

**New Religions in Quebec:
Alternative Spiritualities after Vatican II and the 'Quiet Revolution'**

***Les Nouvelles Religions au Québec:
Spiritualités Alternatives après Vatican II et la Révolution tranquille***

*Projet religion et diversité/Religion and Diversity Project
(www.religionanddiversty.ca)*

* Please confirm your attendance/Merci de confirmer votre présence:

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Organizers: Susan J. Palmer, Affiliate Member of the Religious Studies Faculty, McGill University and Part-time Instructor, Concordia University
Solange Lefebvre, Chair of Religion and Culture, University of Montreal

Date: Friday, April 25, 2014, 08.30AM – 17.00PM

Place: The Chapel, second floor of the Birks Building, the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill University, 3520 University Street, Montreal H3A 2A7

Description: This conference will explore the unique characteristics of Quebec's *nouvelles religions* and the limits of Quebec's "favorable ecology" (Stark, 1988) for religious minorities (indigenous and imported) since the 1960s. The focus will be on issues of religious freedom and identity, and the public management and recognition of alternative religions within the context of Quebec's distinct culture and the *Charte des droits et libertés de la personne*.

Scholars from Quebec and Ontario will present ethnographical studies of specific groups. These include the Catholic *integristes*, and eclectic or schismatic movements as well as the local branches of international magical-arcane, theosophical, or UFO-inspired groups. Other papers will address the broader sociological/historical themes that contextualize Quebec's religious minorities. The afternoon discussion will address the various ways in which Quebec's new religions movements and spiritual currents have been influenced by the unique historical, cultural, linguistic, and social forces in the province of Quebec.

MORNING SESSIONS/SESSIONS DU MATIN

8:30-8.45 - *Welcome and Opening Statements*

Susan J. Palmer (Affiliate Member of the Religious Studies Faculty, McGill University)

J. Gordon Melton (Distinguished Professor of American Religious History of Baylor University's Institute for Studies in Religion, Waco, Texas)

Session I

8:45-10:30 – Catholic Schismatic Movements and *les Intégristes*,

Martin Geoffroy (Cégep Édouard-Montpetit) “*Les Apôtres de l’amour infini and les Berets Blancs*”

Paul Gareau (doctoral candidate at University of Ottawa) “*L’Armée de Marie*”

Susan Palmer (McGill University) “*La Mission de l’Esprit Saint: One Hundred Years of Schismatic Movements*”

Dell Rose (M.A. candidate in the Folklore Program at Western Kentucky University) “*The Doctrines and Values of la Mission de l’Esprit Saint*”

10:30- 10:45 – TEA BREAK

Session II

10:45-12:15 Session II – The New ‘Anti-Catholic’ Movements.

J. Gordon Melton, “The Rise of Atheistic ‘Churches’ in Quebec and Canada”

Cimminnee Holt (doctoral candidate in Religion at Concordia University) “*Autonomy, Language, and Religion: How Quebec Satanists Negotiate the Charte des valeurs québécoises*”

Donald Boisvert (Associate Professor of Religion, Concordia University) “The Temple of Priapus”

12:15-1:30 LUNCH BREAK at Restaurant Lola Rosa, 545 Milton Street

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

Session III

1:30-15.00 Quebec’s Controversial “Cults & sectes”.

Guy-Robert St-Arnaud (Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Montreal), “*CÉINR: de l’information à une écoute*”

Michael Kropveld (Executive Director and founder of Info-Cult/Info-Secte) “The Baptist Church of Windsor and State Intervention: from Law-abiding Citizens to Child Abusers to Reformed Parents cooperating with the State”

Lorraine Derocher (Université de Sherbrooke), “*Les incidences de la socialisation marginale des enfants issus de groupes apocalyptiques sur leur processus d’intégration sociale*”

Tea Break - 15.00-15.15

Session IV

15.15 – 16.45

Lorne Dawson (University of Waterloo) “The Legal Privatization of Religion and the End of Religion as We Know It”

Peter Beyer (Professor at the Department of Classics and Religious Studies, University of Ottawa) “The Globalization of ‘Bad Religion’: Cults, Sects, Fundamentalisms”

Arvind Sharma (Birks Professor of Comparative Religion at McGill University) “A Proposal for a Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the World's Religions”

General Discussion

Sponsorship and Aims of the Conference

This conference is funded by the Social Sciences and the Humanities Research Council, and is sponsored by the *Religion and Diversity* project at the University of Ottawa (www.religionanddiversity.ca) and part of its mission is to map the contours of religious diversity in Canada.

Quebec's Nouvelles Religions: Alternative Spirituality after Vatican II and the 'Quiet Revolution' will bring together scholars with research data and interest in those small, obscure, “deviant” religions Quebec, hitherto neglected by academics. “Cult” conflicts and criminal gurus have been featured in the media, but there are to date few ethnographical studies of these groups. Some of the “flashpoints” and challenges posed by these groups – such as their use of alternative medicine, their authority patterns, and unconventional approaches to sexuality, childrearing and gender roles will be analysed in sociological perspective. This conference provides a forum for discussion and debate regarding 1) Quebec's favorable ecology for NRMs and its “public management” of religious diversity; and 2) How NRMs challenge or accommodate Quebec's legal, political and social structures. The shifting levels of tolerance and accommodation to new, alternative religions or *sectes* in Quebec's recent history will be an important part of our investigation.

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