see: https://www.etymonline.com/word/neology Concerning theodicy, see: https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=theodic

[107] 1968, 393. Concerning Tongiori, see: https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/tongiorgi-salvatore
[108] Ibid. Concerning Bibaud, see: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bibaud_francois_maximilien_11E.html
[109] Ibid. Concerning Bentham, see: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/bentham/
[110] Ibid. Concerning Kant, see: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant/
[111] Ibid.
[112] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/rebellions-of-1837
[113] 1968, 393.
[114] Ibid.
[115] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/institut-canadien#:~:text=Institut%20canadien%2C%20fd%2017%20Dec%201844%20in%20Montr%C3%A9al,organizations%20were%20established%20in%20about%2060%20other%20centres.
[116] 1968, 393.
[117] Ibid.
[118] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/guibord-affair
[119] 1968, 394.
[120] https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-canadian-provinces-claims-of-victimhood-are-wearing-thin/
[121] 1968, 394.
[122] https://prabook.com/web/stanley_george.french/3546471
[123] Quoted in 1968, 394.
[124] http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/bios/bastienhermasbio.htm
[125] 1968, 394.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.
[128] https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Pius-X
[129] Quoted in 1968, 394.
[130] 1968, 394.
[131] Ibid.
[132] 1968, 395.
[133] https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/idealism/
[134] 1968, 395.
[135] Ibid. No longer perhaps, but for a long while he appears to have been.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/deus-scientiarum-dominus
[141] 1968, 395.
[142] Ibid.
[143] 1968-395-396.

[144] 1968, 396.
[145] Ibid. Regarding the Parent Commission, see research brief #24. Regarding Naud, see: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/phin.12263
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid.
[148] https://cetmed.umontreal.ca/accueil/
[149] 1968, 396.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid.
[155] 1968, 397.
[156] https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_des_professeurs_de_philosophie_de_l%27enseignement_public
[157] 1968, 397.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid.
[163] 1968, 397-398.
[164] 1968, 398. While I don't dispute this assertion, it confers upon context an almost deterministic control of concepts, a contextualism antagonistic to philosophies that claim the status of truth, a concept that often implies context-free veracity.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ibid.
[167] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/quiet-revolution
[168] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/de-gaulle-and-vive-le-quebec-libre-feature
[169] Pinar et al. 1995, 644-652.
[170] See, for example, Burns 2024.