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CANADIAN CINEMA
AND CANADIAN FILM PERIODICALS
1950-1976

by

Pat Goodspeed

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Arts
in Canadian Studies

Carleton University
OTTAWA, Ontario

May 1988

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ABSTRACT

The film periodical exists as an extension of film, mediating, in some manner, some aspect of the cinema, for a particular reader, at a particular time, and place, with a specific end in view.

In the period following the Second World War, several Canadian film periodicals attempted to play an interventionist role in the changing cultural climate as it evolved. They are not all widely known but, when viewed as a progression between 1950 and 1976, they can be seen to have played a significant even if subsidiary role in a time of radical change.

1950 marks the appearance of the first specialized film periodical in the years under review.

1976 marks a moment of resolve by both English Canada and Quebec as the period ended.

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METHODOLOGY

As the basis for my thesis I have chosen several of the main specialized film periodicals that were in circulation at some time during the period from 1950 to 1976. They represent several different ideological positions, each one occupying a particular place in that time period.

My approach has been to consider these periodicals individually as they appeared and also sequentially in order to demonstrate that, as a progression, they played a significant if subsidiary interventionary role at that period in Canadian society.

TERMINOLOGY

Nothing about Canadian cinema is without complications, least of all what exactly constitutes a Canadian film. Without pursuing this issue but in order to make clear my intentions, for the purposes of this thesis, the following terms are used as defined:

Canadian cinema includes both anglophone and francophone films made in Canada.

French Canadian cinema refers to francophone films made in Quebec before the Quiet Revolution.

Québec cinema refers to francophone films made in Quebec after 1960 when the French Canadians of the province of Quebec had become, or were in the process of becoming, les Québécois.

English Canadian cinema refers to anglophone films of all periods made in Canada (mostly in Toronto with some few in Quebec). It might be defined as Canadian cinema minus French Canadian or Quebec cinema, depending upon the period in question. The designation 'Québécois' claimed a culture, a language, and a territory; no comparable renaming and redefinition took place in English Canada.

Periodical - a publication which began with the intention of appearing regularly regardless of how long it remained in publication

Quebec is used in the English text.

Québec is used in the French text.

INTRODUCTION

The period following the Second World War was, on a global scale, a time of adjustment to new and changing conditions. As the centre of economic and political power moved from Europe to North America, the proximity and expanding influence of the United States became a matter of increasing concern to a growing number of both English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians.¹

In no area was this more disturbing than in film, whether by commercial distribution or increasingly by television. The constant exposure to the Hollywood product ensured an ever-present American influence which supported the growing consumer society as it crossed the border, with little regard for national difference, to include Canada in a continuous market area. A set of foreign cultural norms was co-incidentally imported, seriously inhibiting the development of Canadian forms of cultural expression, blurring differences and undermining existing Canadian values.²

Particularly sensitive to the changing values of society was the Roman Catholic Church in Quebec, an institution which, from the beginning, had been uncomfortable with film, particularly as it affected young people. Consequently attempts were made by the Catholic Church to control the influence of the cinema by exerting pressure on the audience.

1. J.A. Lower, Canada: An Outline History (Toronto, 1966) p. 208.

2. Canadian values which had already been mediated through the process of colonization.

As early as 1907 general Sunday attendance at the cinema was forbidden, justification for this order being the detrimental effect on children.³ Control of the effects of film on the Catholic mind and on Catholic society was an ongoing concern of the Quebec clergy.⁴

In 1917, and responding in some way to the prevailing social climate, the French language "L'Action française" was launched in Quebec in which, from time to time, articles on the impact of film were printed.⁵ These articles contained many warnings against "le cinéma Américain qui est considéré comme immoral et diffuseur de la façon de parler yankee."⁶ Thus the nature of the threat to the Quebec way of life was perceived by the clergy as arising from American ideology in combination with the power of the image in the days of the silent cinema. If Lenin could say in 1922 that cinema was, for the Russians, their most important art, the Conférence de l'Abbé Lionel Groulx au Monument-National sur le cinéma

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3. Pierre Véronneau, "A Chronology of Canadian and Quebec Cinema: 1896-1979" in Self-Portrait (Ottawa, 1980) p. 183.
 4. Restrictions on Sunday attendance lasted until 1939 in spite of complaints from the United States.
 5. Christiane Tremblay-Daviault, Un cinéma Orphelin (Montreal: 1981) p. 73.
 6. Also mentioned by Tremblay-Daviault (p. 74) "Tableau historique général": notes (1921): Publication de "Le Cinéma corrupteur" par l'Oeuvre des Tracts d'Euclide Lefebvre. De nombreux articles dans les journaux (Le Devoir) dans les revues cléricales (La Semaine Religieuse) ou diverses brochures (Ecole sociale populaire) expliciteront par la suite cette lutte contre l'immoralisme et le "dénationalisme" du cinéma". The source for a large part of this information is given as the work of Pierre Pageau and Yves Lever: "Cinéma canadien at Québécois".

could and did make the same observation in a negative form denouncing the film medium as "le pire agent de dénationalisation".⁷

The Combines Investigation in 1930 charged that American interests in the process of film distribution constituted a monopoly which denied Canada all control over her own interests in this area. The charge was taken to court in Ontario in 1932 and was dismissed. It was a decision with far-reaching consequences which effectively approved the continuing domination of Hollywood to the continuing detriment of the Canadian film industry.

In 1939 with the declaration of war on Germany, the National Film Board of Canada was launched. Its intention was to intervene in the film milieu in order to unite Canadian society in a common effort to win the war; it was, in effect, an attempt to create a sense of common purpose rooted in Canada. This propagandist intervention at the institutional level continued into the post-war years producing non-feature films to explain Canada to Canadians and to other nations, the implication being that the NFB was in a position to do this. Until the 1960s these films took mainly a documentary form and so were able to exist in a space not already expropriated by Hollywood.

In the province of Quebec, from the election of Maurice Duplessis in 1944 and continuing through the 1950s, Quebec society was virtually held in place by Union Nationale policies of conservation together with the dogma of the Catholic Church. It was a period in which the influence

7.. Tremblay-Daviault, p. 73.

of Hollywood was increasing as the return to peace-time film viewing occurred. Once again the Catholic Church in Quebec intervened in an effort to control the film-viewing audience, this time at the student level, with the introduction of the ciné-clubs.

Between 1950 and 1975, a number of Canadian film periodicals were published at different times and under different circumstances. Most of these periodicals commented to some extent on the international cinema but, in addition, they addressed an area of domestic concern. Whether this was the Canadian situation in English or the Quebec situation in French, they were all essentially concerned with questions of identity and control. Sequentially they took part in the process of intervention in a film environment dominated by Hollywood which they found unacceptable, in the one instance from the point of view of Canada and, in the other, from the point of view of Quebec.

The francophone publications began to appear in 1950 following the formation of the ciné-clubs. Prompted by a concern for the preservation in some form of the French Canadian identity, they continued to appear through the years of the Quiet Revolution, taking part in a debate over what that identity should be.

The English language periodicals appeared a little later recognizing that a specifically Canadian film viewer existed and that a Canadian film industry was struggling to emerge.

While the French periodicals were frequently the more ideologically specific, the English publications were less direct in their approach, recognizing Quebec, along with the other regions, as part of the Canadian nation to be included in a total film coverage. This approach was

probably less an appeal to French-speaking readers than an acknowledgement that they existed.

At issue in Quebec were two basic inter-related problems, both of which concerned the Quebec identity: the modernization of the province and the control of its destiny. The former was addressed by the Quiet Revolution; the latter was brought into sharp focus by the election to power of the Parti Québécois.

Less involved generally with specific political issues but, nevertheless, well aware of the power of Hollywood in the economic and cultural field, the English periodicals were concerned with marshalling an informed Canadian film audience and establishing a specifically Canadian position, different and separate from that of the Americans.

All of these Canadian periodicals, both English and French, some of them rather small and personal, articulated or implied positions not formerly expressed in such a format.

1950, as the beginning of this period, marks the first attempt of a specialized film periodical to mediate in the cinema environment in Quebec. By 1976, the end of the period, in Canada generally there was a new self-awareness. René Lévesque had declared his readiness to take on the responsibility and the control of Quebec's destiny at the head of the newly-elected Parti Québécois, and, in Ottawa, John Roberts, the Secretary of State, faced the Canadian Parliament, determined to assert Canadian rights in the film industry by confronting the Americans.⁸

8. Sandra Gathercole, "The Best Film Policy this Country Never Had" in Take Two, ed. Seth Feldman (Toronto: Irwin 1984) p. 38.

Although in 1976 Quebec was facing Ottawa, and Ottawa was facing Washington, it was a shared moment in the sense that each declared a vehement desire to be free of past constraints even if those constraints came from different sources.

The film periodicals that were published during this time, from 1950 to 1976, when viewed as a progression in relation to the times of their appearance, can be seen to have played an important if subsidiary role in a time of great change. In Quebec they helped to redefine the French Canadians as "les Québécois" in a modern Quebec and, in Canada, they helped to clarify the film situation while publicizing the still-existing need for adequate policies supported by legislation.

1

CHAPTER I

Writing in "The State of Québec" in 1965, Peter Desbarats discusses what he sees as Canada's national immaturity stemming from "a failure to remedy a congenital and potentially fatal defect in its original composition."

From the beginning Canada has been not merely a confederation of British colonies but an alliance of two distinct peoples... Up to the present the choice has been for partnership, but the terms of union have never been agreed upon finally by both parties. The nation has always been in a state of civilized civil war."¹

The result has been the lack of both a shared national identity and a sense of national destiny which has perpetuated and sustained the continuing existence of two societies, each with its own historical roots, its language and forms of cultural expression.

The renaming of Canada in 1947 by the removal of the words Dominion and British from official Commonwealth terminology, was to English Canadians a step towards final autonomy while to French Canadians it was simply the removal of one item of many which acted as a reminder of foreign colonial domination.²

In Quebec, the wartime issue of conscription had brought into question the relationship of the province to the rest of Canada, the subsequent debate creating a rift which carried over into the post-war

1. Peter Desbarats. The State of Quebec (Toronto, 1965) p. xiv.

2. J.A. Lower, Canada: An Outline History (Toronto, 1966) p. 212.

years to lend emotional validity to the concept of separation even if overshadowed by more pressing domestic concerns.³

The election to office of the Union Nationale party under Maurice Duplessis in 1944 re-established policies based on traditional Quebec values: francophone, Roman Catholic, patriarchal, family-oriented, rural, imbued with messianic fervour. In return for loyalty was the promise of the survival of a francophone collectivity in North America, keeping faith with the Catholic Church. The folkloric quality of the province continued while social equilibrium was maintained with appeals to solidarity and nationalism, Duplessis holding his position with strong support from the rural areas and with the co-operation of the Church.⁴

The sense of nationalism in Quebec at this time took French Canada as its point of orientation, re-affirming its difference in an inward-looking provincialism which came to look less and less romantic and increasingly out of date.⁵

3. Ibid., p. 218.

4. Lower, p. 182: "...under the overwhelming personal dominance of Duplessis the Union Nationale came to stand for close association with the Roman Catholic Church, and with the business community in the province, the suppression of radical opinions and movements, state control of labour unions, the protection at all costs of Quebec's unique culture, and an extreme doctrine of provincial autonomy".

5. Robert Daudelin, Vingt ans de cinéma au Canada français. (Québec: 1967) p. 9.

"If to-day one re-reads the newspapers and reviews of the period (1940s and 1950s) one has the distinct impression of a beginning of the century chronicle rather than refreshing the memory of events which are only fifteen or twenty years old".

From the idea of Canada as an alliance of two distinct peoples comes the practical division of the two societies at the level of language. This factor is a fundamental problem in the concept of a Canadian National cinema which would be able to embrace and involve the whole country. Pierre Véronneau has written of the difficulty of grasping the Canadian cinema; its complexity parallels the complexity of the country itself as the Canada of two founding peoples and the Canada of regions move in and out of focus.⁶

However, the division of the country into two linguistic groups tends to oversimplify the facts. On the one hand it maximizes their differences and minimizes their points of similarity. In addition it tends to overlook the very real differences that exist within each group.⁷

Nevertheless, the sharp linguistic division as the sign of cultural difference is, in general terms, an accurate assessment of the two solitudes and the lack of participation (never mind enjoyment) of one culture in the artistic expression of the other. Unquestionably language is the Berlin Wall of Canadian cinema since, for all practical purposes, bilingualism is the accomplishment of the very few.⁸

6. This work does not address the situation of the native peoples.

7. There were widely divergent views held within both Quebec and English Canada.

8. Susan Barrowclough, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre: The Quebec Connection (London, British Film Institute, 1981) p. 8.
"...the Québécois were rarely bilingual and those who did speak English were of a privileged class." In English Canada, bilingualism was less likely.

On the other hand, the view of Canada as a confederation of provinces or as a collection of regions tends to minimize the importance of the language division.

The arrival in Canada of the first films in 1896 demonstrates the division of the two cultures. The first presentations took place in Montreal and Ottawa to two distinctly different societies in totally different settings inaugurating two systems which progressed along different tracks. In Ottawa the first showing was a preview which took place out of doors using equipment and films produced by the Edison Company of the United States to a largely anglophone audience.⁹ In Montreal the first showing was held in a small café for a group of invited, largely francophone journalists and notables, no doubt including members of the clergy, using the films and the equipment of the Lumière Company of Lyons, France.¹⁰ Both events were reported in local newspapers.¹¹

In 1973, Peter Morris concludes from his research that the Canadian première was the Ottawa showing¹² while some ten years later Pierre Véronneau's research supported the earlier Montreal date as the Canadian

9. Peter Morris, Embattled Shadows (Montreal, 1978).

10. Germain Lacasse, L'Historiographe (Montreal, 1985) p. 5.

11. The Ottawa presentation of July 20, 1896 was reported in the Ottawa Daily Citizen of July 21, 1896, and the Montreal première of June 27, 1896, was announced in La Presse of June 27, 1896 (Morris and Lacasse).

12. Peter Morris, Embattled Shadows. However, in the preface Morris states, "This book is a first attempt to chronicle film activities in Canada before the NFB ... I make no claim for the book's definitiveness ... the study of Canadian film is still in an embryonic state of development."

première.¹³ Both conclusions come from serious studies; the discrepancy arises from the separation of the two societies which existed in 1896 and persisted into the 1970's, eliciting from Véronneau the observation: "Il faut voir ici une conséquence des tiraillements politiques et culturels canadiens."¹⁴

Following the first showings, the early films in English Canada continued to be shown in fairgrounds and as items on vaudeville programmes finding their place as entertainment¹⁵. In Quebec there were attempts to associate films with the educational system and even charitable causes in an effort to find a space in which the cinema could operate profitably in a province over which the Catholic church had enormous control.¹⁶

With the return to peace following the Second World War when the consciousness of nationality was still at a high level, attempts were made to reanimate a film industry.¹⁷

13. Lacasse, p. 5.

14. Ibid., p. 14.

15. Morris, Embattled Shadows, pp. 11-18.

16. Lacasse, p. 9.

17. Morris, Embattled Shadows. Morris notes that the period from 1917 to 1922 was similar to that of the post World War Two period in being a time of increased national awareness in the aftermath of war and war propaganda. It was a period which reached its peak in 1922 with high film production and the establishment of several film periodicals (mostly in Quebec) but it passed all too quickly into the shadow of Hollywood. Chapter 3: "The Years of Promise", p. 57 "...But for some eight years there was no doubt of Canada's desire to have a domestic film industry reflecting its own image. The mood, a self-aware nationalism, was exactly right."

In the English Canadian Cinema few films were made in the private sector and, since distribution was blocked by tightly controlled American interests, these films were seen by very few Canadians or anyone else.¹⁸

There was, however, activity in English Canada in the industry. In 1948 the Association of Motion Picture Producers and Laboratories of Canada (AMPPLC) was formed, the first of a number of professional film societies in Canada and the beginning of a move to try to consolidate the industry. In the same year the Annual Canadian Cinema Awards were inaugurated in Toronto, at which the achievements of both English and French films were recognized.¹⁹ At the same time criteria were established in relation to Canadian film production which were distinct from the standards of the American Academy Awards. As a television event the awards also provided a focus for Canadian publicity and for the raising of awareness of Canadians in relation to the industry. Organizations such as the AMPPLC were largely anglophone. However, in their titles they claimed to represent the whole Canadian nation, the concept of Canada being a federation of provinces in which Quebec was one of those provinces. In practice, language together with its cultural implications, was the stumbling block in national organizations as well as being a reminder of the basic Canadian duality. During the 1950s and

18. Peter Morris, in *Self-Portrait*, p. 9, mentions *BUSH PILOT* (1946), *FORBIDDEN JOURNEY* (1949), and several made in the (1950's).

19. First Canadian Film Awards presented in 1948 under the sponsorship of the Canadian Association for Adult Education and later joined by the Canadian Film Institute and the Canada Foundation.

the 1960s, the anglophone position remained more or less constant while increasingly Quebec withdrew into organizations of its own to claim its difference.

Film production was at a low ebb in English Canada during the post-war period but Quebec fared better. Between 1944 and 1953 some nineteen feature films were released which was a substantial increase over the two features which had been produced over the preceding thirty years.²⁰ This increase was due to the initiative of two companies: Quebec Productions Corporation which was commercially oriented, and Renaissance Films which was connected with the Catholic Church.

First to test the climate was the newly-formed Renaissance Films with the 1944 production of LE PERE CHOPIN (Fedor Ozep), the great success of which was due, in no small measure, to the fact that it was set in a familiar locale: "For the first time the public (and the critics) saw characters, a countryside and places that were 'ours'."²¹

In the following year, 1945, Renaissance Films Distribution was formed around the original company. Close contacts were quickly established with the Roman Catholic Church in France followed by the setting

20. Pierre Véronneau, "The First Wave of Quebec Feature Films: 1945-1953" in Self-Portrait, p. 54.

21. Véronneau, p. 55.

The fact that the Quebec audience was viewing familiar scenes "...convinced them that this film with its story of two brothers, one a lonely millionaire, the other poor but happy with his family, was a masterpiece of great value to Quebec culture."

up in Montreal of a base for the international Catholic cinema.²² Financial and moral support was solicited within the province in an attempt to create a cinema able to respond to the threat of the worldly evils of atheism and communism.²³ Three more films were produced before the company went into bankruptcy bringing to an end the direct intervention of the Church in the filmmaking process in the province of Quebec.²⁴

22. Véronneau, "A Chronology of Canadian and Quebec Cinema: 1896-1979" in Self-Portrait, p. 187.

23. Véronneau, Self-Portrait, p. 56. A report to the shareholders of the Company in October, 1946, illustrates the combined financial and moral appeal for support to retain control: "...we anticipate even more since the creation of an international centre for the production of films of Christian inspiration will have to propagate all our teaching: familial, pedagogic, professional, social, political, aesthetic, and religious. We are well-placed among the most privileged nations, and throughout the world, assets are no better protected than in the province of Québec, thanks to our population whose religious, hard-working and frugal spirit has shown itself absolutely resilient to all subversive ideas. Now is the time for those here among us with available capital to offer timely aid to healthy businesses that are looking for capital to expand."

24. The films were LE GROS BILL (1949), DOCTOR LOUISE (1949), LES LUMIERES DE MA VILLE (1950).

The second organization formed in Quebec was the independent Quebec Productions Corporation which was launched in 1946 as a business venture with the aim of attracting both English and French audiences and also of establishing a substantial international following.²⁵

Its first venture was the simultaneous production of an English and a French version of a murder mystery (WHISPERING CITY/LA FORTERESSE, Fedor Ozep, 1947) both versions of which relied heavily on Hollywood.²⁶ Wide distribution was not realized and the international vision was abandoned as the company turned inwards to the province for its material, thereby contributing to the isolation of the French Canadian in Quebec.

25. Véronneau, Dossier no. 4, p. 12. The moving force behind Quebec Productions Corporation was a well-known radio producer, Paul L'Anglais. One of his early speeches to the Junior Advertising Club of Montréal indicates his thinking at the time: "If we work with intelligence we shall succeed in making Canada, in radio and in film, the bilingual artistic centre of the world and we shall become the Canadian ambassadors of to-morrow. We are privileged because we live in a bilingual country. As we say in business, if one can speak French and English, one can reach almost all parts of the world. We have two means at our disposal - radio and cinema. No other country can rival us in this way..."

26. Ibid. In Le Clarion (8.7.47) René Lévesque writes: "Trêve de charité chrétienne. Maintenant qu'il s'agit d'exportation de linge sale et de la famille. Comme LE PERE CHOPIN de mélancolique mémoire, LA FORTERESSE sera pour nombreux français, belges, suisses, la première image du Canada qu'ils aient jamais vue. Supposons que notre devoir soit de leur annoncer l'évènement. Ma foi, je ne vois pas qu'on puisse le faire..." Véronneau, (Self-Portrait, p. 58) mentions that LA FORTERESSE enjoyed a certain success but the reception of WHISPERING CITY is not mentioned. Nor does Peter Morris refer to it in "The First Six Decades" - perhaps not considering it a Canadian film.

What followed was a series of films based on familiar serialized radio dramas:

The weekly adventures of the Quebec heroes of those dramas were assiduously followed by a population whose attachment to 'Québécois' cultural values was one of the only means to resist the national oppression that they lived.²⁷

Again financial difficulties proved to be insurmountable although a final attempt was made to extend the market for larger profits with a Quebec/ France co-production in 1950.²⁸ LE COPAIN (Jean Devaivre) was released in Canada, France and Britain but was only marginally successful and the company was reduced to renting out its facilities.²⁹

The local character of the heavily religious Quebec films of the 1940s and 1950s had little appeal on the French market, the bilingual audience was very limited and, above all, Hollywood's position of dominance in virtually all of the western world was incontestable. The attempt to take advantage of the Canadian situation as visualized by Paul L'Anglais was a failure. Altogether, the films produced by Quebec Productions Corporation were determined by the box office and turned out to be not very different from those of Renaissance Films thereby indicating that the only dependable audience for Quebec films was within the

27. Pierre Véronneau, Self-Portrait, p. 59. Véronneau, writing in 1978 uses 'Québécois' no doubt to refer to the French Canadian cultural values of the 1940's and not to the values that emerged in the 1960's.

28. Véronneau, p. 60. The co-production was LE COPAIN, 1950.

29. Among the films produced by Quebec Productions Corporation were: UN HOMME ET SON PÉCHÉ (1948), SÉRAPHIN (1949), LE CURÉ DU VILLAGE (1950) et LE ROSSIGNOL ET LES CLOCHES (1951).

French Canadian community. Only the staunchly Catholic, French Canadian audiences were prepared to accept the moralistic films of the 1940s and the early 1950s and even so, there were dissenting voices.³⁰

Clearly at this time film production in English Canada was blocked by lack of access to the system of distribution. In Quebec there was the further problem of an extremely limited audience.³¹

In the early post-war years, while the private companies struggled against too great odds, at the institutional level the National Film Board continued in its attempt to straddle the country as it adapted from war to peace-time conditions, carefully avoiding feature film production and operating in the limited space which did not conflict with the territory of the Hollywood cinema.³² The production of short

30. René Lévesque for example.

31. During the 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s, 10% of the cinemas in Quebec ran exclusively French programmes (Véronneau, Self-Portrait, p. 54). The rest showed American films almost entirely in English. Of the 10% with French programming, as many as 80% were French imports.

32. A situation that was not helped by the 1948 Canadian Co-operation Project which "prevented both import controls and a quota system, and suppressed yet another drive towards an indigenous and stable Canadian feature film industry". Peter Morris, Self-Portrait, p. 3.

Canadian Co-operation Project remained in force until 1958. In return for using Canadian locations and making references to encourage tourism, an undertaking which was barely honoured, the American Motion Picture Association secured the continued transference of some 17 million dollars annually from rental fees to the United States.

subjects continued and frequently these short films were recognized internationally without being widely seen at home.³³

In the early post war years, the NFB was a predominantly anglophone organization and so it remained until, with the move from Ottawa to Montreal in 1956, the language and cultural division began to be addressed.³⁴ The fact of the inadequate francophone representation together with several events related to the Board were cause for concern in Quebec.

The first of these events occurred in 1945 during the red scare when the loyalty of the Board's employees was questioned, and John Grierson himself came under attack.³⁵ As a consequence of these suspicions, Duplessis ordered his Board of Censors "to examine National Film Board subjects for content sympathetic to communism, arguing that the Film Board diffused communism and showed films encouraging federal centralization."³⁶ Four years later, in 1949, the distribution in

33. Piers Handling, "Canada" in World Cinema after 1945, p. 89.
"During the immediate post-war years, the NFB was engaged in making numerous films that explained the immense variety of social reforms that the government was busily enacting."

34. Peter Morris in Self-Portrait, p. 9.
The list of filmmakers recognized for their work with the NFB during the 1940's and early 1950's appears to include possibly one francophone.
Piers Handling, World Cinema after 1945, p. 89 states that "the move of the NFB to Montreal in 1956 turned the organization into a truly bilingual institution."

35. Piers Handling, "The National Film Board of Canada: 1939-1959" in Self-Portrait, p. 48.

36. Ibid.

Quebec of all films produced by the NFB was stopped with Duplessis charging left-wing leanings. In 1949 also, the Film Board came under the scrutiny of the Royal Commission on the Arts, Letters and Sciences³⁷ accompanied by criticism from the private sector as well as from the governments of Canada and Quebec.³⁸

In 1950, following the report of the Massey Commission, a new film act was passed to replace the original legislation of 1939 with which the NFB was founded. A new mandate was produced which broadly stated that the Film Board should interpret Canada to Canadians and to other countries (as previously stated).

It was a mandate which, given the two solitudes and the overwhelmingly anglophone make-up of the Board, may not have been received too warmly by either Maurice Duplessis or the Quebec clergy, both of whose policies depended on their own interpretation of Canada. From their point of view, the new mandate must have seemed like a licence for the NFB to tread on Quebec's preserves and can be seen as perhaps the most important underlying factor in the difficulties that arose in the late 1960s and the 1970s between the Quebec filmmakers employed by the Board and the Board itself. The quite legitimate question arises as to who is qualified and in a position to undertake the all-powerful interpretation.

37. The Massey Commission, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences.

38. Peter Morris in Self-Portrait, p. 8. "Though some have argued that the NFB has had a negative influence on the growth of a Canadian film industry, it is indisputable that for more than two decades the Board provided the principal focus for film productions in Canada."

Clearly the film industries in Canada and in Quebec, such as they were, were not pointing in the same direction. The Quebec experience had tested the box office in and out of the province, and had ruled out the possibility of expansion and the production of films that were other than local in character. English Canada had not been in a position to put the product to the test on a large scale, Hollywood restrictions having prevented such a testing of the box office.

The dominance of the American cinema remained, becoming, as the recovery of the war years advanced, a cinema of conspicuous consumption which promoted materialist values and tied the Canadian population into the American consumer society.

The impossibility of controlling film viewing and the prospect of an even worse future situation with television about to appear on the scene, put great pressure on both Duplessis and the clergy to prevent the undermining of the traditional lifestyle and the Catholic doctrine that went with it. Unable to stop the flow of foreign, chiefly American, films, the Church turned its attention to the audience in an attempt to moderate the impact.

Consequently, in 1949; the Church, using the education system, intervened with the first student film societies.³⁹ Based organizationally on film clubs already existing in France and Britain,⁴⁰ they

39. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Objectif, no. 38, p. 6. "Il n'y a dans ce fait rien d'anormal puisque depuis toujours le clergé contrôle de façon absolue tout le secteur de l'instruction publique."

40. Découpages, Vol. 1 no. 1.

provided a network of groups operating in the church-controlled educational system in the colleges and convents of the province.⁴¹ Their clear objective was to intervene in the student/film relationship by providing a frame of reference as a guide both to viewing habits and to the intellectual and emotional reception of the films. The ciné-clubs provided control over the choice of films to be viewed (only "good" films to be included),⁴² as well as a somewhat structured and educationally oriented environment as the proper place in which to discuss them.

In 1950, as a support and coordinating agent of these ciné-clubs, the periodical Découpages was published, the first of the specialized film publications to make an appearance. Writing in Objectif in May 1967, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, in an article entitled "Le Monopole" observes:

Le clergé québécois s'est intéressé de façon active au cinéma à partir des années 49-50 et petit à petit a érigé une structure de défense qu'il a simplement superposé aux structures d'éducation déjà en place.⁴³

41. Robert Daudelin, Vingt ans de cinéma, p. 18: "Un coup d'oeil suffit pour réaliser l'étonnante vitalité de l'activité cinématographique des dix dernières années au Québec (1955/65). Plusieurs éléments ont permis cet éveil:les travail des ciné-clubs. Fort répandu dans les maisons d'enseignement, les ciné-clubs ont connu aussi une période de grande activité dans le secteur privé durant les années 1956 à 1962", p.p. 17-18. "1954, 1955 1956: c'est l'âge d'or des ciné-clubs qui commence à Montréal et un peu partout au Québec. Les cinéphiles se rassemblent, discutent et rêvent parfois de faire un film", p. 16, and some of them did. The ciné-clubs worked well until in the 1960's the regionalization of schools was the deciding factor in after-school activities.

42. Clearly this is a judgement on the moral qualities of the films.

43. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, "Le Monopole" in Objectif, no. 38, p. 6.

In English Canada, the impact of American films was no less great, but in the absence of institutions as powerful and sensitive as the Duplessis government, and, above all, the Catholic church, reactions were spasmodic, scattered and slower to gain momentum. The English periodicals were instrumental in bringing together these scattered responses. However, the first anglophone periodical in Canada in the period under review did not appear until the mid-1960s.

CHAPTER II

The film periodical with its various connections to the cinema has a history which dates back to the beginning of this century. Since the first moving pictures were shown in Paris in 1895, people have written about them in one way or another. Initially, the phenomenon of film itself was interesting as a development of still photography, and each showing was an event reported in local newspapers. After the turn of the century when the novelty of the medium had, to some extent, faded, other aspects of film began to engage public attention.

There was, for example, great curiosity about the performers whose lives and identities had been concealed, primarily in accordance with a general policy to limit their economic clout. However, public interest was constantly created, satisfied and recreated through the agency of the fan magazine which began to appear around 1910. This appears to have been the first type of film publication to be launched in a specialized form, and it played a substantial role in the creation of the stars and Hollywood as the dream capital of the world.

In Great Britain, the publication Pictures, for example, in its June issue of 1912, associates knowledge of, and interest in, the players with greater enjoyment of the viewing experience.¹ Clearly, these magazines supported the industry as entertainment, rapidly becoming a spin-off which has survived largely with its original function into the present.

1. David Robinson, World Cinema, (Methuen, 1981) p. 30.

Between 1915 and 1922 with the attempt to establish a domestic film industry and a growing interest in film generally, several Canadian film periodicals appeared on the market.² There were film features in newspapers and general magazines, but it was not until after the Second World War that a more critically-oriented film periodical appeared and serious consideration was given, in this format, to the effect of foreign films (particularly those produced in Hollywood) on Canadian society, as well as to the general situation of the Canadian film industry.

Some years later, in 1971, the periodical Champ Libre published an article entitled "Le Champ étroit de la critique" in which the question of where the critic publishes his work came under review.³ The writer states that the place from which the critic speaks and the context of his work are determining factors in the way the work is perceived and in its effectiveness. For example, in allotting several pages of the leisure section of the newspaper to the film as week-end culture, the press indicates very clearly the importance of the role of a diversion in a capitalist society.

The film critic might choose to publish in a general weekly magazine, in which case his writing might be placed between an economics and a historical or political text with the result that his comments appear

2. Véronneau, Self-Portrait, p. 184.

3. Champ Libre, 1971, Vol. 1, no. 2, p. 63.

in isolation from other film comment. There is also the possibility that the work might be coloured by the general political sympathies of the publication.

The specialized film periodical is considered by Champ Libre to be the most effective place for the publishing of a critical work, in spite of the fact that, in its Marxist view in relation to Quebec, it will reach only a small number of readers who are likely to be mainly students and middle-class intellectuals.

Nevertheless, the article considers that there is a useful role for the critic to play as a catalyst in society. To move beyond criticism, it must set out and maintain a clear ideological position. Failure to do so inevitably leads to a collection of diverse comments with no real focus and, therefore, no real impact.

This is a concept which might be applied to the Take One experience at the end of the 1960s.

Découpages was the first of the specialized film periodicals to appear in Canada in the post-war years. It was launched in 1950 by la Jeunesse étudiante catholique into an environment that was well under control socially, but which was vulnerable to the many current ideas that were circulating freely as the media widened their coverage. It was the first periodical to attempt an interventionist role in defence of the Catholic way of life in Quebec.

Robert Daudelin writes:

Pour la première fois peut-être, dans notre milieu, un groupe d'hommes prenait le cinéma au sérieux⁴ et voulait y regarder de plus près. L'idéal de Découpages (faire du cinéma un facteur de promotion spirituelle) nous paraît aujourd'hui un peu trop apostolique sans doute, mais son action fut néanmoins décisive dans la découverte culturelle du cinéma au Québec.⁵

Découpages describes itself as a Cahier d'Éducation and addresses its first numbers to all those student "équipes" (of ciné-clubs) who are interested in the question of cinema and in making of it an instrument of culture for the modern student.⁶ The editorial or introduction is credited to "l'équipe" and generally writers of specific articles or comments are not identified so that the impression is of a collaborative effort.

The first three issues are directed to the organizers of the ciné-clubs, and are based on the stated premise that the cinema poses a significant social problem which is of daily concern to all members of the student generation to which, in all conscience, they must respond.

4. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Objectif 1964, no. 29/30, p. 42: "les Années folles de la critique ou petite histoire des revues de cinéma au Québec": "On a beau feuilleter presque toutes les revues et les journaux canadiens-français publiés avant les années 50, on n'y trouve à peu près rien sur le cinéma, sinon quelques articles consacrés au phénomène social qu'il constituait. Nos intellectuels, qui venaient de découvrir Albert Camus et ne lui laissaient pas de repos, ou suivaient les traces de George Duhamel, ou méprisaient le cinéma de leur silence et de leur ignorance, ou montaient en chaire afin de mettre en garde la communauté chrétienne."

5. Robert Daudelin, Vingt ans de cinéma, p. 14.

6. Découpages no. 1, March 1950.

The first issue looks for an effective way of dealing with the cinema, which, they state, appears to be an enormous task for students who have neither financial nor political power; it suggests that a way may be found within the student milieu through the ciné-clubs.

The fourth number notes the influence of film on young people who might see as many as fifty films in a year, and who, in the absence of both a cinema culture and a cinema education of their own, learn about life through the medium of film, passively and unwittingly submitting to the tyranny of business interests.

Cinema as an international language, operating across words, classes and ages, must, it states, be conquered peacefully through understanding its nature so that by intervening at the level of the spectator, attitudes towards the medium can be controlled. To transform the attitude of the spectator is already to begin to transform the cinema. Intervention in this way is presented as an action of social significance with the possibility of decisive effects on their own student generation.

The fourth number also claims a slightly different slant with a re-orientation to include readers who are interested in the cinema while not in the business of running a ciné-club. In order to do this, they are widening their horizons and proposing to deal with cinema history, techniques, genres, and its relationship to the other arts.⁷

7. Ibid., no. 4, Feb. 1951.

Découpages is, as Robert Daudelin says, a little too apostolic for 1966 (the date of publication of Vingt-cinq années), and seems even more so for 1987. Its attempt to hold back the influence of the cinema is presented in apostolic terms as a mission which allows the students to play a considerable role in the struggle to make the cinema a factor in spiritual promotion. It recognizes the complexity of the task and our miserable incapacity to deal with the situation. It also recognizes the necessity of adhering to Christian principles and to a morality which it associates with the art of living in conformity with the relative values of natural and divine laws.⁸

In the fourth number, it addresses the problem of a dominant American cinema:

Il y a un fait qui nous marque et dont nous ne tenons pas assez compte, c'est que nous vivons dans un contexte américain. De toutes parts, les produits américains nous arrivent et parmi ceux-là, les films. Nous trouvons bien utiles certaines inventions, nous les adoptons rapidement. Notre peuple, par larges sections, a rapidement adopté le film américain. Les étudiants ne sont pas le groupe social le moins amateur de cinéma américain. Peu à peu nous avons développé un goût, une préférence pour les films des Etats-Unis. La publicité qui sait vendre beaucoup de choses nous a vendu le cinéma américain en bloc. Les étudiants l'ont beaucoup acheté. Une grande partie de la population s'est peu à peu habituée à goûter ce cinéma à en apprécier la philosophie. Les vedettes y ont été pour quelque chose. Il y a vraiment pour nous, les étudiants, une tendance à apprécier d'avantage le cinéma américain. Nous aimons comment finissent les films américains. Ce qu'il y a de grave c'est que nous ne prenons pas ce qu'il y a de mieux des Américains et que nous ne connaissons souvent de leur cinéma que les productions de qualité inférieure. Cette complaisance pour le cinéma américain et ses productions inférieures avait peut-être déjà en nous des intelligences.

8. Ibid., no. 1, p. 41.

Fait de conséquence: nous sommes en train d'acquérir une formation universelle et sur le plan du cinéma nous sommes terriblement non-universels. Nous ne connaissons que les derniers films parus. Nous connaissons à peine les classiques du cinéma. Nous ignorons presque tout des films étrangers.

Il y a à notre décharge le fait qu'il n'est pas toujours facile d'aller voir autre chose.⁹

A new attitude towards the cinema is discussed:

Certains écrivains répudient le cinéma. Leur oeuvre littéraire n'est certes pas sans mérite. Enfermés dans le passé, ils n'ont vu dans le monde moderne que ce qui blessait les concepts traditionnels. Ils n'ont pas cherché à comprendre leur siècle et l'ont condamné au lieu de s'essayer à l'orienter. Ils appartiennent à un autre temps. Ces auteurs n'ont fait qu'exprimer les réactions de toute une génération qui refusait son époque...

The article continues:

Nous sommes devant un fait: tout tant que nous sommes, nous assistons de temps à autre à une représentation de cinéma. Certains mènent une lutte acharnée contre le septième art en répétant que c'est un passe-temps d'illettrés, pourtant les intellectuels s'en rapprochent de plus en plus; les plus célèbres et les plus sérieux l'étudient et le discutent.

Le Pape écrit sur la question, des recherches sérieuses s'ébauchent, des jeunes s'y consacrent, l'O.C.I.C. (Office Catholique International du Cinéma) se fonde. On discerne mieux, maintenant, les merveilleuses possibilités artistiques et éducationnelles que le cinéma renferme.

On découvre de plus en plus cet art des images vives faites pour s'imprimer dans la mémoire et pour y servir de support à des idées qui se cristalliseront peu à peu. D'où "la puissance mais aussi la responsabilité du cinéma."¹⁰

9. Ibid., no. 4, p. 4.

10. Ibid., no. 1, p. 21.

Generally, cinema is accepted as an instrument of modern culture which, the periodical states, must be integrated into education and into life,¹¹ a position which is adopted in the Parent Commission Report on Education which appeared in 1964-66.

Also noted is the presentation of women in film which they find unacceptable; although the cinema revolves around them, it does so in such a way as to glorify them but in a "poor and false sense".

The most important aspect of Découpages is that it approaches film as worthy of serious attention and as a vital factor in the development of both the individual and society. In addition, it advocates studying cinema and its related issues in order to develop a collective cinema culture and an individual awareness of the need for a critical stance. In defending the morality of the Catholic Church and attempting to preserve its authority, Découpages exposes the Hollywood star system and the threat it poses for Canada, and particularly for Quebec. The importance of cultural values is stressed, as well as the attachment to cultural roots, both being basic to the making of authentic choices.

While the perspective of Découpages is totally related to the spiritual development of the individual in the struggle to maintain a personal and collective morality in the light of Catholic teaching, it raises many problems which are basic to the Canadian cinema and, undoubtedly, in its systematic and regular coverage, played a vital role in the emergence and development of a cinema culture in Quebec. No such formation took place in English Canada at this time.

11. Ibid., no. 4.

Overall, Découpages conveys an earnestness and an articulated dedication which is not the style of the 1980s, and perhaps conveys in its tone a hint of the colonized experience:

A l'endroit du cinéma, l'étudiant est dans une position défavorable à cause de son manque de maturité. Il n'est pas un adulte. Certains parmi nous le sont davantage que d'autres, mais dans l'ensemble nous sommes encore dans la période de l'adolescence. C'est à la fois pour nous et notre force et notre faiblesse en ce qui regarde le cinéma.¹²

In the early 1950s there were other reasons for concern by the Church in Quebec. In 1952, the CBC-TV broadcasts began, changing the pattern of film production (and therefore film viewing) across Canada.¹³ In Quebec, the films and serials produced centred around the Church in some way, but television brought other values into the home to influence the family unit and its traditional relationships (patriarchal) essential to the preservation of the Quebec society of its time.

The last films of the feature boom in Quebec were made between 1951 and 1953: LA PETITE AURORE, L'ENFANT MARTYRE (1951), COEUR DE MAMAN and L'ESPRIT DU MAL (both 1953); each of which stressed in a somewhat desperate fashion, the concepts of good and evil - almost as fairy tales - which supported this society. Pierre Véronneau writes:

...the genre that aroused the most reaction was the weepy melodrama, highly moralistic with curious sado-masochistic overtones... These three films epitomize the collective morbidity that marked our darkest period, suffocated by Catholic values of penitence, atonement, forbearance and

12. Ibid.

13. Véronneau, Self-Portrait, p. 63 "TV arrived in 1952 and it played the same role as the films had: from now on the serials found their place on the TV screen. The film companies began to produce series of short films rather than features."

self-sacrifice. They reflect with great insight the sick imagination of our society and are valuable to-day (1978) more for their sociological connotations than for their cinematic qualities.¹⁴

In this period, TIT-COQ (1952) was the only feature which presented a different view of the French Canadian.¹⁵ It features a Quebec soldier - a conscript - who returns from war to find that his girlfriend has fallen in love with another man, and so deals with a contemporary situation with issues of some concern to Quebec. It could, perhaps, be seen as the beginning of a move towards politicization in Quebec films. It elicited from René Lévesque the following comment:

Enfin, ça y est. Au chant magique de ce Tit-Coq qui naguère nous reprenait le chemin du théâtre, le jour se lève à nouveau. Au cinéma cette fois...le cinéma canadien sort de l'âge des cavernes ...et de forteresses!

Dieu! que c'est passionnant - et nécessaire - de se reconnaître sur un écran. Et, tout à coup, de ne plus être simplement intéressé à titre documentaire ou ému par fraternité humaine, mais de se sentir touché au vif et comme flambant nu, violé par l'oeil d'une caméra.

...Réalité rude et qui semblera peut-être informe à l'étranger. Mieux vaut prévoir le pire pour éviter les secousses ...Étranger mon ami, si ce film passe sur ton écran, dis-toi bien, je t'en prie, dis-toi avant toute chose que là, pour la première fois, nous sommes. Bon nombre d'entre nous, en tout cas. Et c'est tels quels que nous sommes à prendre ou à laisser.¹⁶

It is perhaps from this time that we begin to find divergent attitudes appearing in print more regularly.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. René Lévesque, "L'Autorité" (28.2.53) from "Histoire du Cinéma au Québec", II. Dossier 7: Cinéma de l'époque duplessiste.

Between 1952 and 1954, La Société du film de l'association général des étudiants de l'université de Montréal published six numbers of the periodical Projections under the direction of Jean-Pierre Ostiguy, with Pierre Castonguay and Jacques Parent as his principle collaborators.¹⁷

Robert Daudelin notes that it was "un bulletin cinématographique qui malheureusement eut la vie bien courte".¹⁸ Its short duration might have been due to inadequate financing and perhaps also to heavy demands on the collaborators.¹⁹ Many of these relatively early publications in Canada appear to have been the result of the personal involvement of a few individuals.

During the decade of the 1950s and extending into the 1960s, a process of renaming took place. The changing designations of the various regulating bodies of the Church are perhaps an indication of a degree of institutional confusion as attempts were being made to retain control in the changing social, political and cinematic environment. The changes in name are indicative of change exterior to the institution, rather than change within, since the regulating function continued in much the same way.²⁰

17. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Objectif, 1964, no. 29/30, p. 43.

18. Daudelin, Vingt ans de cinéma au Canada français, p. 15.

19. Most Canadian periodicals I have found which are not directly connected to the Church for funding mention in the second or third issue their need for increased circulation to ameliorate their financial situation.

20. Champ Libre, no. 2, p. 25.

In 1953, Le Centre catholique du cinéma de Montréal was formed to keep the public in touch with the directives of the Church in matters of cinema and cinema education by maintaining a bond between the Centre and its affiliates.²¹ It very quickly became the official organ of the Fédération des centres diocésains du cinéma,²² and between 1954 and 1957, it produced fourteen numbers of the periodical Ciné-Orientations. The last issue coincided with the dismantling, or possibly simply renaming, of the Fédération des centres diocésains de cinéma as Le Centre catholique nationale de cinéma, de la radio et de la télévision.²³

In 1953, while the Fédération des centres diocésains du cinéma was still in existence, a regular bulletin was launched to provide a comment on the moral qualities of specific films.²⁴ Originally named Ciné-Service (1953-54), it also passed through the renaming process becoming Les Films de la semaine (1954-1957), and then Films à l'écran.

In 1955, two periodicals appeared almost simultaneously: in September, Images put out its first number, and in October, the first issue of Séquences appeared. They are two very different magazines in orientation and in appearance. Images is a very attractively produced

21. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre. Objectif, no. 29-30, p. 43.

22. Ibid. refers to Ciné-Orientations, Vol. 3, no. 1, Sept./Oct. 1956 Le Cardinal P.E. Léger.

23. Ibid., no. 29-30, p. 43 (Office catholique national des techniques de diffusion).

24. Ibid., Jean-Pierre Lefebvre describes Ciné-Service as "des fiches visant à informer le spectateur de la valeur morale des films." Films à l'écran - "Un instrument indispensable pour ceux qui ont charge d'âmes (souligné dans le texte): en plus d'être utile à tous les cinéphiles, le bulletin hebdomadaire Films à l'écran...."

periodical with a bright red cover and excellent stills, while the first numbers of Séquences are simply mimeographed sheets of paper. Images lasted about twelve months and produced four issues, while Séquences is the most durable film periodical in Canadian cinema history, having appeared regularly from its founding in 1955 into the 1980s.

Jean-Pierre Lefebvre credits the launching of Images to a rift within the Commission étudiante over the apostolic orientation of cinema reviews. The breakaway group (which included some collaborators from Découpages) as a result produced its own periodical in order to be able to express its own divergent views.²⁵

Images ("revue canadienne de cinéma" is added on the inside front cover), in its first editorial, separates itself from both the fan magazine and the moral guide for the spectator after the fashion of Les Films de la semaine.²⁶ It is, to quote Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, "la première véritable revue libre de cinéma à voir le jour dans la Province de Québec."²⁷

It aspires to make a place for itself for the systematic analysis of the mass of images which are offered for daily consumption, as well as in general to play a part in the development of a cinematic tradition within the Canadian context. Its interest, then, includes all types of film, whether for commercial distribution or for television.

25. Ibid., p. 45.

26. Images, Vol. 1, no. 1, p. 1, Sept. 1955.

27. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Objectif, no. 29-30, p. 45.

In its introductory number, it elaborates on the image ("Notre civilisation se débat dans un océan d'images"), on its early appearance in man's history, and on its continuing power in society:

La dimension de la tâche qui s'offre à l'homme actuel ne se limite pas qu'au cinéma. Dans le royaume de l'image, celui-ci n'est pas le seul maître. Voilà pourquoi notre revue s'appelle Images. Nous avons voulu rattacher le cinéma à cette volonté farouche que l'homme a développé de dire les choses ou de se dire par l'image. Cela remonte au premier dessin que l'homme a fait et dont la puissante beauté nous émeut encore. Les images que l'homme inscrit un jour dans le pellicule, sur le papier ou dans la télévision, il les a portées longtemps en lui. Un jour il nous les projette à la face. A leur tour elles travaillent en nous, elles creusent dans les dessous de l'âme populaire, des sentiers inattendus, des mines où sommeillent des charges capables de dissoudre le monde, de le faire exploser ou au contraire transfigurer dans la beauté.²⁸

The need to reflect on film and image is stressed, a process which, the editorial states, leads in a straight line "à une réflexion sévère sur nous-mêmes et les recès de notre coeur." It asks that its subscribers take the position, not of simple readers, but of "compagnons de réflexion". It draws attention, as other periodicals have done before, to the almost entirely foreign origin of films available to the Quebec public, noting the United States, France, Britain, Italy and Japan as sources of these films.

The editorial of the second number²⁹ refers to several problems which it encounters, including that of survival without the strong financial support of an established institution which it clearly does not have.³⁰ It mentions, also, the problem for the critic in doing

28. Images, Vol. 1, no. 1.

29. Ibid., Vol. 1, no. 2, p. 1.

30. It is clearly not supported by advertisers.

justice to films which have been cut by the censor, the complications involved in obtaining the photographic illustrations (which add to its image), as well as the overall complexity of engaging in an intellectual activity which has been so little worked over as the cinema. In response to early reader comment (which is not printed), it promises future attention to documentary films as an appropriate policy in consideration of the fact that the bulk of Canadian production is in this form.³¹

The third editorial³² is concerned with the periodical itself in terms of its orientation, perhaps in response again to its readers ("...et cela semble nécessaire pour éclairer nos lecteurs qui ont, sans doute, essayé de se faire une idée de ce qu'était ou voulait être Images"), perhaps a degree of self-reflexivity on the part of the editors in relation to what was, in the circumstances, a rather bold and courageous, if somewhat tentative, venture.

The editorial acknowledges, after only a year of publication, the difficulty of stating in definitive and detailed terms, its 'politique d'action' when, in fact, it is being constructed in response to the requirements of the material and of the situation, a very different

31. Images, Vol. 1, no. 2, p. 2. Editorial p. 3: Introductory article by Gabriel Breton "L'invention de la nature", p. 31: Le documentaire: section Canada with short comments on NFB films - LA FEUILLE VERTE and LES RICHESSE DE LA TERRE. Images no. 3: an interview with Colin Low by Arthur Lamothe, p. 31: Documentaries by Arthur Lamothe featuring LES ABOITEAUX (un documentaire de valeur), CORRAL (un film génial), PECHEURS DE TERRE-NEUVE from the series Canada Carries On (Le style en est pompeux et grandiloquent) p. 32.

32. Ibid., Vol. 1, no. 3.

concept from that of the guiding hand of the periodicals and articles associated with the Catholic church. Its stated policy at the moment of writing is to focus on "le cinéma quotidien, sur ce flot continu de productions qui défilent sur l'écran du cinéma du coin."³³

Other problems noted in this third editorial are those caused by censorship cuts, by the preponderance of foreign material, and by the lack of a well-equipped cinémathèque.

The fourth editorial devotes half its space to a consideration of television for the French Canadian audience, aimed less at coverage of current programmes as they appear than at an overall view of specific areas over a period of several months:

....De telles études globales n'ont pas été faites souvent en ce qui regarde la télévision canadienne et nous croyons qu'elles remplissent une fonction de lucidité intellectuelle que ne peut remplir une critique toute d'actualité et jamais capable de faire la somme d'expériences passées ni d'en tirer une signification.³⁴

In response to reader requests for greater attention to the French cinema, articles by Henri Agel³⁵ and by André Bazin³⁶ are contained in the final issue. The contents of these articles came as a great sur-

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., Vol. 1, no. 4-6, p. 1.

35. Ibid., Henri Agel, "L'Esthétique nouvelle dans le cinéma Française", p. 37.

36. Ibid., André Bazin, "Evolution du cinéma française", p. 32.

prise, the editorial tells us, since they reveal a five or six year gap between the French and the French Canadian spectator:

...un étrange biais que leurs articles sont pour nous une révélation frappante. Nous sommes littéralement et depuis longtemps privés de ce qui fait le véritable cinéma français. Tout cela est cocasse dans un pays où les orateurs de tout acabit nous inondent de prédications sur les vertus de la culture française.³⁷

The editorial ends with the hope that the issue contains material sufficiently detailed and interesting to its readers to justify the time spent on its preparation (which is obviously considerable). Since this is the final number, one is left wondering if indeed the periodical did not receive the encouragement it needed to ensure its financial survival and to compensate for the extensive work involved in its production.³⁸

Images is important as a first tentative step in the break with tradition. When Jean-Pierre Lefebvre characterized it as the first instance of really free expression in a film periodical, it seems clear that freedom in this context means freedom from the teachings of the Church. However, the conventional way of approaching the work of art remains, and it is this approach to film - as a popular art, the 7th art, one of the industrial arts - as something of value in the human experience - which is central. Its critical stance is aesthetic and humanist and begins with the work itself.

37. Ibid., p. 1.

38. It appears to rely entirely on its readership.

Gabriel Breton, in his article "Sur le problème de la critique", writes:

La question est de savoir si la critique est destinée au producteur ou au spectateur. Traditionnellement, d'un point de vue uniquement théorique, je crois qu'elle était conçue comme un instrument de direction, de gouvernement et de corrections à l'usage des producteurs; et comme une norme du bon goût pour le spectateur... Ce qu'il y a d'important, je crois, dans ces critiques, ce n'est pas les jugements portés sur les œuvres ou leur classification en bonnes ou mauvaises, mais plutôt une tradition de réflexion sur la nature et sur l'homme transformés par l'art.³⁹

Fernand Cadieux has the following to say about the critic: "Etre critique a surtout été vu comme un antidote aux dangers du cinéma. C'est d'abord un achèvement de l'œuvre," and he ends his article with:

...Ce dont nous avons le plus besoin c'est d'un peu d'art dans notre vie et pour que nous puissions le lire cet art, il faut quand même que le niveau de critique prenne corps. On n'y arrivera pas sans une méditation sur l'humanisme viable pour l'homme en Amérique.⁴⁰

The crusading zeal of Découpages has gone, but from time to time we are reminded of its having been with perhaps a turn of phrase and the occasional rhetoric.

The failure to produce another issue after Autumn 1956 leads to the question of whether, after the positive and assertive tone of the traditional periodicals which were its antecedents, the more open attitude, the less emphatic tone and directed style (not necessarily less deeply held views) might have been felt at the time to be lacking

39. Images, Vol. 1, no. 1, Gabriel Breton, "Sur le problème de la critique".

40. Ibid., Fernand Cadieux "De l'actualité de l'œuvre critique en cinéma et en télévision", p. 10.

in conviction. Art is not the pressing concern that religion frequently seemed to be. The removal of the firm institutionalized Catholic structures with the Church and its values as the context for evaluation, may have left readers and potential supporters with a sense of an absence of firm convictions as we may perhaps interpret the self-questioning editorial of the third number.⁴¹

One wonders if, to be successful in the 1955 Quebec climate in terms of survival, an intellectual approach based on aesthetics and humanism is enough and if an outright contestation with a more assertive tone might have been necessary.⁴² Perhaps the time had not quite arrived. In any case, Images took a significant step and facilitated, to some extent, the advent of the more politically oriented and more combative Objectif which appeared four years later.

There is about both Découpages and Images (and in spite of the zealousness of the former) a certain-controlled passivity, an over-intellectualization which we can associate with some of the critics of Objectif who make the connection between colonization and repressed creativity. Both periodicals touch on many of the major problems faced by the Canadian cinema, but there is a lack of the spontaneity which the later Objectif and even Champ Libre perhaps display.

41. Ibid., Vol. 1, no. 3, p. 1.

42. Ibid. "...Quoi qu'il en soit de cette position, elle ne condamne pas d'autres efforts qui peuvent être différents. Elle représente une tentative de nous situer au niveau de la culture cinématographique qui se définit chaque jour le grand public."

Séquences, the second periodical to appear in 1955, was published under the direction of Léo Bonneville for the Fédération des diocésains de Montréal.⁴³ Its first number appeared in October, following the final issue in the preceding spring of Découpages, thereby ensuring a continuity in the largely establishment thinking of the traditional critic. Like Découpages, it was directed to the successful operations of the ciné-clubs.

Its first numbers are simply mimeographed sheets which appeared four times a year. The opening editorial (Presentation) states its intention of following attentively the activities of the many ciné-clubs and pursuing with them the exploratory work into questions of cinema with two objectives in mind: to further education and to develop a cinema culture. Its stated aim is to provide a close liaison between the Commission des étudiants and the ciné-clubs, as well as among the clubs themselves, thereby setting in place a communications network for the exchange of Catholic ideas through the cinema.⁴⁴ In this connection, it will serve as a cahier de liaison. It intends also to serve two additional functions; those of cahier d'étude and cahier de travail, the former to establish a programme of study and the latter to provide for the clubs all the necessary information on the most appropriate ways of studying the cinema.⁴⁵

43. Objectif, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, no. 29-30.

44. Séquences, no. 1, p. 1.

45. Ibid. The stated intention was to divide and classify the material, to become acquainted with it little by little, sequence by sequence, as an indispensable framework for the study of an extremely difficult and complex art.

The editorial continues with a statement of its intentions to maintain an interest in the organization and the functioning of the ciné-clubs and altogether to be the voice which will encourage and support a unanimous move towards the enriching knowledge of the 7th art.

The programme of study (no.1), "the ideal material for a stage of formation" is elaborated under a number of headings: the fundamental elements of a film and the signification of the cinema, genres of the cinema, human conditions within the cinema, cinema and art, the great director, Christianity seen within the cinema.

Séquences provided critiques on individual films appearing in commercial cinemas and on Radio-Canada; it provided interviews with filmmakers and their works regardless of countries of origin, film reviews,⁴⁶ feature articles on cinematic movements, news of festivals as well as literature and the cinema, book reviews and comments on newspaper reports. It covers world cinema, "porte-parole de valeurs solidement implantées".

It is clearly aimed at the spectator, maintaining a consistent position and projecting Christian principles, as they were institutionalized in the Catholic Church. Open to a wide range of films from

46. Séquences, no. 62, Oct. 1970 - On the Underground film and the "Dressing Adagio" séquence of SCORPIO RISING (1963), Kenneth Anger, Gregory Markopoulos writes: "Ce document sociologique nous apprend plus que plusieurs livres sur la civilisation américaine et sur l'une de ses hantises secrètes: la fascination de la violence. Il décrit une maladie des sociétés d'abondance: l'infantilisme." It concludes the article with: "Il n'est pas nécessaire de voir tous les films de l'underground. Il suffit de soupçonner l'influence de ce mouvement sur les mutations de notre cinéma moderne."

many sources and many topics of cinematic concern, it appears, at least in the fifties, to be closed to any possibility of liberalization of outlook.

By the end of the fifties, Séquences was well-established, if not yet in wide circulation⁴⁷, and it continued in publication through the Quiet Revolution and on into the 1980s. In 1959, it was the only periodical to deal seriously with cinema on a regular basis in Canada.

In English Canada, although there may have been film clubs, there was nothing comparable to the ciné-clubs of Quebec which operated in the schools and colleges on a fairly wide scale. The final article in Images: "Une expérience de TV à l'école" by Micheline Latulippe records a series of experiments at the fifth and sixth year levels in schools in Ontario with TV in the classroom, and concludes with the finding that it might well be a useful tool for the transmission of information (1956).⁴⁸ We might perhaps see, in the difference between the English and the French approach, signs of the difference that was to emerge in the two cinemas of the 1960s and 1970s.

47. Objectif, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, no. 29-30, "les 400 abonnés du début".

48. Images, Vol. 1, no. 4-6, p. 55.

CHAPTER 3

Through the 1950s the publicized position taken in relation to film in Quebec was that of the Catholic Church as it attempted to hold to the status quo.

There were, however, growing doubts in the minds of some French Canadians as to the validity of the Duplessis policies which failed to address such pressing problems as increasing urbanization, industrialization, the need for educational reform, all of which impeded progress towards the development of a modern society of its time¹. Duplessis himself was one of the major obstacles to progress. Consequently, his death in September of 1959 opened the possibility for change, and marked the end of the old Union Nationale Party.

The ease with which his successor, Paul Sauvé,² was able to launch a programme of reform redefining both the party and the province, seems to confirm the readiness of a substantial part of the population for change and suggests that, in fact, the Quiet Revolution was already underway.³

By 1960, the winds of change were swirling in Quebec as Lesage's new liberal government set off a social programme built around the slogan "Maîtres chez nous." Wide reforms were introduced, of which the

1. Debarats, p. 83.

2. Ibid., p. 86.

3. Ibid., p. 87.

most far-reaching was the move in 1963 towards secularization of education under the direction of a Minister of Education, effectively removing the clergy from their privileged and controlling position within the system.⁴

With new legislation, the Lesage government began its systematic separation of church and state; as the power of the bureaucracy grew, the power of the Church declined. In the changing balance of power, opinions which had formerly been expressed more or less privately began to find their way into print and into film, which was symptomatic of a rising national consciousness.⁵

In his article, "Some Ideological and Thematic Aspects of the Quebec Cinema"⁶, Michel Houle suggests that the Quiet Revolution was primarily perceived as a right to speak and to claim what had previously been either denied or severely limited by a self-imposed censorship.

If the political climate was in the hands of the politicians, the cultural climate, although supported by the politicians, was the preserve of the artists. They took that right to speak and produced works which expressed both the individual and the collective experience, animated the population with new or renewed forms of cultural expression, and changed irrevocably the quality of life in the province.⁷

4. Ibid., p. 143.

5. Expressed in the renaming which took place in Quebec in the 1960s.

6. Michel Houle, in Self-Portrait, p. 159.

7. Ibid., pp. 167-169.

The most visible signs of the Quiet Revolution were to be found in the extraordinary blossoming of the arts; in painting, music, dance, poetry, and in no medium more dramatically than in the cinema. The creation of a Minister of Culture as part of the new Liberal reform programme in 1961 produced grants leading to the possibility of expression of ideas and concepts which, up to and during the Duplessis years, had been in one way or another either suppressed or repressed.

In the Quebec cinema, the church-oriented films of the fifties had already been changed by the middle of the decade and, by the sixties, had completely disappeared to be replaced by productions which frequently challenged all the old values.

In English Canada, a sense of national awareness in relation to Canada was also present,⁸ externally in response to the limitations imposed by the United States, and internally, if not triggered then at least reinforced, by events in Quebec which were felt in English Canada initially more as a response than as a self-generating need within itself.

Quebec's claim for an updated relationship within Canada vis-a-vis English Canada, as a necessity for the expression and preservation of her own culture, provoked some debate in English Canada on English Canadian culture - some said there was none.⁹

8. Lower, p. 224.

9. Cinéma/Québec, Vol. 1, no. 1, p. 22 "De la notion du pays à la représentation de la nation" avec Michel Brulé et Fernand Dumont, Pierre Perrault. "Le Canada se pose la question de son identité par rapport aux États-Unis. Hélas, il est surtout porté à percevoir le danger exclusivement en termes économiques. Le Canada-anglais est peut-être, déjà mort culturellement..."

The difference between English and French Canada in this context in relation to the cinema is expressed by Robert Fothergill:

It has to be remembered that most of the Quebec film people are active separatists; to work in film is to participate in the formation and articulation of a dynamically self-aware political culture. Directors in English Canada, on the other hand, are, with some exceptions, apolitical bourgeois, aspiring to fame and fortune in the commercial cinema, and ideally in the United States. There are some cultural radicals, to be sure... but virtually no socio-political perceptions shared broadly enough to constitute an ideological matrix. This is far from surprising; there simply isn't available in English Canada a developed ideological identity which filmmaking can nourish and be nourished by. Hardly a single film consciously perceives a connection between individual experience and the political condition of being a Canadian.¹⁰

Certainly at this time there was nothing like the self-searching which took place in some Quebec films as can be seen clearly in a comparison of Claude in *LE CHAT DANS LE SAC* (1964) and Peter in *NOBODY WAVED GOOD-BYE* (1964). The former film directly addresses Claude's thinking in its specific context, as opposed to the latter which might be seen as addressing Peter's lack of thought; Claude's introspection directs his behaviour while in Peter's case, his emotions cause him to ricochet from one situation to another.

In Quebec films generally during the sixties, the thrust was towards self-expression and self-redefinition as the metamorphosis from

10. Robert Fothergill. "Being Canadian means Always having to say you're Sorry" in Take One, Jan./Feb. 1973, pub. May 24, 1974, p. 29.

French Canadian to Québécois took place in the new cultural climate, making the screen models of earlier decades seem obsolete.¹¹

In English Canada at this time, Robert Fothergill sees a recurring theme in films which perhaps expresses the relationship between colonizer and colonized, the recurring pattern of younger and older brother.¹² This seems to indicate a fixed situation that is not amenable to change.

The chronology compiled by Pierre Véronneau notes that in 1960 the whole Canadian film milieu was active.¹³ The new Canadian cinema is considered to have begun at this time, and people began to make the distinction between the Canadian and the Quebec cinemas.¹⁴

This was also the period in which several new film periodicals appeared, most of them published in Montreal. The first on the market was Objectif with its first issue in 1960. It was followed in 1961 by L'Ecran and in 1966 by Take One. In the following decade, Cinéma Québec and Champ Libre appeared in 1971 and finally Cinema Canada in 1972. Séquences continued through both decades. These magazines performed or attempted to perform an interventionist role in their own time.

11. Particularly the repressive models, of e.g. LA PETITE AURORE-L'ENFANT MARTYR (1952).

12. Robert Fothergill, Take One, May 1974, p. 29.

13. Pierre Véronneau, Self-Portrait, "A Chronology of Canadian and Quebec Cinemas 1896-1979", p. 190.

14. Michel Houle, Self-Portrait, p. 166.

Séquences, in its sixth year of publication, continued to appear with a clear field as the only specialized film periodical in Québec. It was produced regularly at the rate of four numbers a year; its moral centre remained with the Catholic Church, its direction was still in the hands of Léo Bonneville, and its orientation was scarcely changed by the turn of events. It continued to be supported financially by the Church, so that it was able to remain free of advertising with the occasional exception for the promotion of a book on an acceptable subject, or a block announcement for one or two of the various agencies operating under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁵

While the thrust of Séquences remained constant, a number of changes had taken place. The initial stapled and mimeographed sheets were replaced by a loose-leaf binder which subsequently advanced further to a printed and bound publication.¹⁶ A further, perhaps more significant change, occurred in 1960 when the practice of publishing articles anonymously¹⁷ was, at some level of the decision making process, altered, and comments and articles began to appear from identified sources. The effect was to suggest that the periodical was updated and had become the collective work of a number of people, rather than the omniscient voice of the Catholic Church conveyed by Léo Bonneville as

15. Séquences, Dec. 1970. Inside front cover. "Filmis - un bulletin de liaison entre le secrétariat missionnaire de l'Office catholique international du cinéma et le pays d'Asie de l'Afrique et de l'Océanie. From Filmis - Secrétariat missionnaire de l'O.C.I.C., Rome."

16. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Objectif, No. 29-30, p. 43.

17. Séquences, no. 30.

its official spokesman. Included in the issues from this time (1960) were film reviews which, without basically changing their perspective, seemed to be less obviously related to church doctrine. In 1962,¹⁸ a further adjustment took place when the "cahier" became a review "... et un jour, Séquences va à l'impression, reçoit une toilette distinguée et sourit avec des photos..."¹⁹

With the appearance of Objectif in 1960, Séquences was no longer the unchallenged film periodical of Québec which was, perhaps, the factor that prompted its new appearance in a more attractive format.

As from the beginning, the target of Séquences was the young Quebec audience. Its approach to that audience reflected its traditional values so that, as a result, it rejected on their behalf whatever did not support that point of view -- perhaps whole films, sequences, concepts or single images which appeared to undermine the solidarity between the Church and its adherents. There was, of course, the Index.

Within this limitation, Séquences provided a wide coverage of world cinema, but was particularly concerned with those films that were accessible to the population of Quebec in local cinemas and on television. The editorial of October 1970, no. 62, ends:

L'esprit que nous animait n'a rien perdu de son amour du cinéma. Et Séquences, si elle désire se tourner davantage vers la réalité canadienne et québécoise, ne souhaite absolument pas se couper du cinéma internationale. Trop de films de tous pays entrent ici pour les ignorer.²⁰

18. Séquences, no. 30.

19. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Objectif, no. 29/30, p. 44.

20. Séquences, no. 62.

Continued publication was made possible with regular funding from the Conseil des Arts and often from the Minister of Cultural Affairs, otherwise the review would have been in financial difficulty.

It was unlikely that a rigid position such as the one generally taken by Séquences would, in the social environment of Quebec in the 1960s, go unchallenged. Everything was under review; nothing was sacred. Séquences had set the established Church position against which the forces for change would exert pressure.

Objectif was one of these forces for change. It appeared for the first time in October 1960, and between then and September 1967, the date of the last issue, 39 numbers (including some double numbers) were published.

Self-styled as an independent cinema review, Objectif, while concerning itself with many of the issues of interest to Séquences, had many differences; all of which stemmed from one very basic fact -- it was entirely opposed to the relationship of the Catholic Church to the cinema. From the first to last, it demonstrated in an unwavering fashion, a drive to separate the cinema and the Church, automatically placing itself in conflict with the well-established Séquences. Séquences dug in its heels and Objectif became more emphatic.

The two periodicals were virtually alone in Quebec until 1967. In 1961, L'Ecran, a publication of Le Centre d'Art de l'Elysée in Montreal, appeared briefly. Only three numbers were published.

The first editorial indicates its aspirations:

Depuis l'été dernier, le public recherche de plus en plus le cinéma de qualité; et les besoins de ce public se précisent davantage. Il veut voir du bon cinéma, il veut lire à son sujet et écrire ce qu'il en pense.

Déjà "Objectif 60" et maintenant "61", a ouvert la marche dans cette voie. Le travail fourni par l'équipe de cette revue est des plus méritoires et d'une valeur culturelle certaine. Le Centre d'Art de l'Élysée est fier de l'avoir soutenue dès le début, et se propose de continuer.

Cependant, nous considérons qu'une deuxième revue de cinéma est très utile, même nécessaire... Une deuxième revue pourra servir de résonances à la première, par la divergence de ses opinions ou par sa concordance...

Le cinéma n'est plus ce que Georges Duhamel appelait "divertissement d'ilotes"; il a conquis de haute lutte sa place au rang des arts. C'est même dirons-nous, l'art le plus complet. Dans son intégrité, il participe aussi bien de la musique, de la poésie que de l'architecture ou de la danse. Des hommes comme Chaplin, Welles, Vigo, Renoir, Einstein, et aujourd'hui Resnais, conscients des limites, des formes d'expression usuelles, ont vu dans le cinéma la possibilité de s'exprimer plus intégralement et leur génie a transformé la bande de celluloïd en un véhicule culturel des plus complets.²¹

The editorial ends by suggesting a discussion on the cultural value of the cinema.

The second editorial begins:

Quand Lumière réalisa L'ARROSEUR ARROSE vers 1900, il composait une entité cinégraphique autonome libérée des contingences inhérentes aux formes d'expressions artistiques connexes. De par son entité propre L'ARROSEUR ARROSE devenait un film d'art. Il faisait appel à une réalité humaine, et l'exprimait selon son mode propre d'expression. Un film d'art se propose d'être, en soi, une oeuvre d'art et non un film sur une ou plusieurs oeuvres d'art.²²

21. L'Écran, No. 1. Under the direction of Jean-Paul Ostiguy with the collaboration of Fernand Benoit, Jean Billard, Gilles Carle and Patrick Straram and Ann Claire Poirier.

22. Ibid., No. 2.

Champ Libre had the following to say:

...Publié par le Centre d'art d'Elysée qui proposait régulièrement pour le premier fois à Montréal des films de qualité, L'Écran...a joué le rôle d'une revue de campus...en ville...et s'élaborer des discours critiques prouvant bien que l'Elysée était un Centre d'art.²³

What appears to have been its art for art's sake approach was, in that time of self-searching, insufficiently heady and too bourgeois-oriented to attract attention in what was, after all, a struggle between institutions and individuals for the right to define the Quebec identity. We might say it tested the market and failed, and as is the case with other periodicals, provided a training ground for its editorial board.²⁴ In the circumstances, a comparison between Séquences and Objectif seems inevitable since the latter virtually takes its position from the former. This opposition is the source of much of the dynamism of Objectif which led to a great speaking of minds, perhaps the first time the Catholic Church in Quebec had come under such fire.

In the first place, they differ in aim and level of readership. Séquences addresses itself to high school and college students as part of an attempt to provide a cinema formation in defence of and according to the principles of the Catholic Church. Objectif addresses a somewhat older and more mature, probably university-educated readership. What is clear is that Objectif resists all submissions to the dominance of the

23. Champ Libre, no. 2, p. 25 "Grandes étapes de la réflexion critique dans les revues québécoises du cinéma" from a Marxist point of view.

24. Gilles Carle for example.

Church.²⁵ Whereas Séquences is steeped in traditional Catholic values which inform virtually everything it publishes (and it would do an injustice to Léo Bonneville to suppose anything else), Objectif is characterized by its rejection of the manipulation of those values as they impinge on and, in its view, distort the cinema. During the seven years of its existence, Objectif continued to see Séquences as a limiting factor to the enjoyment and understanding of individual films, and ultimately as an impediment to personal and social development.

The editorial in the final number of Objectif comments:

"Objectif" naissait en 1960... Et pendant ce temps les curés et leurs appendices de Séquences s'infiltraient de plus en plus dans l'univers du cinéma afin d'y développer leur tâche de récupération religieuse et d'impérialisme intellectuel..."²⁶

At the same time, while the distance between the two points of view is extreme, there may be a tendency for us to allow this fact to overshadow some important similarities. Both, for example, are patriarchal²⁷ (although not necessarily insensitive), both bewail the absence of a Quebec cinema culture (not necessarily embracing the same concepts) and both are concerned with aesthetics and the quality film.

25. Objectif 60, Vol. 1, no. 1. "...Objectif 60 se veut honnête libre des contingences qui ont toujours tué l'amour et qui ont couronné l'incompétence qui règne dans nos journaux..."

26. Ibid., no. 39, Aug./Sept. 1967 (Final number), p. 5.

27. Séquences December 1966, no. 47 carries an article entitled "Cinéma et Tolérance" written by Thérèse Laforest, one of the very few written by a woman, which makes the writer exceptional but keeps her firmly within her traditional role.

The basic difference between the two might be seen to have originated at the moment when Images in 1955 broke away from the controlling position of the Church. The similarities, on the other hand, can be explained by the fact that the main collaborators in the production of Objectif were largely the products of the classical colleges, the church-dominated schools and ciné-clubs. Their rejection of what they perceived as the misguided intrusion of the Church into the cinema did not invalidate the strong aesthetic and auteurist orientation of the chief collaborators of Objectif.²⁸ Most of these writers were young, between the ages of 20 and 25; by the time they were writing for Objectif, many of them had already had experience with articles published in one or other of the periodicals already mentioned. Several were already working in the general areas of film.²⁹

The majority of contributors were French Canadian, with a fairly consistent point of view which gave a unified and decisive quality to the publication. The occasional articles from the United States, France or English Canada, did not alter the sense of a concentrated publication.

28. Objectif: Chief collaborators were: Robert Daudelin, Michel Patenaude (Editors), Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Jacques Leduc, Jean-Claude Pilon, Roland Brunet, Claude Nadon, Pierre Théberge, Jacques Lamoureux, Pierre Hébert, Jacques Bensimon.

29. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, for example, became interested in film while at the classical college in Montreal and organized a ciné-club during the five years he was there. At the University of Montreal, he worked with the ciné-club, wrote film reviews for the student paper and, in 1960, started writing for the just published Objectif. He subsequently became a filmmaker.

The first number with its editorial and content is an indication of the motivating factors in its production. It states its orientation and justifies its appearance in this first editorial:

Nous sommes nés avec CITIZEN KANE, quelques-uns avant, avec LA GRANDE ILLUSION ou LA CHIENNE, quelques-uns même avec GOLD RUSH ou LA PASSION DE JEANNE d'ARC. Mais nous sommes tous les mêmes inclassables.³⁰

It addresses itself to those cinema devotees who are drawn by the particular works of particular directors which places it clearly in the auteurist camp, a perspective which it maintained. It speaks of its minority position as it detaches itself from the past:

On nous croit peu nombreux, aussi nous montre-t-on du doigt. Mais bientôt finiront les catacombes et alors le monde croira dans le cinéma.

It supplants the religious orientation of Séquences with a declaration of another faith:

Plaçant notre foi en Rossellini, Hitchcock, Hawks ou Bresson, nous sommes les croyants ou tout au moins les néophytes dont le regard n'est que mouvement, rythmes, plans...

It speaks of a faith "qui anime tous ceux pour qui l'écran plus qu'un paysage est un univers qu'il n'est pas besoin d'inventer". It defines its position further as unfettered by associations with the cinema comment available in the newspapers.

Objectif 60 se veut entièrement dédié au cinéma, au vrai cinéma, à celui à qui trop souvent l'on voile la face. Objectif se veut honnête, libre des contingences qui ont toujours tué l'amour et qui ont couronné l'incompétence qui règne dans nos journaux.

Objectif se veut ouvert à tous ceux qui aiment l'écran et qui veulent le dire bien haut.

30. Objectif. Editorial Vol. 1, no. 1, p. 5.

In 1960, although sympathy for its position was gathering, it was nevertheless a provocative position in what was a mass popular art.

Committed to honest expression of an alternative perspective on the cinema and on film analysis, and recognizing the power of the image, Objectif proposes to accord to the cinema the important place which it merits³¹ and which has not been publicly acknowledged in contemporary Quebec.

On a beau feuilleter presque toutes les revues et les journaux canadiens-français publiés avant les années 50, on n'y trouve à peu près rien sur le cinéma, sinon quelques articles consacrés au phénomène social qu'il constituait. Nos intellectuels, qui venaient de découvrir Albert Camus et ne lui laissaient pas de repos, ou suivaient les traces de Georges Duhamel, ou méprisaient le cinéma de leur silence et de leur ignorance, ou montaient en chaire afin de mettre en garde la communauté chrétienne.³²

Although Objectif's area of film interest was world-wide, it seems clear that much of its motivation can be found in local issues; the thrust of the early editorials probably reveals the issues of greatest concern to the collaborators.

The references to Church interference in the first editorial are followed up in the second³³ with a more direct reference to censorship which is explored in greater depth in the fifth.³⁴

31. Ibid., No. 29/30 p. 42 "Les années folles de la critique ou petite histoire des revues de cinéma au Québec", Jean-Pierre Lefebvre.

32. Ibid., p. 42.

33. Ibid., Vol. 1, no. 2.

34. Ibid., Vol. 1, no. 5.

It is obviously one of the points over which Objectif and Séquences are likely to be farthest apart. A concept which was abhorrent to Objectif as it threatened the integrity of the created film, as well as the right of the individual to be free of all types of colonization, was considered by the Church to be one of its serious duties in the guiding of its adherents. Moreover censorship was not an uncommon practice in the Duplessis days in relation to film and had not generally caused too much of a stir in the public.

The fifth editorial written by Michel Patenaude and Robert Daudelin in February 1961, draws attention to the whole question of censorship which had been a regular topic of public conversation over the preceding months. Also included in the fifth number was a "petite histoire" detailing the events which had brought the question to the attention of the public. The article recalls La Semaine du film français of 1958 when the censors had seen fit to make cuts in one film and to completely withdraw another from the programme.³⁵

The 1960 Montreal International Film Festival had provided an occasion when a similar situation might have arisen but such an eventuality was avoided by an advance agreement between the Festival organisers and the Board of Censors so that all went without problems. The organisers stressed the importance of an international film event and made it known that they would cancel the entire programme in preference

35. Ibid., Vol. 1, no. 5, p. 3.

to accepting censorship of any kind.³⁶ Reference was made at the time to the viewpoint expressed by André Lussier in Cité Libre³⁷ in which he exposed "tous les poncifs de notre morale inquisitoriale pour conclure à la franche immoralité de la quasi-totalité de notre moral-censure québécoise."³⁸

The experience of 1960 in Montreal demonstrated that it was possible for the organisers and the censors to reach an understanding. However in 1961, the same public in Montreal was allowed to see HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR (1959) only after a fourteen minute love scene had been cut by Lesage's new politically appointed censor. Roundly criticised by Gerard Pelletier, it uncharacteristically caused something of a stir and was one of the first occasions when the public had responded to censorship with action. In addition to picketing outside the cinema where the film was being shown, they expressed their views in many letters to the daily newspapers. A petition by actors, journalists and directors conveyed the general opinion that the Bureau de censure was out of touch with the public and that moreover it was inappropriate that it should evaluate a work of art. The debate continued in Le Devoir as well as on television.³⁹

36. Ibid.

37. Cité Libre June/July 1961.

38. Objectif, Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 4.

39. With columnists André Laurendeau and Paul Sauriol, in English on the programme LET'S FACE IT and in French on PREMIER PLAN.

Nothing was really resolved but Objectif arranged and reported in its entirety a round table discussion with Guy Coté, Roland Brunet, Marc Lalonde and André Laurendeau. The consensus was that a more appropriate appointee for the position of censor would be advisable and also a system which would limit exploitation but would at the same time respect the integrity of what was a popular art form. Some acceptable resolution through a system of classification was suggested. In 1963 such a system was adopted.

Of particular interest to the Church were the films produced in Quebec which responded to local conditions. The February 1965 issue of Séquences contains reviews of six Quebec films made between 1962 and 1965 as the main content of an article by Léo Bonneville entitled "Le Cinéma canadien à l'heure de la révolution québécoise". The films chosen are SEUL OU AVEC D'AUTRES (1962), A TOUT PRENDRE (1963), TROUBLE-FÊTE (1964), LE CHAT DANS LE SAC (1964), LA TERRE A BOIRE, and JUSQU'AU COU.

The introductory paragraph of the article and the general tone indicates the position of Séquences at this time in relation to the events of the early sixties:

La révolte, ordinairement ça fait du bruit. C'est ainsi que cette révolution tranquille dont on parle depuis quelques années au Québec a provoqué des actes regrettables. Mais les mêmes réponses s'appliquent aux mêmes circonstances: il faut faire du bruit pour se faire entendre. Et alors, tous les moyens de communication de masse se sont mis en branle pour faire entendre les revendications des québécois. Évidemment, le cinéma ne devait pas tirer de l'arrière et on ne se contenterait pas de bacher les problèmes aux petits courts métrages. Fait remarquable, cette situation allait même donner un regain aux films de long métrage. Faut-il s'en plaindre?40

40. Séquences no. 40, p. 13.

Beginning with SEUL OU AVEC D'AUTRES⁴¹ made with students at the University of Montreal the review suggests that the camera, far from catching life in the process of being lived, ("cela s'appelle du cinéma-vérité") uses the whole bag of tricks of this kind of cinema and goads the students on:

Cela veut dire que l'on va évacuer tout ce que l'on a sur le coeur. Pour mieux opérer, on joue la parodie de chapelet qui devient un rite d'exorcisme. Et puis pour se prendre au sérieux, on interroge un professeur de science sociale qui prend le pouls de la gent universitaire. La caméra pendant ce temps-là se ballade pour ne pas avoir l'air trop fainéante. Et ainsi on crève les abcès du milieu universitaire canadien français.⁴²

The article puts the position of Séquences clearly: for us the cinema is an art which merits respect, to be used by those who believe in what their films express and who treat them with sincerity.⁴³ It states that SEUL OU AVEC D'AUTRES, in both script and direction, shows a total lack of deference for established custom. It concludes: "Mais il paraît que ce film a fait un saut en Europe. Une fois tombé sur le sol français, il a rebondi sur les rives du St. Laurent. N'en parlons plus."⁴⁴ With A TOUT PRENDRE⁴⁵, Séquences acknowledges the directorial talents of Claude Jutra (to which it attributes the (perceived) improved

41. Denis Héroux, Michel Brault, 1962.

42. Séquences no. 40, p. 13 "Il y avait là beaucoup de choses à liquider."

43. My translation. SEUL OU AVEC D'AUTRES is viewed by Jean-Pierre Lefebvre as "une blague d'étudiants qui fit tomber Michel Brault et Gilles Groulx dans le pire amateurisme". Objectif no. 28, p. 64.

44. Séquences no. 40 Feb. 1965 p. 13. The comment suggests an ambivalence towards France, or perhaps the French cinema.

45. Claude Jutra, 1963.

photography of Michel Brault over his work in SEUL OU AVEC D'AUTRES?) The review finds the images sometimes beautiful but often artificial and the whole work cold and static.⁴⁶ The place of rebellion has moved from the university to the bourgeois world of the protagonist in order to criticize bourgeois values:

Ce milieu bourgeois où s'emprisonne l'auteur-acteur, il faut le briser, s'en évader. Et tout le conformisme moral qui le retient, il faut s'en débarrasser en plus tôt. Apparaît donc le monde bourgeois et faisandé où veut briller notre héros. La famille semble la dernière institution qu'il faut abandonner si on veut retrouver la liberté. Car c'est un vent de liberté qui passe dans l'âme de Claude."⁴⁷

À TOUT PRENDRE, in Léo Bonneville's view, gives us a hero who is not a traditional hero, who does not behave like a traditional hero, and who never rises above the level of the individual with his complexes, which moreover he does not confront in the manner of a true and traditional hero. The review considers that the director's personal involvement in the subject results in a lack of distancing and a failure to achieve a work of great consequence.

TROUBLE-FÊTE⁴⁸ is also seen by Séquences in a negative light. Particularly noted is the fact that young viewers are given the opportunity to identify with the characters on the screen and to participate emotionally in a rebellion against authority while remaining physically on the sidelines, inactive and comfortable. Patry's use of technique to achieve dramatic effects through shocking the viewer in order to create

46. Séquences no. 40, p. 14.

47. Ibid.

48. Pierre Patry, 1964.

situations which Bonneville finds are basically untenable, is also criticized along with the "trucs", both in sound and image, which are calculated to appeal to the sensibilities of the young. "Un cri rauque dans le cinéma canadien" says the reviewer, who judges it to be a film which reveals the naiveté of the maker through its use of techniques which he considers add to the problem by accentuating its artificiality and its lack of emotional depth.⁴⁹

LE CHAT DANS LE SAC⁵⁰ is the fourth film to be considered in the context of the Quiet Revolution. Again the young protagonist is seen as a product of the bourgeois society, disenchanted with its attitudes and customs and anxious to bring about change. Claude's self-questioning, which leads him to isolate himself, is seen by the reviewer to be the behaviour of a social misfit. The reviewer questions Claude's retreat to St. Charles: "Cette solution me paraît bien suspecte", implying that Claude does not have the courage to perform such an act and that, in any case, he is not likely to find there the answer that he needs.⁵¹

Mais il n'apparaît pas que le retrait de Claude soit vraiment salubre. (Solitude ne rime pas nécessairement avec plénitude.) Les motifs et les moyens bien incertains n'assurent pas le triomphe de Claude. Si on admire son acuité à reconnaître l'étroitesse des cadres où il vit et ses déficiences personnelles, on doute de son sombre idéalisme...⁵²

/49. Séquences, no. 40, p. 16.

50. Gilles Groulx, 1964.

51. Séquences, no. 40, p. 16.

52. Ibid., p. 17.

The review acknowledges some merit in the improvised script and confesses to a degree of interest in the film as a whole but in condescending tones:

Mais la naïveté du scénario porte à sourire. Les sursauts de Claude, ses cris, s'ils sont sincères, apparaissent voués à l'indifférence et à la stérilité. Je veux bien que la révolte s'opère dans l'individu avant qu'elle trouve son écho dans la société.

"Vaut-il la peine de parler de LA TERRE À BOIRE?" introduces the fifth film in the review which the asking of the question answers negatively and the fact of answering the question answers positively. It is reviewed as a film which again criticises the bourgeois society, placing value on the individual rather than on the achievements of the capitalist society, pushing towards complete autonomy - "c'est-à-dire à une liberté sans frein, se situe avant tout au niveau du bla-bla-bla du protagoniste." In the judgement of the reviewer it is a confusing film ineptly constructed and lacking in coherent development which presents happiness as a thing of the moment and enduring love as an illusion.

Finally JUSQU'AU COU "... ou jusqu'au cou de la révolte" is another film made by the students of the University of Montreal and is used by Séquences to mock "le cinéma artisanal":

Vous filmez pêle-mêle des événements: collations de diplômes, conférence-débat sur l'indépendance du Québec, manifestation des étudiants et du R.I.N. contre le président d'Air Canada. Vous glissez, à travers ces événements authentiques vus d'un oeil oblique, la fiction d'une intrigue amoureuse dans laquelle un étudiant disputé à son père, professeur de l'Université, s.v.p., les faveurs d'une jeune étudiante fort émancipée. Mais vous oubliez vite ces enfantillages pour vous occuper de problèmes urgents d'indépendantisme, de séparatisme et terrorisme. Au coeur donc de la révolte, vous lâchez bride et laissez aux comédiens (!) le soin d'inventer les situations dramatiques, les pensées, les sentiments, etc. Vive la liberté. Comme vous finissez par vous rendre compte que votre scénario - si vous en avez un - s'évanouit, vite vous chargez

un commentateur d'expliquer en voix off ce qui se passe sur l'écran. Bref, malgré l'incohérence du sujet, la confusion des thèmes, le désordre de la réalisation, l'amateurisme de l'interprétation, la pauvreté de la technique, le cafouillage de la piste sonore, vous comptez que le public marchera."⁵³

This effectively avoids discussion of the implications of the film. Bonneville dismisses the nationalist and sexual revolution in the Quebec cinema at this time as a mere exhibitionist hiccup, unappealing and wearying for the public. He predicts that these films, which he considers to be unrealistic and pretentious, will be viewed with amusement by future audiences who will, at the same time, somewhat paradoxically, recognize that they mark the beginning of the regeneration of the Quebec cinema. He anticipates that the real benefit to accrue from this hiccup will be the releasing of the filmmaker to express his ideas freely even if within the limits of a tight budget. The real revolution he believes will take place in a more peaceful time and will be marked by the still-to-come great works of the Quebec cinema of quality which, clearly, in his view, these films are not.

Together this group of films attacks values which are fundamental to the Church position. The consistently condescending tone of the reviews represents a refusal to accord them any validity as social protest or to consider the conditions which motivated their production. While they are clearly all concerned with the rebellion against established authority and established structures, they are considered by Sequences as isolated works and all are rejected, either in whole or in

53. Ibid., p. 19.

part, for reasons which include technical incompetence, the naiveté of the filmmaker, the unrealistic and unheroic behaviour of the protagonist, the unacceptable manipulation of young people, or the individual problems of the social misfit. It seems clear that in Séquences religious and aesthetic concerns consistently dominate the criticism of these films whose success or failure is measured against the traditional Catholic standards of the cinema of quality. The idea of a film which raises questions which cannot be answered within the text and which are purposefully left unresolved cannot be satisfactory in the context of Séquences, where all can be, if not resolved, then sublimated, in art or in faith..

This early Quiet Revolution cinema which, through its form and characters questions the existing ideology, is consistently held by Séquences at the aesthetic and psychological levels.

The article suggests that while Claude as hero of LE CHAT DANS LE SAC can be applauded for his realistic appraisal of his life as narrow (no doubt meaning spiritually), he cannot finally be accepted because his behaviour is unrealistic and unconvincing. Claude is seen as an unsatisfactory hero rather than as a source of enquiry and self-questioning.⁵⁴

LE CHAT DANS LE SAC leaves the viewer observing Claude observing the circling skater which we might see as representing Quebec going round in circles without forward movement with the film ending at the point where Claude must decide whether to accept the repeated pattern or

⁵⁴ Ibid., no. 40.

to find another way. But the reviewer writes, "Solitude ne rime pas nécessairement avec plénitude" and assures the reader that Claude will soon be back with his friends.⁵⁵ The film is recuperated and with it the Quiet Revolution.

TROUBLE-FÊTE and LE CHAT DANS LE SAC are also reviewed in the October number of Séquences with NOBODY WAVED GOODBYE (1964) - the three films which were in competition for the best Canadian feature film of 1964. While the tone of the reviews of TROUBLE-FÊTE and LE CHAT DANS LE SAC is less dismissive, the critical perspective remains:

Il est naturel et sain que notre cinéma canadien français plonge tête première dans le contexte social qui est le sien. Mais l'engagement par trop sociologique de nos cinéastes risque de les faire verser dans la diatribe et le pamphlet... À peine né, notre cinéma paraît menacé par le poncif de la dénonciation et de la révolte, poncif qui s'accompagne d'un certain masochisme dans l'expression de la difficulté à vivre du jeune Canadien français.⁵⁶

In the judgement of the reviewer, the Quebec filmmaker remains a metteur-en-scène, not yet an auteur, with the Quebec cinema presenting too many ideas ("je n'oserai pas écrire trop de thèses") for the images it uses.⁵⁷ Nevertheless he supports Gilles Groulx and LE CHAT DANS LE SAC as deserving of the 1964 award.

Generally Objectif, in keeping with its self-defined policy, was not particularly interested in its first years in the films of the Canadian cinema except as they appeared in the context of aesthetic

55. Ibid., p. 17.

56. Ibid., p. 52.

57. Ibid., no. 38, p. 52.

products and as the personal works of the filmmaker.⁵⁸ However LE CHAT DANS LE SAC is reviewed later in 1966 by Jean-Pierre Lefebvre perhaps due to his having second thoughts on the social value of the new Quebec cinema. Faulting the Canadian feature film for its tendency to try to be too technically and intellectually advanced, Lefebvre finds LE CHAT DANS LE SAC to be a welcome change. The idea of personal cinema comes into play:

... par-dessus tout, le film de Gilles Groulx démontre clairement que toute création, bonne ou mauvaise, est l'entière responsabilité d'un individu et que l'échec ou la réussite d'une oeuvre ne peut être imputable qu'à ce dernier. Cette constatation qui relève du sens commun, est toutefois primordiale quand on pense au grand nombre d'artistes qui se camouflent derrière un quelconque organisme fédéral, national, commercial, religieux ou autre - afin de faire excuser la tiédeur de leurs oeuvres.⁵⁹

Lefebvre approaches the film as film: "LE CHAT a l'avantage d'être un bon film, si l'on entend par 'bon film' une oeuvre cinématographique où la connaissance du moi, du sujet et d'une technique a été suffisamment approfondi par l'autocritique et l'amour pur et simple". He writes of it as a work created entirely at "le niveau du moi tout en étant un témoignage social qui rejoint l'humain en passant par la conscience d'un créateur."⁶⁰ Although he, like Bonneville, is concerned with the construction of the film albeit at a much more sophisticated level, he accords a depth to the characters and to the filmmaker which Séquences refuses:

58. Objectif, no. 35.

59. Ibid., p. 57.

60. Ibid., p. 58.

Le long monologue de Barbara en train de se maquiller n'est pas un monologue réfléchi, pensé, "intellectuel"; Barbara cherche désespérément à atteindre à la réflexion et tend à projeter à un autre niveau le malaise dont elle est de plus en plus consciente, comme Claude le fait de son côté... Il leur a donné une existence sensible, impressioniste même qui les enracine davantage et mieux dans leur contexte social et psychologique... LE CHAT DANS LE SAC est un film ouvert sur quelque chose d'autre, et non pas fermé sur soi comme l'étaient TROUBLE-FÊTE, À TOUT PRENDRE, et POUR LA SUITE DU MONDE.⁶¹

He concludes:

Avec LE CHAT, Gilles Groulx s'est demandé si lui-même et les Canadiens français en général avaient quelque chose à dire et s'ils étaient capable de le dire.

This is a very different approach from Séquences ; Lefebvre is willing to consider the social implications of the film whereas Séquences takes a position which blocks discussion of this kind.

TROUBLE-FÊTE is reviewed by both Robert Daudelin and Michel Patenaude for Objectif, with slightly different approaches. Daudelin bewails the weakness of the script which he feels Patry was not able to overcome by the many "trucs" which he uses and which effectively deprive the viewer of a normal means of entry into the film.

Patenaude equates it with a B movie but feels that its limited dramatic potential is to some extent compensated by the ease with which a current social climate is picked up. He sees its weakness as a wish to go too far in exceeding the conventions of the genre, with the result that the interior drama of the hero is lost in the constant movement of

61. Objectif, no. 35, p. 58.

the portrayed student milieu. He defines it as a cinema of observation which does not become involved with nuances but ~~attempts~~ to deal truthfully with a social reality.⁶²

Objectif neither embraces the film out of sympathy for its political stance nor rejects it because the hero is not a traditional figure. Both are accorded some thought and a recognition of an attempt to address the situation in Quebec at the time.

NOBODY WAVED GOODBYE is reviewed by Séquences and is approached in a fairly superficial way.⁶³ The protagonist is presented as a confused, rebellious, bourgeois youth at odds with his family and society ("sur un mode mineur le REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE (1955) du Cinéma canadien") but the film is considered to be less radical in both form and subject than LE CHAT DANS LE SAC and TROUBLE-FÊTE. It is described as the story of two adolescents "en mal d'émancipation de leurs parents" which can be seen again as limiting the reading to individual psychology. If Peter is seen solely as the result of a failure within the family, badly prepared by niggling parents who failed to instil the right attitudes and values appropriate for the adult world, the narrative ending is both predictable and salutary. NOBODY WAVED GOODBYE then becomes a cautionary tale for both parents and children. The absence of serious comment on the society as represented, in which the events take place, avoids facing the issues connected with that advancing materialist society. Generally the review in tone seems less involved than was the case with the Quebec

62. Ibid., p. 59.

63. Séquences, no. 38, p. 52.

films, which probably reflects the more distant relationship the periodical has with English Canada, a society which is distinctly another society.

NOBODY WAVED GOODBYE is mentioned in passing by Lefebvre in Objectif but is not considered to be exceptional⁶⁴. The practice of reviewing English language films in the case of both Objectif and Séquences appears to depend on their already being singled out for special mention (as was NOBODY WAVED GOODBYE in contention for a best feature film award in 1964) rather than on a regular basis.

Both Objectif and Séquences, with different ideas in mind, are interested in the difficult problem of a regular cinema education. The editorial in Séquences of February 1965 welcomes the newly published Parent Commission Report on Education with its recognition of film as important to Quebec both educationally and culturally. Léo Bonnevillie, as Editor-in-Chief and editorial writer, comments on progress already made in this area: in addition to its own ten-year history of intervention in the educational process through the ciné-clubs, he notes the film course at the University of Montreal dating from 1963, and similar courses in place in 132 educational institutions in the province. The recommendations of the Parent Commission⁶⁵ that film studies be introduced into the programmes of all schools within the jurisdiction of the Minister of Education of the province would give official standing

64. Objectif, no. 35.

65. The Royal Commission of Enquiry on Education, 1965.

to these courses⁶⁶. The editorial endorses the Commission's comment that cinema is the synthesis of all the arts and forms of expressions, and stresses its own view of film education:

C'est pourquoi, nous pensons que l'éducation artistique... et l'éducation musicale sont d'un secours indispensable pour l'appréciation des films. Étant à la fois art de l'espace et art du temps, le cinéma compose des images qu'il ordonne ou harmonise selon un certain rythme.⁶⁷

Also noted is the difference between proficiency with the camera and the understanding and appreciation of film as a finished product.

Donc, ce qu'il faut avant tout, c'est d'ouvrir les jeunes aux valeurs culturelles du cinéma - comme on les ouvre aux valeurs culturelles du roman sans escompter former des romanciers - et les rendre aptes à apprécier les films. Tant mieux - et c'est à souhaiter - si des vocations de cinéastes se dessinent.⁶⁸

Of particular concern to the Séquences position in relation to a cinema education is a training plan for teachers which would give a five year period of training to teachers capable of understanding the work. Their concern, which they stress, is on preserving the existing cultural values through instruction, in an established way, of quality films as works of art.⁶⁹

The question of a cinema education is discussed by Objectif particularly in its last two issues. The editorial of May, 1967, points to the need for a cinema education that would genuinely prepare the student to penetrate the world as it is transmitted and transformed by the

66. Ibid. Chapter 2 addresses the question of film and film studies.

67. Séquences, Feb. 1965, p. 2.

68. Ibid., p. 3.

69. Ibid., no. 38.

media, a world in a state of perpetual movement and in a continuous state of becoming.⁷⁰ It speaks of a world of anxieties created by twentieth century communications which have opened up a new era of uncertainties but also possibilities of new freedoms since societies can no longer be kept in ignorance of their own conditions or that of others. It is, the editorial continues, a situation which must be faced through the difficult task of education:

Il ne lui faut pas se contenter de faire entrer le 7e art dans des schémas de pensée et de vie tout faits, traditionnels, mais au contraire il lui faut montrer l'éclatement, la perturbation continue de ces schémas, de la vie, des arts, des idéologies, des sociétés, des religions, des philosophies, des morales et même des formes d'éducation.

The editorial draws attention to the frequent lack of competence in the teaching of film in Quebec:

Et nous sommes unanimes à affirmer que cette éducation est essentiellement réactionnaire, car elle n'est rien d'autre qu'une façon "plus dans le vent", pour le clergé et ses parasites qui en possèdent le monopole, de rattraper la tradition qui se meurt, en même temps qu'une façon de s'approprier certaines valeurs qui menacent l'empire réel et occulte, non pas de religion elle-même, mais de ceux qui s'en servent, par habitude historique, à des fins politiques, sociales, et culturelles.⁷¹

Appearing in the same number is an article, by Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, entitled "Le Monopole", in which he attacks the controlling role played by the clergy in Quebec and the various methods they have used to maintain that position.⁷² Particular reference is made to Séquences as one of their most sinister tools by means of which they have directed young people in their viewing habits:

70. Objectif, no. 38.

71. *Ibid.*, no. 38, p. 5.

Ce dirigisme, au reste, s'appuyait et s'appuie encore sur des mécanismes mis et maintenus en place par le clergé, principalement sur la censure, qu'elle soit d'ordre public ou qu'il s'agisse de celle exercée à l'intérieur des ciné-clubs par les responsables des centres diocésains.

Il faudrait parler par ailleurs de l'auto-censure abusive et même ridicule qu'un super-système de protection fait naître chez l'individu.

The article states:

Séquences... s'évertue à perpétuer les malentendus. Elle use de flatterie, elle utilise le lecteur à SES fins, prenant comme tout bon colonisateur, toutes les mesures possibles et impossibles pour satisfaire sans choquer, pour endormir. ...Il s'agit simplement d'un beau mensonge qui contribue à maintenir un autre mensonge, celui de l'art tel qu'on enseigne, celui de l'art privé de sa source, la vie.⁷²

The article and the editorial stirred some response, some of it simple disbelief.

In the following and final number of Objectif, Lefebvre follows with an article "À propos du cours d'initiation au cinéma au secondaire classique", which is an exposé of the teaching of film as well as a statement of the importance of the creative work to the collective.

...nous croyons que la vie qui mène à la création qui mène à la vie reposent sur une aventure collective et que SI L'OEUVRE DE CRÉATION peut influencer une collectivité, peut même, à la longue, transformer les principes qui font agir cette collectivité, nous croyons cependant que cette même oeuvre de création NE PEUT EXISTER EN DEHORS DES VALEURS COLLECTIVES (passées, présentes ou futures) qui, paradoxalement pour nous, ont toujours voulu freiner la création. D'où le fait que toute analyse, même la plus froide et la plus objective, prend au Québec un air d'agressivité. Et notre cinéma, qui en ce moment est pour nous l'instrument le plus précieux, le plus concret d'analyse, provoque des réactions identiques.⁷³

72. Ibid., p. 8.

73. Ibid., no. 39, p. 9.

The article continues with a detailed criticism of the basic outline for film courses in the province of Quebec, "au secondaire classique", substantiating the claims made in the May/June number (39). It concludes:

...Il serait erroné de croire que le cours d'initiation au cinéma au secondaire classique est un cas isolé, qui ne touche pas l'ensemble de la situation cinématographique du Québec. Nous aurions pu aussi bien analyser de la même façon les cours de cinéma qui se donnent à l'Université de Montréal elle-même, et qui visent à former des professeurs; nous manquions tout simplement de documents adéquats.

In 1966, Take One appeared on the scene with a September/October issue, the first of the two major English language film periodicals to intervene in the cultural climate between 1950 and 1976. It took its place as a Canadian magazine clearly defining the country as a collection of regions with associations and interests outside its own boundaries and especially in the United States. Published twice monthly by Unicorn publishers of Montreal, Take One's first number lists its correspondents: New York (Patrick MacFadden), Toronto (Joe Medjuck), technology (Robert Russel), Vancouver (Margaret Waddington), giving the sense of a wide participation in a decentralized concept of a largely anglophone Canada. The first number is high in Canadian content; the eight major topics define a Canadian reader as one who is interested in the following: the state of the domestic film industry (Bill 204, Notes of a Man), Canadian film history (Peter Morris), great figures of world cinema (Hitchcock), technology (Norman McLaren), Canadian Festivals (Montreal), an ironic perspective on the state of the medium (the Jaundiced screen), and a general view of the current releases (Clive Denton).

Appearing in 1966 in the Quiet Revolution years in a periodical form, it puts forward in a serious and positive way another perspective on Canada. The opening statement of intention addresses the entire country and lays claim to a national film industry:

Never have the Canadian film industry, and public interest in the film in general, been at a higher pitch than during the last few years. Most lacking in this period - even more so than good Canadian features - was a magazine that would talk of cinema developments in this country and around the world to the growing number of Canadians with an interest in this, the youngest of all the arts. It is this task that TAKE ONE boldly assumes. We hope that, acting as both a forum for the interchange of ideas and a spur towards higher standards of achievement, we shall be playing some small part in the development of our national film industry and the appreciation of its product.⁷⁴

The first article appears to lend weight to a serious intent and to a specifically Canadian orientation. "Close-up on Bill C - 204" introduces the reader to the current state of Canadian film legislation by no less a figure than Judy Lamarsh, then Secretary of State. Her article suggests a certain institutional approval of a periodical which recognizes and reinforces the federal aspect of Canada and also provides a place in which problems and suggested solutions concerning the Canadian industry can be aired. The publication of the Lamarsh article follows closely on the first reading in the House of Commons of Bill C-204, "An act to provide for the establishment of a film development corporation". Lamarsh justifies the bill on three counts: (1) to provide employment for Canadians, bringing revenue to the state as well as an image of

74. Take One, Sept/Oct, Vol. 1, no. 1, p. 3.

Canada useful for the tourist industry, (2) to supplement the imported culture(s) by means of the production of a domestic culture and (3) to promote Canadian culture in other countries.⁷⁵

The article refers to several problems related to the industry including the fact that in the 14,000 cinemas in Canada, together showing more than 300 films a year, only three or four of those films are likely to be Canadian. Consequently the size of the domestic market under existing conditions is unable to support a stable film industry and employment in the field is unsteady and uncertain.

The article is a solidly Canadian introduction to a Canadian periodical at the point of moving in a positive direction to intervene in an intolerable situation seen from the Canadian point of view. It is followed by an article, "Notes on a Man" by Douglas Leiterman, who is on the point of leaving Canada for the United States after the discontinuation of "This Hour has Seven Days" and a bitter wrangle over the freedom of television reporting, illustrating that, whatever the rights or wrongs of the situation, there is another market in the United States for competent Canadians.

The article on the Montreal Film Festival may be of particular interest to the Quebec readers and "Multi-McLaren" features an artist whose animation cuts across language and frequently culture.⁷⁶

75. June, 1966.

76. The October 1975 number of Séquences celebrates its 25th year of publication by dedicating its 82nd number to Norman McLaren and his work.

Take One makes a substantial entry into the field of Canadian cinema periodicals recognizing for the first time in this particular period the anglophone Canadian viewer in a specialized film magazine and opening a space for his/her participation as a Canadian.

The second number continues its topicality.⁷⁷ However, there is a significant shift towards a recognition of Canada in its duality: there are interviews with two Canadian filmmakers from Quebec. Arthur Lamothe and Jean-Claude Labrecque - the former in discussion in French and the latter in English⁷⁸. The tone of the two interviews, the questions and responses printed side by side, indicate the cultural conditioning of language. The third number carries "Lettre de Montréal", a column by Patrick Straram.⁷⁹ The seventh number includes an interview with Jean-Pierre Lefebvre - "The Gentle Revolutionary" - in English.

In these early numbers there seems to be a real effort to serve the whole of Canada with columns, usually in the form of "Letters from...", originating in cities across Canada as well as from foreign countries e.g. New York, Paris, London. The writers are almost all Canadians who write not about Canada and Canadian film but of Canada and Canadian film. Gerald Pratley in the third number⁸⁰ complains of the current

77. Take One, Vol. 1, no. 2, Nov/Dec., includes articles by Patrick Watson and an interview with Marshall McLuhan.

78. Ibid. Arthur Lamothe is interviewed by Michel Évrard and Jean-Claude Labrecque by Richard Norkin.

79. Cinema critic for Sept Jours and Magazine McLean, Secretary to the Editorial Board of Parti Pris:

80. Take One, Vol. 1, no. 3, p. 21.

advertising practice which, in recommending current films, uses quotes from American newspapers or other American sources. Pratley asks why critics from Toronto, Winnipeg and Montreal are not used instead of those from New York and Los Angeles. He suggests that the answer may be found in a Canadian mind-set which considers that "Many of our critics are no good", a point of view which he counters by pointing out that the same can be said of American critics also and if we are going to listen to idiots we might as well listen to our own. Whatever the merits of the argument, the point is well-taken, and gathers meaning and becomes more telling when read in conjunction with additional informative material on the state of the Canadian film industry. The isolated fact becomes part of an entire picture made possible by the existence of this, at the time, unique publication.

Number 7 with its item "In the Works" refers to a Canadian National Cinema and suggests that some of the films in the then current production would form part of that national cinema.⁸¹ In 1967, the year of the Centennial and Expo, the concept of a national cinema which is not limited to National Film Board production is just beginning and with it we begin to speak of the cinemas of Canada and Quebec. The rather sad accompanying comment by Ronald Blumer sums up very effectively the situation at the time and is genuinely informative. It is difficult to imagine where else such a piece might have been printed to achieve the same effect.

Most of the films listed are either being made at the NFB or through the NFB. Most of these films, obviously, will not get theatrical distribution and are destined for one showing as a

81. Take One, Vol. 1, no. 7.

T.V. special... It is interesting to note the large output of French language films in relation to those in English. This is largely due to the requirements of local French television. Were it not for the ready availability of the packaged product from the south, one would like to think that English Canadian filmmakers would be in a better situation. There cannot be said to be any tradition of feature filmmaking in Canada, but there is a very real tradition of documentary filmmaking at the NFB and it is interesting to note that the French feature filmmakers are building on this. If not actual documentaries, their films use documentary-type material and techniques. It is from such roots that the British "New Wave" sprang and it is probable that, if Canada is to develop a distinctive national theatre, films such as those listed above will be regarded as the beginnings. The list, (the first attempted in this country) is necessarily incomplete and inaccurate. I would appreciate being notified of errors and omissions.⁸²

In Take One it becomes part of a comprehensive picture and was probably stimulated by the fact of the periodical's existence. We can make the same comment about Objectif in its own context. Both periodicals have made a space for the expression of ideas which formerly lacked a suitable outlet. In Take One there is not usually a regular editorial with a statement of a political position. Perhaps wisely, it does not attempt to sum up every second month from a central point, all the complexities which make up the Canadian film industry. It has a regular Feed Back feature and generally allows the different collaborators to convey their own point of view in building up a Canadian publication.

The use of the two languages in the early issues - which was sustained for a limited amount of time - reflects in a very practical way the concept of Canada as two distinctly different societies each with its own language and culture. Arguably the amount of French

82. Ronald Blumer, Take One, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 12

material included is insufficient to make it an attractive proposition for the exclusively francophone reader but it may have sent a friendly message to the bilingual Canadian and³ certainly is an indication of the totally Canadian approach of the management. While the policy of the magazine is to include both English Canadians and Québécois, there is no attempt to disguise the lack of connection, which is part of the language division.

The Toronto letter by Kirwan Cox in Vol. 3, no. 1, complains that the Canadian Film Awards, which are run by a Toronto clique, are dying due to the conspicuous absence of the French Canadians. MON ONCLE ANTOINE, the winner at the 23rd ceremony, was submitted without the knowledge or consent of Claude Jutra, which would probably not have been forthcoming. The offer to hold the event in Montreal had not been picked up and, on the other hand, Robert Daudelin (identified as the most important liaison with Quebec outside the province) had not been notified of the event, nor invited to participate and was, moreover, totally unknown personally or by name to the current organizer of the Awards ceremony.⁸³

The two solitudes remained.

83. Robert Daudelin is identified in the article as Director of le Conseil québécois pour la diffusion du cinéma and recent organizer of a festival of Quebec films for the University of Toronto.

CHAPTER 4

1967 was an eventful year in Canada with much of the focus on Quebec. The great success of Expo 67 in Montreal, the publication of the Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, the founding by René Lévesque of the Movement for Sovereignty Association and the visit of General de Gaulle, all brought Quebec into the limelight, adding to the confidence of Les Québécois as, with increased assurance, they moved from self-definition to a consideration of what a new Quebec society could be like.

Looking back from 1978, Michel Houle suggests that in Quebec, freed from the folkloric past by the Quiet Revolution, "A certain cinema of the 1970's will try to reintegrate them back into society and have them ask themselves about the place that they occupy therein and about the cleavages and the conflicts that are shaping our society".¹

Whereas the 1960s in Quebec was, in the main, concerned with cultural identity and was a time of claiming the right to speak, a time boiling with ideas, the 1970s was a time of competition to consolidate those ideas.²

The Quebec cinema responded by choosing the political and economic arena to try to perceive, understand and analyse the society and the collectivity of Quebec.³

1. Michel Houle, "Some Ideological and Thematic Aspects of the Quebec Cinema" in SELF-PORTRAIT, p. 169.

2. Ibid., p. 167.

3. Ibid., p. 169.

The periodicals took their bearings from the cinema finding their respective positions, both social and political, in order to take part in the shaping of the new Quebec.

If the 1960s was a time of cultural drawing together in Quebec in order to find a commonality, the 1970s was a time of reopening, in both films and periodicals, to expose and examine the differences which existed in the society, within and between the classes.⁴

The thrust towards greater independence, whether to complete separation or something less, frequently placed English Canada and Quebec at odds, so that acute tensions were created within the country, particularly in Montreal where the two cultures came into closest contact.

The English Canadian and the Quebec cinemas continued to operate separately; generally Quebec films made references to anglophone Canada and English Canadian films referred to Quebec but seldom in either case going so far as to take the central characters from the other culture.

In the private sector in Quebec, Denis Héroux made VALERIE in 1968, the first of the profitable soft pornographic films which, perhaps, precipitated the Quebec feminist films of the early 1970s.⁵ Also privately produced was LE GRAND FILM ORDINAIRE OU JEANNE D'ARC N'EST PAS MORTE, SE PORTE BIEN ET VIT AU QUÉBEC (Roger Frappier, 1970) which expressed the spirit of nationalism that was in the air. Most important

4. Michel Houle, in Self-Portrait, p. 170.

5. e.g. LA VIE REVÉE (Mireille Dansereau, 1972).

of all was Arthur Lamothe's LE MÉPRIS N'AURA QU'UN TEMPS which was released in 1970 and was the first feature film to be commissioned by a labour union.⁶ Available with English subtitles, it was an important film in the increasing politicization of the Quebec cinema, and others followed.

In English Canada, the mood was different and consequently both the films and film comment were different. The most celebrated English Canadian film was probably Don Shebib's 1970 GOIN' DOWN THE ROAD which caught the mood of the times and placed Toronto at the centre of English Canada.⁷ PAPERBACK HERO (Peter Pearson, 1973) and PROXYHAWKS (Jack Darcus, 1971) conveyed some of the sense of the current discomfort and anxiety and at the same time defined the Canadian identity as regionally based.

The private sector was free to do as it wished; the National Film Board, however, found itself in difficulties as the Quebec filmmakers who had not already left attempted to push against the limits imposed by the mandate. Fernand Dansereau's TOUT LE TEMPS...TOUT LE TEMPS...TOUT LE TEMPS...? (1969) was accepted by the board as social action cinema but several of the films which followed dealt in a much more aggressive manner with class differences and the unfair treatment of workers.

6. La Société général de Confédération des syndicats nationaux.

7. In both English and French.

The banning of *ON EST AU COTON* (Denys Arcand, 1970) in 1972 revealed the contradiction at the heart of the Film Board as the filmmaker attempted to expose the working conditions in the textile industry, challenging the management, while the Film Commissioner, Sidney Newman, insisted: "The Board must uphold capitalism and the national unity of the country".⁸

The periodicals in publication at this time convey the sense of an interest which goes beyond that of the simple selling of the periodical itself. Séquences and Take One continued and were joined in 1971 by Cinéma Québec and Champ Libre and by Cinema Canada a year later.

In 1970 and with its 62nd number, Séquences became an independent review. The editorial: "Devenir indépendant" explains that the modifying of the function of l'Office de communications sociales de Montréal (through which, since its inception, it had received its financial support) meant that funding would no longer be available.⁹ It was then decided that an editorial committee would take over.

The editorial indicates how Séquences sees itself:

Ainsi donc, Séquences est devenue une revue indépendante. Cette nouvelle condition n'a pas fait délirer les rédacteurs. Pourquoi? Parce que Séquences n'a jamais été une revue servile et sectaire. Une totale liberté a toujours animé son directeur et l'équipe qui l'entourait. Et les collaborateurs savent avec quelle largeur de vue leurs articles étaient accueillis. D'ailleurs, la censure ici n'avait aucun sens. Il faut ajouter que nous recherchions avant tout, dans un program déterminé, une expression claire sur des sujets

8. Véronneau. Self-Portrait, p. 193.

9. Based on a decision of l'Office de communications sociales de Montréal when it was decided that instead of financing Séquences, it would subscribe to Le Service d'éducation cinématographiques.

précis. La variété des articles et d'expressions constituait une préoccupation constante des responsables de la revue. À ce jour, les numéros parus forment un ensemble de bonne tenue.

Devenir indépendant ne signifie nullement renier le passé. C'est tout simplement le continuer. C'est poursuivre dans la même voix. C'est aller plus loin.¹⁰

The event did not pass without notice by Champ Libre writing in 1971:

Séquences ces derniers temps, semble avoir perdu cette belle assurance qui la caractérisait et la faisant tant apprécier. Elle n'échappe plus à une remise en cause toujours esquivée en préférant les changements de toilette aux transformations internes.

Depuis un an, elle est devenue "indépendante" et ne relève plus de l'Office des Communications Sociales de Montréal (no. 62, p. 2). Maintenant livrée à elle-même, il lui faudra trouver une ligne directrice et préciser la fonction nouvelle qu'elle entend assumer puisqu'elle a perdu, depuis peu, l'exclusivité de la critique en revue au Québec. Longtemps porte-parole de valeurs solidement implantées, Séquences survivra-t-elle à sa liberté tout neuve, même si un peu tard, "elle désire se tourner davantage vers la réalité canadienne et québécoise".¹¹

With the change to independent status and a re-organized financial base, Sequences continued to address those questions relating to the cinema which concerned traditional Quebec society: the classification and distribution of films especially in the rural areas, the need for a cinema law and, increasingly, the attitude towards the Church as expressed in films.

10. Séquences, no. 62.

11. Champ Libre, Vol. 1, no. 2, p. 25.

In the April 1972 number, "La deuxième vague" is an obviously deeply felt editorial written in tones of irony and outrage. With the passing of pornography in the Quebec cinema, Léo Bonneville writes, somewhat ironically, that one can see a renewed interest in religion, not as practised by the village priest or the Canadian martyrs but as a tasteless attack on what the Church stands for. He explains:

Le sexe devenant peu rentable, il fallait trouver un autre filon pour secouer la torpeur des spectateurs toujours prêts à rentrer au logis si on ne les aguiche pas un peu. La relève n'allait pas tarder. D'habiles réalisateurs se sont soudainement convertis, entrant, pour ainsi dire, en religion. Non, hélas pour faire oeuvre pie. Mais si, dans le temple, ils pouvaient trouver des espèces sonnantes et trébuchantes!... sous les formes plus ou moins carnavalesques et avec une impertinence tapageuse.¹²

Jacques Godbout and Jean-Pierre Lefebvre are singled out as offenders:

Il faut dire que déjà, dans les films de Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, surgissaient des allusions grossières que suppuraient des abcès à peine crevés. Mais dans IXE13, Jacques Godbout...s'en donna à coeur joie en caricaturant à outrance la distribution de la sainte communion. Masques et bergamasques triviaux qui dénaturent une réalité religieuse et jettent du discrédit sur un sacrement divin. Jeu d'enfant blasé qui ne sait plus quoi dire et qui lorgne dans le champ du voisin pour ridiculiser le chrétien. Anticléricalisme bête qui ne témoigne pas d'un grand esprit.¹³

The editorial finds a similar religious obsession in L'APPARITION which it rejects along with its publicity, the film for its infantile approach to religion and: "Publicité qui ronge la société de consommation et qui allèche les lecteurs avides de sensations. Sensationnelisme fertile en gestes stupéfiants et grotesques..."

12. Séquence, no. 69, p.2.

13. Ibid.

The editorial sums up the phenomenon of religious parody common in Quebec films during this period as an inept substitute for a serious critical work which would respect the deeply-held beliefs of others. *TRANQUILLEMENT, PAS VITE* (Guy L. Côté) is placed by the editorial in a different category; while it provokes serious self-questioning in relation to religious thought and practice, it stops short of attempting to dismantle the entire institution of the church. The editorial continues: "Malgré de sévères réserves, il faut reconnaître que l'auteur s'est attaqué à son sujet avec un enthousiasme évident, dénonçant un passé désuet et valorisant un avenir prometteur". We can deduce that the film takes a position which leaves open the possibility of reconciliation within the existing structures, and, as such, "*TRANQUILLEMENT, PAS VITE* fait honneur à cette deuxième vague".¹⁴

This editorial deals with questions which are central to the Quiet Revolution, not perhaps as seen externally but as experienced internally. The confrontation by the forces for change against the forces for the preservation of the existing order (which we see as Lefebvre and Godbout confront the Church at this time), creates the clash of two irreconcilable positions, setting up a social tension which in fact existed in Quebec society at the time. It was a tension which split friends and families in a conflict which was at once emotional and conceptual and belonged peculiarly to the people of Quebec. To criticize the Church, however harshly, while maintaining respect for its

¹⁴. Ibid., No. 69, p. 3.

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adherents and faith in its potential for goodness in renewal, is basically to accept the status quo. Effective social change necessitates the repositioning of the critic, who must move from a deferential to an analytical position, from a reformer within the system to an opponent outside the system, a move which some of the young filmmakers of the 1960s and 1970s made. In this instance as in certain former instances, Séquences reads these films as unrealistic and juvenile, the inept products of infantile minds taking pleasure in an anticlericalism which ridicules the Christian.

Again criticism by the Séquences editorial is held at the level of personal ineptitude and lack of respect, the maintenance of its position resting on complete rejection, and again avoiding further discussion.

In the following year, 1973, Séquences continued to follow its stated policy of featuring prominent Canadian filmmakers. Included in its list were Denis Héroux, Jacques Leduc, Denys Arcand and Jean-Pierre Lefebvre - all makers of films which had attracted controversy if not notoriety. Their works could not in the main have been easy for Séquences to accept.

Each interview begins with a short introduction by Bonneville which places the interviewee by bourgeois standards in a favourable light. Denis Héroux, "...qui a fait une percée fracassante par la sortie de Valerie...", becomes one of the rejuvenating forces of the Quebec cinema who is primarily a history teacher with more talent and ambition than he is usually credited with and who is at present working on a historical

subject which has interested him since his university days.¹⁵ Bonneville's introduction adds, somewhat nostalgically: "Séquences a été heureux de le retrouver aussi dynamique que lorsqu'il participait à une table ronde organisé au temps glorieux des ciné-clubs - par la revue".¹⁶ Héroux acknowledges the provocative nature of his films. Asked if QUELQUES ARPENTS DE NEIGE (1973), without being a film "engagé", is a political film, he replied:

Oui. Il n'est ni fédéraliste, ni péquiste, ni révolutionnaire. Mais il montre ce qu'est une révolution, ce qu'est la violence. En ce sens-là, il est politique. Je souhaite sensibiliser les Québécois aux événements de 1837. Cela leur fournira l'occasion de constater que l'histoire nous conditionne vraiment. Je serais heureux si je pouvais vendre l'histoire du Québec come je pense avoir vendu le cinéma québécois. Et par le fait même intéresser les gens aux événements de 1838.

...Je pense que tout mouvement révolutionnaire violent est un mouvement suicidaire et donc tragique...La plupart du temps, le mouvement révolutionnaire est récupéré par d'autres personnes et il devient alors autre chose. Ceux qui croient que tout au Québec va se régler par la violence ont tort comme ceux qui disent que tout doit rester inchangé. Personnellement, j'ai l'impression qu'en tant que cinéaste, je n'ai pas de solution définie à porter mais une volonté de dire aux gens de participer et de faire quelque chose.¹⁷

Jacques Leduc is introduced as a product of the ciné-clubs and the classical college, with experience, from assistant cameraman to filmmaker, with the National Film Board. Far from being a commercially oriented body of work, his cinema is "comme dirait Robert Charlebois, un

15. QUELQUES ARPENTS DE NEIGE - January 1973, p. 5.

16. Séquences, No. 71, p. 5.

17. Ibid., p. 10.

cinéma 'ben ordinaire!'.¹⁸ In the interview with Jacques Camerlain, Leduc identifies himself, not as an auteur (like Jutra, Owen or Dansereau) but as a member of a cooperative. On the subject of ON EST LOIN DU SOLEIL, he makes it clear that the film is not about Brother André as a person but more about the social climate that creates a Brother André.¹⁹ In conception, Leduc says, it tends towards Marxism but without being either aggressive or dogmatic.²⁰

The question of its political orientation is not pursued by the interviewer who controls the direction of the exchange with a question about the choice of the actors.²¹

18. Ibid., no. 73, p. 4.

19. Séquences, Feb. 1972, no. 68, p. 38. In a critique of ON EST LOIN DU SOLEIL, Léo Bonneville complains of its mediocrity, of the greyness of the lives portrayed which is accentuated by the painfully slow pace of the film so that the viewer wonders why all these people are alive. As in earlier reviews, the film is read through the psychology of the individual characters and interpreted as their personal problems: there is "Gérard qui cherche du travail avec une hésitation malade", the night watchman father who makes his rounds with a morbid fear, and Isabel "qui apprend avec un sorte de contentement bizarre qu'elle va mourir et vous avez un portrait grossièrement dessiné d'une de chez nous sans relief comme sans perspective. Bonneville sees Brother André not as a point of departure to question the existing class structures but as a contrast with the other characters. "Ce matin-là, en sortant de la salle de projection de l'ONF, le soleil inondait la neige tombée sur la ville. Comme il faisait bon respirer et retrouver la clarté du jour. Pourtant, la vie n'est pas si éloignée du soleil."

20. Séquences, no. 73, p. 6.

21. In general the questions asked in these interviews tend to address questions of style, technique, methods of work, immediate and past projects rather than social issues.

The interview with Denys Arcand,²² is both introduced and conducted by Léo Bonneville. The questions reveal that, in common with Denys Héroux, Arcand studied history²³ and brings a historical perspective to his work.

The long interview with Jean-Pierre Lefebvre appears in the issue of April 1974 along with an article - "Lettre Ouverte à Jean-Pierre Lefebvre" written by Léo Bonneville after viewing Lefebvre's *LES DERNIÈRES FIANCAILLES*:

Mon cher Jean-Pierre, Je sors de la projection des *Dernières fiançailles* ébloui et ému. Ébloui par une telle maîtrise d'un art que tu connais si bien; ému par la sincérité inattaquable des personnages. Et je me suis dit: il faut absolument que j'écrive à Jean-Pierre.

He continues with a statement of his general disapproval of Lefebvre's work which he finds:

...prétentieux et hargneux, farcis de gags éculés, épicés de mots pas très spirituels, bref, sortant tout droit de scènes de collégiens faussement émancipés. Je trouvais que tu restais fixé de ton adolescence que tu renâclais certaines rancoeurs, que tu ridiculisais trop facilement certaines habitudes de chez nous, que tu piétinais un passé... dépassé. Mais tu avais tes fans: ceux qui riaient de tes petites flèches mal empoisonnées et qui vantaient ton esprit frondeur. J'aurais dû me dire: c'est de ton âge. Je me disais plutôt:

22. *Séquences*, no. 74, p. 4.

23. Bonneville suggests that in Arcand's first two short films - *CHAMPLAIN* and *LES MONTREALISTES* - there was a contestation in the interpretation of history and asks if he intends to dismantle our national heroes. His reply: "Ces films ne traduisaient pas une pensée autonome. Je sortais alors d'une licence en histoire. J'avais été très influencé par mes professeurs Maurice Séguin, Michel Brunet, et Jean-Blain. Donc j'ai mis à peu près, dans mes films, la pensée historique de ce qu'on appelait alors l'école de l'Université de Montréal."

dommage de gaspiller un tel talent. Et tu continuais dans cette voie en essayant parfois de dominer tes penchants gavroches. Et ce fut LA CHAMBRE BLANCHE: un poème un peu trop symbolique à mon goût et scrupuleusement étudié. Mais passons.

Et voici LES DERNIERES FIANCAILLES qui consacré un talent certain: un grand cinéaste est parmi nous. Car LES DERNIERES FIANCAILLES est sans aucune doute le meilleur film jamais réalisé au Québec...Jamais, chez nous, un sujet aussi simple n'a épousé une forme aussi parfaite...tout ce qu'ils font, tout ce qu'ils disent est marqué d'une authenticité indéniable. Aucun geste maladroit, aucune intonation fausse, aucune scène inutile.²⁴

Bonneville introduces Janeck Beaulieu's long interview noting that Lefebvre has come to (se livre) Séquences for the first time, that he was not intimidated by the questions and that he answered directly with lucidity and frankness.

Lefebvre speaks of his films, his early interest in writing and music, talents which did not flourish within the established educational structures. He speaks of his experience as a college boarder, due to a family situation, which, while producing a sense of loneliness also stimulated his writing so that it became a liberating activity through which he began to understand the ambiguity of Canadian history.²⁵

These four filmmakers with their very different styles and approaches to filmmaking are all essentially middle class, all are products of the Quebec classical college system with exposure to the ciné-clubs (as are most of the new Quebec filmmakers).

24. Séquences, no. 76, p. 2.

25. Séquences, no. 77, p. 6.

They can all be classed as radical filmmakers to some extent but are entirely different in their individual approaches. The effect of these interviews in Séquences tended to include them in the establishment (especially with Léo Bonnevillie's introductions) and at the same time to keep the periodical abreast of the times. It was a move that one suspects may not have been made a few years earlier, and could not have been made publicly in quite this way without the existence of Séquences.

Between 1967 and 1971, following the disappearance of Objectif, Séquences was the only French periodical produced in Quebec. In the absence of an alternative publication around which ideas could be generated and expressed, the established Catholic position maintained by Séquences went unchallenged. The absence of Objectif was felt as an unoccupied space by those people who understood the power of the film to persuade and the value of the mediating comment to direct, and who were in sympathy with the position Objectif had taken.

In the Spring of 1971, a group of people who shared an interest in problems associated with the cinema met to discuss the possibility of starting a periodical which might take the place of Objectif. The group was composed chiefly of intellectuals including specialists of various types working within the film area and also interested film viewers. They were generally without organised political experience and had only a loose preoccupation with politics.

In the initial discussions a number of different positions emerged which gradually separated the group into two sections; the division was according to a difference in political philosophies. One group was basically interested in the struggle of the working classes and the

other was committed to a Quebec nationalist position as represented by the Parti Québécois. It was clear to the meeting that the two positions were incompatible as the basis for a periodical; they, therefore, decided to follow separate paths.²⁶

Consequently in 1971, two new periodicals appeared on the Quebec scene representing the two positions outlined at the Spring meeting. The first to be published was Cinéma Québec, the opening number appearing in May. Champ Libre followed in July.

Cinéma Québec was published monthly under the direction of Jean-Pierre Tadros with a number of experienced writers in the field of the cinema including Michel Brulé, Richard Gay, Arthur Lambothe, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Pierre Perrault.

The first editorial appears under the title "La Prise de la parole" and expresses the belief that film criticism in Quebec is needed and that the four years of silence following the demise of Objectif had been detrimental. The editorial states that the proposed role of Cinéma Québec must be to determine the specificity of the Quebec cinéma in relation to its political evolution as it continues to search for new aspects of the individual and collective consciousness. The editor makes a commitment to all who work in the Quebec community that the periodical will break out of the restrictive frame forced on "notre petit monde cinématographique". Stated also is its intention to fight for a cinema of quality while exposing the structures which support the

26. Champ Libre, no. 2 from which the account of this meeting is taken.

existing cinema industry. It makes a reference to the emerging cinemas in the rest of the world and parallels the position of colonized people with its own perceived position. Finally Cinéma Québec wishes to be the meeting point of a collective reflection on the Québec collectivity as it is related to the cinema.

The first number secures a continuity with Objectif by reminding the reader of the intention expressed in its final number:

... de resituer le cinéma québécois par rapport à l'évolution politique et sociale d'un Québec à la recherche de nouveaux éléments de conscience individuelle et collective."²⁷

The first number is designated "cinéma/politique" and includes an opening statement by Jean-Pierre Lefebvre under the title "Québec et la libre bêtise".²⁸ He writes:

Ayant vu le jour sous et 'avec' la domination anglaise - et américain par extension - notre cinéma, à l'instar de notre politique, se voit constamment trahi (en bonne conscience) non pas par nos maîtres à penser mais par nos contre-maîtres à exécuter ou transmettre (en bonne conscience) les ordres et les idées des autres."

He speaks of both federal and provincial governments who have relied on goodwill or nothing at all to protect the film industry and who continue with the same policy, Ottawa doing its best to intervene by means of the NFB and the CFDC as intermediaries.

He writes of the great illusion of Canadian existence in which we all participate, confusing well-being with peace and comfort, seeing the future as being neutral in everything, and accepting everything as an

27. Cinéma Québec, Vol. 1, no. 1, p. 4.

28. Ibid., p. 9.

elementary law of democracy - a law which reduces everyone to the level of the lowest common denominator. He continues:

Quand on sait toutefois, que, et les partis politiques et la plupart des grands commerçants de cinéma au Québec et au Canada sont financièrement liés aux Américains; quand on sait que, et certains cinéastes d'ici, et certains organismes d'état adoptent des schémas industriels et culturels américains dans le but d'avoir cette fierté (qu'on confond trop souvent avec l'universalisme) d'être temporairement à la hauteur de la cheville du géant; quand on sait que certains cinéastes et producteurs d'ici s'empressent de récolter la manne d'inconscience et de frustrations que les autorités, religieuses et civiles, du pays ont si généreusement répandue, et que, en même temps les gouvernements laissent ainsi exploiter le public que ne s'en trouve qu'affaibli, donc plus malléable... on ne peut constater que la pyramide québécoise, à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur, est cimentée par la même irresponsabilité.

Notre politique est bel et bien à la hauteur de notre cinéma.

La médiocratie n'engendre que la libre bêtise.

Clearly Cinéma Québec is a nationalist Quebec film periodical which created a specifically cinematic context for a critical stance in relation to the cinema and beyond the cinema to society. It arrived on the heels of the New Québec cinema and encouraged its continuation as it documented the past (Pierre Perrault) and turned to the future with new forms (Jean-Pierre Lefebvre) in an effort to discuss the future outside the old contexts.

It addressed questions of censorship, the National Film Board, and language as had the previous critical periodicals; it encompassed many topics and reviewed many films while keeping its focus on Quebec. Its

existence was intimately concerned with a new Quebec, redirected towards the Parti Québécois.²⁹

In July, 1971, Champ Libre appeared, diverging from the Cinéma Québec line to promote the Marxist position as the basis for a new society.

Champ Libre numbers 1 and 2 were published in the series Cahiers du Québec and were prepared under the direction of Robert Lahaise with the assistance of the Conseil des Arts du Canada.³⁰ The first number appeared in July, the second later in the same year and both were produced under the direction of le Comité de gestion et de rédaction.³¹ Since the quest for identity had been at least partially satisfied during the 1960s, their appearance at this time perhaps indicates that there was room to bring the question of class into the picture which Champ Libre expressed in terms of the class struggle.

29. Cinéma Québec continued in publication until 1978. As Champ Libre would probably have diagnosed, its political line was not specifically and narrowly defined. It would be consistent with the facts to suggest that, once the Parti Québécois was elected to office, much of the drive of the writers disappeared and also the interest of the readers.

30. Also in the series, published by Les Éditions Hurtubise HMH Ltée, were "Textes et documents littéraires, science politique, histoire, communications, ethnologie, philosophie, etc."

31. Le comité de gestion et de rédaction does not appear in the first number but in the second the following names have been listed as participants: Normand Bissonnette, Robert Boivin, Robert Daudelin, Henri Paul Chévrier.

The first number begins with a statement under the heading "Cinéma, Idéologie, Politique":³²

Ce premier numéro de CHAMP LIBRE est centré sur le problème de rapports du cinéma avec l'idéologie et la politique - non pas pour sacrifier à ce qui, ici et là, prend l'allure mystifiante d'une mode, mais parce que cette réflexion, jusqu'ici à peine ébauchée au Québec, est indispensable, prioritaire et urgente.

The first editorial also stresses the urgent necessity of developing film criticism in the Quebec context:

Au Québec, particulièrement depuis le sabotage d'Objectif, en 1967, le cinéma est plus parlé (et même bavardé) que pensé. On assiste ainsi au paradoxe d'un pays dont le cinéma a connu en dix ans une progression considérable, dont les cinéphiles, surtout parmi les étudiants, sont chaque jour plus nombreux, et où la réflexion sur ce cinéma nouveau est comme aveugle, s'est vue réduite à peu de choses.

Au moment où le cinéma Québécois, après la flambée des années 60, connaît une crise de croissance et se voit confronté aux mirages d'un certain cinéma d'auteur et aux tentations diverses de la "rentabilité", l'urgence d'un travail critique n'échappera à personne.

The editorial continues: "Nous disons bien critique. En trois sens".

The first point made is the need for an evaluative analysis of certain films - including those made in Quebec which deal with local concerns; those which are accessible commercially, on television or in the cinémathèques; those which have been withheld due to stupidity, laziness, censorship or self-censorship and which the editors consider to be important.

The second point concerns the need to involve the Quebec critic in the formulation of a cinema theory and a pedagogy related to the concept of film as ideological and political in nature.

32. Champ Libre, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 7, 8.

The third point is concerned with the machinery of the cinema:

Le cinéma, particulièrement au Québec, seuls les aveugles ou les vendus nous contrediront, est l'instrument et le miroir par excellence de la domination économique et culturelle.

Since all Quebec films are situated in a colonial context (including that of Hollywood), confrontation, the editorial continues, must take place at every level - production, distribution, expression, as well as content, in order to recapture the stolen image of the colonized Québécois.

In summing up, the editorial defines the role Champ Libre wishes to fill: "Champ Libre se veut donc un outil de travail et d'information critiques, un lieu de réflexion théorique et un instrument de combat".³³ It commits itself to an active participation through the preparation of material on relevant issues and also to associate the struggle in the Quebec cinema with those of other young revolutionary cinemas to which it relates in a privileged way. It continues:

S'il est vrai que le Québec est, ou peut devenir, un lieu de rencontre (entre le monde francophone et le monde anglophone, l'Amérique et l'Europe, les cinémas révolutionnaires d'Amérique du Sud ou les Newsreels des États-Unis et les groupes de cinéma révolutionnaire de France ou d'Italie, etc.), il est temps d'en faire la preuve ici.

Like all other film periodicals which preceded it, the editors wait for like-minded readers to join them.

Although there is no similarity whatsoever in the orientations of Champ Libre and Séquences, their function in seeking an activating role is shared as is their cautionary role - the Catholic Séquences to warn

33. Ibid., No. 1, p. 9.

against the moral dangers inherent in the cinema and the Marxist Champ Libre to caution against its political and ideological power.

The article "Situation politique du cinéma québécois" considers some of the films of the 1960s as they relate to a political cinema, a very different approach from that of Léo Bonnevillie.

Dans le contexte historique, géographique, politique et culturel qui est celui du Québec à l'intérieur du Canada et du continent nord-américain, le terme "politique" recouvre une réalité beaucoup plus complexe que dans les pays où l'indépendance nationale ne fait plus problème. Le simple fait de parler ou d'écrire joual dans une oeuvre littéraire ou cinématographique peut passer pour un acte politique dans la mesure où l'on peut y voir l'affirmation du droit d'un peuple à sa langue. De la même façon le cinéma québécois à caractère national est perçu comme un cinéma engagé vis-à-vis de la réalité socio-politique du Québec et partant comme un cinéma politique. Aussi peut-on dire que poser le problème au Québec revient en fait à poser le problème de l'existence d'un cinéma national en pays colonisé.³⁴

The editorial places the "real" Quebec cinema in the 1960s, its beginning coinciding with the Quiet Revolution and the Lesage liberal government. Inevitably other associations are made; there are the first terrorist acts, the founding of the separatist movements,³⁵ and the beginning of an awareness among the population of their political and cultural alienation.

The challenge for the Quebec cinema then was seen, in the editorial, to be the overcoming of economic problems arising from the dominance of Hollywood across the whole of Canada, in order to be able to

34. Ibid., no. 1, p. 53. "Situation politique du cinéma Québécois", Réal LaRochelle et Gilbert Maggi.

35. 1960. The founding of Rassemblement pour l'indépendance nationale.

express its concerns within its own culture outside the cultural patterns projected by the American cinema.³⁶

The article acknowledges the useful exemplary role played by the French New Wave in shooting on the margins of a very large industry with its liberating influence on many of the filmmakers employed by the National Film Board who were then able to break from a formula imposed by the "Mother House" "to make works of individual expression."³⁷ The article associates this with the emergence of the Quebec cinema of auteurs which opened up the possibility of a political cinema, allowing for individual means of expression but at the same time uniting by a common desire to project a Québécois image in the theme of the search for identity. While acknowledging the debt owed to the French New Wave, the editorial points out a negative aspect in relation to the Quebec search for identity:

...le rôle libérateur de la Nouvelle Vague au Québec se double d'un rôle aliénateur, en ce sens que la vision subjective du réalisateur se fait partir du schémas dramatiques et esthétiques d'emprunt sur lesquels se superpose un cachet national.³⁸

The article makes a connection between the colonized cinema of Quebec and Frantz Fanon's chapter "Sur la culture nationale" from his

36. Champ Libre, p. 54. The article refers to *Culture Vivante* (1966) and an article by Jean-Pierre Lefebvre "Notre cinéma et notre histoire naissent avec HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR".

37. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, no. 1, p. 54. The article notes that many NFB directors were technically in advance of the New Wave e.g. the first experiences in 1952 of "Candid Eye" with *LES PETITES MÉDISANCES* (Jacques Giraudeau and Michel Brault).

38. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

book, "Les Damnés de la terre", in which three states in the evolution of the colonized writer are detailed.

The first stage is characterized by assimilation, the borrowing from the colonizer of an aesthetic and themes which are totally divorced from the colonized experience. Examples of this stage in the Quebec cinema are Gilles Carle's RED and the sex films made in Quebec.³⁹

The second stage opens the way for cultural decolonization with the personal expression of the filmmaker as a point of departure. In the case of Quebec, in sticking to nationalist issues, the cinema of this stage testifies to the concerns of the Quebec population through the personal view of the auteur in such a way that the essence of the film is concealed, as in the early films of Jean-Pierre Lefebvre.⁴⁰

The third stage, the last and principal one in the progression, goes beyond statement to the "film-acte"⁴¹ a stage which, the article states, has not yet been reached in Quebec but may be heralded by the social animation films of Dansereau and Lamothe.⁴²

39. Ibid., Vol. 1, no. 1, p. 54. RED is given as an example of the American model. The sex films are from the Scandinavian model.

40. Ibid., Vol. 1, no. 1, p. 56: Jean-Pierre Lefebvre is seen to have dominated the 1960's both by his output and by opening the way for the further development of the Quebec cinema. The later films are seen by Champ Libre to be a deterioration. LA CHAMBRE BLANCHE (1969) has become more contemplative, JUSQU'AU COEUR (1968) is reactionary in the context of a colonized country and LES MAUDITS SAUVAGES (1971) shows the limits of the auteur as director and is a complete deviation in search of humanism.

41. Ibid., Vol. 1, no. 1, p. 55.

42. Arthur Lamothe, LE MÉPRIS N'AURA QU'UN TEMPS (1970). L'HEURE DES BRASIERES, Solanas, Argentina, is given as one of the chief examples of this stage. Also Fernand Dansereau, SAINT-JÉRÔME (1968), TOUT LE TEMPS...TOUT LE TEMPS...TOUT LE TEMPS...? (1969).

A third number of Champ Libre appeared in a new format and with a different financial base followed by a fourth special issue. The first two numbers were overwhelmingly concerned with Marxist theory and critical approaches but some references were made to the commercial cinema. The third and fourth numbers were increasingly concerned with films made for particular labour groups addressing specific situations. LE MEPRIS N'AURA QU'UN TEMPS was of particular interest to the editors.

Champ Libre was never primarily concerned with specific films for the average viewer. The medium as an effective way of communication and particularly of social animation was its first concern.

It could never have been a popular publication but it did offer to the literate reader a theoretical support for a Marxist position in the struggle to improve conditions for the workers.

It seems likely that it did not receive sufficient support from the rank and file, and perhaps from the institutional financing agency, to continue in its original format.

Both Champ Libre and Cinéma Québec in an early number address the question of censorship. In 1961 Montreal was outraged by the cutting of HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR on a decision taken by the Quebec censor according to the moral standards of the province at that time. Public annoyance was then directed to a provincial (national) censoring body. In the changed times of the 1970's, the restricting body was the National Film Board.

In the September 1964 number of Objectif,⁴³ an article by Michel Patenaude appeared which referred to an issue of Parti Pris⁴⁴ in which five NFB filmmakers spoke frankly about their difficulties in working for the Film Board. They referred to a certain malaise - "...euphémisme commode qui se traduit en clair par l'impossibilité pour eux de faire des films librement à l'intérieur d'un organisme officiel".⁴⁵

The article notes that simultaneously l'Association professionnelle des cinéastes presented briefs to the federal and provincial governments in which they demanded assistance from the various public bodies to make possible a feature film industry in Canada.

The question of the NFB is extended in an article in the same issue by Jean-Pierre Lefebvre: "Petit éloge des grandeurs et des misères de la colonie française de l'Office nationale du film." The article states that, 25 years after its formation, the Film Board, Canada's only important production house, is known abroad for a few prominent names (Norman McLaren, Colin Low, Michel Brault, Claude Jutra) as well as for a few bland films which are sometimes ridiculous and a little naive. The article goes on to say that in spite of the very large number of documentary shorts made annually in carrying out its mandate, goodwill notwithstanding, the NFB has not realized its objective, since the projected image of Canada and Canadians is false and incomplete.

43. Objectif, No. 28, pp. 40, 41.

44. Parti Pris, April 1964.

45. Objectif, no. 28, pp. 40-41.

Limited by politics and propaganda, it is not able to deal with the basic freedoms needed to be able to create, and those who try to revolutionize the modes of NFB production are not only tilting at windmills but, with very rare exceptions, exhaust themselves for nothing.

Lefebvre states:

Le problème que nous cherchons à cerner est celui de la création cinématographique en tant qu'expression d'une liberté individuelle commandant toutes les autres.⁴⁶

The article comments on all the works made at the NFB⁴⁷ and states, under the heading "Morale", that the decision to work full-time or under the contract for however many films is the private concern of the filmmaker, whereas freedom of expression is everybody's concern. Directors who accept too many half measures and over too long a period delay indefinitely the moment when the words freedom of cinema expression could become a reality in Canada. Without discounting the NFB entirely, Lefebvre expresses his belief that the system should not ask more than it gives. Happily some can work comfortably within the system (Low, Koenig, Garceau, Dansereau, Guy L. Côté) but others (perhaps with greater lucidity) are not comfortable in the same circumstances. He names Jacques Godbout who works in the NFB, a federal system which he is entirely against but which he does not put himself out to denounce. Rumours of change at the Board have been heard over the years the article states but there have been no signs to substantiate the rumours.⁴⁸ He suggests:

46. Ibid., p. 4.

47. Ibid. Works by Brault, Carle, Godbout, Groulx, Jutra, Lamothe, Patry, Perron.

48. This page and the former are my very rough translation.

...mais n'est-il pas nécessaire d'adopter vis-à-vis de l'institution qui brime la liberté d'expression une attitude d'intransigeance radicale? N'est-il pas surtout nécessaire d'être intransigeant face à soi-même et de refuser les compromis qui n'ont rien apporté à ceux qui les ont acceptés?

Lefebvre suggests that the filmmakers who feel themselves bullied take action, perhaps striking or walking out en masse.

Est-ce trop leur demander que de mettre en jeu leur sécurité matérielle afin de faire profiter la liberté d'expression. Il faut risquer le tout pour le tout, au point où nous sommes, et non plus alimenter le fauve qui nous dévore, le régime qui nous diminue.... Si vous désirez travailler à l'ONF, faites-le; mais si vous voulez être libre à l'ONF et si vous ne l'êtes pas, agissez en conséquence. Nous savons très bien, à l'ONF, ce que nous voulons. Et nous ne voulons que les cinéastes d'ici soient purement et simplement des hommes qui disent ce qu'ils ont à dire. Et nous croyons que l'ONF ne permet pas à tous les cinéastes de devenir des hommes. Des vrais. Des hommes libres.⁴⁹

In 1969 an article appeared in Take One with another perspective on the NFB by Ronald Blumer which begins by reminding the reader that the NFB Headquarters in Montreal was a separatist target in 1966 at the time of the violence.⁵⁰ The article "NFB, Is This the End?" is a response to a government decision to cut the budget by 10% with threats of job losses. Blumer recalls Grierson who referred to the Board as "The eyes of Canada": "It will, through a national use of cinema, see Canada and see it whole, its people and its purposes."

Blumer continues: "The Board was created with the specific purpose of establishing and encouraging the growth of a specific Canadian identity...".

49. Objectif, no. 28, p. 17.

50. Take One, Vol. 2, no. 3, p. 12.

The success which the Film Board has achieved abroad, Blumer associates in part with the freedom at the Board - a freedom to document the social and political roots of the country without having to worry about other considerations: "Thus the NFB has been in a unique position, both financially and administratively, of being able to give the straight truth of what is happening". He quotes the Canadian Society of Filmmakers:

The values of the market place, good as they might be in some respects, are not the only values. There are things that cannot be bought there, and one of the most important of those is independence - intellectual, spiritual and even national.... Our fatal sickness is internal disunity and external domination."

Blumer's final words are: "What is at stake is Canada's survival as a nation," which comes close to echoing the words of Peter Desbarats.

In 1970 although in different circumstances, the National Film Board replaced the Church and the Censor in deciding what could be seen in Quebec and in Canada. ON EST AU COTON (Arcand, 1970), VINGT-QUATRE HEURES ET PLUS (Groulx, 1971-76), UN PAYS SANS BON SENS (Perrault, 1970), were not shown freely until after the election of the Parti Québécois in 1976.

Take One continued in publication but, sad to observe was the gradual lessening of its Canadian content. By the time Volume 3 neared completion, the particular quality acquired through its Canadian content and Canadian point of view had disappeared; it had become a film magazine with what is basically an American orientation with the occasional Canadian article.

Vol. 3, no. 2 has virtually no Canadian content beyond a passing comment on DUDDY KRAVITZ, (Kotcheff, 1974) a full-page advertisement for the National Film Board of Canada with a list of its many (16) successes⁵¹ at the Annual Canadian Film Awards of 1973. In addition there is a half page advertisement for 16 mm rentals for Marlin Motion Pictures Ltd. of Canada⁵² and a quarter of a page devoted to the Bellevue Pathé Film Lab.⁵³

Before slipping into the American orbit, it served a useful purpose in providing women with a platform from which to speak. In Take One Vol. 2, Kay Armatage covered the Venice Film Festival and reviewed MADELEINE IS... (Sylvia Spring, 1970) and volume 3, no. 2 was co-edited by Kay Armatage and Phyllis Plate with almost the entire number devoted to women's issues.

Through 1976, it continued to be supported by the Canada Council and the Council for the Arts of Ontario. It seems very likely that this continued support was directed to keeping space open for Canadian advertising purposes with the U.S. in mind, and to supporting those Canadian writers who wished to make use of its pages. It is difficult to imagine that a totally Canadian publication of this type would, during the 1969-76 period, have enough material to keep it going without having some appeal on the American market.

51. Ibid., Vol. 3, no. 12, p. 7.

52. Ibid., p. 6.

53. Ibid., p. 27.

In 1972, perhaps recognizing that the only influential Canadian periodical was no longer doing the job it had done formerly, the Canadian Society of Cinematographers launched Cinema Canada with its headquarters in Toronto. The designation itself suggests a protection against the fate of Take One and sets its origin clearly. From its founding in 1972 it focussed strongly on the Canadian film industry from the classified ads, technical news, information from the regions, letters to the editor to book reviews and film analysis. Its wide-ranging interests encouraged a wide-ranging readership.

Unlike Take One, the entire magazine was in English (although a regular feature was *les Québécois* or sometimes *Cinéma Québécois*). The whole of the Canadian cinema was covered, usually with substantial reviews but, with the use of only one language, Cinema Canada achieved a greater sense of unity.

The fourth number comes to terms with the hard facts of a Canadian publication. The editorial informs us that government funding of some kind is a pressing need and goes on:

We were naive when we started, and in terms of advertising revenue, we hoped for a much bigger response from the Canadian motion picture industry. It's as hard to separate a hard-nosed business man from his hard-earned dollar, as it is to get him thinking in terms of his responsibilities to support the creative arts of his country. (It really hurts to see double page spreads costing fifteen hundred dollars in the U.S. publications paid for by the same Toronto production facility, that had previously turned us away with a flat no. And our full page ads cost less than one-tenth that amount.)⁵⁴

54. Cinema Canada, Oct./Nov. 1972, no. 4, p. 5.

The response from the film community was interesting and encouraging: from Michael Snow, William Fruet, Paul Almond, Peter Carter, Peter Harcourt, Gerald Pratley. From Linda Goranson: "...I was surprised and shocked to discover there are some people working on Cinema Canada who have not been paid a salary..." From Clement Perron: "Cinema Canada provides an essential link between the public and les cinéastes. It's really pitiful that you have to face the survival problem. Vous n'êtes pas québécois! I am sure that the government will not let you down. Lâchez pas! Amitiés!"

The editorial of number 10/11 announces an independent status with government funding "even if only a quarter of what we asked for".

Through to 1976 and beyond, Cinema Canada continued to provide practical information. The articles were the most varied selection to appear in any periodical covered in this thesis.

In the seventies, Sandra Gathercole announced that we were asking the wrong questions about the Canadian cinema. Her article was followed by many more on the subject and in most likelihood explained for the first time to many readers exactly what the situation of the Canadian Cinema was.

CONCLUSION

The gap between the 1950 Découpages and the 1976 Cinéma Québec represented social change. It was enormous. That the change was achieved peacefully was a result of a process of continuous and insistent pressure generated within the province of Québec. Among the people who agitated for radical change were many of the Quebec filmmakers and writers. They expressed themselves clearly and openly in a confrontation aimed at dismantling what they considered to be outdated and oppressive structures which were held in place by the defending forces of the status quo.

Between the English language periodicals Take One of 1966 and Cinema Canada of 1976 there was also a gap. No great confrontation had occurred but Take One had slipped out of the Canadian orbit to become virtually an American film periodical and Cinema Canada had taken over as the English speaking Canadian film periodical. In addition, over this ten year period between 1966 and 1976, there had been the dawning realization by many English Canadians (and probably some French Canadians) that the Canadian film industry was dominated both economically and culturally by a foreign power and, in relation to the cinema, a not too friendly power.

The situations in French and English Canada were different but both were moving towards a determination to make changes. Such was the mood of the 1960's.

In Quebec a number of groups began to come together including those which gathered around the film periodicals. In these circles, film often acted as the catalyst and the printed word carried the film to the level of debate where issues were hotly contested in the time of "la prise de parole".

In English Canada there was also in a sense "une prise de parole" as the anglophone film periodicals became a source of information for a public which was beginning to take an interest in its own film industry, and as matters which had been long buried in institutions became public knowledge.

The situations in Quebec and English Canada arose from different concerns but can be seen as parallel and related to one another. The situation in Quebec was undoubtedly felt more acutely than in English Canada as a consequence of the close proximity of what was perceived to be the restrictive national (Canadian) structures (English in concept) which impeded both individual and collective progress towards an indigenous self-expression. A case in point is the NFB where, as Jean-Pierre Lefebvre stated, Quebec filmmakers experienced great, sometimes too great, difficulty in containing themselves within Canadian guidelines while attempting to respond to their own creativity according to a film concept which was not their own in the service of a concept of country which they did not share.

For the Quebec filmmakers and film commentators, the immediately felt restrictions of the 1960s and the early 1970s arose from the controlling forces of the NFB and the Quebec Catholic Church, two institutions with different aims but similar characteristics.

In English Canada its own felt source of oppression was the United States, and in expressing this, in its own view it spoke for all of Canada. The 1960s and the early 1970s was a time of the pursuit of the idea of 'Canadian', of which American domination was a significant part, all too clearly exemplified in the state of the Canadian cinema. The spread of information relating to the Canadian industry during the 1960s and 1970s produced a number of groups of people who, with the idea of justice as their guiding principle, pressured the Canadian government to pressure the American government for a better deal. Thus in English Canada resistance to oppression was directed towards the United States.

In Quebec, as the Quiet Revolution moved into the more politically oriented 1970s and as escape from the federal system by way of the Parti Québécois began to be perceived as a possibility, the spectre of the United States as the oppressor loomed larger in the consciousness of Quebec. The comment on America by the young anonymous ciné-club student from Montreal in 1950 had lost none of its relevance, at least in terms of content. The passage of time and the course of events, however, had generated change. The passive and courageous acceptance of life as a Christian journey of struggle against evil and moral temptation lessened as plain speaking in words and images came into vogue. Perhaps the difference in those two modes of expression, the passive and the active, represents the measure of the change brought about in the years between 1950 and 1970 in Quebec.

In English Canada the change was less dramatic. Unlike the Quebec experience, the idea of escape from the economic and cultural oppression of the United States was never seen as a real possibility. The most

that could be expected was some amelioration of the situation. Consequently English Canada never experienced that sense of liberation which, for a short time, was the joyful experience of a not inconsiderable number of les Québécois.

Nevertheless between Take One in 1966 and Cinema Canada in 1976 there was also a difference in the mode of expression and though again it was not as dramatic a change as in Quebec, it was not dissimilar. The articles in Cinema Canada in 1976 were beginning to be written with greater assurance and awareness of the needs of a Canadian industry, which was important to the economy and culture of Canada. There was of course the example of Take One as a reminder of an ever-present danger.

During the 1950 to 1975 years the film periodicals played their part in revising the concept of Canadian; the line of intervention is clear and the part they played is not inconsiderable.

One of the most important contributions was undoubtedly their existence and the fact that their writers carried the impact of film beyond the immediate viewing experience.

Découpages was the first Canadian periodical to appear in the 1950 to 1976 period.

It was undoubtedly an attempt through an intervention to establish (and to sell) a position of stability, related to and supported by already existing Catholic values which, in the new and uncertain developing media age were intended to be the touchstone for the individual response to film. Découpages in fact did the groundwork for virtually all the periodicals that came after, making reference either explicitly or implicitly to problems which, in relation to the United States,

plague the Canadian film industry to this day. It was essentially a communication from the Church although ostensibly originating with the students of a Montreal ciné-club. The ideological position which it established was taken over and maintained by Séquences which followed and which was later contested in the 1960s and 1970s by Objectif, Cinéma Québec and Champ Libre.

In 1955, Séquences moved into the space vacated by Découpages, a space which it already controlled owing to the relationship of the Church in Quebec to the structures of education. However, while all the established disciplines were well considered and adapted to Catholic teaching, the world of the cinema was a free-floating phenomenon threatening to every institution in existence.

In 1955 as a beginning, Séquences went back to basics with elementary lessons on the film aimed at the college student. Catholic principles and values were injected from the basic level in an attempt to prepare the viewer for the viewing experience, alerting him (it was essentially patriarchal) to its dangers. In a very minimal way it approached the deconstruction of the star system.

The Séquences approach necessitated the close examination of certain aspects of film construction as it related to those elements of most concern to the Church: the Christian life, materialist values, moral rectitude. It was an approach which in the 1960s backfired. Ironically, it prepared Denys Arcand, Jacques Leduc, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, and a number of other young Quebec filmmakers for the challenge to the pre-Quiet Revolution society which contributed to its change.

In 1955, Images made its tentative intervention offering a perspective on the cinema and film analysis which was divested of moralistic judgements, a position which was a move away from the religious authority of the Church. It was the most elegant of all the periodicals considered in this paper exemplifying its aesthetic awareness with a first appeal to the senses. Perhaps its red cover should have been a warning to the establishment of what was to follow. Images leaves one with the feeling that having taken up a new, non-moralizing position in relation to films, it was searching for a direction and a sense of purpose. Its importance rests on the fact that it was the first periodical to attempt to take an opposing stand and in doing so it left the door open for Objectif.

During the seven years of its existence Objectif produced film comment which not only responded to the time but was invigorated by the active presence of collaborators who were engaged in the filmmaking process. Thus film and film comment were brought into a close association. The films that were made in the early and mid-1960s belong peculiarly to their time and were characterized by Michel Houle, not as reflectors of that time but as instigators of the movement to change.¹

Objectif was strongly committed to aesthetic and auteurist values. The early years of the periodical reflect this orientation and it is only towards the end of its existence that Quebec films as social criticism are reviewed.

1. Michel Houle, in Self-Portrait, p. 168.

Objectif is a periodical which is nothing if not clear. From its first editorial its position is stated as it rejects the Church hierarchy (though not necessarily religious belief) in favour of a faith in the masters of the classic cinema and the integrity of their work. Beginning from a strong position, which is perhaps even closed in some ways, during the course of its publication, we can see a definite growth. From the youthful enthusiasm of the early numbers, it leaves the reader in the final issue with sober thoughts of the changes that had taken place in the film environment since the days of CITIZEN KANE (1941) and of the complexities of living and working in the 1967 climate when all was in a state of flux as technical developments followed hard and fast.

The relationship between Objectif and Séquences epitomized the larger conflict in Quebec as the former periodical criticized everything that it perceived as holding Quebec in its colonized position. In some circles in Quebec it was a very popular view.

Objectif was a challenging periodical which animated its readers and, perhaps more than any of the others represented the drive and energy that were needed for "la prise de parole". During its seven years of publication it took a clear position on all major issues connected with the cinema. In its outspoken comment and its refusal to be intimidated by past traditions, it allowed people to see possibilities they had not seen before and to begin to visualize a different future for Quebec.

It seems clear from reading Objectif that its interventionary intention was to liberate Quebec from as many of the colonizing agents as possible, adding its voice to the other voices that were demanding change.

Objectif filled an important and useful role in the Quebec search for identity. L'Ecran attempted to follow its example as an independent review but whatever political views it held were overshadowed by its concern for the quality film and the work of art which are inevitably associated with bourgeois values. In spite of interesting writers, only three numbers were published; it seems likely that it simply appeared at the wrong time.

Take One was a successfully launched publication which appeared in 1966 at a propitious moment when the identity question was being widely discussed. Whether purely as a business venture to take advantage of the publicity associated with the coming Expo 67 and the Canadian Centennial or consciously to publicize the Canadian film industry, which then as always was in need of support, Take One filled a void during the years in which it was able to function as a Canadian periodical. It made a valiant attempt to reflect in its format both the regional nature of much Canadian film production of the period and also to acknowledge the concept of two languages, two cultures, and two cinemas. It is difficult to imagine that the amount of French material it contained was enough to attract the francophone reader. In fact it may have had an overall detrimental effect as it failed to present a solidly anglophone front and was a reminder of unresolved problems. Nevertheless it was a gesture which may have been appreciated by the Canada Council and the

Ontario Council for the Arts and in no way detracts from its timely role in publicizing the Canadian Cinema and arousing an interest in its readers in the future of that cinema. It was a beginning and its fate demonstrated very clearly that economic and cultural domination were a practical possibility. Perhaps as time passed there was simply not enough interesting material to support a magazine in the way that Take One had been visualized.

Champ Libre records a link between Objectif, Cinéma Québec and itself as it gives details of a meeting held to organize the publication of a periodical to fill the space left by the disappearance of Objectif. During the organization two distinct groups were identified, two political positions identified and two periodicals set afoot.

Champ Libre (according to its account) served a useful purpose in forcing the Cinéma Québec group to clarify its position and to achieve a unity of aim which led to the formation of a lively, concentrated, nationalist party leaning heavily in the direction of the Parti Québécois.

Champ Libre itself already had a committed position as independent and Marxist which offered yet another choice for the film reader with similar leftist views and an interest in the union movement. It did not survive in its original format and it seems likely that it was too theoretical for the average worker. Nevertheless in the 1970s when the question of identity was no longer quite so pressing, political affiliation became important as the competition for power continued.

Cinéma Québec preceded Champ Libre by a few months and presented a Quebec nationalist position consistent with, although not necessarily committed to, the Parti Québécois. Its unique feature is that in resisting the dominance of the United States and of English Canada, it reaches out in sympathy to colonized people with whom it feels it shares a life condition, extending this to the idea of marginality. This can be seen as a genuinely humanitarian gesture which at the same time adds to the positive identity of les Québécois placing them in a world context. At the same time, by association it is a constant reminder that its view of Quebec is that of an oppressed people.

Cinéma Québec consciously appealed to the former readers of Objectif - one of the opening statements is written by Jean-Pierre Lefebvre - but providing a periodical that is more politically partisan than Objectif. Cinema Canada associated itself solidly with the land in its name, asserting the existence of a Canadian cinema. In the 1970s, with a large number of substantial articles on the Canadian Cinema - its technology, industry, culture, history - it gathered information from every corner of the film world and dispersed it, thereby raising the knowledge and interest of its readers. Supported by government funding, its continued existence was of practical value to everyone associated with Canadian film. Cinema Canada, more than any of the other periodicals examined, conveys the many aspects of film in a historical, economic, industrial and cultural context. During this time, as periodicals came and went, Séquences continued to appear on schedule under the direction of Léo Bonneville with its coverage of domestic and foreign films. It continued to support what it deemed appropriate from

a traditional Catholic point of view. As the Church survived with loss of power and influence, so did Séquences.

The line of sequential progress is there in the film periodicals as they moved step by step, gradually changing the perceptions of their readers and sometimes their own. No single move could have covered the same ground whether in the Quebec situation or in English Canada; the intervals and overlaps were essential to the sometimes noisy but essentially peaceful transitions.

The dissenting positions taken by Images and Objectif gathered momentum with Cinéma Québec. In 1976 the success of the Parti Québécois was in some measure assisted by the animating function of Cinéma Québec.

Cinema Canada, following Take One, animated the cinema community, arming it with information for an understanding of the position of the domestic film industry preparing it for one of the periodic pushes for a better deal with the United States.

Which is why, in 1976, René Lévesque had the support of the majority of les Québécois in his victory and, in the same year, the film community was able to convince John Roberts to make a determined bid for a more enlightened film policy. However the moments of resolve passed.

The potentially fatal flaw continued to exist as did the regions and the two societies. In terms of culture, change had been brought about with the contributions of the film periodicals.

And American domination continued.

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Contributors include: Gilles Ste-Marie, Michel Brault, Fernand Cadieux, Jacques Giraldeau, Pierre Juneau, Marc Lalonde, Gabriel Breton, Claude Sylvestre.

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Chief contributor: Léo Bonneville. Others include Patrick Schupp, Léo Cloutier, Janick Beaulieu, André Leroux, Gilles Blain.

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4 numbers published.

Contributors include: Gabriel Breton, Fernand Cadieux, Rock Demers, Monique Doucet, Jean Fortier, Guy Joussemet, Arthur Lamothe, Jacques Lamoureux.

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Contributors include: Robert Daudelin, Michel Patenaude, Pierre Hébert, Jacques Lamoureux, Jacques Leduc, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Claude Ménard, Claude Nadon, Jean-Claude Pilon, Christian Rasselet, Michel Régnier, Pierre Théberte.

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10 numbers published annually.

Contributors include: Jean-Pierre Tadros, Richard Guay, Jean Chabot, Carol Faucher, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Gilles Marsolais, Pierre Vallières.

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