

COMMEMORATING QUEBEC: NATION, RACE, AND MEMORY

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Abstract
COMMEMORATING QUEBEC: NATION, RACE, AND MEMORY

PhD Dissertation
Darryl Leroux
Carleton University

This study focuses on discourses of nation, race, and memory in present-day Québec society through an analysis of the celebrations of Québec City's 400th anniversary in 2008. My analyses locate these commemorative practices within the broader context of a perceived crisis of Québécois identity. I identify the modes through which difference was discursively constructed in relation to culture, race, and gender in Québec. I then adopt a theoretical framework that examines the relationship among public commemoration, nation-building, and subject formation in Québec. Specifically, I examine the high-profile *Rencontres* spectacle, several museum and art exhibits, a theatrical production, a number of musical concerts, a variety of policy documents, various protocol events, and the Québec nationalist and anarchist protest movements in relation to each other.

I argue that the Québec 400 is best understood as a set of subject-making practices that sought to define an ideal Québécois subject through norms of belonging that prioritized French colonial heroes and subjugated indigenous and non-French Others. Commemorative practices at the Québec 400 celebrations articulated the liberal discourse of cultural pluralism common in Western liberal democracies post-1980s in ways that effectively positioned the normative Québécois subject as the enlightened, generous, and reasoned patron of cultural diversity. Commemoration also operated as a creative, festive, spectacularized, and thus seemingly innocent mode of constituting national subjects in 21st century Québec, relying as it did on territoriality and kinship relations to interpellate subjects into a national project in Québec and to locate them in a hierarchy of

belonging. The Québec 400 was also characterized by the performance of intimate relationships between France and Québec throughout 2008. The transnational dimensions of the normative Québécois subject were premised on a shared understanding of the colonial-settler project in Québec, organized around notions of whiteness, civilization, and territory.

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Preface

Invitations

I was once told that a preface was meant to provide readers with a “hook,” piquing their interest in the page-turner-to-come. This being an academic study, I hold no pretensions of the coming pages compelling anybody to stay up late out of a pure desire to read its flowing narrative. Instead of treating this as my hook, I’ll use it as the one place in my dissertation where I can write colloquially, without referencing the pantheon of theorists and luminaries I hold in such high esteem. The aesthetics of writing are as important to me as its content, yet I find the limits of academic freedom in this regard lacking.

Quite noticeably, I am often warmly invited into particular national spaces, especially those that put a premium on the narrative of the two founding nations of Canada; the one that tells us that Canada is founded by competing English and French colonists. The narrative, in other words, that makes “Canada” possible in the first place. These invitations hold a certain amount of currency for me. They make sense in a way they do not to many others, since they are imagined for people like me: white, male, nominally French-Canadian. They somehow affirm who I am and how strongly I stand in the nation. The actual spaces are most-often presented as neutral spaces that embody the national spirit – who *we* are and what *we* stand for. Masked deep in this narrative, haunting its contours and threatening to spill over its very edges, is the racialized violence and displacement that is at the very basis of the national project.

The fact that these invitations were not visible to me beforehand, and still undoubtedly are not to some extent, perhaps speaks best to the position people like me are given in the national imaginary. The invitation, politely uttered, affectionately

enacted, is compelling. After all, who doesn't want to belong? But the need to unsettle the silences, the relationships put into motion through the formulation and reception of the invitation is pressing, simply because the inequalities produced in it overflow the social body.

Breaking from the abstract imaginary, I believe the following examples illustrate my point. During my time in Ontario-based French-language school systems, where nationalist ideologies around the survival of French-Canadians within Canada were of primordial importance, hardly a day would go by where a teacher, administrator, or fellow student would not remind me of our privileged, and yet perilous place in the nation.

First, during the 1995 Québec referendum campaign, my high school, one of the oldest and largest French-language schools in Ontario in one of the largest French-speaking communities in the province (Ottawa, specifically, the suburb of Orléans), was a hotbed for stories about saving the nation. In this hyper-anxious environment, school administrators, teachers, and student leaders encouraged the student body to attend referendum-day rallies in Montréal as a show of support for the nation, but particularly, of the white, French-Canadian place in the nation. School administrators even went so far as to declare amnesty for any student not in class that day, and gave out information about the network of free transportation available for the trip. The need for parental consent forms was temporarily waived as a way to further induce students to make the trip down the 417. Like many fellow students, I took advantage of the call to assert my place in the national fabric with enthusiasm, and attended the rally, standing next to some

friends from school and by some strange coincidence, the newly-elected Conservative Premier of Ontario, Mike Harris.

My best friend at the time has a tell-tale souvenir from the event: a photo of her and I, draped in a Canadian flag, waving other little Canadian flags, my face painted with a maple leaf, standing amongst throngs of people from Ottawa on a downtown Montréal street. To this day I can't figure out what street we stood on, partly because it was my first-ever trip to Montréal. At the time, I could not understand in the least why so many residents of Montréal were hostile towards us, even going so far as taunting us as we pulled in on the bus: the hostility was everywhere palpable. My cluelessness is not very surprising to me now given the education I was receiving then. The next day at school, the principal announced the close results of the referendum, informing students that the country had averted disaster, especially for French-Canadians like *us*. The lesson was not lost on many students, especially those like me, as we were reminded that our place in the nation was central to the ongoing nation-building project. In this case, I very enthusiastically accepted the invitation. I fully belonged and believed in the national narrative that placed me as its centre.

Second, an even more momentous event for the French-speaking population of Ontario took place in 1997, when the government of Ontario planned to close the only primarily French-speaking teaching hospital in the province, the Montfort Hospital in the largely francophone east-end of Ottawa, as part of its neo-liberal economic policies. The hospital had long been a proud symbol of the “institutional completeness” of the French-Canadian community in Ontario. The ensuing political struggle gave rise to what is now mythologized as the “Crise Montfort” [Montfort Crisis], when thousands of

francophones in the region and from all parts of Ontario protested the hospital's closure, thereby re-asserting our central place in the nation. This was notably true at my high school, where hundreds of students organized around this issue, often referring to it as being part of "la cause" [the cause], a reference to a package of historical positions taken by French Canadians to defend linguistic, religious, and cultural rights. In the end, the closure was temporarily blocked by a lower court decision, and eventually the provincial government backed down.

Again, the results brought on a celebration of mythic proportions in French-speaking Eastern Ontario, including at my school, and cemented this event in the annals of Franco-Ontarian history, thereby ensuring it would live on as a warning of the dangers set to unravel the nation, or at the very least, white francophones' central place in its fabric. Furthermore, the mythical status of the *Crise Montfort* came home to me during the summer of 2004 at a chance visit to the newest French-language public high school in Ontario in the far east end of Ottawa, which was named after the woman who was seen as the leader of the Montfort Hospital mobilization and who is now treated as a hero for her efforts, Gisèle Lalonde. In this second case, I ambivalently accepted the invitation, in the sense that I followed the story and discussed it with friends. Yet, I also regularly resisted Franco-Ontarian narratives such as these, since I only ever lived in French at school. As such, I did not readily identify with the emergent Franco-Ontarian story, one that insisted that *our* collective identity depended on speaking French, something I did only under institutional constraints. In some ways, I saw it as an impediment to the Canadian national story of the multicultural mosaic.

Having decided to leave the French-language social environment so familiar to my childhood to attend university, I encounter the particular French-Canadian invitation to the nation less and less. Yet, the invitations continue to be sent to me with surprising efficiency. One more example will suffice, before I move to my first chapter.

While I was finishing my MA thesis I had a particularly troubling and insightful encounter on a Toronto streetcar. I entered the train at Spadina Station, just north of the University of Toronto. Heading south towards the heart of Chinatown, I sat in the middle of the nearly-empty car, next to a window. At College Street, where Chinatown meets Little Italy, an older woman hopped aboard and sat next to me. I smiled warmly and she reciprocated with a friendly pat on my shoulder. We exchanged pleasantries. Mostly about the weather: the moist, humid heat was particularly oppressive on this day. As the car ambled on its path oblivious to our conversation, it made two stops in the middle of Chinatown. At the sight of a growing number of people, mostly East-Asian, entering the train, the woman turned to me, and in her halting English spoke in a hushed tone: “You know, those people are everywhere. It wasn’t like this when I got here 30 years ago.” Dumbfounded, I began to fidget noticeably. “This isn’t Canada. What happened to Canada?” I mistook hers as a rhetorical question, but she stared at me intently, waiting for a response. I think my eyes might have told her enough about how I felt about her sudden outburst, because she suddenly looked away. The most I could muster on this day was a rather subdued, “Well, I don’t feel that way...” I trailed off and felt the heat rise throughout my body. Undeterred, she mumbled something about living in her house for 30 years and about Greece and about things changing. No matter, our friendly conversation was over. She got up at the next stop and left the streetcar. In some ways, I

was relieved, but in more important ways, I was deeply perturbed. How did this woman, quite obviously a recent immigrant to Canada herself, come to see herself as Canadian, as opposed to the other streetcar riders in Chinatown? And why in the world did she think I would tolerate and perhaps even concur with her analysis? Though I may never know, one thing became clear: I was being invited, as a fellow *white* Canadian, into a story of white supremacy and belonging in the nation.

These types of invitations (and much more material signs of white supremacy) happen on a daily basis, yet it was only on this particular day that the irony and irrationality of these moves came into full focus for me. After all, what in the world did I have in common with this woman on the streetcar, except a shared belonging to whiteness and by association, to the nation? In this third case, I mostly rejected the invitation, but such invitations nonetheless continue to shape my everyday experience of Canada. I can think of countless such interpellations in the past four years: the openly anti-Mohawk rantings of a fellow bus passenger in Montréal; the anti-black “jokes” one of my friends insists on making in my presence; the anti-Chinese musings of one of my friends in Vancouver; or much more commonly, the liberal colour-blind racism so fashionable in Canada. In all cases, the comments are inevitably prefaced/ followed by a knowing, ‘You understand, don’t you?’ With the wink of an eye I am invited into the family of white supremacy, whether I’m in a French-speaking social milieu in Québec or Ontario or an English-speaking environment in the rest of Canada. This study is an academic response to such invitations, with a focus on the particular ways in which they operate in Québec. It is an attempt to understand what conditions make these invitations

possible and how they call particular subjects in through a close analysis of a particular set of events. If you have made it this far, pull up a chair, you're only just beginning.

Chapter One

Introduction

This is a study on nation, race, and memory in present-day Québec society through an analysis of the celebrations of Québec City's 400th anniversary in 2008. Specifically, I examine the making of *national* subjects through the Québec 400. I do so by observing, describing, and then analyzing a wide variety of events in Québec City in 2008, including concerts, speeches, theatre, museum and art exhibits, and street-level interactions. Most of these events unabashedly celebrate Québec's founding, though some also protest the very idea of celebrating the past. I also examine a number of Québec 400 events sponsored by France or French institutions, both in France and in Québec, in order to direct our attention to the *transnational* dimensions of subject formation, organized around notions of whiteness, civilization, and territory. My focus is not on individuals and their motives or how they may take up various subject positions; rather, it is on the ideological, symbolic, and material conditions that make particular subject positions possible. Through this project, carefully chosen to reflect a popular series of public events, I enter into discussions and debates about the politics of race in Québec and Canada.

I locate my work within studies of Canada and Québec as *settler societies*, in which the racial order of society goes remarkably unnoticed, or perhaps more appropriately, where it cannot be politely uttered. While there is some controversy over what precisely constitutes a settler society (see Stasiulis and Jhappan, 1995; Razack, 2002 for opposing views), Ronald Weitzer (1990) defines settler societies as “founded by migrant groups who assume a super-ordinate position vis-à-vis native inhabitants and

build self-sustaining states that are *de jure* or *de facto* independent from the mother country and organized around settlers' political domination over the indigenous population" (p.24). Yet, as Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis (1995) claim, there is no inherent coherence in the settler project, as is apparent in the Canada-Québec political divide: "Unity within the dominant or settler population is...never guaranteed given the prevalence of class, ethnic, religious and other divisions" (p.7). The tensions in the Canadian nation-building project are numerous, and perhaps no more apparent than in the mid-20th century rise of Québécois nationalism.

My study focuses on the making of the ideal Québec subject in relation to race in Québec, a society where the history of settler colonialism and current exclusionary practices on the part of the majority French-Canadian population are often forgiven or forgotten because of Québec's own historical experience with British colonialism. To be sure, I do not believe that individuals in Québec are either more or less exclusionary and/or racist than individuals in the rest of Canada. Nevertheless, I share the conviction, along with many other scholars of Québec (see Salée, 2007; Mahrouse, 2008; Cooper, 2008; Mookerjee, 2009), that an understanding of how the normative Québécois national subject is defined in relation to indigenous and/or non-French Others is a critical question to be confronted, not one to be avoided out of politeness, sympathy, or guilt.

The critical impetus for my study does not presuppose that I am against commemoration or remembering the past. On the contrary, I focus on a particular instance of commemoration as a productive force deeply enmeshed in power relations, one that positions subjects according to processes of racialization. This approach certainly punctures the aura of truthfulness that surrounds commemorative practices.

Following the research goals I introduce in this chapter, I invariably begin from a starting point that places race and racialization at the centre of my research problematic. Despite my approach, I could not predict the particular set of subject positions and/or ways in which race enters into the commemorations. In many cases, I was consistently surprised by the discursive possibilities the Québec 400 produced. By discursive “possibilities” I mean the complex and often contradictory discourses and representations that make specific subject positions *possible*. In this dissertation I do not make claims about the reception of these discourses by individuals or groups of individuals. Instead, I examine the *production* of discourses and subject positions. My study adopts three main analytical threads in order to respond to the varied ways in which the Québec 400 celebrates the past.

First, following my discussion of the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences (Bouchard-Taylor Commission) that took place throughout 2007 and 2008, I identify the politics of cultural pluralism as a central problematic. In particular, I examine how the liberal discourse of cultural pluralism, common in Western liberal democracies post-1980s, is mobilized in the Québec 400 celebrations. I do so in order to examine how *difference* is discursively constructed in relation to race and culture in Québec. The politics of cultural pluralism are front and centre in Québec, as they have been in Canada, Britain, France, Holland, and the United States over the course of the past two decades. My study focuses on the specificity of the politics of diversity in Québec, providing a set of salient analytical questions and considerations.

Second, leading out from my discussion of the politics of cultural pluralism, another central thread of my project is in examining the constitution of national subjects. Commemorative practices at the Québec 400 celebrations were articulated in ways that effectively positioned the normative Québécois subject as the enlightened, generous, and reasoned patron of cultural diversity. Commemoration also operates as a creative, festive, spectacularized, and thus seemingly innocent mode of constituting national subjects in 21st century Québec, relying as it does on territoriality and kinship relations to interpellate subjects into a national project in Québec and to locate them in a hierarchy of belonging. I productively examine many of these strategies in the following pages and thereby contribute to an understanding of Québec nationalisms.

Third, the Québécois *national* subject I had originally conceived was opened up to competing readings once I recognized that the relationship between France and Québec was on full display during the Québec 400. In this case, limiting my analysis to a close reading of the *national* in relation to a more conventional understanding of the nation-state was no longer analytically sound. Following my discussion of the politics of cultural pluralism in liberal democracies, the *transnational* dimensions of the national subject are a major analytical consideration throughout my study. I call this the French-Québec *transnational* subject position, one that relies on a shared understanding of the colonial-settler project in Québec and France.

Using the case of the Québec 400 celebrations, I demonstrate how the dominant mode of Québec nationalism, one that by definition searches for a distinctive *national* community, is articulated through a number of different strategies, such as unique techniques of ethno-cultural management, manifestations of historical tropes, and kinship

and territorial ties with France. These processes, all on display during the Québec 400, (re)produce a hierarchy of belonging in Québec quite common in Western liberal democracies, one that very generally favours white settlers in its vision of the national community. In other words, the main argument in my study is that the Québec 400 is best understood as a set of subject-making practices that seek to define an ideal Québécois national subject through norms of belonging that glorify and prioritize French colonial heroes and subjugate and marginalize indigenous and/or non-French Others.

Before I continue with my discussion, it is important to provide a brief overview of the Québec 400, in order to contextualize much of the discussion that takes place in the following pages and to locate the reader in political debates over the place of Québec in Canada.

Why Study the Québec 400?

The Québec 300

This study is influenced by the scholarly work of historians H.V. Nelles and Ronald Rudin, each of who wrote an important historical monograph on the tercentenary celebrations in Québec City in 1908. Nelles' book, *The Art of Nation-Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec's Tercentenary* (1999) and Rudin's book, *Founding Fathers: The Celebration of Champlain and Laval in the Streets of Quebec, 1878-1908* (2003), are based largely on archival materials from the period. Both explained in lucid terms the many political machinations behind the tercentenary commemorative events. The facet of the tercentenary events that strikes me most now *after* having witnessed the events in 2008 is the remarkable *British* flavour of the proceedings a century ago. The

Prince of Wales, soon to become King George V, was the guest of honour, the Governor-General of Canada, Earl Grey, was one of the key organizers of the events, and the English-Canadian elite traveled en masse from “Upper Canada” by train to attend. Despite the fevered resistance provided by various French-Canadian nationalist organizations to the British imperial encroachment leading up the events, including among them, the *Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste* and the *Garde Indépendante Champlain*, the Prince of Wales was without a doubt the key figure during the events, eliciting nary a protest during his entire stay in the capital (Rudin, 2003, p.196-99). The Prince’s arrival at the Port of Québec on July 22, 1908, was marked by booming cannons and pealing church and city bells, yet Samuel de Champlain’s reconstructed arrival the following day, chosen specifically to follow in the Prince’s footsteps, was welcomed by a somber silence made markedly more pedestrian by the previous day’s grandeur (Rudin, 2003, p.199-202). Following his observations about the ways in which the tercentenary *reflected* the social world around it, Nelles (1999) has described the 1908 commemorations as “politics by other means” that “turned social structure into performance art” (p.12).

Needless to say, none of the royal pomp of 1908 occurred 100 years later in 2008. In fact, the mere mention of Queen Elizabeth’s presence in 2008 brought forth condemnation from far and wide within Québec (see Johnson, 2007; Presse canadienne, 2007; St-Gilles, 2007), raising the specter of her last visit to Québec City in 1964, memorialized as *le Samedi de la matraque* [Truncheon Saturday] in Québec nationalist circles, because of the violent arrests that took place during the widespread protests. Also, the trains streaming in from Upper Canada at the tercentenary were replaced with charter buses carrying tourists from the United States, Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom and

France arriving mostly from the suburban airport. Without having read these two important studies, I would have struggled to articulate the historical and political specificity of the events in 2008, especially the particularity of the French presence. Indeed, the work of Nelles and Rudin reminds us that historically the Québécois subject has been produced against an English-Canadian outsider *and* an excluded racialized Other, a process that is unique to Québec. The next section introduces the Québec 400.

The Québec 400

Québec City marked the 400th anniversary of its founding by Samuel de Champlain throughout 2008. What I am calling the Québec 400 encompasses the wide array of commemorative events meant to celebrate the founding of Québec. The precise nature of these events will become clear in the following pages. Beyond the events, by *Québec 400* I also signify the divergent discourses producing knowledge about Québec's past, and especially, Québec's relationship with other nations and/or with racialized Others during the events. My methodological choices will become clearer in the last section of this chapter, but for now, it is important to note that by *Québec 400* I mean the series of events that took place in 2008 and the broad discourses about these events. I now offer a brief history of the planning and organization of the events.

In 1998, mayor Jean-Paul L'Allier inaugurated the Québec 400 as a way to remedy the Canadian Olympic Committee's selection of Vancouver-Whistler as Canada's representative for the 2010 Winter Olympics over Québec City. In March 2000 at city hall, Québec Premier Lucien Bouchard presented L'Allier with \$2.1 million towards the financing of an organization to plan Québec's 400th anniversary celebrations. Along with

the money, the Government of Québec identified three main objectives for the celebrations: “a) Give the population access to the St-Lawrence River through the construction of a coastal promenade, worthy of a national capital; b) Revitalize the St-Charles River; and c) Invite France to make a significant gift for the 400th, one that recalls historical links, marks the territory and contributes to weaving a new France-Québec relationship” (Lavallée, 2009, my translation). The first two objectives were infrastructure projects undertaken shortly thereafter by the Government of Québec and finished just in time for the events in 2008, while the third came together more slowly, since it involved many different governments, including French, Canadian, Québécois and municipal representatives and policies. The end result of the third objective, that is, weaving together a new France-Québec relationship, is the main focus of chapters 5 and 6. One can see in the initial objectives the *indépendantiste* credentials of premier Bouchard and mayor L’Allier, focusing as they do on the *national* capital and Québec’s international links with France.

L’Allier expressed this well when he wrote an open letter to the people of France, a letter that appeared in many of Québec’s French-language newspapers. In the letter, which ran September 8, 2003, L’Allier shares his vision for a monumental contribution from France in 2008:

The City of Québec wants to offer France a unique site to commemorate...in Québec and the Americas, not only our original and irreversible settlement, but especially after four centuries, the development of a shared language and culture.... We need a strong act that will symbolize the energy and pride that has no equal anywhere else. The presence of France at our sides, at this time more than any other, would be a great honour and source of pride and evidence of friendship and solidarity to Québec and its capital. France now has an exceptional opportunity to share its pride and friendship to the people of Québec and its capital, by pledging an incomparable monument that would have the

same importance and reach than the greatest monuments of Paris.
("Plaidoyer," 2003, my translation)

With the seed money and L'Allier's plans, the city eventually created the *Société du 400e anniversaire de Québec* (Société 400), an autonomous, non-profit organization with the purpose of planning and organizing the events in 2008. Roland Arpin, the original President of the organization and former director of the *Musée de la civilisation du Québec*, had this to say about the Société 400's mandate in March 2003:

What exactly are we celebrating in 2008 in Québec? The birth of Québec and the definitive implantation of the French reality in the Americas....Forget the miserable story of a people born without bread. *Les Québécois*, those from the capital and the province, distinguish themselves on all the world's scenes, both literally and symbolically, thanks to their intelligence....To live in Québec at this moment is exceptional and unique....We must realize we are good. (Moreault and Mathieu, 2003, p. A12, my translation)

From the beginning, the Société 400's main *raison d'être* was to bring Québécois subjects together around shared symbols of belonging. This was a celebration of *national* importance, as Arpin's comments about the "French reality in the Americas" suggest. It was conceived as a commemoration of a *people* worthy of celebration. Arpin's statement directs us to a key problematic of my project: the study of how various techniques are used to interpellate Québécois subjects into a story about ideas, values, and beliefs unique to them. In other words, what makes the normative Québécois subject position "good," as Arpin suggests?

The original thrust of the celebrations was put into question once Jean Charest, leader of the federalist Liberal Party of Québec, replaced Lucien Bouchard as Premier of Québec in 2003. The move from a strongly *indépendantiste* to federalist Premier necessarily invited closer rapport with the federal government, which eventually became

a major donor with the ascendance of Liberal Paul Martin as Prime Minister in November 2003 (Lavallée, 2009). Once federalist Andrée Boucher replaced L'Allier as mayor of Québec in 2005, the Société 400's federalist pedigree was ensured (Beaumier, 2008). With these changes, the Société 400's mandate also changed considerably, eventually leading to Arpin's high-profile resignation in March 2004, when he stated, "The remaining years before 2008 will be years of conflict among the federal, provincial, and municipal [governments]. I don't feel like living this. There are some battles we just don't want to fight" (Lemieux, 2004, my translation). From celebrating the foundation *du* Québec (nation and people) to celebrating the foundation *de* Québec (city), the symbolism behind the Québec 400 shifted markedly.

These shifts in scale, from municipal to national celebrations, necessarily produce very different types of commemorations. As Mariana Valverde (2010) has suggested, beyond marking quantitative aspects such as the differences in dimensions between cities and nations, scalar shifts also work as qualitative markers that act as technologies to gain epistemological advantages, as well as political and even ethical advantages. For instance, celebrating a city seems much more innocent than celebrating the more outwardly violent colonial conquest represented by the founding of European civilization in the Americas, given the context of indigenous people's resistance to settler societies. Or, in keeping with the Québec-Canada political cleavage I have been outlining, celebrating a city as opposed to a nation is in line with the Canadian government's position vis-à-vis Québec sovereignty, one that denies Québec's political independence and actively undermines its many strategies both within Canada and internationally to achieve independence. These shifts occur throughout the Québec 400, solidifying

tensions among competing interests. The *Moulin à Images* [Image Mill], Robert Lepage's wildly successful multimedia presentation at the Port of Québec tells the story of the City of Québec through representing various city luminaries and working-class heroes (see Ex-machina, 2008); *Rencontres*, the official commemorative spectacle (see chapter 4 for an in-depth analysis) tells the story of the founding of French civilization in the Americas with great flourish. Despite their seeming contradictions, both interpellate subjects through very different scales.

As an example from the Québec 400, all plans for a major French monument in Québec City, including L'Allier's original *Place de France* idea; the *Musée national des Beaux-Arts du Québec*'s [Québec National Arts Gallery] call for an *Allée de France*, an avenue featuring sculptures and monuments from major French artists (e.g., Rodin, Claudel, and Bourdelle) leading to the Gallery; and France's stated desire to leave a lasting legacy by renovating the *Parc de l'Amérique-Française*, a major urban park in Québec City's core, were quashed by the now-federalist organizing committee (Lavallée, 2009). Eventually, Premier Jean Charest requested that the French government renovate the front lobby of the *Centre de la francophonie des Amériques*, which is hosted in the *Musée de l'Amérique française* in the Old City, a project on a much smaller scale than the previous proposals. While there would be no grand French monument in 2008, French involvement in the Québec 400 was still quite notable, as I will demonstrate in chapters 5 and 6.

After a great deal of political unrest, the Société 400 eventually settled on a board of directors made up of a president, a treasurer, a secretary, and nine directors: three for each level of government. There was also an executive director and four commissioners

representing federal, provincial, and municipal governments as well as First Nations. The commissioners primarily facilitated the relationship between the Société 400 and its governmental partners. The joint governmental structure of the Société 400 ensured that it was the site for much political turmoil. Over the eight-year course of the Société 400's existence, no less than five presidents, including the founding president Roland Arpin, were in charge of its operations (Deschênes, 2008). In addition, each level of government made several changes to the board, adding to the uncertainty at the organization.

In 2003, the *Commission de la capitale nationale*, an agency of the Government of Québec, named Raymond Lesage as provincial commissioner to the Société 400. Besides the commissioner, the office of the Québec Minister responsible for the National Capital Region was the other main agency liaising with the Société 400. On the municipal level, Annie Brassard, from the City of Québec's commission on international relations, was the commissioner to the Société 400 (Lavallée, 2009).

In 2005, the federal government created the position of Federal Commissioner for Québec City's 400th anniversary and the position of Federal Commissioner for Aboriginal Affairs in order to coordinate the federal government's involvement with the Société 400. The Federal Commissioner, Denis Racine, also became the Director-General of the Secretariat for the 400th Anniversary of Québec City within the Department of Canadian Heritage, a joint ministerial committee set up to coordinate the federal government's Québec 400 planning. There were twelve separate federal departments or agencies involved in the planning and dissemination of information on the Québec 400: National Defence, Fisheries & Oceans, the National Capital Commission, the National Film Board, the Royal Canadian Mint, Canada Post, the Canadian Coastguard, National

Museums, Canadian Heritage, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and Export Development Canada (Government of Canada, 2008a). Despite the intense political machinations framing its work, the Société 400 successfully accomplished its main purpose of delivering a series of extremely popular public events.

By 2007, the Société 400 had secured a substantial amount of funding from the three levels of government: \$5 million from the City of Québec, \$40 million from the Government of Québec, and \$40 million from the Government of Canada. It also received higher-than-expected contributions from private funders and other ventures, such as the International Ice Hockey Championships that the City of Québec co-hosted with Halifax in May 2008, bringing its overall budget to nearly \$95 million by 2008 (Deschênes, 2008, p.113).

Programming for the Québec 400 was complex, and continued to evolve throughout 2008. For example, the Société 400 published a preliminary calendar of events in the summer of 2007 and an “official program” in April 2008, but neither of these documents fully encapsulated the series of officially sanctioned events. The most comprehensive and up-to-date version of official events could be found on the Société 400 website, which was updated regularly and featured a more-or-less consistent calendar of events. While figures vary widely, some commentators estimate that the Québec 400 included nearly 300 official events (see Deschênes, 2008, for an overview).

The Société 400 also chose a general theme for the celebrations. Organized under *La Rencontre* [The Encounter] theme, the celebrations highlighted the numerous exchanges that have taken place in Québec and Québec City. The theme manifested itself continuously during my time in Québec and throughout the Québec 400 at minor and

major events. The theme of encounters or meetings was without a doubt the organizing principle for the events, reiterating the discourse on cultural pluralism on display throughout 2007 and 2008 in Québec. I interrogate the meaning of the *Encounter* theme through lengthy discussions in chapters 4 and 6.

Another important governmental structure involved in planning activities was the *Comité français d'organisation pour le 400e anniversaire de Québec* [French Committee for the Organization of the 400th anniversary of Québec]. This was an organization of the French government set up to coordinate events celebrating the Québec 400 in France and Québec. Jean-Pierre Raffarin, ex-Prime Minister of France and current Senator, was the president of the organization and traveled to Québec on several occasions to meet with Société 400 directors. The events planned by the *Comité français* were organized under a joint France-Québec banner, which hosted a website with an up-to-date calendar of events. Importantly, the *Comité français* planned a series of events in Western France, the French region re-claimed as providing normative Québécois subjects with its territorial roots, a phenomenon that is the starting point for chapter 5.

In addition to the official institutional actors, who organized a large number of the Québec 400 events, there were several nonofficial actors who planned events, mostly of an oppositional nature, and those who wrote about the events in a number of different media, whether in newspapers, magazines, brochures, or others. I assemble all of these under the rubric of Québec 400 in my study, since on some level, they all contributed to Québec 400 commemorative discourses. In the next section I locate my project in the interstice of two broad academic fields.

Locating my Project

Critical Canadian Studies, Critical Québec Studies

My scholarly pursuits have been immeasurably influenced by recent research conducted in the burgeoning field of Critical Canadian Studies (CCS). By *Critical Canadian Studies*, I include works that interrogate “Canada” as a social construction and/or set of material practices and, specifically, those that address the relationship among racism, nationalism, and subject formation in Canada. In addition, the term *critical* is meant to denote an analytical shift away from what has been institutionalized as the discipline of Canadian Studies by anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, geographers, and historians in Canada and abroad. Many emerging scholars whose work interrogates taken-for-granted aspects of the Canadian nation – students and faculty alike – continue to come up against disciplinary barriers to their work. Work that explicitly problematizes race, sexuality, and gender in the making of Canada, for example, is often marginalized within studies of Canada. The use of the term *critical*, while oppositional in spirit, also points to the need for a sustained focus on Canada as an object of inquiry. However one approaches that work theoretically, interrogating the making of Canada, or the common-sense, everyday understandings of what Canada is and perhaps more importantly, what Canadian subjects *do*, is a crucial intellectual project.

In the past decade much work has been done in this vein.¹ My argument, then, is that CCS contributes to a rich, multi-disciplinary, historicized engagement with the

¹ For example, the following books stand out: Kay J. Anderson (1991) *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980*; Elizabeth Furniss (1999) *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*; Himani Bannerji (2000) *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender*; Richard Day (2000) *Multiculturalism and the History of*

production of Canada and Canadians that challenges current national projects, including those within academia.

This literature has been extremely productive in helping me reflect on my problematic around the formation of national subjects in Québec. One key area my project builds on in the field of CCS is in theorizing the formation of subjects in Québec. In other words, I consider the specific ways through which notions of normative Québécois subjects are constituted according to common-sense notions of whiteness, civilization, family, territory and so forth. The strength of such historically and socially specific work is that it accounts for the ever-shifting ways in which racialization produces specific white subject *positions* that interpellate some and not others at any given time and in any space. How could French-Canadians in the 18th century not be of the same race as English Canadians, while both now belong in some fundamental ways to our current understanding of race and whiteness? Such a marked shift points to a contemporary re-constitution of white power and privilege, captured in the rise in the 1980s of discourses of cultural pluralism in Western liberal democracies, one that positions white subjects as “tolerant” managers of national space (see Hage, 2000; Mackey, 2002; Brown, 2006).

Canadian Diversity; Eva Mackey (2002) *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*; Rinaldo Walcott (2003) *Black Like Who?*; Sherene Razack (2002) *Race, Space and the Law*; Daniel Coleman (2006) *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada*; Nandita Sharma (2006) *Home Economics: Nationalism and the Making of 'Migrant Workers' in Canada*; and Sunera Thobani (2007) *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*. Bonita Lawrence (2004) *"Real" Indians and Others: Mixed-Blood Urban Native Peoples and Indigenous Nationhood*; Taiaiake Alfred (2005) *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom*; and Leanne Simpson (2008) *Lighting the Eighth Fire: The Liberation, Resurgence, and Protection of Indigenous Nations* all engage with forms of indigeneity and indigenous nationhood in ways important for any scholar critical of Canada as a settler society.

There is a second notable strength to approaches that explicate the production of race in relation to Québécois subject positions: they directly respond to the types of critiques that make any mention of race vulnerable to being dismissed politically and intellectually in Québec. The focus of my study is on the specific ways normative Québécois subjects are called into a story about race through the Québec 400, one that relies on unspoken values, beliefs, and meanings circulating in Québec. While I do argue that whiteness plays a constitutive role in forming these ideas, I do not pre-suppose that entering into white subjecthood means the same thing in Québec as in the rest of Canada.

As a scholar I am sensitive to the too-easy theoretical conflagration of French-Canadians with English-Canadians or of Québec with Canada, a move that allows for the discrediting of critical race work on theoretical grounds in Québec intellectual cultures that are resisting (English) Canadian attempts to marginalize further or denigrate Québécois political aspirations. I take the need to respond to these concerns seriously, since many intellectuals who might otherwise be sympathetic to the nascent field of CCS may dismiss such analytical work as unrelated to Québec, which has its own specific *national* genealogies. By turning to a close study of the constitution of Québécois subjects through the Québec 400, I respond to many of these concerns.

Many key sociological and historical studies have been conducted that examine French-Canadian and Québécois roles in furthering the entrenchment of inequalities based on racial differentiation.² I locate this project in the interstice between the field that

² For example, see Georges Sioui (1992 & 1999) *For an Amerindian Autohistory and Huron-Wendat: The Heritage of the Circle*, which both articulate indigenous epistemologies. For other examples, see Daniel Gay, (2004). *Les Noirs au Québec, 1629-1900* [Blacks in Québec: 1629-1900]; Daniel Salée, (1995 & 2007). *Identities in Conflict: The Aboriginal Question and the Politics of Recognition in Québec. Ethnic and Racial*

critically examines Québec and the field of CCS, through the study of how the Québec 400 produces a normative Québécois subject position, one that is based in shared understandings of the racial order in Québec and Western liberal democracies more generally. The next section introduces my understanding of race and whiteness.

Race: Towards an Understanding of Whiteness

The ontological status of race has come under sustained criticism over the course of the past half-century (for example, Banton, 1967; Hall, 1989; Goldberg, 1993; Miles, 1993; Gilroy, 2000), in disciplines ranging from sociology, to anthropology, philosophy, geography, history, biology, and many others. What is important to take from these reflections on the status of race is that race, as a discredited biological concept, has no analytical value of its own. In other words, the disproportionately higher incidence of poverty among people of color cannot be explained with reference to their innate inferiority, nor can the disproportionate wealth of people of European descent be explained with reference to their innate superiority. In light of this, Miles takes the position that we should abandon the use of race as an analytical tool altogether in favor of

Studies, 18(2), 277-314 and The Quebec State and the Management of Ethnocultural Diversity: Perspectives on an Ambiguous Record. In K. Banting, T.J. Courchene & F. Leslie Seidle (Eds.). *Belonging?: Diversity, Recognition and Shared Citizenship in Canada*; Caroline Desbiens (2004). 'Women with no Femininity: Gender, Race and Nation-building in the James Bay Project. *Political Geography*, 23, 347-66; Marcel Trudel (2004). *Deux siècles d'esclavage au Québec : Nouvelle édition de l'esclavage au Canada français* [Two Centuries of Slavery in Québec: A New Edition of Slavery in French Canada]; and Amelia Kalant (2004) *National Identity and the Conflict at Oka*.

terms such as racism and racialization, otherwise we end up reifying race through utilizing it as an explanatory category. Miles (1989) defines racialization clearly in his book *Racism*:

I therefore employ the concept of racialisation to refer to those instances where social relations between people have been structured by the signification of human biological characteristics in such a way as to define and construct differentiated social collectivities. The concept therefore refers to a process of categorisation, a representational process of defining an Other (usually, but not exclusively) somatically. (p. 75)

On the one hand, the strength of Miles' understanding is that it points to a social process in the formation of race. In this way, one can approach the analytical study of race by probing the different dimensions in processes of race-making. His understanding also does away with the baggage inherited from the 18th and 19th century scientific racism that legitimized European imperialism and colonialism on the grounds of the superior biological characteristics (e.g., brain size, facial features, penis size, etc) of northwestern European people. On the other hand, as Rohit Barot and John Bird (2001) observed in their genealogy of racialization, one of the weaknesses of the concept as it has been popularly conceptualized through Miles' (1989) work, is that it removes attention from the materiality of race and masks the focus on corporeality and the violence of racism in Frantz Fanon's (1968) prior conceptualization of the concept.

Barot and Bird (2001) explain that for Fanon and Miles the racialization of the world is a process originating in Europe that has served to negate other peoples (p.611). However, unlike Miles and many other scholars who use Miles' understanding of racialization in their works, the aim of Fanon's work is to focus intently on the importance of the body in all forms of racialization. Barot and Bird (2001) argue that such a focus has been marginalized in the mainstream sociological use of the concept of

racialization:

The emphasis on process and on ideological constructions of racial difference typical of those understandings of racialization within the mainstream of sociology have tended to lead sociologists to ignore the implications of such process for those who experience racism and how those experiences are about violence and are implicated in psychological states and views of the body. (p.612)

Many other critical race scholars also find the dismissal of the concept of race unsatisfactory because the vexing question is then what to do about the fact that race, though not a biological phenomenon, nonetheless has social significance (Omi & Winant, 1994; Razack, 2002; Das Gupta et al., 2007). Taking the radical position that race does not exist *at all*, not even at the social level, makes political claims against racist exclusions nearly impossible. After all, if there is no such thing as race, how could claims against racism be justified on any political grounds? Many scholars (see Alcoff, 1998; Mills, 1998; Dei et al., 2005) see moves to eliminate race in the face of massive racial inequalities globally as a sign of the re-constitution of global white supremacy. Alcoff (1998) explains this concern well:

So today race has no semantic respectability, biological basis or philosophical legitimacy. However, at the same time, and in a striking parallel to the earlier Liberal attitude towards the relevance and irrelevance of race, in the very midst of our contemporary skepticism toward race stands the compelling social reality that race, or racialised identities, have as much political, sociological and economic salience as they ever had. (p.31)

Following this understanding, refusing the salience of racial categories within our current social configurations is an element of a discourse of colour-blindness that exacerbates inequalities based in forms of racial differentiation. In this study I stand with critical race scholars who draw on concepts of racialization and racism in their work and at the same time believe it is important to keep referring to race (either in the sense of the idea of race

or race as a social construct) because of the continued existence of this central organizing idea and its material effects (Mills, 1998; Razack, 2002; Dei et al., 2005; Das Gupta et al., 2007).

“Whiteness” is a related concept to race that I employ in this study. I speak of the “white” normative Québécois national subject not for the purpose of essentializing, but of specifying and historicizing what has been assumed as a universal and natural subject position. In other words, to speak of the whiteness of nation-building processes as embodied by the Québec 400 is to highlight the specificity of exalting a particular connection to European (French) civilization. Subsequently, such an approach highlights how the normative Québécois national subject was produced in the Québec 400, and who benefits or is excluded through these processes of subject formation.

I locate my understanding of “whiteness” within the field that emerged in the late 1990s, to which France Winddance Twine and Charles Gallagher (2007) refer as the “third wave” analysis of whiteness, what they explain “takes as its starting point the understanding that whiteness is not now, nor has it ever been, a static, uniform category of social identification” (p.6). Following the formative work of scholars such as W.E.B. Dubois, who wrote a path-breaking study of the white working-class in the United States and Frantz Fanon, whose anti-colonial writings on the relationship between colonizer and colonized continue to influence scholars in all fields of critical race theory, the “second wave³” opened up the field of whiteness studies to a broad academic audience. Ruth

³ Work of such key scholars as literary theorist Toni Morrison (1992), on the discursive production of whiteness in U.S. literature; labour historian David Roediger (1991), on the entry of the U.S. working-class into whiteness; and feminist scholar Ruth Frankenberg (1993), on the social construction of whiteness, all immeasurably contribute to this second wave. Importantly, both Wiegman (1999) and Ahmed (2004) critique the

Frankenberg's (1993) well-known definition of whiteness captures three of its main dimensions:

First, whiteness is a position of structural advantage, of race privilege. Second, it is a 'standpoint,' a place from which white people look at ourselves, at others, and at society. Third, whiteness refers to a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed. (p.1)

As such, whiteness is a *position* that privileges those who are constructed as white in any given social and historical context. As Frankenberg recognizes, this can shift markedly over time, and the case of French-Canadians is particularly telling in this case, since until very recently they were not considered to be the same "race" as English-Canadians. How could this cultural and social shift in our understandings of race occur? Some of the preliminary work that goes into understanding the production of whiteness in relation to a variety of minority European ethnicities has already been done by scholars in the United States, especially in studies such as Noel Ignatiev's *How the Irish Became White* (1996) and Karen Brodtkin's *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says About Race in America* (1998).

According to Frankenberg, whiteness is also a standpoint, from which white subjects can construct how to view and define racialized subjects. We see this in chapter 3 with the example of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission and the Hérouxville Code of Conduct, both of which articulate particular discourses on difference organized around notions of race and whiteness. And lastly, whiteness also relies on a set of cultural practices and politics that shape normative understandings of what is natural and universal in regard to race. As Audrey Kobayashi and Linda Peake (2000) explain, these

formation of "whiteness studies" as an academic field, suggesting that it may in fact further the very racial inequalities it is meant to challenge.

moral values and beliefs are often predicated upon “whitened cultural practices” (p.394). The bulk of my analysis in the following chapters focuses upon this last dimension of Frankenberg’s definition.

Beyond a focus on the contradictory and contested construction of white identities that Twine and Gallagher (2007) identify, the third wave also seeks to foreground the different strategies subjects deploy in order to enter into white subjecthood. As they explain, “the third wave of whiteness studies is characterized, by an interest in the cultural practices and discursive strategies employed by whites as they struggle to recuperate, reconstitute and restore white identities and the supremacy of whiteness.” (p.13). This focus is necessary in a global political context where white power is largely denied as part of what Robyn Wiegman (1999) has called “liberal whiteness,” what she equates to a “color-blind moral sameness” (p.121). In this political and epistemological register, racial difference is denied as a way to evoke a post-racist society (p.120). Within this colour-blind project, openly discussing race and especially racial exclusions is frowned upon. Wiegman locates this colour-blind discourse in a post-1960s and 70s U.S. social context that sought to “rehabilitate the national narrative of democratic progress in the aftermath of social dissent and crisis” (p.121). Building on Wiegman’s work, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2006) also identifies the appearance of a new racial ideology in the 1960s, what he calls “colour-blind racism.” He argues that understanding these new forms of racial exclusion became necessary in the post-civil rights era, “because the social practices and mechanisms to reproduce racial privilege acquired a new, subtle, and apparently nonracial character” (p.16). In her recent study of white racial privilege, Sharon Sullivan (2006) builds on explanations of the liberal colour-blind approach in

understandings of whiteness: “In the early twenty-first century, white domination increasingly gains power precisely by operating as if nonexistent” (p.3). Not only is whiteness non-existent, but through the colour-blind approach, it has also become seemingly innocent, as Wiegman, Bonilla-Silva, and Sullivan all argue.

Charles W. Mills (2008) contends that it is precisely this state of avoidance that allows what he calls “racial liberalism” to flourish. According to Mills (2008), the liberal political philosophy that arose in the 17th and 18th centuries in Western Europe based on an anti-feudal egalitarian ideology of individual rights and freedoms is the dominant political framework of the modern age (p.1380). Mills argues that liberalism is at its roots a racial philosophy, since its original terms restricted full personhood according to race and relegated and continues to relegate non-whites to inferiority (p.1382). In his words, “So racism is not an anomaly in an unqualified liberal universalism but generally symbiotically related to a qualified and particularistic liberalism“ (p.1382). Mills explains how racial liberalism continues to flourish in a U.S. social environment where the median white household’s financial wealth is 100 times that of the median black household’s (p.1393). Without any effort to “colour in the blanks,” as Mills (2008, p.1393) succinctly puts it, or to speak openly and defiantly against the discursive limits of racial liberalism, we are faced with a situation where white subjects continue to receive rewards simply for being white. “Many whites continue to reap advantages or deny they exist,” Micheal Shapiro states, “their insistence on how hard they work and how much they deserve their station in life seems to trump any recognition that unearned successes and benefits come at a price for others” (cited in Mills, 2008, p.1394). This racial contract, based as it is in liberal philosophies that assume that all subjects are naturally equal, conceals the fact that

individuals have never been equal under the terms of the contract. In other words, the presumed ideal state of nature where everyone is on an equal playing field has never existed. In some ways, it has been replaced by a “state of denial” (Mills, 2008, p.1391-1397) upheld by the colour-blind terms of liberal whiteness globally.

Richard Dyer (1988), explaining the normative invisibility of whiteness to white subjects, explains that whiteness “is not anything really, not an identity, not a particularizing quality, because it is everything” (p.45). Dyer argues that whiteness depends on the discursive production of Otherness and difference, which further solidifies its normative and privileged status. Under his highly influential understanding of whiteness, it is through our very racelessness that white subjects come to occupy a sort of universally un-differentiated sameness. However, as I demonstrate in chapters 4, 5, and 6 in my analysis of the contradictory nature of whiteness in constituting the normative Québécois subject in the Québec 400, it is questionable whether whiteness is simply organized around some sort of un-named, invisible group solidarity.

Robyn Wiegman has challenged Dyer’s argument, and those of many scholars in the field of whiteness studies, including Frankenberg’s early work, on the grounds that their approaches tend to focus almost exclusively on white racial invisibility to explain the lasting power of whiteness: “In assigning the power of white racial supremacy to its invisibility and hence universality,” Wiegman (1999) explains, “Dyer and others underplay the contradictory formation of white racial power that has enabled its historical elasticity and contemporary transformations” (p.117-18). She argues for an understanding of whiteness and white racial power that also foregrounds, against Dyer’s formulation above, the *particularizing* dimension of whiteness. Wiegman argues that whiteness is

also produced through specific types of public displays, however dramatically such displays have shifted in the post-1960s era. Importantly, she proceeds to argue that white subjecthood is defined by the contradictory pull of both its universal *and* particular claims to power. In Wiegman's (1999) words, "This split in the white subject – between disaffiliation from white supremacist practices and disavowal of the ongoing reformation of white power and one's benefit from it – is constitutive of contemporary white racial formation, underlying what Howard Winant calls 'white racial dualism'" (p.120). The effects of this liberal move, one defined by its *generous* colour-blindness, are stark, as bell hooks (1992) points out:

The eagerness with which contemporary society does away with racism, replacing this recognition with evocations of pluralism and diversity that further mask reality, is a response to the terror [of whiteness]. It has also become a way to perpetuate the terror, by providing a cover, a hidden place. (p.51)

Despite the ongoing terror of encounters with the white (social) body hooks describes, those constituted as white continue to ignore race through a colour-blind approach understood as a non-racial or even anti-racist gesture⁴. The split between discourses of white racial superiority and discourses of racial sameness – what Wiegman (and Winant) identify as constitutive of white racial formation– is an important technique through which white subjects are constituted in the early 21st century.

Mills also turns to *epistemology* to explicate the constitution of white subjects and whiteness. Foreshadowing his later work on racial liberalism, in *The Racial Contract* (1999) he develops the idea of an "epistemology of ignorance," whereby white subjects

⁴ Alison Bailey (2007) defines colour-blindness as "a form of ignoring that equates seeing, naming, and engaging difference with prejudice and bigotry, and not seeing, naming, noticing, and engaging difference with fairness" (p.85).

are able to benefit from the hierarchies, ontologies, and economies of a racist world precisely because we tend not to understand the world in which we live:

On matters related to race, the Racial Contract prescribes for its signatories an inverted epistemology, an epistemology of ignorance, a particular pattern of localized and global cognitive dysfunctions (which are psychologically and socially functional), producing the ironic outcome that whites will in general be unable to understand the world they themselves have made. (p.18)

It is in this inability to understand the social world as inherently racialized/racist and thus, as benefiting white people to the detriment of people of colour globally, that the epistemology of ignorance is most noticeably manifest (see Sullivan & Tuana, 2007 for an in-depth discussion).

The three conceptual frames in this section that I will carry forward throughout this study are: third wave whiteness as providing a particular set of methodological and theoretical tools aimed at uncovering the contingent formation of white subjects; the constitution of the white subject in racial dualism (universal and particular), brought forth most clearly through liberal whiteness or the colour-blind approach; and the epistemological dimensions of whiteness or how whiteness acts as a particular, localized set of cultural practices that includes ways of knowing and valuing social life. The next section introduces my understanding of processes of subject formation.

Subject Formation: Interpellation and Possibilities

Many popular accounts of the commemorations in Canada and Québec were based upon the notion that Canada and Québec are at their roots British-French or French societies. As such, the Canada-Québec quarrel played itself out in a number of different guises throughout 2008. In English and French-language media, questions were consistently

raised about the significance of the commemorations. Did the founding of Québec City by Samuel de Champlain in 1608 constitute the founding of the nation of Québec? Or did it mark the origins of Canada, as Canadian Prime Minister Harper maintained?

In this way, from its inception the Québec 400 provided a platform for the affirmation of the *two-founding nations* logic of Canadian nation-building. Sociologist Himani Bannerji (2000) explains the results of this discursive interplay,

These then are the two solitudes, the protagonists who, to a great extent, shape the ideological parameters of Canadian constitutional debates, and whose 'survival' and relations are continually deliberated. And this preoccupation is such a 'natural' of Canadian politics that all other inhabitants are only a minor part of the problematic of 'national' identity (p.92).

The debate about the place of Québec in Canada or the viability of an independent Québec nation-state on the world stage is without a doubt of great political import. Many scholars I discuss throughout this study continue to tackle these questions with analytical rigour. Given my desire to study how the Québec 400 constructs a normative Québécois subject along the common-sense racial logic that produces and is produced by the two founding nations/races discourse, I purposefully place my study outside the dominant ontological view of Québec and Canada that Bannerji describes. This does not mean I am uninterested in exploring the relationship between English-Canadians and French-Canadians or Canada and Québec. On the contrary, in conducting my study of the Québec 400, with the broad questions I raise around nationalism and subject formation in relation to the events, I turn to these complex relationships on several occasions to support my analysis.

As I explain in my preface, this two founding nations/races discourse interpellated me into a particular French-*Canadian* subject position. In this regard, Louis Althusser

(1971) provides a concise definition of the process of interpellation I use throughout this study:

I shall then suggest that ideology ‘acts’ or ‘functions’ in such a way that it ‘recruits’ subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all) or ‘transforms’ the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called *interpellation* or hailing and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: ‘Hey, you there!’ (p.174).

I was “hailed” or “invited” into this French-Canadian subject position through various institutional techniques, what Sneja Gunew (2007), recognizing the racial dimension of such attempts, has called “interpellations of whiteness” (p.142). These attempts at calling me into the Franco-Ontarian and French-Canadian project can be summed up nicely by the following play on Althusser’s words, enthusiastically imparted in my general direction: “Hey, you belong!” As a French-Canadian living outside Québec, I was incessantly reminded of the importance of *our* and by clear association, *my* place in the nation. In their work bridging the concepts of ideology and discourse, Alan Hunt and Trevor Purvis argue that Michel Foucault’s theory of the subject ties in nicely with Althusser’s formulation.

Michel Foucault is perhaps the most notable late 20th century theorist to have engaged with theories of the subject. Since his body of work is so vast and at-times contradictory, it is difficult to pull out a coherent theory of the subject from his work. However, since Foucault’s theorization is directly relevant to many of the ideas I discuss throughout my study I present several key themes in Foucault-inspired theories of the subject.

Amy Allen (2000), writing about Foucault’s treatment of the subject, explains how his early work has attracted a great deal of criticism, because in it, “the subject is not

only produced by discursive formations but also generated by a network of anonymous power relations that pervade the social body” (p.116). In this understanding, subjects are often seen as nothing more than effects of power, raising grave concerns about agency and resistance. Some have even compared this to the “death of the subject” (see Allen, 2000, p.114-16). Allen, however, argues that this is a serious misreading that focuses almost entirely on Foucault’s early work.

As she argues, the major part of Foucault’s later work on the subject is concerned with de-centering the subject in Western thinking. In other words, he wants to get rid of the constituent subject (that which explains) and focus on the constituting subject (that which needs explaining). In Foucault’s (1980) words, from the collection

Power/Knowledge:

One has to dispense with the constituent subject, to get rid of the subject itself, that’s to say, to arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework. And this is what I would call genealogy, that is, a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history. (p.117)

Although I do not fully take up a Foucaultian genealogy in this dissertation, I have been inspired by Foucault’s argument that “we must not take the subject for granted” in any historical configuration. One way around this theoretical dilemma is to thoroughly theorize the making of subjects, through a focus on subject positions. His analysis of the subject engages with the following methodological considerations, from “What is an Author?”:

How, under what conditions, and in what forms can something like a subject appear in the order of discourse? What place can it occupy in each type of discourse, what functions can it assume, and by obeying what

rules? In short, it is a matter of depriving the subject (or its substitute) of its role or originator, and of analyzing the subject as a variable and complex function of discourse. (cited in Allen, p.122-23)

In this later version of his work, Foucault turns to the questions that pre-occupy me most for my study, notably: What processes are involved in subject formation? From his focus on subjects in his earlier work, Foucault turns to the question of subject *positions*, as Allen (2000) explains: “After Foucault has carefully laid out the ways in which subjectivity is constructed...he turns rather naturally to an analysis of how it is that individuals come to take up, occupy, or inhabit particular subject-positions” (p.125). Due to the methodological limits of my own study, I do not assess whether or how individuals take up the specific subject positions I discuss in this dissertation. Instead, I explore how specific discourses construct what I call a normative Québécois subject position that I argue provides a set of *possibilities* for individuals. By normative subject positions, I mean subject positions that are produced and lauded as ideal, typical, or standard, which provide certain groups of individuals with a “natural” and comfortable sense of belonging, , whether through language, cultural practices, institutional norms, media, or in the case of the Québec 400, celebratory commemorations. As we will see, the question of subject *positions* is key to my analysis, since they provide a way to make sense of how the Québec 400 envisions *subjects* for its celebrations.

Daniel Gélinas, the high-profile executive-director of the Québec 400 organizing committee, provides us with a telling example of the discursive process of subject formation at play in Québec society. Upon being named executive-director of the organization in January, 2008, following a series of failures under the previous administration, he states his vision for a successful year:

I often think about my guy in Brossard sitting next to his pool, who hears about the 400th. For him to make the trip to Québec City, he must recognize himself in what's going on without us having to explain what's happening. (Martin, 2008, p.5, my translation)

In this formulation, Gélinas demonstrates the common-sense discursive logic at play in the Québec 400 celebrations. Besides his colloquial tone (“my guy”), Gélinas uses a racialized spatial logic to refer to an imagined white subject. Brossard is a suburb of Montréal on the south shore of the St-Lawrence River, home to a large French-Canadian professional class⁵. This statement demonstrates that Gélinas had a specific interpellative intention. In other words, I suggest that as Executive Director of the Québec 400, Gélinas’ statement can be interpreted to indicate that the Québec 400 constructed and in the same process addressed its programming to a normative gendered white subject position.

Later in July, after the major Québec 400 events took place in Québec City, a journalist writing in the Québec City-based newspaper *Le Soleil* set out to discover whether Gélinas met his goal of interpellating the “guy from Brossard,” clearly under the belief that such a task was laudable. Her article, “Where is the Guy from Brossard in All of This?,” speaks rather well to a popular understanding of the process of subject formation. In it, she interviews (white) tourists from Ontario, France, and Australia in search of the mythical figure. Not to be disappointed, she finds a young family from the Brossard area, allowing her to assert that, “Daniel Gélinas can sleep peacefully. The 400th has charmed the ‘Guy from Brossard’!” (Martin, 2008, my translation).

⁵ In fact, the average household income in Brossard is significantly higher than the provincial rate (see Statistics Canada, 2008).

In my study, I do not mean simply to speak against such “hailing,” but instead I question how the guy from Brossard is meant to “recognize himself in what’s going on without us having to explain what’s happening.” There are techniques and codes, such as the enunciative statement above, and others still, such as particular types of performance and display that are made intelligible to those who belong. None of this, however, presupposes that subjects are inert, passive, and voiceless within these processes. A given subject does not enter into the particular set of relations a position enables as a fully conscious individual intent on enacting power and privileges. It is in the complex interplay between reception and production that the socially deterministic dangers of work on subject formation are most manifest.

To remain attentive to the subtleties of subject formation, the multiple techniques through which subjects negotiate being “hailed” into a given subject position are significant. Although important to theorizations of the subject, I do not attend to the subtleties of reception in this dissertation. The “guy from Brossard,” for example, might have developed techniques to avoid, negotiate, or dismiss such calls. While I do not take up the question of who does or does not respond to the call, I do focus on how the *production* of discourses constructs *possibilities* for diverse individuals in Québec. This approach necessarily involves considering the contradictory dimensions of the dynamics of subject formation. For example, besides being one of the wealthier cities in Québec, Brossard also has one of the largest populations of people of colour in the province outside the City of Montréal. Who, then, responds to this call? In considering the complex dynamics of subject formation, Anthony Easthope and Kate McGowan (2004) write, “the theory of the subject proposes a notion of identity as precariously constituted

in the discourses of the social, whereby it is both determined and regulated by the forces of power inherent in a given social formation, but capable also of undermining them” (p.73). In their conception, Easthope and McGowan present the making of the subject as a process deeply imbued within fields of power, but one also holding out the possibility for transformation in those relations.

Returning to the at-times overwhelming attempts to interpellate me into a particular dominant subject position, one of my own primary responses to such attempts continues to be critical assessments of these interpellative functions, in order to better understand the processes through which individuals are hailed and subject positions produced. However, because I do not make claims at this stage about the reception of these discourses – in other words, whether the people addressed by these discourses accept the invitation or not – I construct a reading practice that explores how the various discourses and performances that commemorate the founding of Québec constructed subject positions or possibilities. In other words, I construct a reading practice that explores the *positions* or *possibilities* produced through the various discourses and performances that commemorate the founding of Québec.

As such, I recognize the tensions and ambiguities among the various discourses circulating about the Québec 400. I believe these ruptures can be felt in the analysis I provide in the upcoming pages. Since my main focus is to question what role commemoration plays in producing particular national subject positions, a sustained focus on the discursive construction of these subject positions has been key, whether through the analysis of spectacle, display, performance, museological practices, or other institutional techniques. This has brought me to a number of sites/sights I never would

have considered when I began this intellectual journey. The next section introduces my understanding of commemoration and memory.

Commemoration and Memory

In addition to the body of work studying the making of subjects, there is also an emerging field studying commemorative practices and collective memory using a wide variety of methods. Pierre Nora (1989), John Gillis (1994), Lyn Spillman (1997), and Susannah Radstone (2000) have all been leaders in this field. Nora's lasting contribution to the study of memory was his development of the concept of *lieux de mémoire*⁶, in his seven-volume study of the same name. In it, Nora argues that an external, historicized conception of memory (e.g., monuments, performance, spectacle, etc) now produces French national identity, as opposed to a concept of national identity understood in relation to the history of a politically-determined group of citizens, as in the recent past. In other words, as a result of the social transformations brought about by modernity, *lieux* function as an externalization of memory in a society cut from its past. The shift he identifies has resulted in a spatialization of a previously temporalized national memory (see Crane, 1997; Radstone, 2000 for a discussion). In Nora's (1989) words, memory "crystallizes and secretes itself" in the *lieux* (p.7). In an important sense, Nora's contribution introduces three considerations that are key to any study of memory: the analysis of the materiality of memory; the need to locate and describe the diverse "sites"

⁶ There is still much debate around how best to translate this term. It has alternately been translated as "sites," "places," and "realms." While I tend to believe that the latter best captures Nora's intentions, I have nonetheless decided to hold onto the French original, of which I hope to provide an appropriate understanding in my discussion.

of collective memory; and the need to define the relationship between national identity and collective memory.

In his influential edited collection *Commemorations*, John Gillis (1994) examines the multiple ties that bind commemoration to national identity. Gillis argues that we must develop strategies to decode the construction of national identities through a close reading of commemoration. In his opinion, commemoration represents the trace of the relationship between national identity and (collective) memory. He offers a useful understanding of commemoration, one I use throughout this study:

Commemorative activity is by definition social and political, for it involves the coordination of individual and group memories, whose results may appear consensual when they are in fact the product of processes of intense conflict, struggle, and, in some instances, annihilation (Gillis, 1994, p.5).

In her edited collection *Memory and Methodology*, Radstone (2000) explains how even to many scholars who see the flexibility of identity, memory is often given the status of a fixed, material object rather than a malleable, active process. In her opinion, there is a need to see memory as a decipherable text, as opposed to a lost reality to be discovered (p.10). The starting point for such an approach is “in the local, in the subjective, in the particularity of memory itself” (Radstone, 2000, p.12). I believe that Wulf Kansteiner (2002) explains what such an approach might look like:

Methodologically speaking, memories are at their most collective when they transcend the time and space of the events’ original occurrence. As such, they take on a powerful life of their own, ‘unencumbered’ by actual individual memory, and become the basis of all collective remembering as disembodied, omnipresent, low-intensity memory. (p.189)

Following my focus on the construction of knowledge about the past, seeing memory as a flexible process linked to regulation, compromise, and conflict is of particular salience.

As I demonstrate, especially in chapters 4, 6, and 7, the dominant Québec 400 discourse is bursting at the seams, so heavy is the weight of contradictory and conflicted memories about the past.

Lyn Spillman (1997), in her influential study on the Australian and United States centennial and bicentennial celebrations, points to the strong links between nations and memory. She notes that through the operation of commemoration many techniques are employed to “speak” to the nation and national subjects. Among the most compelling practices of commemoration are rhetorical tropes, emblems, values, and beliefs that represent and constitute the nation. Organized around a variety of symbolic repertoires, these techniques call national subjects into stories of triumph, adversity, and destiny through the material instantiation of commemorative practices that represent and constitute the nation and its subjects (p.11-16). Her methodological innovation is “to analyze the persistent and influential sets of meanings and values which have been used in making claims about American and Australian national identity” (Spillman, 1997, p.6) in a *comparative* fashion.

Three recent studies of large-scale commemorations in Canada have adopted many tools from Spillman’s work. Harold Bérubé’s comparative study of Toronto’s centenary in 1934 and Montréal’s tercentenary in 1942 provides a rich array of conceptual tools for the study of commemoration. In particular, Bérubé argues for an understanding of commemorative practices that foregrounds their relationship with the political exigencies of the present. “The events selected [in commemorations] and especially, the ways in which they are presented or put into motion,” Bérubé (2004) argues, “reflects not only a certain historiography, but especially a vision of the past guided by the present” (p.216,

my translation).

Helen Davies' (2010) historical study of Canada's Centennial celebrations in 1967, *The Politics of Participation*, mixes a cultural studies approach with a Durkheimian theoretical framework that questions *collective representations* and how they affirm sameness. In particular, Davies (2010) analyzes a range of historical texts to explain "how Centennial organizers worked to promote the theme of unity over division in an effort to shape a distinct, but uniform, Canadian national identity" (p.31).

Lynn Caldwell's (2008) sociological study develops a critical analysis of the Saskatchewan Centennial in 2005 by examining a range of texts, micro-interactions, public displays, and other commemorative practices through participant observation. Such a focus on "commemorative leavings," as Patrick Hutton (1994, p.149) has called them, engages with how memories have left marks in words (e.g., texts, speeches, spectacle) and things (e.g., monuments, architecture, infrastructure), in following Nora's contributions. Caldwell's study provides a cogent argument for understanding the *racialized* dimensions of national commemoration, through her focus on space and subject formation in a settler society.

Building on these scholars' very broad focus on representation, a systematic emphasis on practices of commemoration, as I adopt in this study, provides a necessary link between the symbolic and material dimensions of memory production. For instance, memory, often put into motion through fanciful narratives about the past, materializes these narratives in the concrete; anthems, flags, images or monuments, public art, and architecture, among others, all fix memory to subjects. Whatever its shape, commemoration is an increasingly commonplace form of memory production in the

modern age (see Gillis, 1994; Savage, 1997 & 2006). My main focus in this study is what Savage (2006, p.14) has called the “politics of commemoration,” as expressed through the spectacular and symbolic forms of remembering the past in the Québec 400.

Research Questions

Following the theoretical work I outlined above, I treat the various observations, documents, exhibits, spectacles and all else that is part of the Québec 400 as a cultural text or public language that, in keeping with Lyn Spillman’s (1997) work studying the Australian and American bi-centennials, “are rather elaborate sets of responses to a sentence completion test: ‘What characterizes my nation is...’” (p.11). In my case, three questions serve as such cues throughout my study:

- a) How does the *Québec 400* constitute a normative Québécois subject position?
What techniques are used to constitute this particular subject? What are the characteristics of this Québécois subject position?
- b) How does race figure into the Québécois subject position? How are the boundaries of differentiation drawn vis-à-vis various racialized groups?
- c) What possibilities does this position provide subjects? What are the criteria for belonging and non-belonging in racial and cultural terms?

Methodology

Understanding Bricolage

Like others who have studied the complex relationships among subjects, commemoration, race, and nation, for instance, my study employs a range of methods of

inquiry—sociological, historical, ethnographic, literary, visual—so that I see myself assembling a pragmatic and innovative methodological *bricolage*. Grossberg, Nelson and Treichler (1992) define such a methodological approach as a “choice of practice...that is pragmatic, strategic, and self-reflective” (p.2). Chris Barker (2004) has defined the cultural studies understanding of bricolage further:

The concept of bricolage refers to rearrangement and juxtaposition of previously unconnected signifying objects to produce new meanings in fresh contexts. Bricolage involves a process of re-signification by which cultural signs with established meanings are re-organized into new codes of meaning. (p. 17)

In the context of my study, making meaning out of seemingly disparate forms of data and sites has been an essential methodological strategy. Annette Kuhn (2007), in her methodological study of cultural memory, has called such an approach “inductive.” This approach allows researchers to ground their studies in a particular set of social relations and to read “out” from the particular expression of memory (p.283). Kuhn explains how research designs using such methodological approaches range from textual analysis to ethnographic inquiry: “One central plank remains, however: the notion that memory and memories are discursive and that through memory work of various kinds it is possible to come to an understanding of how memory operates as a type of cultural text” (Kuhn, 2007, p.283-84). Such an approach is important, since commemoration is a fluid cultural practice that relies on text, performance, and spectacle to express a social group’s relationship with a narrated (often, national) past. The key to such a methodological approach is to enter into the memory-world of the cultural text, in order to understand its narration of the past. According to Kuhn (2007), such an approach

Undercuts assumptions about the transparency or the authenticity of what is remembered, treating it not as 'truth' but as evidence of a particular

story: material for interpretation, to be interrogated, mined for its meanings and its possibilities...and opens to question the taken-for-grantedness, or the transparency, of acts of memory in relation to the past (p.284).

In other words, I am developing a critical reading practice that engages with diverse forms of data that I treat as a cultural *text* and gather under the rubric *Québec 400*. In this regard, my study employs several interdisciplinary methodological traditions.

Most of my primary research is based on participant observation during the course of the Québec 400 commemorative events. Besides the more conventional use of field notes and drawings/sketches pioneered in sociology and anthropology, I also used photography and video as key techniques. I conducted much of this work during a two-week period in July, 2008, though some of my observations come from previous visits to Québec City in September, 2006, and February, 2008, and research I conducted in Ottawa throughout 2007 and 2008. Among several influential uses of participant observation in works studying the constitution of subjects, Aihwa Ong (1996) and Eva Mackey (1999) stands out for their methodological innovations. Ong (1996), building on Michel Foucault's notion of "governmentality," probes the cultural practices and beliefs that constitute subjects, particularly immigrants to the United States. To accomplish this task, she develops a methodology that moves away from a singular focus on the nation-state, to one that highlights the role civil society plays in shaping subjects:

It is precisely in liberal democracies in the United States that the governmentality of state agencies is often discontinuous, even fragmentary, and the work of instilling proper normative behavior and identity in newcomers must also be taken up by institutions in civil society. For instance, hegemonic ideas about belonging and not belonging in racial and cultural terms often converge in state and nonstate institutional practices through which subjects are shaped in ways that are at once specific and diffused. (Ong, 1996, p.738)

Ong conducts her investigation through combining textual analysis, participant observation, and interviews. Eva Mackey (2002), working in the Canadian context, focuses on the constitution of the unmarked, non-ethnic “Canadian-Canadian” subject position, one she uncovers through her mixed-ethnographic methods. Her approach focuses on what she calls “the myth of tolerance” (p.2) by gathering sets of images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols, and rituals that come to define national subjects. She develops what she calls a “‘multi-site’ and ‘event-centred’ methodology” that, in her words, “allows for an in-depth analysis of the ways in which national political crises - often framed as ‘identity crises’ - become the condition of possibility for the production, surveillance, and regulation of identities and difference at national and local levels” (p.7). Much as in Ong’s methodological work, Mackey examines sites that lie outside *and* inside the official state realm.

Bringing together these methods, my reading practice is two-pronged. First, I look at the commemorative practices in the Québec 400 by considering how street-level encounters, state and institutional practices, and social groups define subjects through monumentalization, spectacle, and performance. By street-level encounters I mean the micro-phenomena I observed while in Québec City, including light, sound, smell, and touch embodied by audience reactions, street-talk, and crowd make-up and movement. By state and institutional practices, I refer to various state-based and non-state based efforts to regulate and define subjects, including the construction of monuments, the instantiation of symbols, representations in museums and art exhibits, enunciative statements, and official commemoration documentation. By social groups I primarily

mean the protest groups organized to oppose the Québec 400, but I also include performers and audience in the mainstream events in this category through my study.

Second, I focus on a wide variety of material that I treat as part of a public language of commemoration: images, spatial organization, spectacle, symbols, statements, and rhetorical tropes. I documented this public language of commemoration in the small details of every-day encounters, as well through more broad social phenomena. The strength of my approach is that it allows for an understanding of subject formation as flexible and relatively open, since it highlights the many contradictions and contestations in the Québec 400. In order to get a “full” picture of the celebrations, I needed to understand the complex relationship among state, institutional, and social actors in Québec.

Data

I gathered data from a number of sources to conduct this research. Among the data I collected leading up to the events in Québec in July 2008, are a series of Government of Québec tourism brochures I obtained upon a visit to Québec City in February 2008, and a series of meeting minutes, memos, notes, and documents I received through a Government of Canada Access-to-Information request from the Secretariat for the 400th Anniversary of Québec City within the Department of Canadian Heritage, and from the National Capital Commission’s (NCC) Ottawa-Gatineau Québec 400 planning committee. All of these requests deal with non-published meetings of various stakeholders and organizers of Québec 400 events across Canada, but especially in Québec City and Ottawa. Along with these materials, I collected official reports,

programs, calendars, and all other pertinent information produced by government agencies in Québec and Canada. In order to do so, I signed up for mailing lists, online lists, and dropped into government offices.

I also conducted field observations in Ottawa-Gatineau throughout 2008. Specifically, I attended all NCC-organized commemoratives events, including theatre productions during Winterlude 2008, public exhibits at the Capital InfoCentre – the NCC’s major Ottawa-based tourism centre– and the unveiling of commemorative banners along Confederation Boulevard in Ottawa. In addition to this, I visited the Canadian Museum of Civilization’s official contribution to the Québec 400 events, the “Jamestown, Québec, Santa Fe” exhibit, originally produced by the Smithsonian Institute. As with all my fieldwork, I took field notes in a field notebook at every opportunity during these events, and proceeded to transcribe them into separate computer files. I also took photographs of relevant visual data.

During my visit to Québec City I collected a large amount of data. I attended all major official celebrations, including those organized by the Société 400, as well as events organized by Canada, Québec, and any other international entity (e.g., France, Vermont, New York). Among the events I attended were a military parade, theatre productions, museum exhibits, art exhibits, film showings, a protest march, musical concerts, street festivals, speeches, and a number of other cultural events. In addition to these explicitly performative events, I also gathered all pertinent documents associated with the celebrations available in the public domain, including: reports, flyers, brochures, books, programs, exhibit catalogues, calendars, commemorative volumes, promotional materials, websites, blogs, restaurant menus, street banners, street signs, historical

photographs, and magazines. I also video recorded various key events and took over 1,500 photographs of all relevant data sources in the public realm.

While state-based agencies and institutions produced many of these sources of data, I also collected documents or attended events organized by non-state entities in order to consider properly the breaks, ruptures, and disjunctures in the discourses under study. In order to do so I attended several events organized by what I am calling “counter 400” organizations or collectives. Among these, there are a number of anarchist collectives that organized against the official celebrations. One of the biggest events planned by anarchist groups was the construction of a temporary tent city in a working-class neighbourhood in the Lowertown area of Québec City. Called *Québec 4 Sans* (Québec Without), it drew attention to the unequal distribution of wealth in Québec’s history. Another of their key activities was a large protest march through the heart of Québec City to draw attention to the militarization of the Québec 400 celebrations. Organized along with activists from Sherbrooke and Montréal, this protest featured a vocal anti-capitalist contingent. In addition to this, a Montréal-based theatre company performed what they called an “anti-colonial” counter-history that focused on the dispossession of indigenous peoples. Their protest was organized against Canadian and Québec-based racism and colonization.

Besides these more politically radical interventions, several Québec-based nationalist organizations, such as the Commémoration Québec 1608-2008 (CQ 400) collective, planned their own challenges to what they argued was the dominant “Canadianization” of the events, articulated as it was in the lack of history in the celebrations. They organized several protests, including a detailed website, a concert and

rally, and several objects for display. Many of the data sources from these “counter 400” projects emerged while I was in Québec City, since the nature of the protest events meant that planning was done mostly (CQ 400) or entirely (anarchist collectives) behind closed doors and on a local level.

As well as gathering a range of texts and taking event-based field notes, I took note of more informal day-to-day observations, conversations and “small talk” I overheard during events, at shops and restaurants, or in the streets more generally. I also took note of discussions in museums or any other venue I attended. Since I did not formally interview any research participants, I limited my observations to what could reasonably be ascertained in the public domain, thereby respecting the Tri-Council Ethical Guidelines and Carleton University’s Ethics Protocol. In order to facilitate data organization and coding, I entered individual pieces of data into a series of spreadsheets organized according to types of data. The following section introduces my chapter outlines.

Chapter Outlines

The next chapter provides a brief history of Québec and links it to theories of (Québec) nationalism. In particular, I examine several key periods of Québec history: the French Conquest, the British Conquest, the Great Darkness, and the Quiet Revolution are all key components of my historical overview. From there, I discuss the ideas of Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm, and Homi Bhabha in relation to theories of nationalism. Through my analysis of the work of Lionel Groulx, Gérard Bouchard, Jacques Beauchemin, Mathieu Bock-Côté, and Jocelyn Letourneau, I turn to an analysis of

Québec nationalism. This chapter helps to frame my subsequent analyses through contextualizing many of the events and moments that the Québec 400 narrates in 2008.

Chapter 3 examines the relationship among several key events in Québec throughout 2007 and 2008, including the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, the Hérouxville Code of Conduct, the rise of the *Action démocratique du Québec* political party, the Québec Identity Act, and the Government of Québec's new immigrant integration policy. I turn to a discussion of these public events in order to tie broader discourses on difference in Québec to the Québec 400. Through this analysis, I investigate how the production of "difference" in Québec relies on civilizational discourses also circulating in Western liberal democracies. In particular, I argue that through these various state practices, a legitimate white, "French-Canadian Québécois" subject is produced against a racialized Other. This subject, depending as it does on a set of interconnected *possibilities*, is then held up as the authorized manager of national space, empowered to decide who belongs through the limits of his/her own tolerance. I reconsider the identity "crisis" brought on by the events during this period in light of the politics of cultural pluralism in Québec.

Chapter 4 considers the instantiation of Champlain's public image as Québec's founding hero in the Québec 400. Through analyzing the multiple performative dimensions of the events, I demonstrate how Champlain's memory is deeply informed by what Katharyne Mitchell (2003) calls "spectacularized politics." In particular, I argue that the Québec 400 places Champlain as the founder of an "intercultural" Québec by underlining the peaceful *encounter* between French colonizers and indigenous peoples. I argue that this intercultural move solidifies the dominance of liberal whiteness that

constitutes the normative Québécois subject's ability to manage national space legitimately. Commemoration, through its public displays of memory, provides a key technique of subject formation.

From there, chapter 5 focuses on the ways in which the Québec 400 is celebrated in Western France and argues that the events provide an instance of transnational racial subject formation. The chapter analyzes two specific modes through which this *extra-national raciality* is constituted: practices of territoriality that signify a “cartography of origins” and tropes of family and kinship that affirm the racial dimensions of Québécois belonging in France. I demonstrate this process through my analysis of a variety of data, including enunciative statements, museum exhibits, an art exhibit, and government documents, among others. I conclude by examining how the making of the French-Québec subject relies on a duality of whiteness based in the tensions between its universality and particularity. It is this analytical move towards understanding the Québécois subject as a member of the Western family of nations through its imagined relationship with France and the French “people” that materializes its racialized dimensions.

Chapter 6 brings much of the analytical work in chapters 4 and 5 together. In it, I present *Le Grand livre de Champlain*, a high-profile museum exhibit displayed at the Redoubt, part of the Governor-General’s official residence in Québec City. *Le Grand livre* represents Champlain’s etchings, drawings, and writing in an innovative artistic presentation. Originally developed by artists and designers in France for a French audience, *Le Grand livre* traveled to Québec for the Québec 400 upon the request of Canada’s Governor-General. *Le Grand livre* solidifies the French-Québec subject, not by

repeating the discourses on cultural pluralism articulated throughout the Québec 400, but by putting them into question. While there might be divergent modes through which to remember the “contact zone,” I demonstrate how the central organizing principle of the French-Québec subject is a shared understanding of the ongoing colonial project, one organized around tropes of whiteness, civilization, and space.

Chapter 7 directs us to an analytical shift away from the focus on large-scale Québec 400 commemorative events. In it, I focus on two protest groups: an anarchist theatrical troupe and a Québec nationalist protest collective, in order to examine the role protest plays in providing alternative subject positions. In particular, I explain what role the politics of denunciation play in building the Québécois subject and how nationalist counter-celebrations resemble the discourses on display in the official events. I argue that while it may seem that protest itself responds to official Québec 400 discourses, in some ways, these protest movements further solidify these dominant discourses.

To sum up, this study focuses primarily on questions of race, nation, and memory in present-day Québec society through my analysis of the Québec 400. My analysis adopts what I have called a methodological *bricolage*, one that grounds my research in institutional processes, discursive constructions, and social relations in order to read commemoration as a specific type of cultural text. In the end, my focus is on the overlapping ideological, symbolic, and material conditions that make particular *subject positions* possible through commemoration. The study of commemoration and national subject formation is a relatively new field of scholarly inquiry, but one that has been growing with the increased interest in commemoration as a mode of nation-building in

the 21st century. My study includes three main analytical threads in order to respond to the varied ways in which the Québec 400 celebrates the past.

First, I identify the politics of cultural pluralism to be of central analytical importance. As such, I focus on the specificity of the politics of difference in Québec, providing a set of salient analytical questions throughout my dissertation. Second, building on my discussion of the production of difference in Québec, I examine the making of national subject positions. I argue throughout this study that commemoration stands out as a central mode through which national subjects are constituted in 21st century Québec, whether through forms of spectacle, monumentalization, or museology that rely on what I have called *strategies of familiarity*. Third, by examining the France-Québec relationship during the Québec 400, I provide an analysis of the *transnational* subject position on display in 2008, one that relies on a shared understanding of the colonial-settler project in Québec.

The next chapter provides a brief history of Québec linked to a discussion of theories of (Québec) nationalism.

Chapter Two

Québec: A Historical Sketch

Unlike the history of many white settler societies, the history of Québec is doubly complex, since not only did French settlers colonize what is now Québec, but they were also later colonized by British and American settlers who treated New France quite like many overseas British colonies. Critical race and legal scholar Laura Gómez (2007) has offered some useful tools for describing and analyzing similar processes. Writing in the Spanish-American context, Gómez suggested the notion of “double colonization” to characterize the multiple systems of racialized inequality that marked the context of the making of what she calls the “Mexican American race.” Her understanding of the concept, which I follow, is that: “double colonization resulted in a situation in which everyone, including elites of all races, jockeyed for position and defined themselves and others in an undeniably multi-racial terrain” (Gómez, 2007, p.48). Such a concept, adapted to the English-French Canadian context, can help delineate three regimes, i.e., the French colonial-settler project of the 17th and 18th centuries, the British colonial-settler project of the 18th and 19th centuries, and contemporary Québec political regimes, by highlighting the different systems of racial order imposed by each regime. A racial discourse of white supremacy is central to all three; however, the particular variants of this discourse, including the category of white, differed and continues to differ under each regime. Colonized by the British, yet itself a colonial society founded through French imperial ideologies, Québec inherited a unique position in North America. This process necessarily makes for a particular organization of racial hierarchies in contemporary French Canada, whose significance for the normative Québécois subject is produced

through processes such as the Québec 400. What follows is a brief history of Québec organized by these regimes. But first I must turn to some explanations about the terminology I use in this chapter.

A Note of Terminology and Identity in Québec

The language I use to describe French-Canadian history might seem inexact, but there is good reason for slippage and *double-entendres*. For nearly two centuries, until their defeat at the Plains of Abraham in 1759, the French settlers called themselves *Canadiens*. Not quite French and not indigenous, *Canadiens* reflected the French settlers' new relationship with the people and land they encountered, as Gomez's notion of "double colonization" would attest. Historian Joseph-Yvon Thériault (2001, p.185-86) explains how Anglo-Montrealers and Lord Durham used the term "French-Canadian" mainly to disparage French settlers¹, many of who later came to embrace the term in what became a bi-national vision of Canada. Within this bi-national vision, French Canada was for a long time constructed as a nation, one stretching from Baie Ste-Marie in Nova Scotia to Maillardville in British Columbia, through stops in Portage-la-Prairie and St-Eustache in Manitoba, Lac La Biche in Alberta, Gravelbourg in Saskatchewan, Whitehorse in the Yukon, and Sudbury and Casselman in Ontario. The nature of this national vision changed considerably with the rise of Québécois nationalism in the 1960s and 70s: no

¹ Historian Gillian Poulter (2009) has written a study about how British colonists in Montréal came to think of themselves as "native Canadians." This involved the appropriation of indigenous and French-Canadian activities and attempts to transform them into properly "Canadian" through such British values as order, discipline, and fair play.

longer part of an imagined French Canada, French-Canadians outside Québec² were left to construct new affiliations, including *Franco-ontariens*, *Fransaskois*, *Franco-manitobains*, and *Franco-yukonnais*.³ It is into this context of *new* national affiliations that I was born in Sudbury, Ontario, to French-Canadian parents whose own parents were born in both Ontario and in Québec. I was the first generation of French-Canadians that was invited into this new *Franco-ontarien* identity, my parents having belonged previously to the French-Canadian national community. At the losses brought on by these social and discursive shifts and in order to hold onto the ambition of being a *national* culture, Thériault (2001) suggests that, “Francophones outside of Québec must accept, in fact, their role as Quebeckers outside the borders” (p.191). It is partly in this spirit, as a French-Canadian outside Québec who rejects the immutability of spatial, temporal, and identificatory boundaries that I enter into my discussion of Québec history.

The French Conquest

The Early French Regime and the Contact Zone

Where to begin such a history is always a difficult question. Many conventional histories of French Canada and Québec begin with the arrival of French settlers⁴, notably with

² The exceptions here are the Acadians, whose history pre-dates the conventional French-Canadian story.

³ See Leroux (2005) for an analysis of the way the building of Franco-Ontarian identity is premised on gendered and racialized exclusions. Amal Madibbo (2006) has written a similar study tackling these questions in much more depth.

⁴ This is not a practice unique to Québec. Elizabeth Furniss (1999), Adele Perry (2001), Cole Harris (2003), and Gillian Poulter (2009), among many others, critique the ways in which this historical process has played out in the (English) Canadian settler project. Jane Jacobs (1996) and Kay Anderson (2003) do similar work in the Australian settler context, while Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) and Avril Bell (2009) make similar arguments in the New Zealand settler case.

Jacques Cartier in 1534 (see Weinmann, 1987, p.67-74 for a discussion). The risks of discursively re-colonizing indigenous peoples and land is quite apparent in any historical representation that foregrounds French-Canadian settlement. Many indigenous scholars (see Churchill, 1992; Smith, 1999; Alfred, 2005; Smith, 2005; Simpson, 2008) have studied the epistemological violence of scholarly fields such as history, anthropology, and ethno-history in the Western academy. Repeating the *discovery* narrative about the past is not my interest here. In order to avoid such a narrative, it is important to acknowledge the violence done in the European colonization project, of which the present-day settler-residents of Canada and Québec are beneficiaries. Georges Sioui (1992), a Wendat historian, explains this process:

Over a 400-year period beginning in 1492, the aboriginal population of the American continent shrank from 112 million to approximately 5.6 million. The population of Mexico, which numbered 29.1 million in 1519, stood at no more than 1 million in 1605. As for North America alone, of its 18 million Amerindian inhabitants at the time of European contact, by 1900 only 250,000 to 300,000 descendants remained. (p.3)

In his follow-up study of the Wendat confederacy, perhaps the most iconic indigenous nation in Québec historiography, Sioui (1999) explains how for most Euro-American settlers, the near-extirpation of indigenous peoples generally represents a historical event, but for many indigenous peoples, it is a moral and philosophical question that continues to animate political claims. Many other scholars writing specifically about the history of French Canada have documented the devastating impact of disease, slavery, dispossession, and displacement for the majority of indigenous peoples post-contact (Trigger, 1976; Savard, 1977 & 1979; Delâge, 1985; Anderson, 1991; Henderson, 1997). Marcel Trudel's (2004) work, originally published in 1960, documenting the institution of indigenous and African slavery in French Canada has been especially important in

piercing the narrative of innocence that surrounds French-Canadian historiography.

Despite this scholarly tradition in Québec, anthropologist Rémi Savard (1979) pointed out the dangers particular forms of Québec nationalism pose to indigenous peoples, one that is equally relevant to various racialized people, very succinctly:

In our writing, debates, discussions, actions, protests on the future of Québec, we pass over in near silence Indians and Inuit. They are incredibly absent from our political projects, which pushes them all the way to the back of our collective conscience. Their presence only seems tolerable, it seems, to the extent that they are fixed in pre-history. (p.10, my translation)

This study picks up on both Sioui's and Savard's injunctions about the ethical and political dimensions of the history of colonialism in Québec, through a sustained focus on the many ways in which the Québec 400 represents, identifies, and regulates relations between indigenous peoples, people of colour, and French settlers.

Champlain: Founding Father?

The history of Québec celebrated in the Québec 400 begins with the arrival of Samuel de Champlain⁵ and his ship and crew at Québec City on July 3, 1608. The settlement of New France was not an easy process, as settlers were slow to arrive and resources hard to come by (see Lacoursière, 1995, p.105-47; Letourneau, 2004, p.7-9). But the settlement of New France grew, leading to the present moment, in which millions of descendants of these original French settlers reside in Québec and Canada. It is this historical event that the Québec 400 celebrates: Champlain founding French civilization in the Americas. Yet, Champlain was not the first European to visit this part of the world. Marcel Trudel (2001)

⁵ Raymonde Litalien and Denis Vaugeois (2004) have edited an exemplary collection on the life of Champlain. Mostly avoiding the hagiographic accounts common in Champlain historiography, the book tackles the many complex dimensions of his life.

and David Hackett Fischer (2009) document Viking, Basque, Norman, Spanish, and English visits to the North Atlantic from approximately the 11th century until French explorer Jacques Cartier⁶ planted a cross with the inscription *Vive le Roy de France* [Long Live the King of France] on the Gaspé Peninsula in 1534⁷.

In 1604, Champlain, under the command of his friend Sieur Dugua de Mons, a Protestant nobleman and member of King Henry IV's "Gentleman of the King's Chamber," eventually colonized a region of present-day Maine⁸. What they called St-Croix Island became the basis for the small French settlement of *La Cadie*⁹ on the *Baie Française* (later, Bay of Fundy). After a disastrous winter in which the majority of the settlers died from scurvy, Champlain and de Mons abandoned the settlement and re-settled in nearby Port Royal (later Annapolis Royal). Champlain, du Mons, and the rest of the settlers stayed in Port-Royal until autumn, 1607, when they returned to France (Turgeon, 2004; Fischer, 2009).

⁶ Trudel (2001) explains how King François I sent Cartier to New France to "discover certain islands where we say that we could find gold and other riches" (p.21, my translation).

⁷ Dickinson & Young (1993) claim that by 1580, more than 400 French, Spanish, and Portuguese ships with up to 10,000 sailors were involved in the cod fishery, the most important trans-Atlantic commerce, even greater than the gold and silver trade between South America and Spain.

⁸ Henderson (1997) explains how the French expedition was met by a group of Miqmaq fishermen led by Chief Messamouet, who spoke French and had visited France over 25 years prior as a guest of the Governor of Bayonne in French Basque territory (p.77-8).

⁹ Fischer (2009) explains that the origins of the term "la Cadie" are debatable. The name first appeared on American maps in the 16th century. It has been linked to Giovanni de Verrazzano's use of the Greek term Arkadia to describe North Carolina's handsome trees. Under this belief, the name moved slowly northward with subsequent cartographers. A competing understanding argues that l'Acadie is a derivation of a Miq'maq word, evidenced by such place names as "Tracadie" (in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) and "Shubenacadie" (in Nova Scotia) (p.150-52).

While in France, du Mons and Champlain re-negotiated a monopoly of all trade in *New France* with King Henry IV. De Mons set out to return to La Cadie¹⁰ and Champlain set out to pursue his dream of a permanent settlement in the St-Lawrence River Valley. They sailed in early spring 1608 and Champlain arrived in Tadoussac on June 3, 1608. He eventually arrived in what is now Québec City on July 3, 1608, the day that is now commemorated as the founding of Québec. I return to a more in depth discussion of the significance of this moment in chapter 4.

As in all white settler societies¹¹, French settlers in the Americas encountered indigenous resistance. The accounts in the historical record describe the encounter between Champlain and his men and indigenous settlers in many divergent ways. The most common narrative highlights the peaceful nature of the encounter (see Lacoursière, 1995; Dickason, 1997; Fischer, 2009). While there is no doubt that French colonization in the Americas had a different texture than both English and Spanish colonization, the degree to which the French were more “civil” remains a lively debate both within

¹⁰ The descendants of these settlers are considered today’s Acadians, who are dispersed across North America, but most importantly in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Québec, Louisiana, and Maine.

¹¹ According to Sherene Razack (2002), “A white settler society is one established by Europeans on non-European soil. Its origins lie in the dispossession and near extermination of Indigenous populations by the conquering Europeans. As it evolves, a white settler society continues to be structured by a racial hierarchy. In the national mythologies of such societies, it is believed that white people came first and that it is they who principally developed the land; Aboriginal peoples are presumed to be mostly dead or assimilated. European settlers thus *become* the original inhabitants and the group most entitled to the fruits of citizenship...In North America it is still the case that European conquest and colonization are often denied, largely through the fantasy that North America was peacefully settled and not colonized” (p.1-2).

Québec¹² and outside of Québec¹³. In fact, a number of scholars have been tackling this problematic in recent studies¹⁴.

From the early settlement to the turn of the 18th century, French settlers and their indigenous allies engaged in constant warfare with the Haudenosaunee confederacy (Five Nations), which the French called *Iroquois*. Through several particularly pitched battles, including the battle at Lake Champlain in present-day New York State in 1609¹⁵; the battle near present-day Midland, Ontario in 1649¹⁶; and the battle on the banks of the

¹² For example, Richard Desjardins, a popular musician and film director, and his collaborator Robert Monderie released their National Film Board of Canada film *Nation Invisible* in 2007. The film documents the historical and contemporary mistreatment of the Algonquin people of Québec at the hands of, alternatively, French-Canadian settlers and present-day Québécois subjects, which the filmmakers compare to genocide. The film won a number of awards including the 2008 Jutra award for Best Documentary; it also sparked debate about the film's analysis of colonialism in Québec (National Film Board of Canada, 2007).

¹³ The "Jamestown, Québec, Santa Fe" exhibit commissioned by the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, was the Canadian Museum of Civilization's contribution to the Québec 400. The exhibit compared the English, French, and Spanish colonization of the Americas through the example of the three cities celebrating their 400 anniversaries in 2007, 2008, and 2009, respectively. Despite its claim that the French, through their system of alliances and networks, were more amicable towards indigenous peoples, the exhibit concluded that in all cases European colonization resulted in "challenges on an earth-shattering scale" for indigenous peoples.

¹⁴ For example, Havard & Vidal (2003), Aubert (2004), Belmessous (2005) and Hodson & Rushforth (2010) all critically engage with the hegemonic view that French imperialism was more "civil" than either its British, Spanish, or Dutch equivalents.

¹⁵ Fischer (2009) explains how Champlain accompanied his indigenous allies to Ticonderoga near the confluence of Lake George and Lake Champlain in New York State. Upon launching into battle, Champlain pulled out his *arquebus à ruet* and killed 3 Iroquois chiefs with one shot. The Iroquois were stunned and eventually retreated, but not before losing 50 warriors, mostly through French gunfire (p.263-70).

¹⁶ This battle took place in historical Wendake, a region of present-day Ontario along the east end of Georgian Bay. French Jesuits had long maintained a mission among the people they called *Hurons* (Wendat), which was attacked by the Iroquois in March, 1649. The attack resulted in the defeat of the Wendat and the death of eight Jesuit priests, later commemorated as the Holy Canadian Martyrs. Most of the remaining Wendat marched to Québec City with the few remaining Jesuit, while others eventually settled in Oklahoma, southern Ontario, Michigan, and Kansas. See Georges Sioui (1992 & 1999) for in-depth

Ottawa River near present-day Carillon, Québec in 1660¹⁷, the Iroquois became the French enemy, later allied with the Dutch and English. The figure of the Iroquois savage, though changing in some significant ways due to the liberal discourse of cultural pluralism in Québec, remains strong in Québec¹⁸.

The British Conquest

From the Plains of Abraham to the Rebellions of 1837-38

With the rise of the British colonies to the east, west, and south, the imperial rivalry between France and Britain intensified. The advent of the Seven Years' War brought this long-simmering battle to a head, leading to several momentous events in French Canada. First, Britain liquidated Acadia of most of its French-Canadian settlers. The event, known as the Great Expulsion, began in 1755 and lasted several years, during which the British expelled over 10,000 Acadians to France, Britain, and other British holdings in North America. Thousands of Acadians died in transit or during the removals, and many lived

overview of the battle in question and the subsequent hardships generations of Huron-Wendat have faced in Québec, Canada, and the United States.

¹⁷ This battle pitched French-Canadian soldier Adam Dollard-des-Ormeaux and a small group of volunteers against a large Iroquois military expedition at Long-Sault on the Ottawa River. While the Iroquois warriors killed the entire group of French and indigenous allies, Dollard-des-Ormeaux has long been credited for saving Montréal from certain destruction. See Gilles Bibeau (1995) for a critique of this heroic representation.

¹⁸ Filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin captures the imagery of the Iroquois savage at play during the "Oka Crisis" in her 1993 film "Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance" (National Film Board of Canada, 1993). Réal Brisson (2000) does something similar when he compares political cartoons about the "Oka Crisis" in French Canada and English Canada. Amelia Kalant's (2004) study of the conflict provides an equally important critical history of the French-Iroquois relationship.

in exile in present-day Québec¹⁹ and the Acadian Peninsula in northern New Brunswick (Frégault, 1969; Dupont, 1977; Landry & Lang, 2001; Vidal & Havard, 2006)²⁰.

After the ethnic cleansing *ante litteram* of Acadia was undertaken, the British set their sights on other French imperial possessions in New France, especially the City of Québec, the most important settlement at the time. The pivotal battle in the Seven Years' War was the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in September 1759. After a three-month siege of the city by the British, General Wolfe led his troops in battle against the Marquis Montcalm on September 13. After about an hour, the British won the battle and eventually took the city, followed by Montréal a year later. France eventually ceded all of its territories in New France to Great Britain in the Treaty of Paris of 1763 (Lamonde, 2000, p.19-23).

The period between the defeat at the Plains of Abraham in 1759 and the *Patriotes'* Rebellions in 1837-38 was a time of enormous change in what the British called "Lower Canada." In order to respond to internal and external demands for a representative assembly as set out by the Treaty of Paris, the British authorities eventually signed the Constitutional Act of 1791, which set up a bicameral system with an elected Legislative Assembly and appointed Legislative Council. The Act, which laid the groundwork for British rule in Lower Canada, found large support among the Catholic Church, French-Canadian bourgeoisie, and the small minority of British colonists (Lamonde, 2000, p.38-52). Yet, the *Parti canadien* (later, *Parti patriote*), the largest party in the Legislative

¹⁹ Paul (2000) tells the story of how the Acadian settlement was given formal protection by the Mi'kmaq for a time prior to the Great Expulsion (p.53-60).

²⁰ Bill Marshall (2009) states that about 2,900 Acadians were eventually deported to France, many of them to La Rochelle. In his words, "In 1785 seven ships...left Nantes taking 1600 Acadians to a new life in Louisiana, in a voyage paid for by the Spanish Crown" (p.73).

Assembly, quickly fell out of favour with the powers of the Legislative Council, which continuously overruled Legislative Assembly decisions. After years of protest through official channels, *Patriote* leaders became disillusioned and joined a growing rural movement against British rule (Bernier & Salée, 1992, p.99-128; Greer, 2003, p.137-52). The movement eventually led to the Rebellions of 1837-38, in which the *Patriotes* launched a military campaign for French-Canadian political independence (Dickinson & Young, 1993; Laporte, 2004). After several short battles, the Rebellions were eventually crushed in 1837 with devastating effects: the constitution and most civil liberties were suspended; entire villages were razed to the ground; and nine Rebellion leaders were executed and many others were imprisoned and/or exiled to British colonies such as Bermuda and Australia (Greer, 2003, p. 3-4).

Historian Yves Lamonde (2000, p.225) identifies four main ideological currents behind the Rebellions: the anti-metropolitan dimension (against London-based rule); the anti-governmental dimension (against the Legislative council's protection of British interests); the anti-clerical position (against the Catholic Church's tithe and collusion with British authorities); and the anti-feudal dimension (against the entrenched social inequalities in Lower Canada inherited from the French regime). These four currents would continue to influence subsequent forms of French-Canadian nationalism.

The Great Darkness: Lord Durham to World War II

The period directly after the defeat of the Rebellions was traumatic to many in Lower Canada. The British government appointed John George Lambton, the first Earl of Durham, to investigate the causes of the Rebellions of 1837-38. He published his report,

known as the “Durham Report,” in 1839. In it, he disparaged French Canadians and called for their assimilation to superior British ways²¹. The British government eventually signed the Act of Union of 1840, which abolished the legislatures of Lower and Upper Canada and created a new political entity, the Province of Canada. The British government saw the union of the Canadas as a way to diminish French-Canadian influence in governance and to assimilate French-Canadians, in following many of Durham’s recommendations.

In the period after the passing of the Act of Union, the former *Patriotes* and their allies²² continued to organize against the union of the Canadas and of British rule more generally. At the same time, the Catholic Church regained its place of prominence in French-Canadian society, one temporarily displaced by the political energy of the *Patriotes* movement and, in particular, its anti-clerical tendencies. The Church rode a new wave of clerico-nationalism²³ taking root as a conservative reaction to the ideals mounting from the French Revolution. The Catholic Church of Quebec found support for its anti-modernist and anti-democratic doctrine from as far afield as the Vatican and many European churches.

Along with the strong influence of the Catholic Church, this period is also marked by a “re-discovery” of French-Canadian roots in France (Lamonde, 2000, p.383-400). In particular, Bouchard (2000) has explained how one of the results of the constant threat

²¹ Bruce Curtis (2008) has written a pertinent study of Durham’s time in British North America from May 29, 1838 to November 1, 1838.

²² It is important to note, as have Bernier & Salée (1992, p. 99-106), that the *Patriotes* movement was not simply a French-Canadian movement, but that it found support from many other residents of Lower Canada, including most notably large segments of the Irish-Catholic urban communities.

²³ Nadia Fahmy-Eid’s (2002) chapter on the rise of “ultramontanism” in Québec during this period points out the many contradictions in this movement.

French-Canadians endured from English Canada and even the United States was how the nation found comfort in the French tradition (Old World), especially since the elites saw French Canadian culture as comparatively poor. Another notable event during this period was the huge wave of French-Canadians that emigrated from Québec to other jurisdictions, especially New England in the United States (Ouellet, 1993). In fact, Yolande Lavoie (1981) has estimated that nearly 40% of the population, or just over 900,000 people between 1840-1930, moved from rural Québec to urban New England, taking up poor-paying jobs in the textile industry alongside other new immigrants from Ireland, Poland, and other mostly East European countries²⁴. This century-long period in French-Canadian history is generally referred to as the *Grand noirceur* [Great Darkness] (see Bouchard, 2005 for a critical discussion).

The Arrival of Québec

The Quiet Revolution and the Birth of 20th Century Québec Nationalism

The next period of Québec history noted in all of its major histories is what has become known as the “Quiet Revolution”²⁵. While there is no consensus about the beginning of

²⁴ Several of my own ancestors followed this route south, eventually settling in Lowell, MA. Some later returned to settle in Ontario after the signing of the Robinson-Huron Treaty between the British Crown and Anishnaabe of the Lake Nipissing area (see Lawrence, 2002 for a discussion of this social and political context). From rural Canada East to urban New England and then to rural Ontario in three generations, I was born in Sudbury to French-Canadian parents who both have similar histories of (forced) migration. Historian Mary Blewett (1990) has written a thoughtful labour history of the period in Lowell, while Yves Roby (1990) has done a history of the Franco-Americans of New England.

²⁵ Courville (2000) notes how a journalist at the Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail* coined the term “Quiet Revolution” to describe the changes going on Québec in the 1960s. Québécois political leaders and intellectuals came to embrace the term, though it has unfortunately come to be associated with an understanding of Québec’s late embrace

the Revolution itself, for many scholars the election of Jean Lesage's Québec Liberal Party in 1960 marked a turning point in the history of Québec (see Courville, 2000, p.387; Behiels, 1985, p.3-7)²⁶. Prior to the election of Lesage, Maurice Duplessis, the founding leader of the highly conservative *Union nationale*, which was closely aligned with the Catholic Church, had been in office since 1944²⁷.

In September, 1960, a few months after Lesage's election, the *Rassemblement pour l'indépendance nationale* (RIN) [The Assembly for National Independence], a precursor to today's *Parti Québécois*, was formed and immediately called for Québec's total independence from Canada in its founding manifesto (see D'Allemagne, 2000, for an overview of the RIN's history). Over the next several years it organized major demonstrations to protest Queen Elizabeth's visit to Québec City in 1964 and future Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau's presence at the St-Jean-Baptiste Day celebrations in 1968. In the 1966 election, RIN leader Pierre Bourgault ran in Duplessis' old riding in the city of Trois-Rivières, nearly pulling out an upset against the old-guard *Union nationale* and Québec Liberal Party (Bernard, 1997).

of modernity (p.387). Gérard Bouchard (2005) has refuted the dominant thesis about the Quiet Revolution, suggesting that its early analysts focused almost exclusively on the rupture in Québec society, at the cost of linking the changes during the period to a *return* of radical thought in Québec (p.426).

²⁶ As an example of a counter-argument, Weinmann (1987) argues that June 24, 1969 (St-Jean-Baptiste Day) marks the definite turning point in Québec's history as *Québec* and no longer French Canada.

²⁷ Behiels (1985) has traced the history of the intellectual movements leading to the Quiet Revolution to two ascendant forms of nationalism that challenged traditional French-Canadian nationalism. The first, neo-nationalism, centred around *Le Devoir* and *L'action nationale* and set out to build a secular, Québécois nation-state. The second movement, liberalism, sought a pluralistic, innovative francophone society no longer under the thumb of the Catholic Church and free from all forms of traditional French-Canadian nationalism.

In an important sense, the Quiet Revolution articulated Québec-specific responses to global movements for social justice and independence, much as the *Pariotes* Rebellions, which were influenced by the American and French Revolutions, did nearly a century-and-a-half prior. At the height of the civil rights movement in the United States and the anti-colonial struggles in the Global South, the most radical wings of the Québec nationalist movement often drew important parallels between the struggles of the Québécois and those of various colonized peoples worldwide²⁸.

Québec nationalism took many different forms during the 1960s. Besides the RIN, the centre-right group *Ralliement national* (RN), and the *Mouvement Souveraineté-Association* (MSA), a breakaway group founded by former Québec Liberal Party MNA René Lévesque, were two other significant *indépendantistes* organizations. Only five months after its formation, in April 1968, the MSA held a general assembly in east-end Montréal that attracted 5,000 delegates and observers. At the meeting, the MSA supported these two main tenets:

1. That Québec accede to the rank of a sovereign State;
2. That Québec adopt a veritable popular democracy, committed to economic liberation, to social progress, and to the cultural development of *les Québécois*.

(Bernard, 1997, p.25-6)

²⁸ Pierre Vallières's (1968) now classic book *Les nègres blancs d'Amérique* [The White Niggers of America] was written while he was imprisoned in a maximum-security prison in New York State for manslaughter, charges for which he was later acquitted. Vallières was for a time a leading figure in the *Front de libération du Québec* (FLQ), an organization Mary Jean Green (2003) claims took its name in honour of the *Front de libération national* (FLN) in Algeria. Albert Memmi (1972) also referred to the question of the colonized nature of French Canadians in his revised edition of *The Colonizer and the Colonized*.

The meeting and its statement for Québec independence laid the groundwork for the formation of the *Parti Québécois* in 1968 following the merger of the RN and the *Mouvement Souveraineté-Association* (and later, the RIN).

The *Parti Québécois* took its place at centre stage in Québec politics just at the moment when certain strands of the nationalist movement became more radical, leading to major confrontations with the Canadian state. Most notable among these was the imposition of the War Measures Act by Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1970, in an event that would later come to be called the “October Crisis.” During this time, the Canadian security forces arrested hundreds of residents of Québec without charge, including many prominent intellectuals and artists. Meanwhile, the *Front de liberation du Québec*, the paramilitary wing of the radical Québec nationalist movement, executed Québec Minister of Labour Pierre Laporte, among other activities, including kidnappings (see Dickinson and Young, 1993, p.312-13).

After some early electoral success, the *Parti Québécois* won the Québec general election in 1976 and eventually followed through on its promise to hold a referendum on independence. The referendum, on May 20, 1980, resulted in nearly 40% of residents of Québec voting for Québec sovereignty-association with Canada, not the majority the PQ had wanted to pursue its political project (see Dickinson and Young, 1993, p.314).

Another major event that marked the Canada-Québec relationship during this period was the 1982 repatriation of the Canadian Constitution by Prime Minister Trudeau and the adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the same year. Québec had adopted its own Charter in 1975, one many of its citizens continue to see as quite superior to the Canadian version. Political scientist Daniel Salée has attributed

much of the political support for independence during this period to a rejection of the new discourse on cultural pluralism emanating from Canada. In particular, the effacement of the two founding nations discourse in favour of official multiculturalism in Canada meant that Québec forms of nationalism articulated a new basis for unity against the Canadian state. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms only exacerbated an already tenuous situation, leading to a political crisis in Québec: “It obfuscated the notion of the two founding majorities historically insisted upon by Quebec,” Salée (1995) explains, “by promoting a cultural policy founded on constitutional minoritarianism. From then on, Quebec would have much less political clout than its history allowed” (p.301). This political slight, along with a number of other disagreements over judicial decisions, economic partnerships, legislative independence, and the general disdain for the Jean Chrétien government among Québécois led to an almost-successful referendum vote in 1995, in which the “Yes” side lost by only a few thousand votes²⁹. The next section examines theories of nationalism, and in particular, theories of Québec nationalism.

Nations and Nationalism: Tropes of Survival in Québec and the Loser Mythistory

One prominent feature of scholarly work on nationalism in the past few decades is the emphasis on the constructed nature of the nation. I still remember the first time I read and discussed Benedict Anderson’s work during my opening course at graduate school: I was utterly flabbergasted at the realization that nations and states were relatively *new* social and political formations. And I could hardly contain my excitement at my rather naïve

²⁹ Anne Trépanier (2001) has written an insightful study on the multiplicity of the discourses at play in the “yes” side during the 1995 referendum, building on Benedict Anderson’s work on nationalism.

conclusion: nations and states, as recent constructions, could give way to more liberatory forms of social and political organization.

To help explain this curious phenomenon, Benedict Anderson's work on the imaginative dimensions of national formation has been key in cultural theory since the advent of his *Imagined Communities* (1991). In it, he traces the development of national consciousness through the demise of the religious and dynastic realms in Western Europe, and the subsequent rise of print capitalism. Through the development of the mass reproduction of newspapers and books in vernacular languages (i.e., French, German, English versus Latin), a growing sense of national belonging arose among people who had not previously known such *national* identity, having been organized mainly in relation to religious or dynastic communities of filiation (p.37-46). In this way, he argues that the nation has become a primary modern institution.

Anderson directs us to the ways in which nations are culturally imagined, primarily through spatial-linguistic means, where otherwise disparate individuals come to see themselves as closely related. This "deep, horizontal comradeship" (1991, p.7) between national subjects who might never actually meet each other points to how nations are imagined as communities, where inequality and exploitation are underplayed in order to mobilize national subjects around shared *national* values.

Anderson's understanding emphasizes the "imagined" quality of nations as opposed to an understanding that sees the *a priori* existence of nations evolving from a primordial past, such as in the work of Anthony Smith (2003), another noted scholar of

nations who traces the ethnic beginning of nations to a pre-modern period³⁰. Despite his focus on the discursive realm, Anderson (1991) is careful not to equate “imagination” with “falsity” or “fabrication,” pointing out that, “communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined” (p.6).

While Anderson uses the example of print capitalism to explain the rise of nationalism in Western Europe, Eric Hobsbawm (1983) uses what he calls “invented traditions,” or what he defines as “a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and norms of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past” (p.1). Hobsbawm directs us to how the repetitive nature of a given tradition must establish continuity with a *suivable* historical past, or one that fits the national imagination. Importantly, in order to construct/fabricate nations as natural entities, historical continuity must be constantly re-invented with new symbols and devices, which, he argues, ultimately seek to redefine who belongs in the nation. As a result, repetition and reference to a continuous past are keys to Hobsbawm’s notion of the invention of tradition, which lies at the centre of the modern national imagination. Commemoration, as a common strategy to construct collective national memory in the 21st century, stands out as an important technique of nation-building and expression of nationalism, in the sense Anderson and Hobsbawm develop.

Of the many Québec scholars who study the complex nature of present-day Québec nationalism, Gérard Bouchard is one of the most prominent. In his book, *Genèse des*

³⁰ Smith’s (2003) primary argument is that many modern forms of nationalism have origins in pre-modern ethnic communities. He essentially disagrees with Anderson temporal understanding of the origins of nationalism.

nations et culture du nouveau monde: Essai d'histoire comparée [The Genesis of New World Culture and Nations: An Essay in Comparative History], Bouchard argues that the ideology of *survivance* [survival] was at the heart of Québec nationalism between 1840-1940, a period that coincides with the defeat of the Rebellions to the first stirrings of the Quiet Revolution. He identifies several main propositions that form the basis of this ideology: the defeat at the Plains of Abraham, the failure of the 1837-38 Rebellions, and consequent British policies meant the nation took a defensive posture that focused on the protection of established (limited) rights and a vision of the past that saw its ultimate survival in its unique culture (viz. religion, language, and memory). From this first proposition, the French-Canadian (and later Québécois) nation recognized its precarious position within North America, one that led to a resilient anxiety about its rightful place in the world. The last element of this ideology was how the nation represented itself as exceptionally homogenous, giving it an advantage in regard to cohesiveness and solidarity, in contrast to English Canada and the United States (Bouchard, 2000, p.107-110).

In many ways, historian Lionel Groulx,³¹ perhaps the most prominent French-Canadian nationalist in the first half of the 20th century, articulates the ideology of *survivance* that Bouchard identifies. Frédéric Boily (2003) has demonstrated how throughout his body of work Groulx articulates a vision of French Canadian nationalism, in which only the true, one hundred percent French-Canadian will be able to survive the onslaught of modern society. Boily argues that Groulx's work resembles that of noted German primordialist Johann Gottfried Herder, especially in his reliance on language as

³¹ Groulx founded the first-ever university history chair in French Canada at l'Université de Montréal in 1915.

the foundation of French-Canadian society³². Anne Trépanier (2001), in her study of the 1995 Québec referendum, also makes the link between Herder's primordialist philosophy and the origins of what she calls "hegemonic national discourses" (p.13) in Québec. "In fact," she explains, "the nation exists like a living organism in the hearts and the minds of its members; it is lived like a 'interior collective personality'" (2001, p.13, my translation), echoing Herder's primordialist position.

While some of Groulx's nationalist ideas are now discredited in Québec historiography³³, there remains quite a bit of support for the ideology of *survivance* itself. Sociologist Mathieu Bock-Coté (2007) has positioned himself as one of the primary defenders of this ideology. In his book *La dénationalisation tranquille* [The Quiet Denationalization], he probes the historical dimensions of Québécois identity, and specifically, the ways in which cultural pluralism is threatening its survival. Anne Trépanier (2008), analyzing his desire to "give the Québécois back their lost pride" (p.244), has suggested that Bock-Coté is one of Groulx's intellectual descendants. She explains:

[His] argument is clear and contains one thesis: the permanence of *la société québécoise*'s historical unity and uniqueness must pass through the nation's recognition of and defense against attacks by pluralism and

³² Eve Haque (2005), in her study of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism of 1963, provides a good overview of Herder's primordialist philosophy. She explains: "Herder believed that the sustaining and integrating power of language would lead to higher rates of social cohesion and the conscious fostering of a common linguistic medium and the emergence of a Volk or a "people" (p.5). This led to what she calls the "blood and belonging" form of nationalism.

³³ There is still much debate in Québec over the role Groulx played in Québec society. Esther Deslisle (1992) wrote a book about Groulx's fascist tendencies that was roundly criticized, including by Gérard Bouchard (2003). In another context, Desbiens (1997) has written about Groulx's "Eurocentric" nationalism, Ethier-Blais (1993) has written a study of Groulx's important influence over the course of the 20th century in Québec, and Rudin (1997) has discussed Groulx's spectre in Québec historiography.

political correctness. In other words, *la société québécoise* will not succeed if the nation continues to be threatened by a denial of its traditions and of its French Canadian history. (p.244, my translation)

Jacques Beauchemin (2002), a leading sociologist at l'Université du Québec à Montréal, makes a similar, if less conservative argument in his now-classic *L'histoire en trop: La mauvaise conscience des souverainistes québécois* [Too Much History: Québec Sovereignists' Bad Conscience]. His primary argument is that Québec nationalism, as expressed by the *Franco-Québécois*, forms the basis of a legitimate political claim: "to assert a memory and a history" (p.184, my translation). Beauchemin makes an argument quite common to Québec nationalism, whether on the right or left: "Québec francophones accepted long ago the diversity that constitutes Québec identity. But it is now time that we make room for their legitimate desire to be who they are" (p.185, my translation). Beauchemin's rejects the argument that Québec nationalism is an anti-democratic and ethnocentric movement that is obsessed with re-situating the French-Canadian Québécois in a place of dominance. In an important sense, Bock-Côté (2007) shares some of Beauchemin's more nuanced critiques of "identity politics," when he argues unequivocally that one of the primary enemies of contemporary Québec nationalism is an anti-racist Marxism, which, he argues, has contributed to the process of denationalization he introduces.

The debate and discussion about the nature of nationalism in Québec is quite dynamic. Jocelyn Letourneau, who, along with Gérard Bouchard, is perhaps the most well-known historian of Québec nationalism, demonstrates the intellectual tradition that questions Québec forms of nationalism. In a recent article, he claims that the French-Canadian Québécois continue to rely on "a stock of histories where they invariably

appear like losers” whereby “[this] discourse returns like a leitmotif to frame the large majority of situations to which French-Canadian Québécois either find themselves, often before those situations even play themselves out” (2006, p.159, my translation). What Letourneau calls the loser *mythistoire*³⁴, comes from the strength and dominance of a particular nationalist discourse in the formation of historical consciousness in Québec. He relies on the works of Homi K. Bhabha, a foremost post-colonial theorist, to make his claims. Bhabha (1990) sees the emergence of the nation as a narrative with its own history linked to imperial culture. He begins his introduction to his influential collection *Nation and Narration* by gesturing to the symbolic unity of nations, in a formulation he credits Benedict Anderson for shaping:

Nations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind’s eye. Such an image of the nation - or narration - might seem impossibly romantic and excessively metaphorical, but it is from those traditions of political thought and literary language that the nation emerges as a powerful historical idea in the west. An idea whose cultural compulsion lies in the impossible unity of the nation as a symbolic force. (p.2)

By collapsing the “political thought” of nations with the “literary language” of narratives, Bhabha points to the imagined, nostalgic nature of the nation form. He also directs us to the fragmentary nature of nations and consequently questions the modernist obsession with the “purity” and homogeneity of nations. He develops this approach to the study of nations in the belief that,

The ambivalent, antagonistic perspective of nation as narration will establish the cultural boundaries of the nation so that they may be acknowledged as containing thresholds of meaning that must be eroded, erased, and translated in the process of cultural production. (Bhabha, 1990,

³⁴ Letourneau defines *mythistoire* as “a realist fiction, a system of explanation, and a mobilizing message that meets a recipient’s claim for meaning, if not their desire for belief” (2006, p.162). I use the translation “mythistory” here.

p.4)

As a result of his “antagonistic” approach, Bhabha troubles the “centre,” pointing to ambivalence, resistance, and liminality in national projects. Geoffrey Bennington (1990), writing in Bhabha’s edited collection *Nation and Narration*, further explains the types of narratives at play in the making of the nation, narratives on full display throughout the Québec 400: “We undoubtedly find narration at the centre of the nation: stories of national origins, myths of founding fathers, genealogies of heroes. At the origin of the nation, we find a story of the nation’s origins” (p.121). In this way, the meaning of the nation is produced through narratives that get expressed in multiple sites including history, literature, theatre, television, and newspapers.

Reading the nation for its narrated quality allows one to interrogate the many identities produced in its narration, much the same way that considering the imagined nature of nations does. But, how do narratives accomplish the imaginative process of producing and rupturing national communities? Again, Bhabha (1990) offers a primer to my discussion, one that correlates well with my focus on commemoration: “The scraps, patches and rags of daily life must be repeatedly turned into signs of a national culture, while the very act of the narrative performance interpellates a growing circle of national subjects” (p.297). In terms of Québec, Letourneau argues that the loser mythistory continues to be dominant today. He argues that two narrative pillars continue to support the loser mythistory: survival and a deflected destiny, of which I offer a brief summary.

Letourneau argues that the survival discourse is linked to a teleological vision of national destiny that Québec cannot escape until it reaches its ultimate destiny: political independence. He claims that many intellectuals in Québec, including Gérard Bouchard,

are stuck in this “episteme of lack,” one that “holds [Québec] back in a state of submission, of depletion, and of subordination to history and itself” (2006, p.168, my translation). Another important narrative pillar supporting the loser mythistory is that Québec’s destiny has been deflected through a series of historical events. Letourneau explains this narrative:

Always at the fork in the road of its destiny, the Québécois subject is continuously invited by History to reintegrate a happy story, an option that he should have logically chosen but delays to take because the derivation caused long ago by the Conquest – a hook reinforced by many other subsequent events – dug a deep fissure through which his evolution finally took place and from which he has trouble untangling himself. It is not easy to change an historical course, in this case, one that has developed a genuine complex of defeat, even helplessness, once it has been maintained for two centuries. (p.173, my translation)

Letourneau (2006) argues that a new story about the Québécois subject is currently being built in Québec, one that is “more serene, positive, and optimistic” (p.176, my translation). His hope for a new national narrative, what he calls *passer à l’avenir* [a future history] in his book of the same name (2000), is still held back by the hegemonic “episteme of lack.” “Public discourse,” he explains, “remains under the influence and stranglehold of those who see the Québécois adventure from the angle of continual defeat and tell it like a story of losers” (2006, p.180, my translation). In many ways, with my interest in nationalism in Québec, this study interrogates how the loser mythistory continues to sanction public discourse in Québec.

As Québec feminist scholar Gada Mahrouse (2008) has argued, one effect that this public discourse in Québec has is the disavowal of its racialized dimensions. In particular, she has reflected on how particular forms of nationalism in Québec, what I would suggest Letourneau captures in his theorization of the interrelated dimensions of the loser

mythistory, might in fact stifle challenges to the normative racialized status quo in Québec. This framing of Québec as “unique and exceptional,” as Mahrouse (2008) maintains, means that two possible positions exist:

One can either be sympathetic to the preservation of francophone rights and culture, *or* be complicit in its repression. A more nuanced critique, one that can appreciate both the desire to subvert Anglo-hegemony, and point out the racist exclusions that are justified in the name of protecting national identity, has rarely been articulated in this debate. (p.19)

With the questions I raise about the normative Québécois subject position produced through the Québec 400, I have sought to cast a critical eye on the ways in which various forms of nationalism in Québec might operate to limit an engagement with the dynamics of race in Québec society.

The next chapter examines the relationship among several key events in Québec throughout 2007 and 2008, including the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, the Hérouxville Code of Conduct, the rise of the *Action démocratique du Québec* political party, the Québec Identity Act, and the Government of Québec’s new immigrant integration policy. Through an analysis of these events, I investigate how the production of “difference” in Québec relies on discourses about cultural diversity circulating in Western liberal democracies. In particular, I argue that through these various state practices, a normative “French-Canadian Québécois” subject is produced against a racialized Other. Throughout this next chapter I reconsider the identity “crisis” brought on by the events during this period in light of the politics of cultural pluralism in Québec.

Chapter Three

Québec Identity and the Production of Difference: The Bouchard-Taylor Commission, Québec Identity Act, Hérouxville Code of Conduct, and Québec's Immigrant Integration Policy

The two-year period of 2007 and 2008 was an opportune time to conduct research on the dynamics of race in Québec society. Several key events took place in Québec that put questions of race and national identity at the forefront. I have selected a number of the most important events in Québec during this period in order to tease out the various dimensions of what I am calling *discourses on difference* in Québec, and especially, to contextualize the Québec 400's attempts to construct and interpellate normative Québécois subjects. Drawing on an examination of these four sites, I argue that together they produce a form of civilizational discourse that relies on racialized and gendered notions of culture as part of a Québécois nation-building project. The liberal discourse on difference re-produces an essentialist and Euro(French)-centric understanding of cultural difference and confirms the whiteness of the normative Québécois national subject.

This chapter mostly follows a chronological path through these events, and as such, begins with the 2007 Québec general elections and the public release of the Hérouxville Code of Conduct in January 2007. From there, I introduce one of the most talked-about events in Québec during this period, the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences (The Bouchard-Taylor Commission), which was formed in February, 2007, and tabled its final report in May, 2008, just as the Québec 400 was starting to gain momentum. The next event I analyze is the introduction of the Québec Identity Act (Bill 195) by the *Parti Québécois* at the Québec National Assembly in October, 2007, followed by the Government of Québec's

new immigrant integration policy released in October, 2008, just as the Québec 400 celebrations were winding down. This chapter presents and analyzes these “events” in relation to emerging academic literature on the politics of cultural pluralism in Western liberal democracies, in order to explicate their relationship to the questions of national subject formation I adopt in this study. In particular, I argue that through relying on a discourse on difference that depoliticizes “difference,” the various events appeal to the dominant understandings of race and gender in Québec society, thereby obfuscating the civilizational dimensions of these discourses on difference.

Intercultural or Multicultural: Is that Really the Question?

In this section I discuss some of the major debates about how Québécois and Canadian approaches to managing cultural difference diverge and converge, in order to tease out my analysis of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, the Québec Identity Act, the Hérouxville Code of Conduct, and Québec’s Immigrant Integration Policy later in the chapter. Québec’s approach to the management of cultural pluralism formally abandons the concept of multiculturalism in Canada for interculturalism, defined as the set of institutional rights and responsibilities associated with policies on tolerance and respect of differences within a French-language social environment. Unlike Canada, where a specific multiculturalism policy was enacted in 1971 (see Bannerji, 2000; Day, 2000; Mackey, 2002; Haque, 2005 for critical overviews), Québec’s interculturalism policy is not grounded in any single policy. The 1990 policy document *Au Québec pour bâtir ensemble : Énoncé de politique en matière d’immigration et d’intégration* [In Québec to Build Together: Policy Declaration on the Question of Immigration and Integration]

comes closest to articulating the unique policy implications of interculturalism. These include three main tenets: French as the language of public life; a democratic society where everyone is expected and encouraged to participate and contribute; and an open, pluralist society that respects democratic values and inter-communitarian exchange (Government of Québec, 1990). Furthermore, Azzeddine Marhraoui (2005), in his literature review of studies of racism in Québec, argues the conventional view in Québec that interculturalism is based on a conception of “integration” that constitutes a two-pronged approach: acquiring French and developing a sense of belonging to Québec society.

The debate about Québec versus Canadian approaches to cultural pluralism is lively in Québec. In her overview of the debate, Amy Nugent (2006), a former public servant for the Governments of Canada and Québec working on their respective cultural pluralism files, argues: “It is evident that the policies are very similar in their origins, aims, and evolution. Each policy is limited by individual fundamental rights and freedoms as guaranteed in bills of rights and by the jurisdiction’s respective language laws” (p.32). The key policy difference, in her opinion, is how each favours integrating immigrants according to specific English- and/or French-language priorities.

Nugent’s arguments aside, the general consensus in Québec is that the intercultural approach is more favourable to inter-ethnic/racial harmony. Within these arguments, interculturalism is taken to mean an openness to the Other, to cultural exchange, and to respecting identities that stands in stark contrast to Canada’s more amorphous and individualistic multiculturalism (see Juteau, McAndrew & Pietrantonio, 1998; Labelle, 2000; Labelle & Rocher, 2004; Lefebvre, 2008). Political scientist Daniel

Salée (2007), in his review of the various debates in Québec on the management of cultural diversity, explains the position that favours Québec's approach to diversity management, one he claims Québec sovereigntist scholars and commentators argue: "They believe that the Quebec state has set the francophone majority culture a more honourable, integrative role as a hub toward which minority cultures and identities converge to partake in a common civic culture that rallies all Quebecers, regardless of origin" (p.115). Capturing this analysis, Alain Gagnon and Raffaele Iacovino (2005) explain how Québec's intercultural approach is based on a process of "cultural convergence" that diverges substantially from the Canadian multicultural approach:

[Interculturalism] contends that the incorporation of immigrants or minority cultures into the larger political community is a reciprocal endeavour – a 'moral contract' between the host society and the particular cultural group, in the aim of establishing a forum for the empowerment of all citizens – a 'common public culture.' (p.30)

They go on to argue against the Canadian multicultural approach on the grounds that in Canada, integration "came at the expense of the recognition and preservation of minority cultures – which in the final analysis is the defining feature of ideological multiculturalism" (p.36). In their opinion, Québec's model of cultural pluralism has made a "more serious effort to balance the prerogatives of unity with the preservation and flourishing of minority cultures" (p.40).

Danielle Juteau (2002) has argued that these policy differences are evidence of Québec's adoption of a more republican model of citizenship, underlining integration to a common culture, while Canada adheres to a more liberal conception of citizenship, emphasizing individual rights within a pluralist society. Anthropologist Talal Asad (2005) provides a good overview of the French republican tradition in his article on

“L’affaire du foulard” in France. The debate on the Islamic headscarf in French public schools led the Government of France to appoint a Commission of inquiry headed by former politician and then-Ombudsman Bernard Stasi, quite similar to the Québec experience with the Bouchard-Taylor Commission. In December, 2003, the Stasi commission submitted its final report to the President of the French Republic, and recommended a law that prohibits the display of any “conspicuous religious signs” (*des signes ostensibles*) in public schools—including most prominently, Islamic headscarves. The French National Assembly formally passed the law in February 2004.

In his historical overview of French republicanism, Asad demonstrates that the legislation is fundamentally in keeping with the French Republican tradition, where secularism is not about tolerance *per se*, but about the regulation of certain religious expressions and identities in the French public sphere. “What is at stake here, I think,” Asad (2005) explains, “is not the toleration of differences but sovereignty that defines and justifies exceptions, and the public spaces in which it does this” (p.42). Asad demonstrates that the law does just that: it excepts many instances of state-sanctioning and –financing of religious institutions on the grounds of “French” culture and identity, but refuses to allow the public display of the Islamic headscarf in schools.

Despite the general agreement in Québec that Québécois and Canadian approaches to cultural pluralism are somewhat different in *practice*, many scholars deny any fundamental differences between the ideological or discursive dimensions of these approaches. Some, in fact, argue that support for Québec’s approach is premised on nationalist discourses that are responses to Canadian attempts to marginalize further Québec within Canada. For example, Daniel Salée (2007) has argued that this debate is

“framed essentially by the ideological and politicized compulsion to assert the primacy of one national project over another” (p.116). He also argues that within this debate in Québec, the differences between interculturalism and multiculturalism “matter more for political reasons than for analytical or taxonomic reasons in the minds of those who stress them” (p.113-14). After her review of the two approaches, Nugent (2006) makes a similar argument about the politics of cultural diversity in Québec: “National mythologizing [is] more important in explaining popular and academic discourse than substantive policy differences” (p.21).

Gada Mahrouse (2008), in her critique of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission¹, also explains the *political* logic that stifles legitimate critique of Québec’s policies and practices:

One overriding tension for those from Anglophone and Allophone communities is that we are told that we do not understand the particularities of Québec history and its struggle for national identity. An appreciation of the history of Anglo-hegemony in Canada... would reveal why the integration and assimilation model of *interculturalism* is necessary in Québec.... That given its particular history as a minority culture under siege, Quebec simply cannot afford to be too tolerant, lest it be swallowed up by Anglophones and immigrants.... The point is not to wrongly imply that Quebecers are more racist or less tolerant than people in the rest of Canada, but that implicit in this reasoning is that its particular history renders the situation in Quebec as exceptional and therefore less open to criticism. (p.18)

Political scientist Danic Parenteau (2010) has also advanced several arguments to explain the reluctance to embrace multiculturalism in Québec. He highlights six key features

¹ Mahrouse (2008) makes a very useful link between the Bouchard-Taylor proceedings and the Government of Canada’s Immigrant Policy Review (1994). She argues that in both cases, “the story behind the consultation was that the nation’s heritage and culture was being eroded by the growing diversity of immigrants and by the promotion of their cultures” (p.20). Sunera Thobani (2007) has written a very extensive critique of the Immigrant Policy Review in her book *Exalted Subjects* that Mahrouse draws upon.

leading to the adoption of interculturalism and the rejection of multiculturalism in Québec: a) a widely-shared sentiment that Canadian multiculturalism is based on an elite discourse coming from above, precisely the type of discourse people in Québec are reluctant to support following the Quiet Revolution; b) a feeling in Québec that multiculturalism is held up as an ethical norm, a position that most people reject in favour of a different, yet, equally ethical position; c) a sense that multiculturalism is pushed as an historical necessity, a teleological position people in Québec reject; d) a sentiment that multiculturalism is used in Québec as a strategy of political neutralization that drowns Québec's distinct national identity in a sea of ethnic diversity; e) a feeling that multiculturalism is often explained as a post-national ideology, one that challenges the relative homogeneity of any national or cultural group, an understanding at odds with Québec nationalist aspirations; and f) a sense that multiculturalism is alien to Québec's own model of cultural pluralism. Parenteau explains that the first three positions are common critiques in other Western liberal democracies, while the latter three are unique to Québec society.

Despite the various *political* positions against multiculturalism in Québec, Parenteau (2010), Salée (2007), Nugent (2006), and Marhraoui (2005) suggest that both the Québécois and Canadian approaches to cultural pluralism are nearly identical in their individualistic understandings of society. They do acknowledge that Québec's approach is indeed influenced by the French Republican model, but still contend that the influence is much less important than most scholars in Québec generally argue. Drawing on the existing literature, I take the position that there is no profound difference between Canadian multiculturalism and Québec interculturalism; both overlap in significant ways,

especially in their philosophically and politically liberal approach and in their treatment of cultural difference as belonging outside the nation or as needing management. As

Salée (2007) puts it:

Both are premised on the state's will to foster an all-encompassing, integrative citizenship, which, ideally, would rally all. Both partake of the same liberal vision of individual equality and respect for individual freedoms; though they may apply or interpret it in varying ways, they draw from the same social and cultural normative framework. And, finally, despite the lofty and humanist ideals that are said to inform their respective understandings of diversity management, both are susceptible to straying away from those ideals or implementing them without much conviction. (p.116)

It is precisely what Salée calls the “social and cultural normative framework” in Québec that I want to tease out in this chapter, especially as to the discourses on difference I want to analyze. How can we make sense of the ways in which Québec society has managed the politics of cultural pluralism? I begin my analysis with a discussion of the 2007 Québec general elections and the release of the Hérouxville Code of Conduct, both of which led to widespread public debate in Québec about the nature of Québec values and beliefs.

The Hérouxville Code of Conduct and Unreasonable Accommodation

In the lead-up to the March 26, 2007, general elections, a debate about the appropriate level of accommodation Québec society should afford to those making specific cultural or religious claims began to gain steam. Several events in the preceding few years conspired to make this an important campaign issue. Among the stories that circulated the most during this period are the following: the Yetev Lev Orthodox Jewish congregation requesting and paying for the frosting of the windows of the YMCA du Parc gym in

Montréal in March 2006 to block the sight of women working out, a decision the YMCA later reversed on March 19, 2007, following protests by YMCA members; the *École de technologie supérieure* (ETS), an elite engineering school in Montréal, allocating “accommodation” for prayers on the grounds of the ETS following a complaint by Muslim students to the *Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse* [Québec Human Rights Tribunal] filed in April 2003; and on September 22, 2006, the Québec Human Rights Tribunal, following an initial complaint by the *Mouvement laïque québécois* [Québec Movement for Secularism], ordered the City of Laval to halt the practice of reciting a prayer at public meetings of the municipal council (Government of Québec 2008a, p.48-60).

Perhaps the most well known case of what became known as “reasonable accommodation” in Québec was the Marguerite-Bourgeoys School Board’s ruling in February, 2002, that a Sikh student, Gurbaj Singh Multani, could not wear his kirpan to school because they judged it to be a weapon. After making its way through the Québec courts, the decision was eventually overturned by the Supreme Court of Canada on March 2, 2006 (see Lefebvre 2008, p.178-80). The decision by the Supreme Court was not a popular one in Québec, largely because it was seen as de-legitimizing Québec’s judicial and political independence.

Mario Dumont, the leader of the conservative *Action démocratique du Québec* political party (ADQ), added fire to this incendiary debate about the appropriate level of accommodation in Québec throughout the 2007 Québec election. During the election campaign, Dumont continuously repeated the ADQ’s opposition to what he called the “unreasonable” accommodation of religious and cultural minorities, relying on a nascent

anti-immigrant discourse to mobilize his conservative political base. Political theorist Mahmood Mamdani (2004) recently developed a concept, what he calls “culture talk,” to describe the types of racialized discourses at work in the public sphere in North America; I suggest that such discourses are manifest in Dumont’s construction of “unreasonable” accommodation and his reliance on tropes of Québec national destiny. In Mamdani’s (2004) words, culture talk “assumes that every culture has a tangible essence that defines it, and it then explains politics as a consequence of that essence” (p.17). Under these cultural regimes, groups of people are associated with some very broad notion of a fixed and immutable *culture*, in a way that closely resembles the scientific racism of the past, except that meanings associated with values, beliefs, and practices are naturalized to certain “cultures” as opposed to biological traits, thereby de-politicizing their very production.

On January 16, 2007, Dumont engaged in such forms of culture talk when he released an open letter to the people of Québec in which he argued in defence of Québécois values and identity (see Dumont, 2007). In the letter, published in several major, Québec-based, French-language newspapers, he urged people in Québec to “get rid of the old minority reflex” in which the Québécois people “continue to submit when we should keep our chin up high.” He goes on to propose that people in Québec “should act in a way that reinforces our national identity and especially, protects the values that are so dear to us.” In his estimation, Québec is under threat, as evidenced by “multiple episodes that demonstrated how public sector leaders choose to push aside our shared values in order to satisfy demands advanced by certain communities.” Above all, Québec must return to its “European roots, by virtue of who founded Québec...our shared values

were actualized and are now a part of Western thinking” (Dumont, 2007, my translation). It is in this last sentence that Dumont most clearly expresses the *racial* character of the Québécois, a people who are undeniably connected to the Western family of nations through their European roots. Near the end of the letter, Dumont proposes a way to ensure the normative Québécois subject is at the centre of his vision of society: a Québec Constitution and Citizenship that safeguard Québec’s shared values.

The ADQ’s subsequent success at the polls – it won 41 seats and increased its share of the popular vote by nearly 13%, finishing a very narrow second place to the Québec Liberal party – has largely been attributed to its stand on the question of reasonable accommodation (Allan and Vengoff, 2008; Bélanger, 2008; Lefebvre, 2008). As Pauline Côté (2008), writing during the Bouchard-Taylor deliberations, explains: “This self-assigned role of collective identity protector made [Dumont] an effective challenger.” (p.46). In fact, during the campaign, the small town of Hérouxville (pop. 1,300), northeast of Shawinigan, passed its infamous municipal *normes de vie* [code of conduct]. The Code specifically prohibited stoning or burning women alive and female genital cutting. Due to the negative public response after its release in January, 2007, the council decided to slightly amend the Code and eventually re-released it in February 2007 (see Nieguth and Lacassagne, 2009 for a history of the Hérouxville Code). The following statement opened the English-language translation of the original Code (see Appendix I), laying the groundwork for its gendered and racialized discourse, one that in many ways resembles the tone of Dumont’s letter:

We consider that men and women are of the same value. Having said this, we consider that a woman can; drive a car, vote, sign checks, dance, decide for herself, speak her piece, dress as she sees fit respecting of course the democratic decency, walk alone in public places, study, have a

job, have her own belongings and anything else that a man can do. These are our standards and our way of life.

Consequently, we consider as undesirable and prohibit any action or gesture that would be contrary to the above statement such as: killing women by lapidation or burning them alive in public places, burning them with acid, excising them, infibulating them or treating them as slaves. (Hérouxville, 2007)

The Hérouxville municipal council sent the code to, among others, the Canadian and Québec Ministers of Immigration, Diane Finley and Lise Thériault respectively, urging them to revise relevant laws on multiculturalism and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Québec's *Charte des droits et libertés de la personne*. In addition, in an open letter to Québec Premier Jean Charest, Hérouxville town councilor André Drouin called on both levels of government to include the Code in integration packages distributed to new immigrants. Many commentators argued that the Code was aimed specifically at Muslim immigrants, of which, ironically, there are none in Hérouxville or surrounding communities (Mookerjea, 2009, p.177; Cooper, 2008, p.4-6; Letocha, 2007, p.8). After a high profile visit by a delegation of Muslim women on February 11, 2007 (Canadian Islamic Congress, 2007), only weeks after its original release, the Code received international coverage (Kin Gagnon, 2007, p.2). Town councillor André Drouin², who drafted the original code, replied to the international controversy, explaining that,

Of course, we wanted to upset people by speaking about stoning and female circumcision, but it was time that somebody 'put on their pants'

² Interestingly, the *Montreal Gazette* explains how Drouin embarked on a cross-Canada tour (with visits in Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver) with the support of a group he co-founded along with Canadians from outside of Québec, the Centre for Immigration Policy Reform. The article goes on to explain how the group will lobby for a "radical reduction in immigration and a tougher stand on minority accommodation" (Scott, 2010).

and looked ‘beyond the end of their nose.’ If we adapt to all new immigrants, what will become of our Québec culture in 10 or 20 years? (*“Hérouxville mène,”* 2007, my translation)

Bernard Thompson, an employee with the Hérouxville municipal government at the time the Code was drafted who would later become mayor, also wrote a book that details the logic for the Code. In *Le syndrome Hérouxville ou les accommodements raisonnables* [The Hérouxville Syndrome and Reasonable Accommodations], Thompson (2007) explains that the debate on reasonable accommodation revealed a crisis about the nature of national identity in Québec, one the Code is meant to mediate by defining the boundaries of Québécois identity. If the Code is any indication, this “crisis” is one that operates not only according to a racial logic, but importantly, intersects with understandings of gender as well.

As Québec scholars (Cooper, 2008; Mahrouse, 2008) have noted, following the work of such feminist theorists as Chandra Mohanty (1986 & 2002) regarding the construction of the category of the “Third World Woman” in the West, the gendered dimensions of the Code are striking. For instance, the Hérouxville code explains that *equality* between men and women is a fundamental Québécois cultural value, despite the fact that violence against women, among a number of other manifestations of gender *inequality*, continue to be all-too-real in Québec society (Niegurth and Lacassagne, 2009). Sirma Bilge (2008) approaches the cultural discourses in Western liberal democracies (viz. Holland, Britain, and France) pitting “gender equality” versus “multiculturalism” with analytical rigour. As she explains,

It is my contention that the current focus on women’s status within minorities, mainly among Muslims, is being used as a tool to police the boundaries of the imagined community, whether national or supranational

(such as the one found in the expression ‘European core values’), and as such it must be met with scepticism. (p.103)

Reflecting on the paucity of scholarly work on what she calls the feminism versus multiculturalism “doxa,” Bilge (2008) argues that, “Such scholarship relies on commonsensical formulas with Orientalist undertones, which assume gender domination to be intrinsic to Other/non-Western cultures” (p.111). It seems that within these same Orientalist tropes, Muslim women’s bodies become the limit test for tolerance of the Other in the Hérouxville Code, much as they have become in Western liberal democracies more generally³. The language of gender equality, un-problematically stated as a central dimension of “our” Québécois standards in the introduction to the Code above, points to the multiculturalism versus feminism doxa currently at play in Québec society⁴.

Such presumptions about Others are a sign, I argue, of the civilizational dimensions of this discourse, putting on display the culture talk Mamdani (2004) argues is a key feature of modern Western society: “We need to think of culture in terms that are both historical and nonterritorial. Otherwise, one is harnessing cultural resources for very specific national and imperial political projects” (p.27). Without the careful deliberation Mamdani calls for, we risk reviving the “clash of civilizations” discourse;

³ In the Québec context, see Ramachandran (2009) and Chew (2009). In the Canadian context, Haque (2010) and Razack (2008) make similar arguments, while Yegenoglu (1998) makes the same point in the context of Europe and the “West.”

⁴ The Government of Canada released a new citizenship guide in October 2009 called “Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship.” There is one paragraph under the rubric “The Equality of Women and Men” that captures the Hérouxville Code of Conduct’s culture talk: “In Canada, men and women are equal under the law. Canada’s openness and generosity do not extend to barbaric cultural practices that tolerate spousal abuse, ‘honour killings,’ female genital mutilation, or other gender-based violence. Those guilty of these crimes are severely punished under Canada’s criminal laws.” (Government of Canada, 2009).

one Wendy Brown (2006) locates broadly in Western societies and Sourayan Mookerjee (2009) locates specifically in Québec. In fact, I argue that the above statements by Dumont (where the Québécois “give in” and “collectively fade to the background”), by Drouin (“If we adapt to all new immigrants, what will become of our Québec culture in 10 or 20 years?”), and by the Hérouxville Code of Conduct itself produce a form of civilizational discourse that relies on racialized and gendered notions of culture as part of a specific national project.

Regardless of how one reads the events I present in this section, it is difficult to ignore how the arrival of the Hérouxville Code of Conduct on the public stage mobilized a large section of Québécois society to debate issues related to cultural accommodation, racial difference, and national identity. The events at Hérouxville, combined with some of the other high-profile incidents I present below and the heated political context ahead of the March 26, 2007, general election, led the Charest government to form the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, with two prominent Québec-based academics as Commission co-chairs: l’Université du Québec à Chicoutimi historian and sociologist Gérard Bouchard and McGill University philosopher Charles Taylor. This Commission, though different in its approach than the Hérouxville Code and the ADQ’s electoral politics, reflects many of the same dimensions of the discourses on difference on display in Québec during this period.

The Bouchard-Taylor Commission and the Politics of Tolerance

Before proceeding with my analysis, an overview of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, perhaps the most talked-about event in Québec during this period, is useful. The

Government of Québec formed the Commission in February, 2007 (Government of Québec, 2007a, see Appendix II), in order to address several high-profile instances of conflict around “reasonable accommodation,” such as the four cases I discussed above. The opening pages of the Commission’s final report explain the Commission’s very broad mandate: to survey harmonization practices in Québec; to compare Québec society’s issues with cultural pluralism to other societies; to conduct extensive consultations on these questions; and finally, to make recommendations to the Government (Government of Québec 2008a, p.7).

To accomplish these tasks, the commission had a \$5 million budget, which it spread out over a vast network of research activities. Besides organizing 13 research projects at different Québec universities and 31 focus groups with individuals from different social milieu, the Commission also held 59 meetings with experts and representatives of civil society organizations. The largest part of the commission’s work occurred during the public hearings, which took place in the final months of 2007. The Commission held 31 days of public hearings throughout the province and collected over 900 briefs at the hearings (see Heinrich and Dufour, 2008 for in-depth discussion)⁵. The Commission later met with many of the authors of these briefs during 328 individual hearings.

With these examples and the debate about “reasonable accommodation” in mind, the Commission set out to evaluate the appropriate level and modes of accommodation in Québec. The Commission’s terms of reference broadly lay out the rationale for its

⁵ Debate was also organized outside the proceedings. For example, in November, 2008, the McGill Centre for Research and Teaching on Women hosted a day-long symposium entitled “Feminist Responses to the Bouchard-Taylor Commission.” Featuring academics and community activists, the main theme was on how best to bring together anti-racist and feminist responses to the report findings (National Campus and Community Radio Association, 2008).

creation. Here are the main terms:

Whereas Québec society is attached to fundamental values, such as equality between women and men, the separation of Church and State, the protection of rights and liberties, justice and the primacy of the law, the protection of minorities, and the rejection of discrimination and racism.

Whereas Québec society has made the choice to be an open society;

Whereas accommodation practices related to cultural differences come from a society that embraces the Charter of Rights and Liberty (L.R.Q., c. C-12), the French Language Charter (L.R.Q., c. C-11), the governmental policy on equality between women and men as well as rules and programming on matters of immigration and integration;

Whereas certain accommodation practices related to cultural differences could put into question the just equilibrium between the rights of the majority and the rights of minorities;

Whereas integration and the full participation of citizens to collective life constitutes a priority for the government.

(Government of Québec, 2007a)

The end results also mirror the Commission's framework, manifest in the opening paragraphs of the conclusion to the final report:

The rationale underlying our report stems from three intersecting themes: a) inter-culturalism; b) open secularism; and c) harmonization practices. For each of these themes, we have sought to **find balanced positions**... This general guideline, based on the search for balance, has a twofold advantage. First, **it avoids radical solutions**, which are always to be feared in the realm of intercultural relations. Second, **it is in keeping** with the procedures adopted by public and private institutions and agencies in Québec (Government of Québec 2008b, p.93, emphasis in original).

The authors go on to explain that their approach “affords security to Quebecers of French-Canadian origin and to ethnocultural minorities and protects the rights of all in keeping with the liberal tradition” (p.119).

As we can see, the commissioners readily adopt the language of interculturalism and “accommodation” common in Québec society in the lead-up to the commission's proceedings, supplanting the concepts of multiculturalism and “tolerance” common in the rest of Canada as the appropriate measure of managing what the commissioners

alternatively call “cultural difference” (Government of Québec 2008a, p.26, 34, 79, 91, 116, 119, 128, 239, 242, *et passim*) or “ethnocultural diversity” (Government of Québec 2008a, p.20, 43, 115, 116, 120, 128, 129, *et passim*) in their final report. As the commissioners explain in footnote number six: “We will avoid the concept of tolerance, which, for some people, betrays a discreet form of hierarchy or paternalism. The individual who professes it implicitly sends the following message: ‘You’re not following the social norms but I’m overlooking it’” (p.116). The result is discursively apparent: the term “tolerance” appears a mere 12 times in the 316-page final report, while “accommodation” is used 353 times.

The authors explain accommodation’s genesis in legal discourse and labour relations, the actual origins for the concept of “reasonable accommodation,” as a primary motive for its adoption (p.38). It is my opinion that this discursive move between tolerance and accommodation mirrors the interculturalism versus multiculturalism debate I introduced at the beginning of the chapter, where “accommodation” appears as a unique, made-in-Québec solution to the limits of tolerance, despite their shared roots in a Western liberal discourse on cultural pluralism. To tease this argument out more, I present a brief history of the concept of “accommodation” in Canada and Québec.

In their recent analysis of the concept of reasonable accommodation in Québec, Yasmeeen Abu-Laban and Bahu Abu-Laban (2009) explain the concept’s historical origin in depth. They claim that as far back as 1978, the Ontario Human Rights Commission used the term to settle a workplace dispute, while in subsequent years the term was used in relation to employment practices relating to individuals with disabilities. The term has taken many different forms over the last decades, even regulating relations between

landlords and tenants and smokers and non-smokers under the Alberta Human Rights Commissions in the mid-1980s. Yet, Abu-Laban and Abu-Laban (2009) explain the importance of the Gurbaj Singh Multani decision in the context of Québec:

The great catalyst for the contemporary popularization of the term 'reasonable accommodation,' and in particular its association with religious groups, appears to stem from the March 2006 Supreme Court of Canada ruling on whether a Quebec schoolboy, who is an orthodox Sikh, could wear his kirpan to school. (p.30)

Marie McAndrew (2009) also locates the Multani decision as a turning point in the debate over "reasonable accommodation" in Québec. In her analysis, the debate leading up to the Bouchard-Taylor Commission was a "bad dream" evoking signs of a time when the Other was seen as an inherent threat to a homogenous national identity (p.45). In her words,

But the dichotomization of 'Us/Them' is not the only worrying aspect of the current debate on ethnic relations. It is actually accompanied by a tendency to inferiorize, whether through the depreciation of the Others' behaviors or cultural traits or through the generalization of negative representations of minority groups. (p.45, my translation)

McAndrew expresses a common sentiment in left nationalist circles in Québec at the time of the debate over reasonable accommodation: consternation over the possibility of a return to more explicit forms of ethno-racial nationalism.

In their attempt at balance and fairness, the Bouchard-Taylor report does acknowledge these sentiments, as well as the widespread belief that accommodation has perhaps gone too far. Much as McAndrew (2009) and Abu-Laban and Abu-Laban (2009), the final report explains how the concept of reasonable accommodation has an abstract and less formal "path" than in the legal context. For the commissioners, what they call the "citizen route" relies on negotiation and the search for compromise as a way to manage

the economic and cultural threats globalization brings to the future of French-speaking Québec (Government of Québec, 2008a, p.38). As they explain regarding reasonable accommodation, “Its objective is to find a solution that satisfies both parties and it corresponds to concerted adjustment” (p.19). The commissioners strongly favour this second, less legal approach, since “a) it is good for citizens to learn to manage their differences and disagreements; b) this path avoids congesting the courts; and c) the values underlying the citizen route (exchanges, negotiation, reciprocity, and so on) are the same ones that underpin the Québec integration model” (p.19). Except for its origins in the legal realm, from which the commissioners distance themselves through their enthusiasm for what they call the citizen route, it remains unclear in the report how the concept of accommodation differs substantively from that of tolerance.

In my opinion, accommodation-talk belies its origins in the logic constituted through tolerance discourses in Western liberal democracies more generally⁶. In other words, both accommodation and tolerance involve taken-for-granted notions of who tolerates and who must be tolerated; who accommodates and who must be accommodated that conceal the ways in which culture and difference are defined through its logic (Hage, 2000; Brown, 2006). In fact, Wendy Brown (2006), in her study on the rise of tolerance discourses that fashion, regulate, and position subjects in the West since the 1980s, explains how tolerance is part of a civilizational discourse intimately bound up with liberal modes of power. Her approach is not “against” tolerance, as she explains, but instead, she questions how tolerance has become “a historically protean element of liberal

⁶ In his book *Multiculturalism*, Tariq Modood (2007) defines “liberal democracies” as “places in which...an ethical primacy is given to the individual and individual rights are politically fundamental” (p.6).

governance” (p.11) that produces and organizes subjects, acts as a framework for state action and speech, and facilitates liberalism’s legitimation. Importantly, she questions how tolerance talk has itself been de-politicized. In her words, the de-politicization of tolerance talk,

Include[s] the legitimation of a new form of imperial state action in the twenty-first century, a legitimation tethered to a constructed opposition between a cosmopolitan West and its putatively fundamental Other. Tolerance thus emerges as part of a civilizational discourse that identifies both tolerance and the tolerable with the West, marking nonliberal societies and practices as candidates for an intolerable barbarism that is itself signaled by the putative intolerance ruling these societies. (Brown, 2006, p.6)

We can see this “clash of civilizations” discourse at work above in the de-politicization of accommodation-talk. Notwithstanding the commissioners’ sustained focus on exchange, compromise, and negotiation, they do not question the *politics* of accommodation.

Instead, in following their liberal approach to difference, accommodation is presented as a negotiation between a private or individual choice (e.g., a practice to be accommodated) and what they understand as the public interest (e.g., what needs no accommodation, since it is the norm). The “citizen route” the commissioners call for effectively de-politicizes accommodation, since it represents accommodation as a voluntary behaviour (see Brown, 2006, p.12).

In his very recent analysis of the Bouchard-Taylor deliberations, Daniel Salée (2010) echoes Brown’s analysis: “Their [Bouchard-Taylor] analysis does not take into account processes of exclusion, subalternization and racialization that, in Québec as in the rest of contemporary Western societies, are not only the source of intercommunitarian tensions, but constitute their operational foundation” (p.29, my translation). The notable exception in the final report is in the very brief discussion of the politics of discrimination

in Québec, one overshadowed by the commissioners' sympathy for what they perceive as a legitimate Québécois fear of social change brought on by an increase in cultural and religious diversity (Government of Québec 2008a). This process of depoliticization has very real effects, as Brown (2006) explains:

Depoliticization involves construing inequality, subordination, marginalization, and social conflict, which all require political analysis and political solutions, as personal and individual, on the one hand, or as natural, religious, or cultural on the other....Tolerance as it is used today tends to cast instances of inequality or social injury as matters of individual or group prejudice. And it tends to cast group conflict as rooted in ontologically natural hostility toward essentialized religious, ethnic, or cultural difference itself an inherent site of conflict, one that calls for and is attenuated by the practice of tolerance (p.15).

As I argue throughout this chapter, the Commission's depoliticization of culture naturalizes conflict in such a way as to appeal to the dominant understanding of difference in Québec society. One relevant *effect* of these discourses on difference is the obfuscation of its racialized *and* gendered dimensions.

The discourses about the four incidences of "reasonable accommodation" I list above clearly articulate the conflation between culture and politics Brown introduces. Whether in the case of Gurbaj Singh Multani or the Yetev Lev Orthodox Jewish congregation, culture is reduced to a natural human trait, simply what some people *do*, as opposed to a deeply politicized and contested concept. The next section discusses several instances of this "culture talk" on display in Québec leading up to and during the Bouchard-Taylor deliberations, in order to demonstrate how the process of depoliticization operates in Québec.

Producing “Difference:” Racialized Others and the Normative Québécois Subject

The politically charged context of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission was at the forefront of public discourses about race, culture, and difference during 2008. Mamdani (2004) previously explained how culture is a code that comes to stand in for an understanding of politics, a process he calls the “culturalization of politics.” By re-stating the essentially *cultural* dimensions of “ethnocultural” conflict, the commission confidently asserts its own culture talk as a legitimate explication of the politics of cultural pluralism in Québec. One of the clear *political* ramifications of this culture talk in Québec was a sustained focus on the identity crisis I mentioned above, one that centered on the question of reasonable accommodation. Sourayan Mookerjee (2009), writing about the debate over reasonable accommodation, explains how “signifiers of ‘culture’ serve as a racializing code” (p.180) in the Québec context. Indeed, by employing the authoritative terms of liberal discourse through such tropes as accommodation, the Commission concealed its racialized and gendered discourse on difference.

Ghassan Hage, in his work on the liberal concept of tolerance, echoes Brown’s work explaining how tolerance discourses de-politicize what are essentially effects of power. Hage (2000) explains how, “Multicultural tolerance...is a strategy aimed at reproducing and disguising relationships of power in society, or being reproduced through that disguise. It is a form of symbolic violence in which a mode of domination is presented as a form of egalitarianism” (p.87). Eva Mackey (2002) also explains how Canada’s adoption of official multiculturalism led to new modes of managing and producing difference. I argue that her analysis applies to the Québec intercultural project, one based in a similar liberal logic:

The state did not seek to erase difference but rather attempted to institutionalise, constitute, shape, manage, and control difference....The key issue here is that despite the proliferation of cultural difference, the power to define, limit and tolerate differences still lies in the hands of the dominant group (p.70).

Through her work probing how the unmarked “Canadian-Canadian” (i.e., as opposed to Jamaican-Canadian, Indo-Canadian, Chinese-Canadian, etc) subject underpins Canadian practices of managing cultural diversity, Mackey directs us to how the liberal discourse of cultural tolerance that supports Western state-making projects is not tolerant at all; instead, much as Brown and Hage suggest, it is used as a weapon to depoliticize and manage difference through, in this case, constituting the very terms of difference and sameness. The convergence between the “Canadian Canadian” subject Mackey discovers while interviewing participants during the Canada 125 celebrations in Ontario and the Bouchard-Taylor report’s creation of the “French-Canadian Québécois” subject in the commission’s final report in 2008 is notable. As an example, one of the final report’s major sections is titled: “Anxiety and Solitudes: French-Canadian Québécois,” and deals plainly with the common themes in dominant forms of Québécois nationalism, whether values, language, or historical memory, all of which speak to a very particular French-Canadian project, such as that highlighted in Letourneau’s concept of the loser mythistory. In both the Canada 125 and the Bouchard-Taylor report, there is a need to re-signify the legitimate national subject, because Canadian and Québécois have become slippery, if not altogether unreliable, terms. In this way, interculturalism in Québec, through the operation of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, operates as a tool to enhance the normative Québécois subject’s ability to produce and manage difference.

One effect of the discourse of difference unique to Québec (and Canada) is the common-sense belief that accepting and respecting differences are fundamental national values. This apparently progressive position, one that rests on an assumption that differences are pre-given, natural social phenomena, was widespread during the Bouchard-Taylor Commission hearings (see Heinrich & Dufour, 2009 for an overview). However, its liberal rationale masks the complex operation of power at work in the very production of, in this case, “cultural” difference. The very use of the concept of cultural difference in the Commission’s creation (e.g., in its title and terms of reference) points to an imaginary norm against which difference is measured and through which the norm is itself produced.

Following the culture talk on display in the Commission’s final report, where the concepts of “ethnocultural diversity” or “cultural difference” are used to refer to political processes, the normative Québécois subjects, or the commissioners’ notion of the “French-Canadian Québécois” subject, express their superiority vis-à-vis cultural difference within the Bouchard-Taylor Commission proceedings with a vision of the right to govern through tolerance or accommodation, one not afforded in quite the same way to those under the commission’s scrutiny. As Hage (2000) explains, writing in an Australian context of liberal pluralism,

Those addressed, or to use a technically more correct word, those interpellated, by the discourse of tolerance see in the very address a confirmation of their power to be intolerant. In fact, they would not be interpellated by this discourse if they did not recognize that they are already in a position of power which allows them to be intolerant. (p.87)

The Bouchard-Taylor Commission, then, as *the* most significant institutional process producing knowledge about difference during 2007 and 2008, stands out as a compelling site within which to consider questions of race in Québec.

The Québec Identity Act: Defending the Nation

Perhaps as a response to the questions raised about the nature of Québécois identity in the Hérouxville Code of Conduct and the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, the *Parti Québécois* (PQ) quickly moved to protect the French-Canadian Québécois subject through a controversial citizenship bill. During the Bouchard-Taylor Commission's public hearings in October 2007, the former governing party introduced its Québec Identity Act at the National Assembly, presumably to re-position itself as the defenders of Québécois interests following its embarrassing third-place finish in 2007, the PQ's worst showing since the 1970 election (Bélanger, 2008, p.75-6), its first as a political party. Bill 195, as it is popularly referred to, set out the parameters for Québec citizenship. The following points framed the bill:

1. The purpose of this Act is to enable the Québec nation to express its identity through
 - (1) the creation of a Québec Constitution;
 - (2) the establishment of Québec citizenship;
 - (3) the interpretation and application of fundamental rights and freedoms with due regard for the historical heritage and *fundamental values* of the Québec nation and, in particular, the importance of ensuring the predominance of the French language, *protecting and promoting Québec culture*, guaranteeing *equality between women and men*, and preserving the secularity of public institutions.

(Government of Québec, 2007b, emphasis mine, my translation)

As we can see, a central component of the PQ's Bill followed the ADQ's proposal earlier in the year for a Québec constitution and citizenship. In addition, much as the Hérouxville

Code, Bill 195 focuses on several key features of Québec citizenship, in this case through a very broad framework of Québec values. Unlike the Hérouxville Code, Bill 195 does not readily define these values (except for the focus on equality between women and men and secularity), but instead leaves them in the background of the document, to be defined at a later date. Interestingly, the very way the Bill describes the “protection” of Québec culture echoes the national ideology of *survivance* from the previous chapter. In this very discursive move, Québec is constructed as “at risk” and in need of mechanisms to help it navigate a threatening situation. Again, it seems the threat is difference itself, whether in the form of gender *inequality*, religion in public institutions, non-French-language speakers, and values foreign to the normative Québécois subject. These elements are evaluated against an invisible norm, except of course in the case of the French-language.

The bill does elaborate on the creation of a Québec Constitution and the features of Québec citizenship flowing from such a constitution. Under Bill 195, the first step in developing such a constitution would be conducted by the "Select Committee on the Québec Constitution," featuring 32 members, including an equal number of National Assembly and civil society members. Once the bill passes through the legislative process and is approved by the Legislature, the Québec Civil Code would be amended to reflect this new Québec citizenship. Under article 49.2, in order to qualify for Québec citizenship a person who is new to Québec must fulfill the following requirements before the Minister responsible for the Act grants them citizenship:

- (1) has been a Canadian citizen for at least three months;
- (2) is domiciled in Québec;
- (3) has effectively resided in Québec for six months, including the three months preceding the date of the person's application;
- (4) has an appropriate knowledge of the French language; and

(5) has an appropriate knowledge of Québec and of the responsibilities and advantages of citizenship.

(Government of Québec, 2007b, my translation)

Bill 195 includes a provision for a three-year “integration contract” with persons settling in Québec, that includes an obligation to learn French within the specified time. The proposed amendment to the Immigration Act also states that, “The Minister may determine the terms of the contract, which may vary according to the foreign national's age or circumstances” (Government of Québec, 2007b, my translation). After setting out the requirements for Québec citizenship, article 49.6 prevents non-Québec citizens from running for municipal, school, and legislative office; donating to political parties; and petitioning the National Assembly. Despite the heated public debate about the merits of Québec citizenship flowing from Mario Dumont’s open letter to the people of Québec (see discussion above), the proposed Act received very little support in the legislature, with both the Québec Liberal Party and the ADQ refusing to support it. The Bill received a sharp rebuke from Québec Premier Jean Charest, who, in an open letter to the people of Québec published across the province, accused the PQ of fanning the flames of intolerance and diminishing Québec’s reputation on the international stage (CBC News, 2007). Yet, picking up where the Hérouxville Code left off, Bill 195 and the subsequent debate about its adoption contributed to the discourses on difference circulating in Québec during this period, mostly by re-iterating the immigrant threat to Québécois identity. In this way, Bill 195 returned under a different guise once the controversy over “reasonable accommodation” had died down, as I demonstrate in the next section of this chapter.

Québec's New Immigrant Integration Policy

One of the lasting results of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission's deliberations and the debates raised by the other events I underline in this chapter was an initiative undertaken by the Government of Québec at the end of October 2008. Several months after the release of the final Bouchard-Taylor report and in the afterglow of the success of the Québec 400 celebrations, the Québec government released details of its new immigrant integration policy, just ahead of another hotly-contested Québec election in December 2008. In a press release dated October 29, 2008, the Government of Québec explained that one of the primary goals of its new immigrant integration policy was to educate potential overseas immigrants about shared Québec values. Yolande James, Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities, explains, "Living diversity like a value added is enriching Québec. No company, municipality or region can get by without *Québécois* and *Québécoises* of all origins" (Government of Québec, 2008c, my translation). The document then explains that in following the new policy, potential immigrants must affirm their commitment to respecting Québec's values by signing a formal declaration. Under the terms of the policy, every potential immigrant must sign the declaration upon entry into Québec, much like the provisions called for in Bill 195. The declaration (see Appendix III), available only in French, includes the following brief overview of Québec society:

Québec is a pluralist society that welcomes immigrants from the four corners of the world, bringing with them their knowledge, competencies, language, culture and religion.

Québec offers services to immigrants to facilitate their full and complete integration and participation in Québec society, in order to overcome the challenges of modern society, such as economic prosperity, the durability of the French-language and openness to the world. In return, immigrants must adapt to their *milieu*.

All *Québécois*, whether native-born or immigrants, have rights and responsibilities and can freely choose their lifestyle, their opinions or their religion; however, everyone must respect the law whatever their convictions.

The Québec state and its institutions are secular; as such political and religious powers are separate.

All *Québécois* enjoy the rights and liberties recognized by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and other laws and have the responsibility to respect the values they set out (Government of Québec, 2008c, my translation).

The opening statement repeats much of the same language as the Bouchard-Taylor report, balancing immigrants' rights and responsibilities. After setting out the very broad terms of the declaration, the document goes on to list six fundamental Québec values to all potential immigrants:

- Québec is a free and democratic society.
 - Religious and political powers are separate in Québec.
 - Québec is a pluralist society.
 - Québec society is based on the rule of law.
 - Men and women have the same rights.
 - The exercise of one's rights and freedoms must take place while respecting the rights and freedoms of others and society's general well-being.
- (Government of Québec, 2008c, my translation)

In the accompanying 14-page booklet, *Pour enrichir le Québec – Affirmer les valeurs communes de la société québécoise* [To Enrich Québec: Affirming Québec Society's Common Values], the Government expands on these values, explaining the significance of each to potential immigrants. In addition to the booklet, the Government of Québec communicates these common values to potential immigrants through a series of documents produced in 2008, following the release of the Bouchard-Taylor final report, including: the second edition of *Apprendre le Québec: Guide pour réussir mon intégration* [Learning Québec: A guide for a successful integration] and the *Immigration-Québec* and *Québec-interculturel* websites, among others. In addition to declaring a

commitment to the aforementioned values, all potential immigrants must also declare a willingness to learn French, if they have not already done so and must now attend an information session on Québec values called “How to Live in Québec.” Potential immigrants must also take a course “pursuing and perfecting” their French-language knowledge, as the press release explains.

Ironically, it is the same government that vociferously opposed the PQ’s Québec Identity Act and the ADQ’s anti-immigrant rhetoric in 2007 that instituted a policy that closely resembles the Hérouxville Code of Conduct, if not in language, then at the very least, in discourse. Under the heading “Who are we?,” for instance, the Hérouxville Code sets out its logic, organized at it is around *values*, in a manner similar to the Government of Québec’s new immigration policy:

This fundamental question aims to draw a portrait of who we are by defining the principal values that guide our collective life. It is these values that we designate by the expression *Code of Conduct*. Who are they addressed to? To eventual immigrants. But, what’s the point if Hérouxville doesn’t have any, or only a few? Well, simply put, the Ministry of Immigration is increasingly encouraging newcomers to settle in rural areas because of the problems in urban areas. Our goal is to clearly communicate all the relevant information to potential newcomers so they can make an enlightened choice about living in our territory (Hérouxville, 2007, emphasis in original, my translation).

Nearly two years after the publication of the Hérouxville’s Code and Premier Jean Charest’s dismissal of it as an “isolated case” of anti-immigrant sentiment (Bruemmer and Dougherty, 2007), the Québec government’s immigration policy embraces many of the initial code’s discursive strategies, including most apparently, a focus on defining Québec’s shared values to imagined outsiders. That the shared Québec values outlined in the government’s policy repeat both Hérouxville and Bill 195’s most central points – equality between men and women, maintenance of the rule of law, separation between

state and religion, and a focus on democracy – directs us to a form of culture talk that presupposes an immigrant Other against which the Québécois subject defines itself.

While the Government of Québec's new immigrant integration policy uses different tropes than the Hérouxville Code and the Québec Identity Act, it still manages to define some of the conduct not welcome in Québec: "The expression of hateful behaviour, whether of a political, religious or ethnic nature, will not be tolerated. Québec society favours resolving conflicts through negotiation" (Government of Québec, 2008c, my translation). The focus on defining Québec values and especially, the need for Québécois subjects to educate Others is testament to the civilizational discourses on display in Québec. These discourses, I argue, are fundamentally informed by discourses on difference that, in their civilizational logic, places Québec in the family of Western nations. The Bouchard-Taylor Commission, the Québec Identity Act, the Hérouxville Code of Conduct, and Québec's new immigrant integration policy all direct us to how these discourses on difference are articulated in Québec leading up to the Québec 400.

Discourses on Difference in Québec

The purpose of my analysis in this chapter has not been to single Québec out as a hotbed of intolerance in an otherwise multicultural Canada. Mookerjea (2009) alludes to this very real threat in an English-Canada otherwise too happy to gloat about its political superiority vis-à-vis Québec (p.186). Instead, similar to Salée (2007), Cooper (2008), Kin Gagnon (2008), Mahrouse (2008), Mookerjea (2009), and Nieguth and Lacassagne (2009), my analytical aim has been to point to the limits of Québécois discourses on difference in relation to the politics of cultural pluralism. If Wendy Brown's work on the

rise of discourses of tolerance in Western liberal democracies holds any value, how are shared civilizational values in Canada and Québec materialized through ideas about difference? The dangers of disregarding such theoretical and political questions are many. First, as Daniel Salée (2007) explains, without discussing the relative *power* the French-Canadian Québécois exercise in Québec (and Canada), the potential for social transformation is seriously muted:

This tension between the power the French-speaking majority will not admit to having and its will to exercise power it does not actually have is what makes the emergence of alternative policies of diversity management virtually impossible in Québec. (p.134)

In this way, the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, Québec Identity Act, Hérouxville Code of Conduct, and the Government of Québec immigrant integration policy continue a particular racialized discourse that upholds the rights and privileges of the French-Canadian Québécois subject (see Cooper, 2008; Nieguth and Lacassagne, 2009). On this note, in the context of the Bouchard-Taylor deliberations, Gada Mahrouse (2008) encapsulates the danger of current discursive moves in Québec: “A framing of Quebec as unique and exceptional not only lends itself to erasures, but effectively works to stifle, if not silence, antiracist critiques” (p.19). My hope, then, is that the people of Québec may see beyond the politics of cultural pluralism, towards de-naturalizing culture talk and the production of difference.

The next chapter picks up on the theme of the politics of cultural pluralism by examining how the Québec 400 crystallized Champlain's public image as Québec's founding hero. Through analyzing various forms of spectacle and performance, I demonstrate how the Québec 400 marks a shift in discourses, one that places Champlain as the founder of a diverse Québec by underlining the peaceful “encounter” between

French colonizers and indigenous peoples. This multicultural move solidifies the dominance of a “liberal whiteness” that constitutes the normative Québécois subject produced in the Québec 400.

Chapter Four

Remembering Champlain, the Founding Hero

What we celebrate under the title of founding events are, essentially, acts of violence legitimated after the fact by a precarious state of right. What was glory for some was humiliation for others. To [sic] celebration on one side corresponds execration on the other. In this way, symbolic wounds calling for healing are stored in the archives of the collective memory. More precisely, what, in historical experience takes the form of paradox—namely, *too much* memory here, *not enough* memory there—can be reinterpreted in terms of the categories of resistance and the compulsion to repeat, and, finally, can be found to undergo the ordeal of the difficult work of remembering.

Paul Ricoeur, 2004, p.79, emphasis in original

This chapter turns to an analysis of the *Rencontres* show, the Québec 400's centerpiece commemorative event. I demonstrate how the show relies on a *strategy of familiarity* to produce a normative Québécois subject position. This strategy is based on a *spectacularized politics* that places the event within a grid of intelligibility, based as it is on a semiotics of space and appeals to a festive celebration. Through my analysis I demonstrate how this commemorative strategy builds a persuasive narrative of the past that positions Champlain as the intercultural-man. I begin with a historical overview of the making of Samuel de Champlain as the father of Québec, before turning to *Rencontres*.

The significance of Samuel de Champlain's image came into full focus at two notable moments during my time in Québec City in 2008. Both occurred in close proximity to each other along near the St-Lawrence River in the Port area of the city. The first was at the *Musée de la civilisation du Québec* (MCQ), at the permanent exhibit *Le temps des Québécois* [Québécois' Time]. The second was at the *Centre d'interprétation de Place-Royale*, during the *Champlain retracé, une oeuvre en 3 dimensions* [Facing

Champlain, a Work in 3 Dimensions] film screening (see Musée de la civilisation du Québec, 2008a & 2008b).

Le temps des Québécois was first launched in 2004 and provides a synthesis of the major events that have shaped present-day Québec. It is a rather traditional museum exhibit; it features a linear progression through a series of objects, artifacts, audio-visual productions, and textual panels. According to the MCQ website (*Musée de la civilisation du Québec*, 2008a), the exhibit addresses five key themes: a) Québec's social, political, and economic history; b) Québec's urban society; c) the growth of Québec's rural regions during the 19th century; d) Québec society's "pluriculturalism;" and e) Québec modernity. Among the many diverse items displayed in the exhibit are busts of early colonizers; models from a variety of landscapes; paraphernalia from the Montréal Canadiens hockey team; and objects such as books, clothes, and letters from various periods.

Historian Jocelyn Letourneau (2004) wrote a book, entitled *Le Québec, les Québécois: Un parcours historique* [Québec, Québécois: A Historical Journey], as an accompanying part of the exhibit. Letourneau organized the book into five short chapters: the first focuses on the foundation of New France; the second introduces the dividing practices the British colonists put into place following the Conquest; the third (and longest chapter) focuses on geographic, economic, social, and cultural expansion between 1850-1940; the fourth focuses on social tensions following the Second World War; and the last chapter discusses the rebirth brought about by the Quiet Revolution and the

subsequent optimism for the future. While the book diverges from the exhibit in some important ways¹, they both highlight many of the same historical events.

Samuel de Champlain is given a prominent place among the exhibit's key figures. Near the entrance to the exhibit, a bust of Champlain stands tall, overlooking a drawing of L'Abitation, his original settlement, and a model of *Le Don de Dieu* [The Gift of God], Champlain's ship during his 1608 voyage. An accompanying panel puts words to the outwardly celebratory display: "Founder of Québec and talented explorer. Champlain is also the author of travel narratives and re-usable maps. We don't have a portrait of him, but in the 19th century, artists invented a face for him" (Musée de la civilisation, 2008a, my translation). This postscript about Champlain's face caught my attention. Artists invented a face for him: What did this mean?

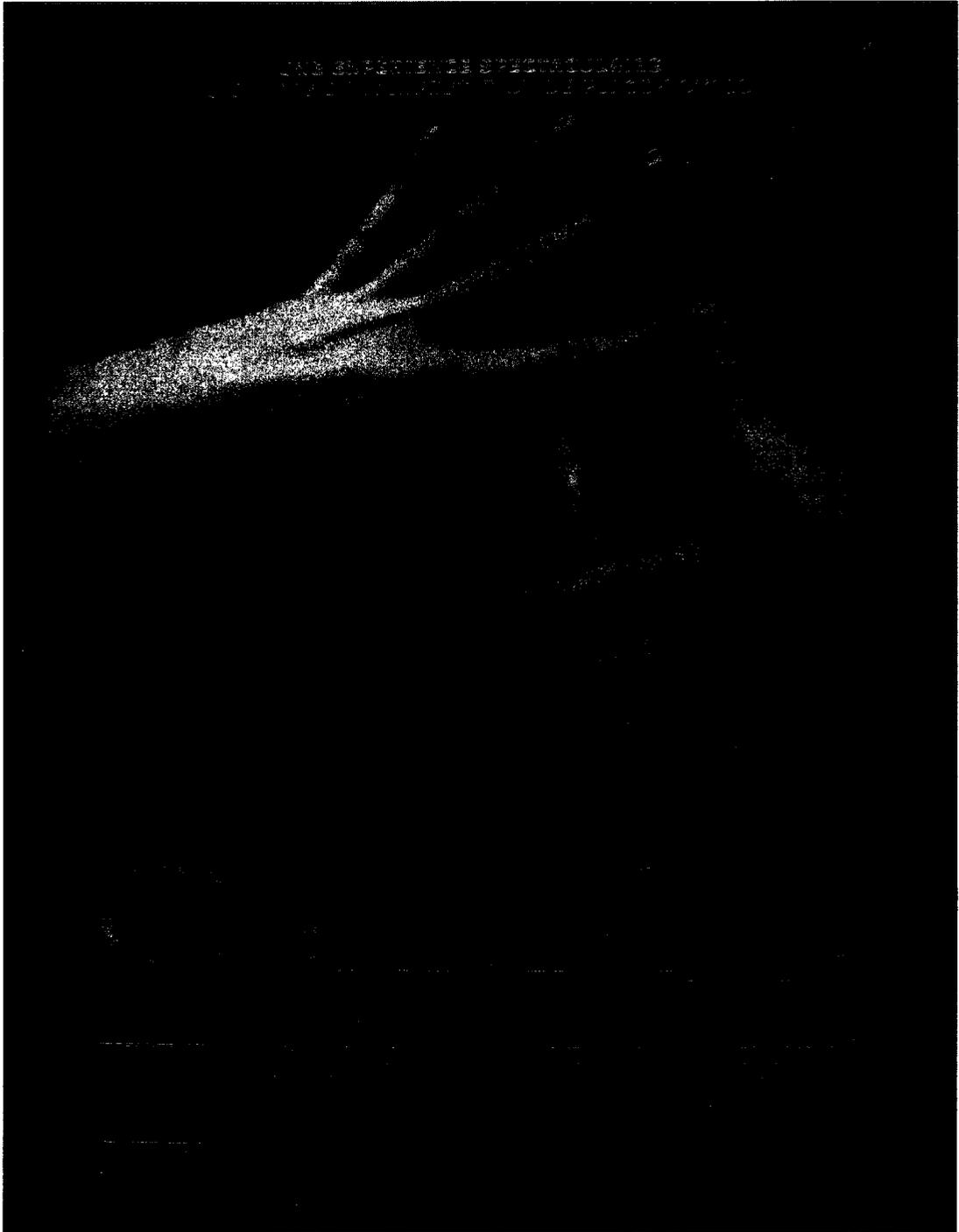
The film *Champlain retracé*, which I watched the day after visiting the *Musée de la civilisation* on July 7, 2007, re-iterates this same point about the invention of Champlain's face. In fact, as producer Marc Bertrand explains in the National Film Board of Canada documentary about the making of *Champlain retracé*, the film was also inspired by a 19th century search for Champlain's face (National Film Board of Canada, 2008). *Champlain retracé* follows the protagonist Méliissa Hébert, a fictional descendant of the first colonists in New France, on her creative journey to paint a portrait of Champlain. Before doing so, she enters a mystical world where time and space have no bearing, in order to get a clearer picture of the essence of Champlain. This takes her through a wealth of material, including texts, maps, drawings, prints, and

¹ For example, Yves Frénette (2005), a historian at Glendon College at York University, has said Letourneau's book "flirts with postmodernism, but in the end announces itself towards a humanist conception of history" (p.559). In my opinion, the exhibit cannot be read as "post-modernist."

artifacts. The film's script acts as a metaphor for the fact that no *real* portrait of Champlain exists, only one invented by 19th century artists eager to put a face to the man later anointed the founder of French civilization in the Americas. In the end, after much painstaking research and work, Hébert creates a painting that obscures Champlain's face, showing only his eyes, the defining feature of his adventurous spirit (see Figure 4.1).

While wandering through the summer streets of Québec City and darting down the dark corridors of its cultural institutions, these two stories about the invention of Champlain's face struck a chord inside me. His likeness was present everywhere I turned: in shop windows, museum exhibits, countless products, and/or on street corners featuring Champlain impersonators (see Figure 4.2). The sharp features of his nose, his dark, flowing hair, his piercing eyes, and his signature hat were unmistakable. Who invented this face? When was it invented? I was deeply intrigued by the subtle suggestions in *Le temps des Québécois* and *Champlain retracé*, neither of which provided its audiences with any resolution. The hook had been set. This chapter follows up on the question of the source of Champlain's *literal* image as I examine the multiple efforts in the Québec 400 to construct Champlain's *public* image as founder of Québec and father of the Québécois. Through interrogating Champlain's public image, I argue that the Québec 400 represents Champlain as the founder of the liberal intercultural ethic recently popularized in Québec in events such as the Bouchard-Taylor Commission. In some ways, Champlain became the ideal subject envisioned by the Bouchard-Taylor report: confidently Québécois, tolerant of differences, unfazed by change. He is a reasonable facsimile of the Québécois subject I describe in chapter 3, innocently defining difference even as he

Figure 4.1 – Poster for *Champlain retracé*



The official poster for *Champlain retracé, une oeuvre en 3 dimensions*. The film was shown at the *Centre d'interprétation de Place-Royale*, near the Port of Québec. Photo by Darryl Leroux

Figure 4.2- Champlain Mural



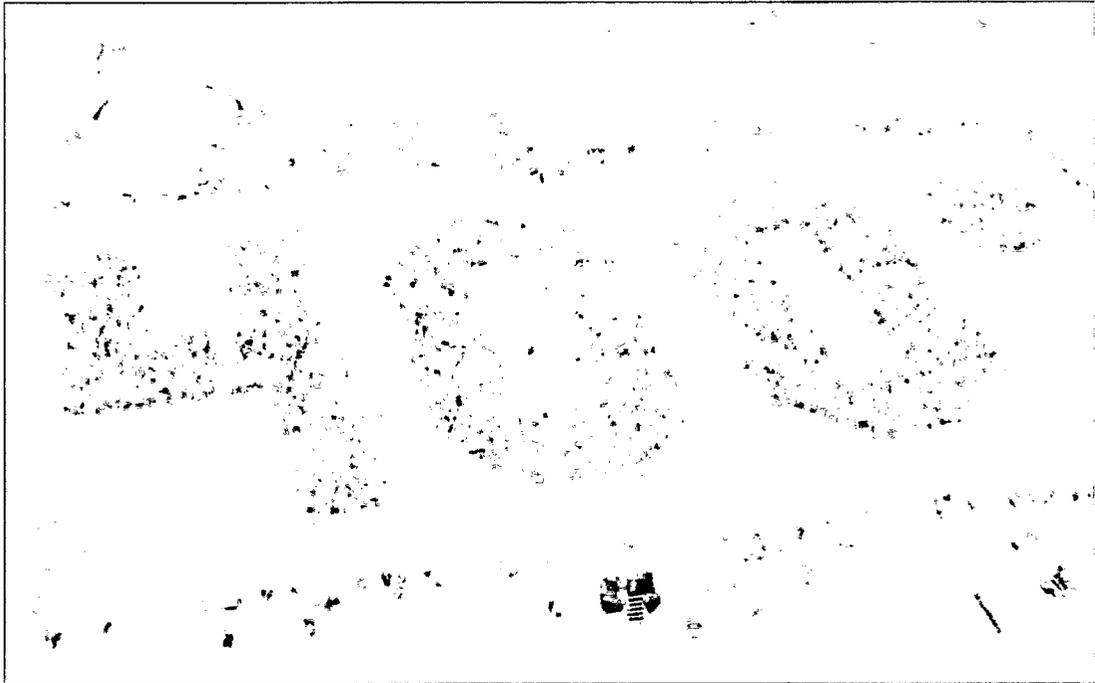
This is a mural of Samuel de Champlain in the Lowertown area of Québec City. The orange banners are the official colours of the Québec 400. Photo by Darryl Leroux.

Figure 4.3 – Champlain Monument



The Champlain Monument, inaugurated in 1898, on the Terrasse Dufferin. Photo by Darryl Leroux

Figure 4.4- The Big Family Picnic: Number 400



The number 400 (actually, “400th”) on July 6, 2008, at the *Grande rencontre familiale* [Big Family Picnic] on the Plains of Abraham, where hundreds of people gathered to form the number “400” in order to recreate an aerial photo taken in 1908. Photo courtesy of Services de communication, Ville de Québec.

Figure 4.5- Samuel de Champlain in *Rencontres*



Actor Yves Jacques as Samuel de Champlain in *Rencontres*, the official commemorative event. Photo courtesy of Services de communication, Ville de Québec.

engages in its very management. Before turning to my empirical data, the following section presents the “process of foundation” that positions Samuel de Champlain as the father of the Québec nation.

The Process of Foundation: Memory and Building a Public Image

This section examines a number of theoretical concepts in the broad field of “memory studies” in order to outline my subsequent analysis of Samuel de Champlain in the Québec 400. By “memory studies” (Klein, 2000; Kansteiner, 2002), I refer to an academic field of knowledge that treats memory as a primary unit of social analysis. The study of memory is a broad field of inquiry, bridging scholars from a number of disparate disciplines, and this chapter reflects that interdisciplinarity. As many scholars have remarked, since the 1970s there has been an exponential increase in the number of social theorists engaged in memory work (see Radstone, 2000; Klein, 2000; Hodgins, 2004 for critical discussions of this phenomenon). The rise in such research and theorization has been attributed to many emerging phenomena, including a post-modern influenced skepticism in Western historiography and an anti-colonial influenced resurgence in narratives that challenge imperialism and domination (Klein, 2000). This recent academic focus on memory is the starting point for my own understanding of memory, one that allows me to engage critically with and to build on work dealing with the relationship between commemoration and subject formation.

To begin, historian Michel-Rolph Trouillot, writing about the Columbus quincentenary in the United States in 1992, argues that the making of a “public face” through commemoration necessarily depends on the singularization of a specific

historical moment – in this case, Champlain’s founding of Québec City on July 3, 1608. “The creation of that historical moment,” Trouillot (1995) explains, “facilitates the narrativization of history, the transformation of what happened into that which is said to have happened” (p.112-13). It is the relationship between what he calls the *sociohistorical* process (e.g., what happened) and our narratives about that process (e.g., what is said to have happened) that straddles the theoretical line between a materialist and empiricist history and a social constructivist account. I believe Trouillot’s theorization of commemoration underlines the tension between the two competing models of history-making he introduces, opening up the possibility to examine how and under what conditions Samuel de Champlain enters into our narratives about the past through the Québec 400. Historians Natalie Zemon-Davis and Randolph Starn (1989) explain what is at stake in adopting such an analytical approach to the study of history:

If memory is an index of loss, and notoriously malleable besides, how can we remember truly? The obstacles are formidable – sheer forgetfulness, suggestibility, censorship, hindsight, conflicting recollections, the force of interests that frame whatever we remember.... We can say, as is often said, that identity depends on memory, whether we mean by that a core self that remembers its earlier states or, poststructurally, the narratives that construct (and deconstruct) identities by comparing ‘once upon a time’ and ‘here and now’.... For that matter, if memory is shaped by mythologies, ideologies, and narrative strategies why should we even try to remember what actually happened in the past? And yet if we give up trying, where does this leave history except as a special category of fiction? (p.5)

In particular, Trouillot argues that the isolation of a single moment creates an historical *fact*: on this day, in 1608, Champlain founded French civilization in the Americas. What I would call a *process of foundation* relies on two interconnected phenomena. First, as Trouillot (1995) explains, chronology replaces process. In other words, we are left with a series of moments that all lead to Champlain’s triumphant landing in 1608 (p.113).

Among them are Champlain's much-earlier settlement at Port-Royal in 1604; his eventual return to New France with the blessing of King Henry IV; and his arrival in Tadoussac aboard the *Don de Dieu* in the spring of 1608. *Rencontres* makes no mention of his numerous travels to the Americas before 1608, including several earlier attempts at founding permanent settlements; nor is there any mention of the hundreds of Europeans already in the area, including many already trading with indigenous peoples and *not* settling.

Second, as Trouillot (1995) argues, once historical processes are sublimated to linearity, social contexts fade away (p.113-14). Again, in the example of Champlain, little attention is paid to the Wars of Religion ravaging Western France at the time, wars that were perhaps, at least peripherally, responsible for Champlain's desire to escape Western France (Fischer, 2009). The Québec 400 thereby expunges the political, economic, historical, and social contexts for his travels.

Yet, the ontologization of the founding as "fact" necessitates a de-contextualized, linear representation of Champlain's heroism². This is not a transparent process of historical meaning-making. Trouillot (1995) explains this process further:

As a set event, void of context and marked by a fixed date, this chunk of history becomes much more manageable outside of the academic guild. It returns inevitably: one can await its millennial and prepare its commemoration. It accommodates travel agents, airlines, politicians, the media, or the states who sell it in the prepackaged forms by which the public has come to expect history to present itself for immediate consumption. It is a product of power whose label has been cleansed of traces of power. (p.114)

² Sociologist Himani Bannerji (2000) uses the concept "ontologization" to explain the process through which a gendered and racialized poverty becomes common-sense in Ontario during the 1990s (p.71).

The naming of Champlain as the *father* of the nation and the selection of the official *founding* date have taken many different guises in the past century-and-a-half in Québec. Champlain has not always enjoyed the unique popularity he did during the Québec 400. In fact, he was a figure among many other prominent French-Canadian (male) figures during much of the past four centuries. As Québec historians Ronald Rudin (2003, p.177-180) and Denis Martin (2004, p.354-58) have documented, it was only during the last part of the 19th century that Champlain slowly emerged in his primary place as father of the nation³.

For instance, in conjunction with Trouillot's work on the politics of commemoration and the selection of a founding moment, Denis Martin argues that the making of Champlain's public image depended on finding a literal face for Champlain. In his essay, "Discovering the Face of Champlain," Martin (2004) explains how 19th century historians, ready to make Champlain the father of French Canada, scoured the portrait collections of famous 17th century French artist Balthazar Moncornet looking for a portrait of Champlain; or as Martin suggests, in the very least a reasonable likeness (p.356). Though no *official* portrait of Champlain was found, shortly thereafter in 1854 a portrait attributed to an unknown French artist appeared throughout French Canada. Martin suggests that today, it is widely held that this likeness is based on Moncornet's

³ In his introduction to the edited collection *Commemorations*, John Gillis (1994, p.7-8) explains how professional historians stepped in to fabricate new histories in the 19th century as a way to consolidate nascent national affiliations (e.g., French, English, German). He later states: "In the course of the nineteenth century nations came to worship themselves through their pasts, ritualizing and commemorating to the point that their sacred sites and times became the secular equivalent of shrines and holy days" (p.19). Historian Patrice Groulx (2001) makes a similar argument in the context of Québec in his essay on Benjamin Sulte, "the father of commemoration" in French Canada.

portrait of Michel Particelli d'Emery, superintendent of finance under Kings Louis XIII and Louis XIV. Martin (2004) explains how the 1854 representation, almost certainly a forgery and based on another man's image, spawned a small industry of Champlain paintings and engravings in the latter half of the 19th century (p.357). So great was the appetite for a legitimate founding hero that even though the portrait's authenticity was put into question from its very first appearance, Particelli's face remains Champlain's face to this day.

Along with these efforts to find Champlain's face, several other attempts to position him as the founder took place during the 19th century. There were many reasons for the newfound love of Champlain, but given his unusual appeal to both secular and Catholic interests, his place as the founder *par excellence*, a title Champlain shared for some time with explorer Jacques Cartier and religious icon Monseigneur Laval, was cemented (see Litalien & Vaugeois, 2004). In fact, as recently as 1984, Québec/Canada was commemorating 450 years since Cartier's 1534 landing at Gaspésie, when he planted a large cross in the name of the King of France. The events in 1984, named "Québec 84," were deemed a colossal failure, as attendance for the events sagged⁴.

The largest public outpouring christening Champlain the symbolic father in the 19th century came in the guise of a campaign to erect a large monument on the *Terrasse Dufferin* next to the Château Frontenac in Old Québec, perhaps the most iconic public space in the Old City (see Figure 4.3). Once historians succeeded in establishing

⁴ The Official Programme from the event in 1984, which was produced by the Québec 1534-1984 organizing committee, states: "Canadians from coast to coast are invited to attend and participate in the 1534-1984 festivities on the site of Le Vieux-Port de Québec, the city's historical harbour and in Gaspé, the actual place where our history began."

Champlain's face and creating an accompanying persona that were widely recognized throughout French Canada, an epic monument became possible. Rudin (2003) has explained how the campaign, lasting well over 20 years and culminating in the erection of an immensely popular monument in 1898, solidified Champlain's place as *the* most important French-Canadian historical figure⁵ (p.86-155). In fact, the unveiling of the monument drew anywhere between 30,000 and 100,000 people,⁶ remarkable for the period, given that Québec City's population at the time was less than 70,000 (City of Québec, 2008b). By the time of the unveiling, the significance of Champlain's image was secured. "In September 1898," explains Denis Martin (2004), "the unveiling of the statue by Paul Chevré conferred on Champlain something of the immortality that the historians had been seeking for him for a half-century. What would Québec City be today without his image?" (p.357). Indeed, given the prevalence of Champlain's image in the public sphere during the Québec 400, it is difficult to imagine the celebrations without his commanding presence.

Champlain's iconic monument also served an important purpose in selecting a founding moment. As we now know July 3 has become Québec's official founding date, contributing to Champlain's public image as father of the nation. Yet, this date has only very recently been instituted as such. Until the 1950s, July 3 was a summer day among many others. It was then that a local historical society began leaving a flower wreath at the base of the Champlain monument to mark the day (Lemieux, 2008). At the end of the

⁵ As part of this process of making Champlain the "founding father of the nation," Groulx (2001) lists a number of Champlain monuments inaugurated during this period: Québec (1898), Saint John in New Brunswick (1904), Ottawa and Orillia in Ontario (1915), and Lake Champlain (1907) and Plattsburgh (1912) in New York State (p.64).

⁶ Rudin (2003) explains that the exact figures are in dispute, though he prefers the lower figure.

1970s, Québec City mayor Jean Pelletier marked the date by laying a wreath and since then every subsequent mayor has undertaken the ceremony, instituting July 3 as *the* official founding date, further authorizing Champlain as the founding father (Lemieux, 2008b). To take this logic a step further, an official founding time of day was selected in 2008. Early in the year Mayor Régis Labeaume wrote a letter to the mayors of Canada's 400 largest municipalities asking them to mark the occasion of Québec City's founding by ringing out municipal and church bells at exactly 11 am, the time officials, recreating tidal records, deduced that Champlain's boat was most likely moored 400 years previously. With the help of Québec City Archbishop Marc Ouellet, more than 900 municipalities, parishes, and a wide variety of other bodies rang their bells at exactly 11 am on July 3, 2008 (Société 400, 2008a). The anniversary date now includes not just a date, but also an exact time, solidifying Champlain's landfall as the founding moment.

To point to the recent construction of the founding moment, we could look no further than the two-week tercentenary commemorations in 1908 – the largest commemorative events Canada had ever seen, larger than all other events celebrating Canada's founding fathers *combined*. The events in 1908 began on July 19, fully two weeks *after* the July 3 anniversary (see Nelles, 1999; Rudin, 2003). The lack of adherence to the now-official July 3 anniversary in 1908 stands in stark contrast to 2008, where all major events, even the entertainment and protest events, took place on this date and in some cases, at the exact official time. In this striking shift during the Québec 400 – one that solidifies Champlain's place as founder through singularizing and elevating the founding moment – we are witness to the tensions in history-making Trouillot highlights in his work: the shifting relationship between “what happened” (e.g., Champlain arrived

in Québec City) and “what is said to have happened” (e.g., Champlain founds French civilization in the Americas).

The purpose of such an analysis is not to dwell on the exact events of the past, for instance, when precisely Champlain landed in Québec or how many people were aboard his ship, but to build an understanding of how those events are part of a process of history-making that signifies the event for the present. One of the most salient effects of the process of history-making that I witnessed in Québec City in 2008 was the adoption of the language of “encounter” to describe the meeting between French settlers and indigenous peoples. The next section briefly directs us to some of the effects of the history-making process, before turning to the event *Rencontres*.

The semantic description of Champlain’s endeavour has shifted considerably over the past century. From “discovery” in the tercentenary (see Nelles, 1999; Rudin, 2003) to “founding” in the lead-up to 2008 and during many of the events, we find “encounter” as the Société 400’s signifier-of-choice to describe Champlain’s venture during the Québec 400. Here is an explanation of the theme from the City of Québec’s 400th anniversary website:

Québec is a natural site of encounters, large and small, historical and contemporary; a theatre of memorable *rendez-vous*.

Québec is the encounter between Europe and the Americas, the First Nations and the first migrants, and between France and England.

It is also the meeting place of a river and two mountain chains, of fresh water and salt water, of Lowertown and the Old City, of old walls and glass towers.

It’s still the meeting place for lovers cast under the spell of the sites, for welcoming residents and visitors from around the world, it’s the story of a citizen’s love for their city.

In Québec, everything bears the marks left over by these successive encounters: the landscape, the architecture, the culture, the economy, the population, as well as the warmth and the art of living.

And thus the essence of the programming for the 400th anniversary of Québec is born: sharing with people from here and away this centre of unique encounters. (City of Québec, 2008a, my translation)

In an important sense, the theme sets out the epistemological frame for the history of Québec, *the city*. In other words, it is decidedly a *regional* story of encounters, not primarily *national*, underlining the tensions between Québec the city and Québec the nation I highlighted in chapter 1. Yet, “The Encounter” theme takes a number of different meanings throughout the celebrations. For example, the following song, entitled “So Many Stories,” was written for the joint Radio-Canada and Société 400 contest *Québec, je te chante!* [I sing for you Québec] and further manifests “The Encounter” theme. By winning the contest, it became the official song of the Québec 400 events.

So many stories to tell
Tall ships, conquerors
From torment to beauty
Brave hearts in search of liberty
Defied the wind
So many tales to tell
L'Anse au Foulon, the Citadelle
400 winters and as many summers
And the desire to be more beautiful
Defying time

I remember your shores
And the ambition of a continent
I am the land of many faces
From afar, from the past
For the future and a long time

So many stories for the future
I hear your whispers in the wind
Adventures with no end
Heroes clamouring for liberty
Defying the wind

So many stories from elsewhere
I hear you tell them
Adventures with no end
Heroes clamouring for liberty
Defying time...

I remember your shores
And the ambition of a continent
I am the land of many faces
From afar, from the past
For the future and a long time
For the future and our children.⁷
(Société 400, 2008a, my translation)

The slippage that occurs between the City of Québec's official narrative's focus on the city of Québec and the official song's focus on encounters between heroic sailors and dangerous shores is indicative not only of the scalar shifts at work in the commemorative practices, but also speaks to the *national* dimensions of the celebrations.

In his work studying the Columbus quincentenary celebrations, Trouillot (1995) foreshadows the use of the language of "encounter" in future large-scale commemorations: "[Encounter]," then "[is] one more testimony, if needed, of the capacity of liberal discourse to compromise between its premises and its practice. 'Encounter' sweetens the horror, polishes the rough edges that do not fit neatly either side of the controversy. Everyone seems to gain" (p.114-15). Yet, as Trouillot argues, the liberal terms of the discussion limit how and to what extent one can describe historical and contemporary inequalities from the point of view of those who continue to be subjugated, notably in his work, indigenous peoples and enslaved Africans. Instead, the

⁷ Musicor, a subsidiary of Quebecor Media, one of Québec's largest corporations, released an album entitled "Si Québec m'était chantée" [If I Could Sing Québec], that featured "So Many Stories." It also included songs by Québec icons Félix Leclerc, Gilles Vigneault, and Robert Charlebois, all of whom were featured prominently in the *Rencontres* show I discuss later in this chapter.

encounter invites everyone to celebrate as equals, terms, he argues, the encounter between Europeans and indigenous peoples/people of African descent has never made possible. Trouillot forcefully reminds us that not everyone gained. Inequalities in power were invariably involved in the “contact zone,” as Mary Louise Pratt (1992) has argued:

[Contact zone] refer[s] to the space of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict. (p.6-7)

Besides obfuscating inequitable power relations in the contact zone through a specific socio-spatial epistemology, another distinctive effect of using the language of *encounter* is temporal, in that it foregrounds the events leading up to the “founding,” leaving what happened between Europeans and indigenous peoples after “contact” to the historical dustbin, performing the process of history-making Trouillot describes above. In other words, the teleological lens cast by the *encounter* logic stops at the meeting, often of equals on a level playing field. What happened afterwards is left to one’s imagination, or in the case of *Rencontres*, the Société 400’s major commemorative event, for Champlain to re-narrate. In this way, “Commemorations” as Trouillot (1995) explains, “sanitize further the messy history lived by the actors. They contribute to the continuous myth-making process that gives history its more definite shapes: they help to create, modify, or sanction the public meanings attached to historical events” (p.116). My analysis of the *Rencontres* performance below demonstrates this discursive process.

Rencontres: Intercultural Encounters

Successful celebrations de-contextualize successfully the events they celebrate, but in so doing they open the door to competitive readings of these events.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, 1995, p.131

The most widely disseminated event organized by the Société 400, the show *Rencontres* [Encounters], narrates 400 years of Québec history, and was planned as the centerpiece of the commemorative events. At \$3.5 million and attracting large crowds of upwards of 40,000 people per day, it was the most popular historical representation during the Québec 400. Three daily performances took place from July 3 to July 5 at the National Assembly building, on a stage that was nearly one square kilometre. The flagship event of the Québec 400 predictably adopted the official “Encounter” theme as its inspiration. The Société 400 website offers an introduction to the event:

Samuel de Champlain in person, portrayed by Yves Jacques, an actor originally from Québec City, will recount 400 years of history through ten impressionist and musical tableaux....Fifteen singers accompanied by 15 musicians, six vocalists, 25 acrobats, a number of dancers and performers along with a chorus of adults and children will bring this show, based on the history of the Capital, but also inspired by the history of Québec and the rich heritage of the French-speaking world, to life. (Société 400, 2008a, my translation)

We see in this official description of the event the performance of history involved in the Québec 400 commemorations, one that tells an imagined Québécois subject something about him/herself through spectacle. Yves Jacques, the actor who portrays Champlain in *Rencontres*, demonstrates this in a full-page interview in the Québec City newspaper *Le Soleil* following the first two showings: “We are perhaps more representative of history than any history book. Canada is born in 1867. Sorry, but we’re not celebrating the birth

of Canada, but the birth of Québec, and through this, the French fact in the Americas. It is obviously a spectacle with nationalist tendencies” (Moreault, 2008b, my translation).

In her comparative study of the centennial and bi-centennial celebrations in Australia and the United States, Lyn Spillman (1997) explains spectacle as an expression of constructed social bonds that transcends the heterogeneity of the imagined national community. Building on Benedict Anderson’s work, she claims that, “Appeals to national spectacle and symbol could seem to transcend difference to create the sort of imagined community bicentennial organizers wanted to claim” (Spillman, 1997, p.130). In some ways, it is precisely the ambiguous nature of spectacle, its imaginative rendering of the past that allows it to make equally inspired claims of collective belonging where no such consensus exists.

John J. MacAloon (1984), in his study of Olympic spectacle in relation to his development of what he calls a “theory of cultural performance,” explains the role of large-scale events such as *Rencontres* in modern society:

Cultural performances are more than entertainment, more than didactic or persuasive formulations, and more than cathartic indulgences. They are occasions in which, as a culture or society, we reflect upon and define ourselves, dramatize our collective myths and history, present ourselves with alternatives, and eventually change in some ways while remaining the same in others. (p.246)

Building on MacAloon’s work, David Roberts (2003) argues that, “spectacle, as its name indicates, signifies a separation of actors and spectators, which is almost inescapable once the social group exceeds a certain size” (p.55). Roberts argues for an understanding of spectacle linked to the rise of the state form, a periodization that corresponds with Benedict Anderson’s work on the nation. What he calls the “spectacle of the spectacle” relies on the “mass multimedia spectacles of the entertainment industry” (Roberts, 2003,

p.58). In the case of *Rencontres*, we see just such a spectacle, one that builds a distinct separation between actors on stage and spectators in the crowd and relies entirely on special effects and entertainment as a form of remembering the “past.”

Peter Hodgins (2004) explains such uses of the past as a “spectacularization of memory” that constructs “audiences as being incapable of concentrating for more than a minute, driven by the need to see, touch, and manipulate the past” (p.105-6). Noted literary theorist and novelist Toni Morrison has also explicated the ways in which public spectacle enters into discourses of the present: “‘Spectacle’” she writes, “is the best means by which an official story is formed and is a superior mechanism for guaranteeing its longevity. Spectacle offers signs, symbols and images that are more pervasive and persuasive than print which can smoothly parody thought” (1997, p.xv). Katharyne Mitchell (2003) builds on such an analytical frame by directing us to the relationship between the material and symbolic a “spectacle” approach reveals about public memory: “The grand spectacle...is frequently recoded through time, but always contains the interplay of the ‘fixed:’ monument, stage, building, flags or lights, and the ‘mobile:’ commemoration, ritual, march, pageant, meeting, event” (p.444). She then explains that there are several processes that render memory a collective project, as in the efforts in the Québec 400. Among the most salient are the

Social production of memory and fixation of memory through repetition; the semiotics of space, where the use of monuments (such as the Statue of Liberty) are of crucial importance; the use of commemorations as a ‘practice of representation’ that enacts and gives social substance to the discourse of collective memory. (Mitchell, 2003, p.443)

Mitchell, then, suggests that through these processes, where individuals assemble to remember *together*, commemorations interpellate a growing number of subjects through

the very act of performance. In other words, what is unique about commemoration is that we are meant to do it *together*, in that it is conceived as a way to remember *something* about the past with other people who share that *something* with us. By getting together to remember in this way, we perform the *something*, giving it new meaning and bringing it to life. What we commemorate never stays the same, since the act of commemoration re-signifies what we are remembering.

A few brief examples from the celebrations will explain the relevance of Mitchell's theoretical interventions to the Québec 400. The use of the number 400 during the events was quite remarkable. Not only were there hundreds (thousands?) of fixed banners with the number welcoming tourists like myself into the city, but the number was an integral symbol in numerous events. The repetitive nature of 400 was materialized in several monuments lining the city, many of them gifts from other jurisdictions.

For example, along the renovated Promenade Champlain on the northern shores of the St-Lawrence River, pedestrians and cyclists now meet a series of handsome sculptures donated by the Government of the United States, the State of Vermont, and Franco-Americans of New England, each prominently featuring the number 400. In this case, the monuments are all fixed representations of the founding of Québec. From there, the number itself acts as a symbol bringing people together. The giant family picnic on the Plains of Abraham, where thousands of people gathered on July 6, 2008, to form the number "400" in order to recreate an aerial photo taken in 1908 is a telling example of the "mobile" dimensions of the celebrations (see Figure 4.4). The hundreds of participants in the event are all minute dots in the number "400," thereby taking part in a ritual of belonging that evokes the past.

Another example comes from France, where on Bastille Day (July 14), the annual fireworks show in Paris began with the number “400” lighting the sky above the City of Lights, followed by five minutes of fireworks in blue and white, Québec’s national colours. The number itself has no intrinsic meaning, but through the Québec 400, it is given multiple historical meanings. In this way, the number gave social substance to the narrative of Québec’s past, whether in the celebration of a nation or city, since it came to hold a series of meanings about the past: Samuel de Champlain’s heroic voyage, the birthplace of French civilization in the Americas, Québec’s national history, the historical importance of the French-Québec relationship, and so forth. And these meanings transcend individual interpretations of the events, since through repetition commemorative events and rituals “create a single, highly idealized, composite image” (Mitchell, 2003, p.443). The number, turned into a symbol with multiple historical meanings, ensures social cohesion through the repetitive nature of its narration and performance.

Mitchell’s theoretical insights are instructive in *Rencontres*’ case as well. The show offers a popular rendition of Québec history through a number of significant symbols, relying as it does on what I call a *strategy of familiarity* that engages a number of different senses, such as sound, sight, and touch, and a semiotics of space; all contribute to the construction of a persuasive historical narrative. And as Mitchell describes, this “grand” spectacle relies on the interplay between several fixed and mobile signifiers to call subjects into its epic story of multicultural encounters. Ultimately, it is their organization under the banner of celebration that brings them together as *spectacle*. In this way, *Rencontres* “builds on the collective memory of the recent past, but also

produc[es] that memory's future through a highly particular form of aestheticized, spectacularized politics" (Mitchell, 2003, p.443). The politics of the spectacle are on full display during *Rencontres*, the official commemorative event.

The most salient feature of the spectacle during *Rencontres* was the way in which Champlain was represented as a cosmopolitan, intercultural man. Champlain's genius, as expressed in *Rencontres*, lies in his openness to diversity, a recent historical construction that lays certain liberal values of cultural pluralism as the founding principle of the normative Québécois subject. *Rencontres* does not so much celebrate Champlain's mapping or navigational skills; instead, it highlights his ability as a manager of difference who decides the terms of the encounter with "difference." In fact, one of the primary aims of the show is to invent a new Champlain, since no authentic representation of Champlain exists. The Société 400 released a 45-minute documentary on the making of *Rencontres* as part of its special commemorative DVD package of the show in late 2008. In the documentary, entitled *De la création à la scène* [From Creation to the Scene], the show's director Pierre Boileau, echoing the statements in the film *Champlain retracé* and the exhibit *Le temps des Québécois*, explains the show's intentions: "[We want] to invent Champlain, to invent our own Champlain, and I believe this one will remain in History" (Société 400, 2008b, my translation).

The Champlain-as-intercultural-man discourse is evident during several key moments in *Rencontres*, none more apparent than the opening scene, "The Encounter," where Champlain explains the relationship between French settlers and indigenous peoples to the crowd (see Figure 4.5). I will now describe and examine this scene, before

turning to the contradictory signs that put the intercultural man into question during the rest of the event⁸.

The show begins with Champlain high above the assembled crowd, perched at the top of the National Assembly building: He is a bronze statue surveying his surroundings. As the music begins, Champlain rids himself of a bronze-coloured mask and matching overcoat, signaling to the audience that he has come alive. Champlain's opening statement sets the stage for the romantic and nostalgic tone of the event:

Québec. My beautiful. My sweet. My city. Four hundred years ago on this day, regardless of what historians might say, I, Samuel de Champlain, founded you in the name of his Royal Highness Henry IV and made of your vast wilderness, the first lady of New France!

As Champlain descends nearly 30 metres to the ground, balanced by pulleys and ropes, he alerts the audience to his 400-year presence overlooking the capital city he founded so long ago:

What? You are surprised by my return? But I never left you. Ha, never! Me, miss your *Fete-Dieu* [Corpus Christi], your Winter Carnivals, your endless upheavals, never in 400 years. I was there on high, observing, I saw everything, heard everything. Yes, even that M'am. You have no secrets for me.

The crowd laughs loudly in anticipation of things to come as Champlain's charming smile is beamed to spectators via several large screens provided for the overflow crowds along Avenue Grande-Allée, one of Québec City's major arteries. Instead of cars, the street was filled with people sitting or standing in the road, as it was closed to traffic on the days *Rencontres* was presented to the public. The smells of cigarette smoke and sweat mingled together on the humid premiere afternoon on July 3, 2008. Champlain,

⁸ My descriptions of the events and citations from various scenes are from my field notes and also from the Société 400's DVD of the *Rencontres* show (Société 400, 2008b). I attended the show on July 3 and July 5, 2008. I translated all passages.

positioning himself as the patriarch of Québec history, is accompanied by a troupe of acrobats, smeared in bronze face paint and dressed much like Champlain, each one acting as a statue coming to life from the façade and grounds of the building. Featured among the twenty-five “living” monuments are an all-star cast of Québec’s founding fathers: Louis-Joseph de Montcalm, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles-Michel d’Irumberry de Salaberry, Paul Chomedey de Maisonneuve, and of course, Jacques Cartier, who all occupy a place of honour on the grounds of the National Assembly. Once he arrives on the ground from the top of the National Assembly building, Champlain leads the group of performers into a makeshift stream, spilling from the majestic Fontaine de Tourny – an anniversary gift to the city from the Québec-based Simons corporation – to the main stage. As he leads the founding fathers down the stairs of the National Assembly towards the crowd, Champlain continues,

Québec, you made yourself so beautiful for our meeting. Do you see that beautiful river, just like a poem. And over there nearby that Old City, surrounded by the walls of History. And over there, that new fountain that spits its joy...look at you Québec, as beautiful as when you were born.

Champlain wades into the stream, re-telling his much earlier voyage up the St-Lawrence:

Remember our arrival? We made our way up the [St-Lawrence] River, and the shorelines, like a welcoming embrace, pulled us towards them. Just like through sorcery, they tried to hold us. Hey, at the top of the ship, what do you see over there? Movements you say. A forest that walks? Let’s get closer. Row faster. Along the shorelines, among the trees, are strange shapes. Are they giant birds? Or beasts?

The water splashes around Champlain’s ankles, as he walks slowly through the stream, gesturing grandly towards the large audience in the VIP section along its banks. After a long pause, he answers his seemingly rhetorical question with flourish:

No! Not birds, nor beasts. Such a surprising vision: men, women, and children, feathers in their hair. We thought we were alone in the New World, but they were coming to meet us.

As Champlain makes his way up the St-Lawrence, hopping from stone to stone, a singer in a white dress shirt follows Champlain and sings a melancholic song spelling out the life of European mariners. “Belle Virginie,” is a traditional French-Canadian folk song:

Belle Virginie, tears in her eyes
I come to say goodbye
And now I leave again for America
Following the wind
And goodbye again my Belle Virginie
The sails are already in the wind
The sails in the wind, my love
Cause me torment
There will surely be storms
That will destroy your building
And I will be without my love

Belle Virginie, don't worry
I am a talented mariner
And I know the whole earth
And I am sure of my ship
There will be no sinking
While I'm on the waters
Belle Virginie, until I return
Be faithful to our love
I promise you, my dear
To return to this country
Where we will get married
Goodbye my Belle Virginie

The tone is somber, as Champlain navigates his way through the St-Lawrence to centre stage, in front of thousands of spectators. The founding fathers follow along, paddles at hand, rowing to the slow beat of the music. The Société 400 website provides some added background on the logic of this opening scene:

The show opens on the façade of the National Assembly with acrobats, disguised as the bronze statues that adorn the building, personifying the Europeans that set out to discover a new world. On the ground level, the

Tourney fountain is at the centre of a 360-degree stage, on which is set a dome representing the globe. On this structure, two shapes representing Québec and Europe move, shift, and illuminate throughout the tableaux.
(Société 400, 2008a, my translation)

Just as the music comes to an end, Champlain, feather in his hat and astrolab swinging from his belt, climbs onto the stage and circles around the globe. He tells the story of his first encounters with indigenous people, who, in his account, taught the French to survive in the harsh, unfamiliar climate. Champlain explains, while staring intently into the eyes of well-known Québec-based Innu musician Florent Vallant:

The first encounters were fragile. But little by little, we found friendship. We were hungry and they fed us. We were cold and they showed us how to dress. We were suffering, and they showed us how to boil bark, or to smoke grasses.

As the founding fathers continue to paddle in the background stream, Champlain places his hand on Vallant's shoulder in friendship. The low, rhythmic sound of drums fill the stage, as Vallant, along with his band, plays a drum-infused, Innu and Anishnaabe-language folk song, "Nikana," around a burning campfire. Champlain steps back and looks on encouragingly. As soon as the slow, lilting song ends, a new upbeat song begins in the background. As the sound rises, Champlain continues to expound on the importance of the early encounter with indigenous peoples: "Between us is produced a type of alchemy and the embrace between the Aboriginal [*Amérindien*] and European gives us a new species...the *Québécois*!" The crowd cheers for the first time since Champlain's opening descent and the sounds of French-Canadian music reverberate loudly, featuring a prominent accordion and fiddle. Many audience members sway to the up-lifting rhythm, one quite common in both "traditional" French-Canadian music and the contemporary Québec folk/pop genre *néo-trad* (neo-traditional). With the pounding

beat carrying the crowd, Champlain explains that in the early settlement period he inaugurated an “Order of good cheer” that stipulates that at “all times and all places we must celebrate our presence in New France.” Champlain dances joyously, as barefoot background singers wearing French-Canadian sashes move to the music.

Importantly, in *Rencontres*’ narrative Champlain suggests that the “encounter” between the French and indigenous peoples produced a new people, the *Québécois*. In a rather sweeping discursive move, Champlain re-defines not only the very terms of the colonial encounter, but also its historical import. Whereas the traditional French-Canadian narrative of the colonial encounter highlights indigenous intransigence, especially in the form of “Iroquois savageness,” as I explain in chapter 2, this new narrative collapses all conflict into a happy story of embracing respectability. During the Québec 400, finding signs of this formerly hegemonic narrative was quite like finding a needle in a haystack. Not impossible, as I demonstrate shortly, but certainly not an altogether easy task. This is not to suggest that highlighting the warm relationship between French settlers and indigenous allies is a new phenomenon, but such narratives have traditionally been constructed in explicit contradistinction to a shared enemy. In this sense, the terms of the encounter in *Rencontres* have shifted.

Post-colonial theorist Sarah Ahmed has focused on the vital role of the figure of the stranger in forming national subjects. In particular, she has argued for an understanding of the encounter between Self and Other as one deeply invested in processes of inclusion and exclusion or incorporation and expulsion. In her analysis, these processes “constitute the boundaries of bodies and communities, including communities of living (dwelling and travel), as well as epistemic communities” (Ahmed,

2000, p.6). Whether the process itself is inclusive or exclusive, Ahmed claims that the relationship between Self and Other is crucial to subject formation, as she explains:

“Given that the subject comes into existence as an entity only through encounters with others, then the subject’s existence cannot be separated from the others who are encountered” (Ahmed, 2000, p.7).

Jocelyn Letourneau’s work on the history of Québec nationalism dovetails with Ahmed’s theorization. Letourneau (2006) explains how the dialectic between Self and Other constitutes the background for the loser mythistory current in present-day formulations of Québec nationalism. Despite its paradoxical focus on recognition from English Canada, this paradigm, as Letourneau calls it, expresses a vision of an enemy to Québec (i.e., the Other). “The story of the search for Self,” Letourneau (2006) explains, “is a story of bravery in the face of a storm, of persistence through difficulty, and of recklessness in the face of adversity — all ways to conjure up the spectre of disappearance” (p.170, my translation). A pillar of this national narrative in Québec is what Letourneau identifies as the story of the Other’s fault. In this narration, the Other is responsible for the Québécois subject’s failure to meet its destiny. Whether through the figures of early Canadian Prime Ministers Sir John A. Macdonald or Sir Wilfrid Laurier or in later Prime Ministers Pierre Elliott Trudeau or Jean Chrétien, the Other can be an outside or inside enemy (Letourneau, 2006, p.174-75). Thus, the Other, in its many manifestations, is either Outside-the Self (i.e., English Canada) or an Other-in-the-Self (e.g., the French-Canadian traitor).

In many ways, the figure of the threatening Iroquois played the role of the visible Other who constitutes the normative French-Canadian/ Québécois subject throughout

much of French-Canadian/Québécois history. Yet, given the history of British colonialism in French Canada, the figure of the Other has also been complicated by the “double colonization” process I discussed previously in chapter 2. In the case of *Rencontres*, the figure of the indigenous Other is *incorporated* into the Québécois subject. There is no visible indigenous resistance; instead we are invited into a story of the creation of one people. In this way, Champlain re-signifies the colonial encounter as one between equals, eager to “get to know” each other.

In this fashion, *Rencontres* articulates a form of what Charles W. Mills’ (2008) calls “racial liberalism,” building on Trouillot’s idea of the “encounter” logic. Mills (2008) explains how such epistemologies are based in liberal philosophies that place all individuals on an equal field, thereby concealing the fact that individuals have never been equal under liberalism’s abstract terms. In other words, the presumed ideal state of nature, in which individuals can come and go as they please, has never existed. In some ways, it has been replaced by a “state of denial” (Mills, 2008, p.1391-97). This form of racial liberalism is upheld by the colour-blind approach to cultural diversity that Robyn Wiegman (1999) and Alison Bailey (2007) theorize. Bailey (2007) explains the shift to the colour-blind approach in North American society, one quite salient to my analysis of *Rencontres*: “Images of the other in the early white imagination say ‘we are unlike them,’ whereas the recent color-blind version says, ‘we are all the same underneath.’ Both moves rely on a logic of purity. Neither says we are multiplicituous beings” (p.92-93). Indeed, *Rencontres*’ narrative represents a return to origins, one found in the encounter between French settlers and indigenous peoples. Under the terms of racial liberalism, white subjecthood is produced as a universal position, one that solidifies its universality

through the very particular enactment of the “colour-blind” approach, a position not available to all subjects. Wiegman explains how white subjecthood is defined precisely by the contradictory pull of both its universal and particular claims to power. In Wiegman’s (1999) words, “This split in the white subject – between disaffiliation from white supremacist practices and disavowal of the ongoing reformation of white power and one’s benefit from it – is constitutive of contemporary white racial formation” (1999, p.120).

There are several instances of such fanciful *racial* constructions in *Rencontres*. Champlain expresses the “white racial split” well at the very beginning of *Rencontres*, when he suggests that indigenous peoples along the shores of the St-Lawrence “were coming to meet us.” His arms outstretched, Champlain is ready to return the embrace. He then explains how indigenous peoples facilitated the settlers’ early existence through teaching them essential survival skills. In this way, the liberal logic is upheld: everyone contributed to the early French settlement. Without indigenous peoples, there could be no settlement. Champlain then makes the next logical step: the result of this encounter is the making of a new people. No longer indigenous, no longer French, the new people are *Québécois*. This encounter logic presents subjects with a narrative where everyone seems to gain. This is a universalizing move towards incorporation⁹.

⁹ Eva Mackey (2002) points to a very similar process during the Canada 125 celebrations in 1992 in her analysis of the *Spirit of the Nation*. The play resembles *Rencontres* in many important ways, including in the representation of the encounter between white settlers and indigenous peoples. Mackey (2002) explains how the performance’s narrative “combines a celebration of cultural diversity, a glorification of Canadian achievement and shaping of the environment, and a message of harmony with the land” (p.74). The correlation between *Spirit of the Nation* and *Rencontres* is striking. In this way, both representations provide subjects with a story of settler innocence and potentially lead to the marginalization of indigenous political claims. The representations

Champlain's grand gestures towards how "we must celebrate our presence in New France" points to the universality of this racialized subject position. Having incorporated the indigenous Other as Québécois only moments before, Champlain is free to speak for *all* the subjects in the "contact zone," since, after all, there is now only one subject. This universal position assumes equality precisely when and where that claim to equality is put into question, as my discussion about the devastation of indigenous communities following the arrival of French settlers in chapter 2 suggests.

In addition to this universal, "raceless" position, Champlain articulates a *particular* socio-spatial epistemology in the very way he expels current indigenous political and territorial claims. If Champlain was indeed watching Québec for the past 400 years, he would be hard-pressed to miss the fact that there exists in Québec indigenous peoples who see themselves as *distinct* from French settlers. The excision of the continued indigenous resistance to white settler colonialism is understandable to Champlain from the *particular* socio-spatial epistemology of white settlerism. It might make little sense from the vantage point of an indigenous person who continues to resist colonialism and in fact refuses to identify with either Québec or Canada. The resistance indigenous peoples in Québec continue to organize and in engage in, partly through the difficult work of re-constituting the various violences of colonialism, contest this version of the hybrid Québécois¹⁰. The Québécois subject in *Rencontres* is outwardly constituted

of the encounter diverge in an important way as well: Instead of representing settlers and indigenous peoples as involved in the same endeavour, as Mackey explains *Spirit of the Nation* does, *Rencontres* represents French settlers and indigenous peoples as the same people, the *Québécois*.

¹⁰ For example, in the afterglow of the Québec 400, the Huron-Wendat nation registered a land claim on October 15, 2008. The claim, covering nearly 24,000 sq. km, includes the cities of Québec and Trois-Rivières. There are of course many different forms of

not only as distinct from Canadians (English vs. French), but as the *same* as indigenous peoples, quite contrary to current indigenous resistance in Québec.

It is not that this phenomenon is particularly surprising. Nor do I want to suggest that highlighting “Iroquois savageness” is a *better* way to celebrate the past. But the discussion of war and battles in the contact zone make the ambivalences, the contradictions in the narrative discernable. They more readily open the door to competing readings of the past. Given that the Other in *Rencontres* is re-claimed as the Same, an essential component of the Québécois subject Champlain inaugurated, how do we analyze the making of this subject position? One way, I argue, is to open the door to the contradictory nature of the discourse by questioning the representation of violence in the spectacle, an analytical task to which I return shortly.

After the introduction of the new Québécois “species” on stage, Champlain effortlessly introduces another band, this time singing a French-language rendition of a popular French-Canadian song, *Front de beu* – translated loosely as “strong-willed” – that mythologizes enterprising early settlers. It was written by well-known Québec singer-songwriter Raymond Lévesque and appeared on his 1977 album *Le P'tit Québec de mon Coeur* [My Heart’s Little Québec]. Lévesque, a long-time Québec sovereigntist, did not participate in the events on the grounds of the National Assembly building.

decolonization as practiced by indigenous peoples. Taiaiake Alfred (2005), Glen Coulthard (2007), Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez (2008) and Leanne Simpson (2008) all call for the resurgence of indigenous resistance in the form of an “indigenist” politics that goes beyond the “recognition” model that limits indigenous resistance to making claims/appeals to the Canadian nation-state. One important aspect of this indigenist politics is marking indigenous diversity, thus speaking against the figure of the Indian captured by *Rencontres* in this case.

Instead, he made a notable appearance at a parallel protest event, one I introduce in chapter 7. Here is a sample of the lyrics from *Rencontres*:

To leave from Saint-Malo
On a small boat,
Going into the unknown
On the ocean that stirs and kicks,
You need a strong will.

To get off at Gaspé,
To plant a cross in the bay
And take possession of this corner
Without asking anything of the Indians,
You need a strong will.

To spend the winter on land
Because the river is frozen
And to get scurvy
While freezing your ass,
You need a strong will.

To clear the land
With a gun in your hand
Because the Iroquois
Want you out of there
You need a strong will...
But History is like that
Everything that takes place
Happens because guys
Were looking for gold or silver
And they had a strong will
And they had a strong will
And they had a strong will.

Once the performers fade out, the energy on stage shifts markedly. Champlain fills the near silence by introducing an English-language choir that sings a traditional English hymn. Before they begin, Champlain cheekily suggests that the English were always right on the French's trail, never far behind. The song radically changes from the upbeat tempo of the previous song to a gloomy love song mixing English, Irish, and Scottish influences and featuring violins and a bagpipe. All three acts then perform together, which director

Boileau explains in the *De la création à la scène* documentary: “The opening scene was meant to represent the melding of these three cultures, and ended in a type of organized cacophony, which reflects what we are: a well-organized cacophony where everyone has their place, everyone has a right to their place” (Société 400, 2008a, my translation).

Boileau accomplished his vision admirably, as the scene ends with the sounds of crashing melodies and booming voices, seemingly competing for the crowd’s affections.

The scene does present one subtle exception to the peaceful encounter largely on display. The song *Front de Beu* introduces the question of colonial-era violence in the following lines: “To clear the land With a gun in your hand Because the Iroquois Want you out of there You need a strong will.” Other than this fleeting gesture towards the violence of colonialism in the contact zone, one that receives no explicit treatment, conflict between the French and indigenous peoples, whether in the form of war, genocide, murder, rape, or epistemology, is not on display during *Rencontres*. Instead, we are presented with the incorporation of the indigenous Other as a fundamental component of the normative Québécois subject produced in the Québec 400.

Following the song, Champlain introduces the next scene, “L’Acadie,” which tells the history of the French-Canadian population of the Eastern provinces of Canada (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island). Importantly, it is here that we are introduced to the normative Québécois subject’s ability to sympathize with historical forms of violence, thereby putting the earlier representation of the encounter between French colonizers and indigenous peoples into question. After making several jokes about the French loss at the Plains of Abraham in 1759, Champlain says: “And we aren’t the only ones to have experienced upheavals. Acadians have also experienced their share of

misery...and 250 years after the Great Upheaval, Acadians, whatever we do to them, persist.” Champlain descends the stairs at the front of the stage and greets Acadian artist Marie-Jo Thério as she disembarks from a horse-drawn carriage. Nearly one hundred women in white period dress surround her, singing in unison in the background, “We didn’t give up...today, 3 million Acadians continue to sing...continue to sing...to sing.” From there, Thério, playing the piano, performs a long and moving rendition of *Évangéline*, a popular Acadian folk song recounting the story of a young Acadian couple separated by the British deportation of thousands of Acadians to the 13 British North American colonies, Louisiana, France, and Britain. Here is an excerpt:

But the English arrived
In the Church and they shut in
All the men from your village
And the women had to spend
The night on the shore
With all the crying children
In the morning they loaded
Gabriel on a large ship
Without a goodbye, without a smile
And all alone on the dock
You tried to pray
But didn’t have anything else to say...

There exists today
People who live in your country
And who remember your name
Because the ocean speaks of you
The south winds carry your voice
From the forest to the plains
Your name is more than Acadia
More than the hope for a homeland
Your name exceeds its boundaries
Your name is the name of all those
Who, despite being unhappy
Believe in love and hope.

Despite the attempts to present a seamless story of *togetherness* and *belonging* throughout *Rencontres*, the “spectacularized politics” of the event creep up in this second scene. It is heartbreakingly melancholic, marking as it does the deportation and ethnic cleansing of the Acadians by the English in the 18th century. The entire scene explicitly highlights Acadian resilience in the face of great suffering, in this case due almost entirely to forced displacement, dispossession, and in many cases, death. This suffering is caught viscerally in the image of crying children in *Evangéline*.

We can see here how violence and suffering are not altogether foreign to *Rencontres*’ narrative. Not to diminish Acadian suffering, but Scene 2, coming right on the heels of Scene 1, which effectively incorporated the indigenous Other and expelled contemporary indigenous claims to sovereignty, points to a major contradiction in *Rencontres*’ encounter narrative. There are no crying indigenous children in Scene 1, faced with the displacement, dispossession, and death of entire communities. The politics of spectacle are made clear here, in the very way that Scene 1 de-politicizes indigenous resistance. How are Québécois subjects to make sense of present-day indigenous resistance, whatever forms it takes, when they are presented with such a fanciful construction? The normative Québécois subject constructed through the Québec 400 is faced with an epistemological dilemma: How could present-day indigenous claims to land and sovereignty, for instance, be legitimate if the “encounter” was so peaceful and amicable? Such an epistemology is based on a *particular* shared understanding of the contact zone on the part of the normative Québécois subject.

According to Mills (2008), the liberal discourse that assumes that everyone is on a level playing field makes present-day social and political inequalities almost entirely

incomprehensible to white subjects in its reliance on ignorance of the historical and contemporary subordination of various racialized people. This is not to say that the imagined Québécois subject position produced in the Québec 400 categorically makes it impossible for individuals to grasp the visceral nature of colonial violence, for instance, as we can see in the example of Scene 2 of *Rencontres*, where Acadian suffering is made understandable. On the contrary, the scene works to bring the Québécois and Acadian subjects together through a shared understanding of violence at the hands of British settlers. Remembering the Acadian deportation gives the Québécois a reason for the occupation of indigenous lands. The Québécois serve as a bulwark against the dangers of (English)-Canadian and American hegemony. Remembering the encounter between indigenous peoples and the Québécois as one constituting a new people, serves a similar discursive strategy: the Québécois not only absolve violence in the encounter, but they also ensure their place *protecting* indigenous claims, since they are one and the same *people*.

During the transition between scenes, Thério returns to her horse-drawn carriage, and Champlain, slightly off-stage, turns to the crowd and enthusiastically introduces the next performers, with the following prologue:

They come from all over the world to build a country. *Coureurs de bois* [French fur traders], *robes noires* [Jesuits priests], *filles du roi* [young women sent to New France by the King]...explorers of a new continent. But soon they are joined by Italian cabinetmakers, German goldsmiths, Belgian chocolatiers. Artisans and thinkers from the entire world bring with them all the science, art, and industry from their respective cultures to our city over the centuries.

Champlain gestures grandly towards the sky, the river, and finally, to the mountains that ring the north side of the city. He pauses, before continuing his introduction to the next scene, looking intently at the crowd:

From Chad, from Northern Africa to the Steppes of China, to the sands of the North Sea, our homes are filled, our society takes on a depth, similar to the rich and multicolored fabric of a sash: knit, strongly woven together. We, who for so long searched for the Spice Route, we were our own destination without knowing it. The spices are us. The new arrival takes his place at the grand table and becomes the little King of his domain.

In this scene we are again witness to Champlain's intercultural ethic. In fact, there can be no mistaking it, according to Champlain's vision Québec society gets its strength from the multi-coloured fabric of its diverse people. We can temporarily forget the story of the *French-Canadian* people for this scene, since Champlain's narrative is one that *includes* all people into its big tent with rhetorical flair. As Champlain explains, everyone can be King of his own proverbial domain. The scene, called "Multi-Ferland" after well-known Québécois singer-songwriter Jean-Pierre Ferland, features seven performers: Italian-born, Québec musician Marco Calliari, wearing a black dress shirt; Algerian-born, Québec musician Lynda Thalie, wearing a flowing red dress; and H'Sao, a six-piece¹¹ band originally from Chad. H'Sao's male members are dressed in brightly-coloured dress shirts, while their female member, Taroum Rimtobaye, wore a red dress and green African headwear. The performers took turns singing classic songs by Ferland, mostly in French, but also translated to Italian and Arabic. Besides this one scene, the "intercultural" diversity of Québec society disappears from the stage, much as indigenous people do as well, attesting to another example of how the politics of cultural pluralism play out in Québec society.

¹¹ Only five members were on stage on this day.

Following this, a revolving door of Québécois musical icons from the 1960s and 70s came on stage, including Claude Dubois, Diane Dufresne, Michel Pagliaro, Robert Charlebois, and Gilles Vigneault. Up-and-coming acts such as Arianne Moffat and the band Karkwa also performed songs written by Québécois songwriting legend Félix Leclerc. The show ended with all the performers assembling on stage to sing Québec's unofficial national anthem, the song Vigneault and Gaston Rochon penned in 1975 for the Saint-Jean Baptiste celebrations on Mont-Royal in Montréal, *Gens du pays*.

Champlain introduces the final scene with these words:

Québec. Québec. Québec. The 'Order of Good Cheer' is re-established once-and-for-all. We had a city, a country to build. Here it is. After 400 winters, 400 miseries, four centuries of upheavals, of laughter, of tears, of fires, of blood, the soul of Québec sings the joy of its Fathers' labour and of promises kept.

The final sing-along took place in the pounding rain, as the sky above the National Assembly, threatening as it was on the afternoon of July 3, finally opened up. The audience, clutching umbrellas and makeshift raincoats, waved their arms enthusiastically during the entire scene. Before the grand finale, Vigneault stepped to the front of the stage and sang his nationalist song *Avec nos mots* [With our Words]:

With our words, our games, our works and our dances
Our joys our sorrows too
Four hundred years of faith, love and hope
With those who lived here
Our mirrors and our differences
We became this people and this country

Ask the rocks
Ask the woods
Everyone is home
On the Earth

And finally, Vigneault began the first two bars of *Gens du Pays*, before the singers on stage, Champlain, and large sections of the crowd joined in. The following excerpt is the last verse and chorus:

The river of time stops today
And forms a pond where we can
See love reflected like in a mirror
For these hearts to whom I wish
A time to live out their hopes

Countrymen, it's now your turn
To let yourself speak of love
Countrymen, it's now your turn
To let yourself speak of love

As the voices continue to sing the anthemic chorus, Champlain has the final word: “The rain marks the end of this marvelous show. I would like to thank my singer-, acrobat-, and dancer-friends. I will return to my bronze statue on high, but Québec, never doubt that I’ll keep you in my sights...and in my heart!” The show ends with Champlain’s hand firmly clutching his chest.

Understanding the Encounter

Several days after seeing *Rencontres*, I traveled to Wendake, the Huron-Wendat community in the suburbs of Québec City. The community had just inaugurated its new Hotel-Museum, a stunning architectural feat, just in time for the Québec 400. The opening exhibit *Territoires, mémoires, savoirs* [Territories, Memories, Knowledge] featured panels, images, music, video, and objects depicting approximately 1,500 years of Huron-Wendat history, from a “Huron-Wendat perspective,” as the introduction to the exhibit explains (Huron-Wendat Museum, 2008). The most salient aspect of the exhibit for my purposes here is one that responds directly to Scene 2 of *Rencontres*.

In the “History” panel at the entrance to the exhibit, the year 1534, 105 years after the founding of the Wendat Confederacy in 1430, is marked as “The Beginning of the Great Upheavals.” Not much else is said about the date, but it can be no coincidence that 1534 also denotes the year-after French sailor Jacques Cartier landed at Gaspésie, where he planted a large cross in the name of the King of France. The exhibit marks the arrival of the French as irrevocably changing the course of Wendat history, quite similar to *Rencontres*’s representation of the results of the British deportation of Acadians. In fact, the exhibit marks the year the Huron-Wendat were exiled from Wendake as “The Great Dispersal,” in language quite similar to what *Rencontres* uses to describe the Acadian deportation. Interestingly, in the exhibit 1534 marks the beginning of the upheaval, denoting a process with no accompanying end-date. As a result, the process, presumably European colonialism and settlerism, is ongoing. Nowhere else is this counter-story on display during the Québec 400, where the spectacle on display presents a teleological representation of the past beginning with European settlement and leading to the development of the great institutions of European modernity, including the nation-state. Roger Simon (2005) tackles this problematic, when he raises the question of what types of possibilities spectacle produces in relation to building historical consciousness:

The projections and identifications made within spectacle, and the consequent defences it elicits, both require and enact leaving ourselves intact, at a distance, protected from being called into question and altered through our engagement with the stories of others....Our attentiveness while not ‘inactive,’ is compliant; it does not engage in the praxis of making and re-making our historical consciousness. (p.144)

Not only do such forms of spectacle fail to engage subjects in a process of interrogating their historical consciousness, but in this very process, they play an important role in forming subjects: “Spectacle invites us to read particular narratives on the terms of the

moral certainties we hold dear,” Simon (2005) explains, “allow[ing] us to disavow any requirement that the terms on which we are moved might throw ourselves into question, into destabilization” (p.20). By re-affirming the “moral certainties we hold dear,” through, for instance, incorporating the indigenous Other and including the Acadian struggle against the British as a Québécois experience, *Rencontres* builds a normative Québécois subject who is an essentially moral and good.

This normative Québécois subject is also safely left intact by repeating the story on cultural pluralism now common in Québec and relying on the various devices of spectacle (lighting, music, dance, etc). *Rencontres* uses easily identifiable symbols, such as the Champlain monument at the top of the National Assembly building, depending as it does on a *strategy of familiarity* to call subjects into its historical narrative. It is no coincidence that the highly visible monuments adorning the National Assembly building and grounds were selected as “actors” in *Rencontres*. In the *De la création à la scène* documentary, director Pierre Boileau explains that the site and monuments were selected precisely because of their familiarity to the planned audience (Société 400, 2008a). Jean Leclerc, the President of Société 400’s board of directors, takes this a step further, when he enthuses at the prospect of having huge crowds for *Rencontres*, in an interview the day before the first showing: “But the National Assembly is a symbolic site. It’s here that power is exercised, it’s the site of power” (Lemieux, 2008a, my translation).

Consequently, *Rencontres*’ very premise hinges on a semiotics of space where the use of monuments is of crucial importance. In this way, *Rencontres*’ narrative legitimacy and construction of memory depends upon meanings embodied by the monuments on the Assembly grounds and the politics of their authority. Who is the subject envisioned as

recognizing the Assembly's legitimate authority and its monuments' inherent familiarity? The normative Québécois subject interpellated by *Rencontres*' narrative will necessarily recognize the Assembly's authority as the site of political governance in Québec and the monuments on the Assembly grounds as representing figures familiar to their understanding of history. Otherwise, why not hold the event in the much more spacious and comfortable Plains of Abraham, where all other major events during the summer were held?

It is important to consider how the liberal discourse on cultural pluralism on display in *Rencontres* prohibits the discussion of violence on the part of the French in any explicit form. Instead, it authorizes a historical narrative narrowly related to Québécois nationalism, in which Champlain and his forebears create a new people, the Québécois, a seemingly benign and perhaps even mutually beneficial relationship between the French and indigenous peoples. While this discourse might seem more "inclusive" or perhaps even more "just," in following its liberal logic, it also ignores particular forms of violence, a key in constituting normative Québécois subjects.

Avril Bell, a New Zealand Paheka (white settler) studying the history of Maori and Paheka relations, demonstrates how forgetting constitutes settler-subjects. As she suggests, the "forgetting" of violent encounters between settlers and indigenous peoples serves an important discursive strategy. "This historical amnesia," she argues, "blocks any real attention being paid to addressing contemporary inequalities that must be understood as colonialism's ongoing legacy" (Bell, 2006, p.263). These forms of forgetting are, as Alison Bailey (2008, p.77) has argued about what she calls "strategic ignorance," part of an "active social production" that situates subjects in relation to

discursive and ideological possibilities. Such constructions solidify political economic relations favouring white settler material power and privileges in the face of ongoing indigenous resistance. Yet, the story of white racial domination is decidedly *not* what Champlain is meant to express in *Rencontres*; one that positions Champlain as benevolent in intention, if not effect. I have sketched out an analytical way to account for this apparent discrepancy between the attempt to re-narrate colonial history as an encounter between relatively equal humans beings and the re-constitution of white forms of power and privilege in this same move.

My analysis in this chapter proposes no easy reconciliation between remembrance of the past and contemporary modes of subject formation. The discourse on cultural pluralism I uncover, despite recent policy debates, is wildly popular in Canada and Québec. With its deep ideological roots in Western liberalism, it provides a set of safe *possibilities* for white subjects articulated as it is through *strategies of familiarity*. Who would argue against tolerance, especially when one has the power to decide when and where tolerance is warranted, and which individuals and practices *to tolerate*?

My analysis provides a link between what Ghassan Hage (2000) has called these “fantasies of white supremacy” and the re-making of historical consciousness through commemoration. History is not immune to the political machinations of any society; on the contrary, the politics of difference play an integral role in the making of history in 21st-century Québec. My analysis, building as it does on a broad literature interrogating the making of subjects through commemoration, points to various manifestations of such fantasies in Québec.

The next chapter directly engages with the question of the constitution of normative Québécois subjects in the Québec 400. I do so by focusing on the ways in which the Québec 400 was celebrated in Western France. I argue that Québec 400 events in France provide an instance of transnational subject formation. The chapter analyses two specific modes through which this *extra-national raciality* is constituted: practices of territoriality that signify a “cartography of origins” and tropes of family and kinship that affirm the racial dimension of Québécois belonging in France. It concludes by examining how the making of the French-Québec subject relies on a duality of whiteness based in the tensions between universality and particularity.

Chapter Five

Québec in France, France in Québec: Towards a Practice of Transnational Commemoration

The Québécois are our brothers, while Canadians are our friends.

François Fillon

Prime Minister of France

Despite the popular media's intractable discussion of the Québec-Canada political divide I outlined in chapter 1, very little attention was paid, especially in the English-language media, to the tremendous *French* presence and influence in the Québec 400. As I pointed out previously, the *Comité français d'organisation pour le 400e anniversaire de Québec* (*Comité français*), presided over by former French Prime Minister and current Senator Jean-Pierre Raffarin, was a French organization set up to coordinate events celebrating Québec's 400th anniversary in France and Québec. On the organization's website, Raffarin highlighted several key events to take place in Québec, most notably: a selection of top French films screened at *La Fête du cinéma français*, a film festival; the Paris-based *Musée du quai Branly* presented two exhibits, *Ideqqi - Art des femmes berbères* [*Ideqqi: Art of Berber Women*] and *Objets blessés - La réparation en Afrique* [Wounded Artifacts: Repair Work in Africa] at the *Musée de la civilisation du Québec*; the exhibit *Le Louvre à Québec*, featuring a large selection of works of art from the Louvre exhibited at the *Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec*; and *Paris-Québec à Travers la Chanson* [Paris-Québec Through Song], a large outdoor musical concert that took place on the Plains of Abraham and attracted a dedicated French television audience. Whether in these events or in the numerous trade and economic partnerships announced between a

number of Québécois and French state structures, or the wide variety of other official¹ or non-official² exchanges that took place throughout the year, France and the French people were without a doubt front and centre throughout 2008 in Québec.

As this chapter demonstrates, Québec and the Québécois people were also on full display in France. For instance, on July 3, 2008, the official anniversary date, the Société 400 website explains that 5,000 French municipalities raised the Québec flag over municipal buildings and institutions (Société 400, 2008a). In going over my data I was struck by the prevailing France-Québec connection. Most importantly, the myriad ways in which the relationship between France and Québec was produced and narrated and how the French and Québécois people figured in these discourses has proven remarkably rich.

This chapter, then, responds to the wide variety of sites through which the France-Québec relationship was articulated in France within the confines of my broader research themes: to examine the making of a normative Québécois national subject through the Québec 400 and to tease out the racialized nature of these events. I do not provide a complete overview of all the events highlighting the French-Québec relationship since they are too numerous to analyze. Instead, I question how and under what circumstances this Québec presence in France mixed with and molded discourses about the normative

¹ As an example, the Québec 400 featured several key French diplomatic representatives, including the Prime Minister of the Republic, François Fillon, and two of his predecessors, Jean-Pierre Raffarin and Alain Juppé. As such, France took its place as the most important international delegation in Québec. (see Corbeil, 2008)

²For instance, *Québec: un détroit dans le fleuve* [Québec: A Strait in the River], a comic book released in 2008, brought together artists from Québec and France to narrate Québec's history (see Beaulieu et al, 2008). The introduction to the book explains that the project is meant "to underline the friendship that unites [Québec City] to France by initiating a collaboration between authors from both sides of the Atlantic."

Québécois national subject. How is the relationship between the French and Québécois people discursively produced through the Québec 400? What tropes and metaphors are used to solidify this relationship? What types of subject positions are produced through these discourses?

Territory, Roots, and Kinship: The Making of a Transnational Subject

In this chapter, I adopt an approach that examines the ways in which territorial practices conceptually and discursively “root” the Québécois in France throughout the Québec 400. My analysis points to the geographical instability of place, whereby the very rootedness and fixity of subjects in space is put into question through considering movement between spaces and the very production of space itself. To counter attempts to “root” subjects, Lisa Malkki (1992), building on Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s work, identifies the intellectual need for a new “nomadology,” one that focuses on theorizing the fluidity of identities through a focus on de-territorialization (p.38). Her call for such work correlates well with Jan Penrose’s interest in re-thinking the grounds on which identities are constituted by developing a focus on *territoriality*. Such an epistemology of nomadism recognizes territoriality as a strategy to fix subjects in space. “Territoriality,” as Jan Penrose (2002) explains, “[is] the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence or control people, phenomena and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area” (p.279). This chapter provides an analysis of an important set of territorial practices in order to explicate the complex operation of power invoked through their use. In other words, I aim to de-stabilize notions of “territoriality,” in Penrose’s sense, that structure discourses circulating during the Québec 400.

Beyond dislodging the relationship between space and subjects, I also interrogate the immutability of subject positions. For example, Paul Gilroy (1993) sees through the Black Atlantic, or his concept of a transnational, anti-imperial space, “a means to reexamine the problems of nationality, location, identity, and historical memory” against which essentialist assumptions about “rootedness” are formulated (p.16). Within this understanding of subjects and space, national belonging is put to the test, since Gilroy conceives of a trans-Atlantic subject who becomes the site for struggles for racial justice. As Gilroy (1993) explains, “I want to develop the suggestion that cultural historians could take the Atlantic as one single, complex unit of analysis in their discussions of the modern world and use it to produce an explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective” (p.15).

While my empirical site is markedly different than Gilroy’s, I see the conceptual usefulness of his challenge to ethnic and national absolutism, since it opens up networks of transnational cultural exchanges to study. Notably, Gilroy’s conceptual work opens up possibilities, such as questioning the national dimensions of identity and seeing the fluidity of cultural exchange, to understand the transnational French-Québec subject I examine throughout this chapter. Insisting on a transnational perspective, as opposed to a seemingly simple, straightforward, teleological, inevitable “express route” from France to Quebec, brings the larger colonial project, including historical social relations and parties excluded from national imageries, into the picture. Such work necessarily involves an understanding of movement that displaces the primacy of the subject onto a questioning of the processes that constitute the subject. In other words, the Québécois are not rooted in France, but rather, are produced by a transnational route from France to Québec, one

also forcefully cast around enslaved Africans traveling through the port at La Rochelle or French subjects setting out for the Empire's ends during much of the same period. This might seem a minor semiotic distinction, but Stuart Hall (1996) has argued for the importance of re-thinking the grounds on which identities are constituted by "coming-to-terms with our routes," meaning the temporal changes and spatial re-configurations that become part of narratives of identities (p.4). Routes, then, put roots into question by foregrounding a consideration of history and politics in the making of the trans-national French-Québec subject.

I have organized the rest of this chapter in several sections. The next two sections are structured around what I have called the "cartography of territorial origins." In them, I explain the "rooting" of Québec in France throughout 2008. The fifth section is devoted to an examination of the exhibit *La grande vague, ou la mémoire de l'eau salée*, which bridges the spatial and familial dimensions of the French-Québec subject. The last section then investigates the theme of kinship/family relations. In it, I point to the ways in which the French-Québec relationship is produced according to a "family" logic. Within these sections, I examine a number of tropes and metaphors that constitute the French-Québec subject. The underlining rationale for this chapter is to demonstrate how the France-Québec relationship is constituted through ideas of race, especially through a focus on origins and family. Social theorist David Theo Goldberg (2004) explains this reliance on "racial origins" in relation to geography, whiteness, and race in his overview of European imperialism:

Those whose 'racial origins' are considered geographically somehow to coincide with national territory (or its colonial extension) are deemed to belong to the nation....But those belonging racio-nationally also share an *extra-national raciality*, a *super-whiteness*, as Etienne Balibar has pointed

out, complementing the supraracial nationality. Race figures the national even as it transcends it. (p.215)

Specifically then, I argue that the commemorative practices on display in France provide a platform for articulating such an extra-national racial subject, one that relies on the flexibility of whiteness as a racial signifier. As Goldberg explains, this does not presuppose that whiteness is never *national* in its constitution. Instead, he points us to the existence of a *super-whiteness* that transcends the national, organized as it is around particular *transnational* and *imperial* histories.

A Cartography of Territorial Origins: Imagining Western France

This permanent exhibit, organized on three levels, examines migrant origins, their arrival in La Rochelle, the port where they boarded for the 'New World,' as well as the dreams and fears that preceded their crossing....Beyond history, the actual links that unite Poitou-Charentes and Québec are highlighted (cultural links, exchanges, sites of memory in the region).

(Government of France, 2008a, my translation)

I begin my journey into the France-Québec 2008 connection with a stopover in Western France. La Rochelle is a seaside city on the Atlantic Ocean with a thriving domestic tourism industry and large ocean port. Recognized internationally as a German stronghold during the Vichy regime, it was the last French city to be liberated at the end of World War II. La Rochelle is the capital of the Charente-Maritime Department, in the administrative region Poitou-Charentes along the Atlantic coast (see Appendix V). This region of France, and specifically La Rochelle, was for a long time considered the Huguenot capital of France. Following the Wars of Religion of the 16th century that devastated large portions of the population of France, the French Crown signed a series of

edicts, culminating in the Edict of Nantes in 1598, protecting the freedom of conscience and civil rights of Protestants throughout France.

However, these attempts at religious freedom were short-lived, as Cardinal Richelieu and King Louis XIII launched the siege of La Rochelle in 1627-28³, followed by the eventual revocation of the Edict by King Louis XIV in 1685 (Robbins, 2007). Through the 16th and 17th centuries, successive French kings (King Charles IX to Louis VIII) and their Catholic emissaries decimated the Protestant population of France, creating a large Protestant refugee population throughout Western Europe, especially in England, the Dutch Republic, and Prussia (see Robbins, 1997). The immediate period after the Wars of Religion until the French Revolution was prosperous for La Rochelle, which was thoroughly engaged in the triangular trade with the emerging French Empire, dealing in the slave trade in Africa, the sugar trade with plantations in the Antilles, and the fur trade in Canada (Pétre-Grenouilleau, 2004). In fact, in his book *The French Atlantic*, cultural theorist Bill Marshall (2009) highlights how La Rochelle was an important slave trading port in the 17th and 18th centuries, second only to Nantes in what is now the French Republic. The slave trade began between 1634-1715 in La Rochelle and by the 18th century, the trade was at its height, with 427 slaving expeditions leaving the port of La Rochelle carrying approximately 130,000 slaves (p.59).

Interestingly, Marshall (2009) argues that the rise of the slave trade in La Rochelle was directly linked to events in New France. In his words,

The reason for the increased uptake of slaving expeditions in the late eighteenth century was due to the loss in 1763 of that other major pole of

³ The siege of La Rochelle began in August 1627 and lasted until October 1628. It resulted in the deaths of upwards of 20,000 inhabitants of La Rochelle (Robbins, 2007)

colonial commerce in which the town had been implicated since the sixteenth century, namely the North Atlantic and especially Canada (p.63).

In this passage, Marshall is referring to the 1763 British Conquest of Québec City at the Plains of Abraham and the eventual conquest of New France as representing a defining moment in the development of the slave trade in La Rochelle and in France. One of Marshall's central arguments in his analysis of what he calls the French Atlantic is how the Black Atlantic (in Gilroy's sense above) marks the spatial-temporal boundaries of the French Atlantic. Marshall (2009) explains how "The Black Atlantic constantly subtends the French Atlantic, and constantly problematises the weaving of a major (or 'major-nostalgic') totalizing memory of transatlantic Frenchness" (p.91). I would suggest then, following Gilroy's work on the Black Atlantic and Marshall's work on the French Atlantic, that through participating so centrally in this *transnational* trade, including plantation slavery, La Rochelle contributed to allowing Western modernity and coloniality to achieve its economic and cultural hegemony.

Within this transnational context of trade and migration, many Huguenot men were among the earliest colonists to the Americas, eventually settling in New France, despite a ban on Protestant settlement, and the American colonies (New Rochelle, New York in suburban Westchester County is an example of a Huguenot settlement circa 1689)⁴. The significance of the Huguenot presence in the 17th century colonization of New France has only recently begun to garner widespread attention among scholars of New France (Larin, 1998).⁵

⁴ Marshall (2009) explains how French Protestants represented 30% of the first generation of South Carolina merchants and the third largest ethnic group in New York City after the Dutch and English around the turn of the 18th century (p.68).

⁵ The *Musée de la civilisation*, through its *Musée de l'Amérique française*, mounted an

The figure of Samuel de Champlain, never very far from my narrative, looms large over this history. Champlain was born in the city of Brouage, about 100 kilometres south of La Rochelle, around 1570. At the time, the city was fortified in order to battle the *Rochelais* (Protestant residents of La Rochelle). Whether Champlain was himself Huguenot or Catholic remains a heated question of debate among historians (see Lestringant, 1999).

Importantly, it is through the figure of Champlain that La Rochelle enters into the discourse about the Québec 400. That Champlain and some of the early French settlers in New France came from La Rochelle and the regions surrounding it, including Brouage, Poitiers, and Rochefort, meant that the *Société française* saw the region as the natural staging ground for the Québec 400 celebrations in France⁶. In fact, when reviewing the numerous events held in the region throughout 2008, one could imagine a modified map of Western France marking the sites of significance for New France and by clear association, Québec. As I explore below, not only is the broader imaginary map re-signified for the Québec 400, but the landscape is dramatically re-configured, renovated, and re-made to mark the France-Québec connection. Edward Said's work on "imaginative geography" helps to explain how, in many cases, the very imagined dimension of space can be imbued with varied social meanings. Said (1978) explains his concept, relying on Gaston Bachelard notion of the "poetics of space:"

exhibit entitled "Forgotten Presence: The Huguenots in New France" from May 6, 2008, to March 22, 2009. The exhibit, meant to coincide with the Québec 400 events (though not an official event), underlined the lives of key early settlers, such as Pierre Dugua de Mons and Jean-François de la Roche de Roberval.

⁶ This natural connection to Western France was put into question in France when the mayor of Saint-Malo, René Couanau, complained about the lack of funds for Québec 400 events in Brittany. Saint-Malo, which lies on France's northwestern coast on the English Channel, was Jacques Cartier's hometown (see Dutrisac & Porter, 2008).

The objective space of a house—its corners, corridors, cellar, rooms—is far less important than what poetically it is endowed with, which is usually a quality with an imaginative or figurative value we can name and feel; thus a house may be haunted or homelike, or prisonlike or magical. So space acquires emotional and even rational sense by a kind of poetic process, whereby the vacant or anonymous reaches of distance are converted into meaning for us here. (p.55)

Here we see how space itself is not objective in any conventional sense of that term: it is deeply imbued with subjective experiences. In the same way that France or Québec refer to material territorial arrangements and relationships, they also refer to imaginative and symbolic dimensions. Derek Gregory (2004), a leading cultural geographer who has explained Said's own geographical imagination to a wider academic audience, defines "imaginative geography" further:

[Imaginative geographies] are constructions that fold distance into difference through a series of spatializations. They work, Said argued, by multiplying partitions and enclosures that serve to demarcate 'the same' from 'the other,' at once constructing and calibrating a gap between the two by "designating in one's mind a familiar space which is 'ours' and an unfamiliar space beyond 'ours' which is 'theirs'" (p.17).

As this section demonstrates, the imagined geographies of Québec in France find expression in many textual, performative, and display narratives. I argue that these stories about space support a racialized cartography of origins. Racial cartographics, as David N. Livingstone (2010) explains, are "carefully staged productions that discipline and direct human imaginations through conveying the impression that they are simply mirror reflections of natural realities" (p.219). In this hermeneutic understanding, maps are not simply transparent reflections of space, but are "rhetorical devices of persuasion" (p.206). Linking the "poetics of space" to an understanding of the cartographic project allows me to interrogate how maps, much like texts and performances, are thoroughly mediated by

their conditions of production. In the next section I turn to the various narratives that produce a particular cartography of origins for the Québécois in New France.

Québec in France: Territorial Origins

The naturalized geographical connection between Québec and Western France was solidified through a number of discursive techniques, none more important than the visit of a large Canadian delegation to La Rochelle and the region in May 2008. Governor-General Michaëlle Jean led the delegation in order to kick-off France's celebrations of the Québec 400. Here we can see an example of what Jan Penrose (2002) calls "practices of territoriality," or what she defines as people's attempts to "reinforce their connections with specific places through history, memory and myth" (p.282). The Canadian delegation's trip, which repeatedly underlined the historical and biological basis for territorial belonging, marks a definitive territorial relationship between Québec and France. The results of such practices of territoriality are widespread, as Penrose (2002) explains, "Through a process of symbolic transference, specific places become synonymous with the society's rootedness there" (p.282). Much of the delegation's trip was reserved precisely for these types of symbolic exchanges, solidifying the France-Québec territorial connections, which are then portrayed and understood as "natural." At times it sounded as if Québec never really left Western France.

For example, at the ceremony marking the Québec 400 in France, Governor-General Michaëlle Jean underlined the *special* territorial relationship between France and Québec on a number of occasions. In a speech on the occasion of the inauguration of the *Centre permanent d'interprétation de la Nouvelle-France* in La Rochelle, she stated,

And this idea of transforming one of the fortified bastions at the mouth of the old port of La Rochelle into a place that will henceforth house a permanent exhibit dedicated to the memory of the French migrants who left for Quebec and New France is inspired.

It is an idea that radiates the same light that the beacons of memory shed across the dark expanse of ocean to guide ships safely home.

By happy coincidence, on the other side of the Atlantic in the City of Québec, we are also restoring one of the first fortifications of the French Regime in the Americas—the Cap-aux-Diamants Redoubt—to house the *Grand Livre de Champlain*, presented just hours ago to the people of Canada by the cities of La Rochelle, Rochefort and the Agglomération Royan Atlantique.

In this very special year, the ties of friendship and, yes, of solidarity between our peoples on both sides of the Atlantic are stronger than ever; we can rejoice that the spirit of adventure of the pioneers lives on today, making us *sisters* and *brothers* in language and culture (Government of Canada, 2008b, emphasis added, my translation).

Jean delivered the speech with typical rhetorical flourish, though her own tenuous position as a Haitian immigrant to Canada puts her in a unique situation as spokesperson for Québec's territorial belonging in France. On several occasions during the delegation's four-day trip Jean discursively solidified the connection between France and Québec, one inaugurated in the violence of the colonial encounter. She even suggested, as in the statement above, that the French and Québécois "rejoice that the spirit of adventure of the pioneers lives on today," a rather open celebration of the excesses of colonialism. In her speech, it is precisely a shared understanding of the ethos of European colonial strength that ties the French-Québec subject together.

In other contexts, such as the event she held in 2007 at her official residence at Rideau Hall in Ottawa celebrating the bicentenary of the abolition of the transnational slave trade, Jean has spoken out about her personal history as a descendant of African slaves and the legacy of European imperialism. However, in La Rochelle, a hub of the

transnational trade in slaves, Jean made no mention of this particularly violent history, choosing instead to highlight the shared French-Québec celebration of their mutual ties, many of which were forged in the same transnational trade.

Besides this striking omission, the fact that Jean was speaking at an event inaugurating the *Centre permanent d'interprétation de la Nouvelle-France* is also telling. The Centre was built to mark the 400-year relationship between France and Québec. The Centre itself is built in one of the most historic sites in La Rochelle, a renovated 15th century tower marking the entry to the port that, along with two other towers built in the 12th and 15th centuries, secured La Rochelle's defences for 700 years (Government of France, 2010). The French government manages the Centre through the *Centre des Monuments Nationaux* [National Monuments Centre]. A Government press release explains the vision behind the *Centre d'interprétation*:

Québec celebrates 400 years. France and Canada commemorate, in 2008, the fourth century since the founding of the City of Québec in 1608, by Samuel de Champlain. On this occasion, the National Monuments Centre presents, starting on May 9, 2008, a permanent exhibit 'La Rochelle-Québec: Get on Board Towards New France,' in the new 'exhibit space' of the renovated and restored Tower. (Government of France, 2008a, my translation)

By selecting a key historical building on the very edge of Western France, the National Monuments Centre (NMC) solidifies the territorial bond between France and Québec. The *Délégation générale du Québec* in Paris, the centre of Québec's diplomatic corps in France, released a letter pledging its support for the NMC's work underlining "shared sites of memory." The letter, available on the NMC's website, begins with the following introduction:

For several years, the *Délégation générale du Québec* has been attentive to all that emphasizes France and Québec's shared heritage...the term 'shared

sites of memory' clearly refers to a point in common: a starting point, an arrival point, a site to which we are attached. The Chaîne Tower constitutes in this regard a privileged site of memory. Isn't our common history largely due to the fundamental and founding meeting of a man from the Poitou-Charente region with a new land that would become New France and later Québec? (Government of France, 2008a, my translation)

The letter brings the geographical imagination to the fore in its next paragraph: "Our memory is born on this French land and crossed an ocean to settle in a colony that today has become a prosperous country, one that is open to the world. It is a country that has not forgotten its roots, the starting point for its history" (Government of France, 2008a, my translation). In this way, the transnational French-Québec subject is brought together across the Atlantic, an important part of the imaginative process of geography.

Jean herself builds on this imagined geographical connection rather well in her statement at the opening, when she highlights not only the Tower's re-signification from a fortified bastion to a museum commemorating France's connection to Québec, but also the renovation of the Cap-aux-Diamants Redoubt in Québec City "on the other side of the Atlantic." This discursive move, highlighting proximity and even solidarity across the Atlantic, effectively folds the distance between France and Québec, constructing a symbolic relationship across nearly 6,000 kilometres. Jean also employs a practice of territoriality that relies on a sense of memory when she compares the founding of the Centre to what she calls, "the beacons of memory shed across the dark expanse of ocean to guide ships safely home." Again, much as Penrose's theorization of how practices of territoriality reinforce connections with specific places through memory, the symbolism of Jean's statement pulls the Québécois and French subjects together through space and returns the Québécois subject safely back to its roots, against the backdrop of some threatening natural disaster. Here, Jean highlights the vulnerability of the colonists.

In this way, the *Centre d'interprétation*, the *Délégation générale*, and Michaëlle Jean exemplify practices of territoriality that solidify Québec's roots in France. The Chaîne Tower, originally meant to ward off enemies, now welcomes tourists to the city and region. Most importantly, through its permanent exhibit "La Rochelle-Québec: Get on Board Towards New France," the Centre interpellates French subjects looking to re-live their imperial history and Québec subjects eager to trace their hereditary lineage to the region and quite possibly claim their share of the imperialist, colonial project. These practices of territoriality, whether the re-signification of the Tower, the folding of distance between France and Québec, or the invocation of a coherent sense of memory on the part of the transnational French-Québec subject, are examples of the process of symbolic transference that solidifies Québec's rootedness in France.

Another innovative display of this cartography of origins came from Ségolène Royal, the ex-leader of the French Socialist Party and President of the administrative region Poitou-Charentes, the location for most of the Québec 400 events in Western France, including La Rochelle and Brouage. Royal, along with the Canadian minister responsible for Québec, Philippe Couillard, attended a ceremony in the Village du 400e in La Rochelle on May 7, 2008. The ceremony marked the opening of the park, and specifically, the opening of the *Jardin des cousins* [Cousins' Garden], a garden commemorating the original settlers from Poitou-Charentes and their contributions to the building of Québec. The park takes the theme of Québec rootedness in France to its most logical conclusion, in that it features a variety of tree and shrub species native to Québec and northeastern America transplanted to French soil. At the ceremony, Royal paused in front of forty shipping containers about to be sent to municipalities throughout Québec,

filled with messages of friendship, pieces of soil, or historical objects from forty communities in Poitou-Charentes. The delivery, part of *La Grande Traversée*, where forty large ships sailed from Poitou to Québec City together in time for the official celebrations, re-created the cross-Atlantic mail service under the French regime⁷.

Standing in front of the shipping containers, Royal was quoted as saying:

For 400 years, the people who left here to settle in Canada resisted repression and death in order to preserve the French language. It is a successful history, but also one of great suffering. For us to be able to commemorate our common history today informs us that in the past, there was much courage, energy and will. (Lemieux, 2008b, my translation)

Here, Royal uses the trope of “suffering” to articulate the common bond between the French and Québécois. In fact, the statement was given in the context of Royal’s comparison of the plight of the Québécois to that of Tibetans, a nation under permanent Chinese occupation. Royal made a very similar comment at the ceremony marking the arrival of *La Grande Traversée* in Québec City two months later, when she compared the Québécois’ courage in maintaining the French language for 400 years to the courage of Ingrid Bétancourt, a French-Columbian woman and former member of the Columbian Senate, who was kidnapped by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia in 2002 while campaigning for the presidency. She spent seven years in captivity and was eventually liberated by the Columbian security forces on July 2, 2008. Such a focus in her formulations further builds on the narrative of innocence Jean articulates above. In other

⁷ The main attraction of this flotilla was the ship, *Le Belem*, constructed in 1896 in Nantes and one of the oldest tall ships in the world still sailing. It arrived in the port of Québec on July 2 and stayed until July 6. The ship carried 400 bottles of Bordeaux wine to deliver to French and Québec corporations working together. It also carried 426 letters from France to Québec, including many from mayors of French communities to mayors of their sister-towns in Québec. It was the first tall ship to deliver trans-Atlantic mail in nearly a century (Lemieux, 2008c).

words, French settlers' courage and will to persevere in the face of adversity are traits that set out innocence in forms of violence.

In many ways, the narrative of innocence I identify is built around what Letourneau (2006) calls the “loser mythistory” in Québec. It is instructive to take up his words again here: “The story of the search for [Québécois] Self is a story of bravery in the face of a storm, of persistence through difficulty, and of recklessness in the face of adversity — all ways to conjure up the spectre of disappearance” (p.170, my translation). Not only does Jean literally use the metaphor of a storm in her statement about “the dark expanse of ocean,” but Royal also probes the suffering faced by the joint French-Québec subject.

After reviewing the exhibit “La Rochelle-Québec: Get on Board Towards New France” at the *Centre d'interprétation de la Nouvelle-France*, it seems there are several ways to narrate suffering in this context. The exhibit is divided into the three teleological steps a migrant might have taken on a trip to New France. The first step, titled “La Rochelle, a Gathering Place,” highlights the trip migrants inside France made to the Atlantic coast in the 17th century; the second step, titled “On Board with the Migrants,” features a corridor covered with images and text telling the stories of various migrants to New France; and the third step, titled “From History to Memory,” features a number of short films telling the story between Western France and New France and databases with information about family genealogy.

In my opinion, it is the first step in the exhibit that explains Royal's way of understanding suffering. As the exhibit's website explains: “Step One: La Rochelle, a Gathering Place—The first step evokes the arrival of migrants in La Rochelle after a long

trip from interior lands” (Government of France, 2008a, my translation). In the exhibit hall, several themes are explored, including French migrants’ geographical origins, the routes they borrowed through Western France to arrive in the La Rochelle region, and the material baggage they carried with them across the Atlantic, whether in the form of beliefs, traditions, or knowledge. It is this arduous trip *through* France that in some ways brings the French-Québec subject together, since many of these French migrants to Western France experienced a similar sense of suffering (e.g., hardships brought on by travel, lack of food, social isolation) to those who eventually migrated to New France. The key point here is that French migrants to the coast *and* to New France both suffered, and thus, now share a particular type of bond according to Royal.

The sentiment she describes relies on what I have been calling a *cartography of origins*, since she speaks of a “here” (i.e., La Rochelle, Western France) from which people left to go “there” (i.e., New France, Québec) to found French settlements. And it is this spatial story, one in which French people sailed across the ocean and settled in Canada or migrated to Western France from other regions of the Republic, that creates the space of shared suffering. The message, then, is plain: if your origins trace back to Western France, regardless of your present-day *national* affiliation, then you share a particular territorial heritage, one defined by strength in the face of hardships and by association, innocence in colonial relations. In this case, colonialism, for such subjects, means shared suffering.

La grande vague: Linking Territory to Family Origins

Perhaps the strongest example of this focus on shared origins, and one that nicely ties together the territorial and familial dimensions of these origins, could be seen in *La grande vague, ou la mémoire de l'eau salée* [The Great Wave, or Saltwater Memories], an exhibit staged in Brouage, Champlain's hometown. The exhibit is fragmented into 400 pieces within its 20 square metre surface, each one a book held up by a narrow rod, with 400 names at the top. Each name is written in a different three-dimensional font, and also included in an accompanying panel (see Figure 5.1).

Writing on the exhibit website, Québécois artist and *La grande vague's* creator Marc Lincourt explains how and why he selected the names:

Four hundred memories of families, journeys, salt and sea. A selection of 400 names was compiled, pulled from the various regions of France left behind by emigrants bound for New France. These names are from old French stock, names that recall places and trades, personalities and nicknames, titles and privileges. These names forged a nation, and serve as vessels of memory. (Lincourt, 2008a)

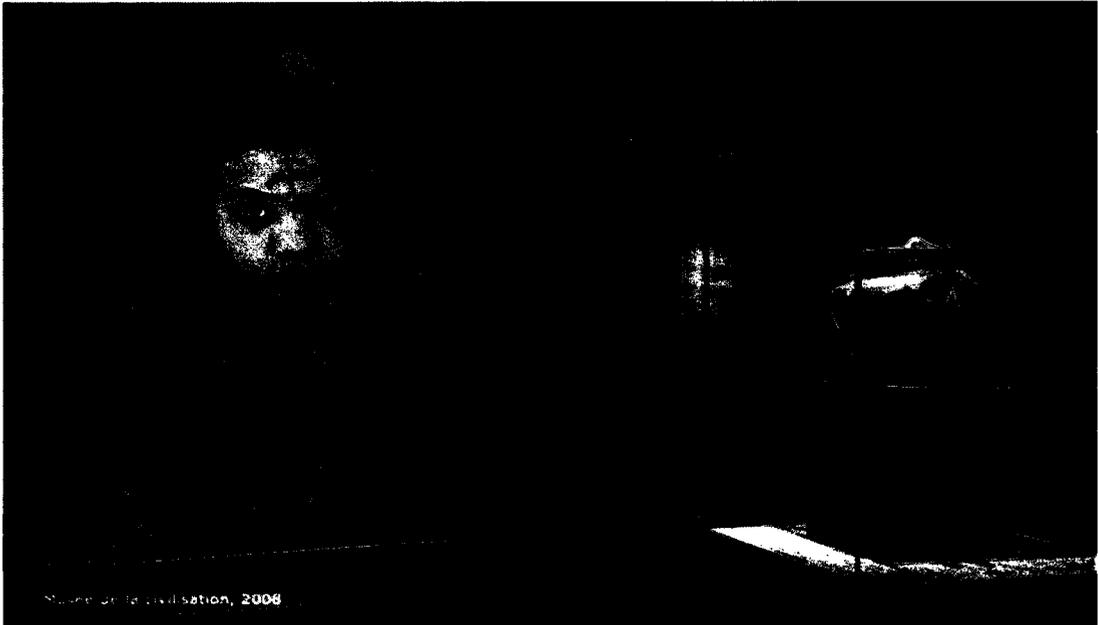
Gathered on the books at the end of steel rods of varying lengths, the names undulate in the breeze created by a large fan meant to mimic the ocean winds. In this way, the exhibit is in constant motion. Along with the undulating wave of books and names, the shadow on the ground underneath the exhibit is conveyed via a layer of grey and white salt meant to denote the saltwater of the ocean and the salt flats of Brouage, an important feature of the surrounding landscape. The exhibit's artistic strength lies in its fine ability to capture motion amongst the large steel rods and books. It evokes the notion of movement, since the books, mostly horizontal to the ground, ripple like a wave, mimicking the movement of migrants towards New France. It also evokes salt water and the ocean, the thread that pulls France and Québec together, thereby shrinking the distance across the Atlantic. In

Illustration 5.1 – An Image of *La grande vague, ou la mémoire de l'eau salée*



An image of *La grande vague, ou la mémoire de l'eau salée* courtesy of the France-Québec 400 website. The rectangular white books each inscribed with the name of one of the 400 early French settler-names are balanced on metal rods that undulate in the breeze.
Photo courtesy of the France-Québec 400 website.

Figure 5.2 – An Image and Object from *Ideqqi: Art of Berber Women*



The image above captures the tone of the “Ideqqi: Art of Berber Women” exhibit at the *Musée de la civilisation du Québec* (MCQ). Photo courtesy of the MCQ website.

Figure 5.3 – An Object from *Wounded Artifacts: Repair Work in Africa*



The image above is an example of an object on display at the “Wounded Artifacts: Repair Work in West Africa” exhibit at the *Musée de la civilisation du Québec* (MCQ). Photo courtesy of the MCQ website.

fact, the evocation of saltwater as a binding agent between the French and Québécois starts to resemble the language reserved for blood, further linking the French-Québec subjects.

As such, the exhibit engages in a series of practices of territoriality meant to signify the space of Brouage and Western France as the mythical place of Québécois origins. Yet, despite the gesture to movement, the main organizing trope of the exhibit is that of roots, since the “old stock” names are all pulled from the various regions of France and notably the La Rochelle area, one that I have been suggesting provides Québec with its territorial origins. This naturalization of roots is also accomplished through the flattening of differences among the assembled original families. All class, religious, regional, and gender conflicts, for instance, are suppressed to manufacture the sameness around “origins.” As I discussed in my brief introduction to Western France, this region has hardly been a homogenous melting pot of diversity. If anything, it stands out as a historically important site for understanding the complexity of French imperial history. And yet, the exhibit chooses to manufacture a homogenous grouping of original settler-families, by steering away from the intimate details of family histories. Instead, we are shown names and places moving in unison, meant to naturalize the relationship between the two.

The exhibit, in its single-minded focus on the original settlers, exemplifies a Québécois claim to origins in France. Liisa Malkki (1992) explicates such attempts to claim *nativeness*: “To plot only ‘places of birth’ and degrees of nativeness is to blind oneself to the multiplicity of attachments that people form to places through living in, remembering, and imagining them” (p.38). In the case of *La Grande Vague*, “places of

birth” are replaced with “places of origins,” but such a focus still plots Québécois degrees of nativeness in France, in fact ignoring the multiplicity of attachments Québécois subjects might have to a variety of places. I read this as a logical extension of the making of the Québécois “species” I discuss in the previous chapter, one that relies on narrow notions of purity to make political claims about belonging. Such origin stories necessarily construct boundaries around subjects in relation to place, fixing them in the same moment they are re-claimed. Malkki (1992) calls this “sedentarist metaphysics,” one that equates morality and subjecthood with rootedness (p.31). Avril Bell (2006) builds on Malkki’s work, by explaining that, “in commonsense thinking, claims to peoplehood and territorial belonging are inseparable” (p.254). In their conflation of morality, subjecthood, and territorial belonging, such discourses betray a normative judgement: to be a legitimate subject, one must be rooted in place. Otherwise, one is cast outside the boundaries of civilization. Malkki (1992) illustrates this in her work by pointing to the case of refugees, who are often painted as inherent threats (e.g., potential terrorists) to the national order of things. The refugee is neither here nor there, thus marking them as morally suspect. In other words, their very homelessness/statelessness is deeply pathologized (p.32). Hannah Arendt (1973) captures this well in her work on the post World War II nation-state, in which she explicates the relationship between morality and national space:

Mankind, for so long a time considered under the image of a family of nations, had reached the stage where whoever was thrown out of one of these tightly organized closed communities found himself thrown out of the family of nations altogether. (p.294)

Given the context of modern place-making Arendt explains, *La Grande vague’s* obsession with origins is understandable. After all, where one is *from* is particularly salient to modern forms of national *belonging*. The sovereign forms of power Arendt

describes depend on place for their very logic. Without a place of their own, subjects are wide open to violence: “The abstract nakedness of being nothing but human,” Arendt (1973) argues, “was [the Jewish refugees] greatest danger. Because of it, they were regarded as savages, and afraid that they might end by being considered beasts, they insisted on their nationality...their only remaining and recognized tie with humanity” (p.300). In the case of *La Grande vague*, the search for roots lays the foundation for the normative Québécois subject, a symbol of one’s national *belongingness*.

Lincourt, the artist, explains this pre-occupation with roots well in a video interview shown as part of the exhibit. In discussing how he has often imagined what his ancestors in France were doing 400 years before, he says:

What about my ancestor, who was here [in Brouage] in my place? He must’ve asked himself, “Do I stay or do I leave?” Because we’d have to imagine the wooden boat, the uncertainty of the voyage, 3 months to cross...and on top of this, “What is waiting for us over there?” This is something that has blown me away, this type of *courage*...but above all, the question – Why? What would motivate people to leave such a place, a place we find so beautiful today? ...This is what happens when you’ve been disoriented, as it were, because we left France 400 years ago and suddenly there was a break, there’s a hunger to know where you come from, every Québécois wants to know their origins...to find the starting point. (Lincourt, 2008b, emphasis mine, my translation)

Here again we see the invocation of the early settlers’ courage, a trope repeated previously by Ségolene Royal (“courage, energy, and will”) and Michaëlle Jean (“spirit of adventure”), one that re-states the innocence of early settlers and makes the search for one’s origins all the more salient. In some ways, the French settlers’ courage, strength of will, and spirit of adventure are attributes that define the nation, and especially, the transnational relation between France and Québec. Who would not want to find their link

to heroic founders of a New World? As such, the exhibit further builds on the narrative of innocence I have been developing in this chapter.

The exhibit, then, is meant to satisfy the Québécois urge to know about one's territorial and family lineage. Given the crisis of Québécois identity I underlined in chapter 3 in relation to the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, this need to find one's roots in the faraway past is not very surprising. Yet, in the exhibit's call to the normative Québécois subject who needs to know, there is no real consideration of subjects-in-Québec who do not share such territorial "origins." Cultural theorist Dick Hebdige provides a way to counter the naturalization of space and subjects at play in this exhibit:

Rather than tracing back the roots...to their source, I've tried to show how the roots themselves are in a state of constant flux and change. The roots don't stay in one place. They change shape. They change colour. And they grow. There is no such thing as a pure point of origin. (cited in Malkki, 1992, p.37).

As this section demonstrates, during the Québec 400 much work went into constructing precisely the type of pure point of origin that builds strict boundaries around normative subjects. And I would argue that such a search for purity, for origins, for the very uniqueness of a Québécois subject understood as a direct descendant of France, produces this subject as immutable, not the product of hybridization processes and global inter-connections. In this way, the metaphorical "return" of the 18th century ships in *La Grande Traversée* performs the authentic Québécois subject. David N. Livingstone (2010) also explains the results of such a focus on origins:

Origin discourses are a perennial resource for renegotiating humanity's relationship with itself and for hammering out how different political imperatives have been distilled from the stories that different writers have spun. But this simply underlines the recurrent need for genesis myths that can be deployed in the service of ideology, whether to underwrite or to undermine racial hierarchy or racial equality. (p.219).

Taken this way, cartographies of origins are deeply invested in defining, delimiting, and constraining subjects, an important technique in subject formation, what I would call the “rooting” of normative Québécois subjects in European space. For example, the following excerpt describes one subject’s reaction at finding out her ancestors were one of the founding families of New France⁸. She was part of the official delegation that toured the site with the Governor-General and the mayor of Québec.

Marie Allard erupted in tears when she saw her family name written in black and white on a wall dedicated to the original families of New France. And the emotion was even stronger when she found her name on *La grande vague*, an exhibit by Marc Lincourt. [She] will remember this moment all her life because she is the last surviving member of her generation. Right away she wanted to touch this name written in three dimensions on her family’s book. (Lemieux, 2008d, p.12, my translation)

My point in highlighting this particular reaction is not to make light of Allard’s reaction. On the contrary, her reaction is perfectly understandable given the logic of territorial origins I have been outlining. What I do want to underline is the *work* that goes into producing such *possibilities* in the first instance. In Allard’s reaction, we see the slippage between territory and kinship that the exhibit produces, since there is a recognizable relationship between Western France and abstract notions of family to those interpellated by such a search for origins, a search the exhibit inevitably exploits and facilitates.

Importantly, these types of formulations – whether Jean’s strategic call to La Rochelle, the *Centre d’interprétation’s* re-making of space, the *Délégation générale’s* letter supporting the NMC’s memory projects, Royal’s enunciative statement, or *La*

⁸ Upon seeing the exhibit in Montréal in March, 2010, I found myself studying the names for my own ancestors. Sure enough, I found the “Leroux” strand of my ancestors featured as part of the exhibit and at least five other “family” names, thereby confirming that I am indeed of “old stock.”

Grande vague's classification of the original families – all took place or referred to events in Western France. Beyond the display of the number “400” in blue fireworks at the beginning of the Bastille Day fireworks display in Paris, very few major Québec 400 events in France took place outside Western France. However, in the La Rochelle region, one that still regularly celebrates its role in French imperialism, the relationship between race and space, between the region and the Québécois subject, is strong. It is this *cartography of origins*, one that conflates the space of Western France with the origins of the Québécois people and naturalizes the territorial relationship between the French and Québécois that provides the building blocks for the extra-national racial subject. As the cartography of origins is established, as I argue that it is through the above techniques, the discursive field is wide open to articulate familial or kinship ties, as if the Québécois were coming back to their ancestral home.

Racial Belonging Through Imagined Kinship

In addition to the *spatial* logic behind the French-Québec racial bond, *kinship* relations are the primary means through which the French-Québec subject was constituted in the Québec 400. In his significant work on the relationship between nationalism and racism, Etienne Balibar (1991) explains that a focus on biological lineage necessarily relies on an idea of race:

The symbolic kernel of the idea of race (and of its demographic and cultural equivalents) is the schema of genealogy, that is, quite simply the idea that the filiation of individuals transmits from generation to generation a substance both biological and spiritual and inscribes them in a temporal community known as ‘kinship.’ (p.100)

French Prime Minister François Fillon takes this “symbolic kernel of the idea of race” to its logical conclusion, when as in the epigraph to this chapter, he states, “The Québécois are our brothers, while Canadians are our friends.” This was not a slip of the tongue, since there was a concerted effort by French officials to solidify this familial relation throughout the Québec 400. Indeed, a variety of French officials repeated this formulation, equating the Québécois and French as family. For example, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, in Québec City for the Francophonie Summit in October 2008, repeated Fillon’s formulation:

The French and Québécois people are like two brothers. Two brothers separated in time by destiny, but reunited afterwards by a common project: to develop their own identity and vision of the world – unique and in French – in a world whose true richness is diversity. The 400th anniversary has above all exemplified the depth of the relationship between France and Québec and the immense affection between the French and Québécois people. (Rioux, 2008, p.26, my translation)

At his much-anticipated address at the Québec National Assembly on October 17, 2008, Sarkozy, the first President of the French Republic to speak in the Assembly, again repeated this formulation, when he said, “Long live the friendship between Canada and France and the fraternity between the French people and Québécois!” (Government of Québec, 2008d, my translation). He re-iterated this later in his speech when he referred to Canadians as “friends” and Québécois as “family.”

In addition, when Fillon, the most prominent French official to visit Québec in the summer of 2008, arrived in Québec City, he immediately embarked on a well-publicized effort to define the Québec-France relationship. He did so in his address at the Salute to Champlain, the event organized by the Société 400 for official speeches and deliberations on July 3, 2008, the day marking the official founding of the city, when he stated,

I salute the 400th. I want to pay homage to the exceptional destiny and to the courage of *les Québécois*, who've been able to maintain the French fact in the Americas. Québec and France, despite the distance that separates them, share a common history, culture, and language. (Société 400, 2008a, my translation)

Again, we see some of the same tropes as the last section, for instance, courage and suffering, thereby pulling the French and Québécois subjects together, to reach across the ocean and find commonality.

Several Canadian officials made similar remarks, the most notable being Governor-General Michaëlle Jean. In her official speech at the reception of *Le Grand Livre de Champlain* in La Rochelle, she stated,

And this year, we are also celebrating the 400th anniversary of the founding of the City of Québec on July 3, 1608, and our shared history that makes us *sisters* and *brothers* in language and culture, on both sides of the Atlantic...

This *Grand Livre de Champlain*, which you have created based on his notes, engravings and maps, tells of the extraordinary power of encounters and of the equally extraordinary bond of the history we share...

We can think of no better way to honour the *blood* and cultural ties that bind us and through which the voices of the world's Francophonie resonate farther and stronger. (Government of Canada, 2008c, emphasis added, my translation)

Along with the excerpt from another speech made later the same day earlier in the chapter, we can see how Jean positions the French and Québécois in a familial relationship by relying on the tropes of sisterhood and brotherhood. In other words, her reliance on the blood metaphor clearly denotes Québec's French racial origins in France⁹.

⁹ Historian Guillaume Aubert (2004) has documented the emphasis on discourses of blood purity in 16th - 19th century French imperialism and colonialism, one that he argues conflated notions of family and lineage in the latter half of the 16th century onwards (para. 5).

Another striking example of this discourse of kinship was on display in the *Musée du Quai Branly* exhibit at the *Musée de la civilisation de Québec* (MCQ). This was one of the official French-sponsored events in Québec City, meant to display a major traveling exhibit by an eminent French museum in Québec City. The exhibit, *Regards sur la diversité culturelle* [Views on Cultural Diversity], featured two exhibits, one on Imazighen¹⁰ women in Algeria (“Ideqqi: Art of Berber Women”) and another on recycling and re-using in West Africa (“Wounded Artifacts: Repair Work in Africa”). Upon walking past the introductory panel, one could enter into the exhibit on Algeria to the left and the exhibit on West Africa to the right.

“Ideqqi: Art of Berber Women” focused on Imazighen pottery. There were 128 pieces of pottery interspersed with large photos of Imazighen women and three accompanying videos demonstrating pottery-making. Panels accompanied every photo and gave only a minimum of information: name, region, and at times profession. The most salient part of this exhibit was the large arresting photos: some capturing a faraway look, others focusing on the hands at work (see Figure 5.2).

The logic of the exhibit is articulated by the following MCQ statement, which focuses on authenticity and tradition:

Just like the pottery they make, Berber women sport symbolic patterns, as seen in the oversized photos throughout the exhibition. Their solemn, proud looks were caught on film by French photographer Marc Garanger during his military service in Algeria in the early 1960s. They bear witness to their traditional art, which is being lost today as people flock from the countryside to the cities, while economic development shows scant regard for maintaining authentic handicrafts. (Musée de la civilisation, 2008c, my translation)

¹⁰ Imazighen is a term to describe the indigenous peoples of North Africa, who are otherwise known as the Berber.

The second exhibit, “Wounded Artifacts: Repair Work in Africa,” featured 120 repaired objects, including masks, statues, doors, bracelets, and shields. The exhibit explains each artifact’s story and displays objects from a wide variety of cultures and regions of West Africa. Drawings and text accompanied each artifact, outlining the specific repair techniques used in each. The exhibit is divided into three categories: ritual objects, functional objects, and a collection of African calabashes. Unlike the first exhibit, *Wounded Artifacts* focuses less on authenticity, and more on the relative differences between African and Western patterns of repair and consumption (see Figure 5.3).

Museum scholars have been greatly influenced by recent interventions in cultural theory on questions of representation, memory, and subjects. This “new museology,” a term Peter Vergo (1989) popularized in an edited collection by the same name, has opened up a number of important avenues for questioning the relationship between museums and their publics, including: the institutional authority of museums, the role of national museums in nation-building, knowledge production and dissemination, the agency of the museum visitor, and constructed practices within exhibits. Through the questions raised in this new museology, many scholars have argued that museums contribute significantly to processes of post-colonial subject formation (See Clifford, 1997 for a discussion).

Jennifer Gonzalez (2008) has taken up this challenge to museum studies in her work on installation art. In her study of approaches to display, she focuses on how exhibits, and in particular, installation art, produce racial otherness through race discourses and related forms of subjection (p.9). She explains how these race discourses “can be understood as the intricate intersection of philosophies, regimes of representation,

and systems of enforcement that work in concert to define human beings as racial types” (Gonzalez, 2008, p.3). These discourses are constituted through conditions based on a long history of race science and image production. Using Gonzalez’s model, I read the images and accompanying exhibitionary information at the MCQ exhibits as part of a “race discourse,” in that through their very title (“A Look at Cultural Diversity”) and display techniques, they invoke and respond to cultural differences in such a way as to delineate the Other in relation to the French-Québec subject. As Gonzalez (2008) explains, “Race discourse can thus be understood as the process or experience of *subjection* through which people are transformed into signs of culturally preconstituted subject positions” (p.3). In these exhibits, various people of African descent are thus transformed into racial types, in this case, the racial Other against which the transnational and imperialist French-Québécois subject is defined. In their attempts to portray difference as a natural condition, the exhibits demonstrate how race discourse in fact “*produces* the subject it supposedly describes” (p.4, emphasis in original).

There are several techniques through which this race discourse operates in the spaces of the exhibit. In entering the exhibit halls, there was a large introductory panel featuring an opening statement declaring *La Francophonie* a laboratory for cultural diversity. Focusing on the *La Francophonie*¹¹ here is a key interpellative technique, since it displaces France and Québec’s shared history with colonialism towards a de-politicized remnant of imperial rule (e.g., *La Francophonie*). In fact, speaking directly to the French-Québec subject, the panel explained how viewers were meant to “put aside *our* Western

¹¹ La Francophonie refers to the governments and political units that speak French in some official or non-official capacity. Much like the Commonwealth, it is also an agglomeration of former French imperial “possessions,” except for the case of European members of La Francophonie.

notions and open *our* minds to other cultures within the francophone diversity” (Musée de la civilisation, 2008c, emphasis mine, my translation). Near the end of this statement, which re-positions the Imazighen women in Algeria and the men and women in West Africa as members of *La Francophonie* and outside the history of French imperialism, we find the following sentence: “France and Québec are of one family, a family that constitutes our francophone identity” (Musée de la civilisation, 2008a, my translation). Not only is there a rapprochement here between France and Québec, one familiar in Québec 400 discourses, but there is also a movement away from *La Francophonie*, since France and Québec share a special bond, a *racial* bond that trumps the more racially porous boundaries of *La Francophonie*. Nowhere else in the exhibit hall is *La Francophonie* mentioned, which suggests that it is used to differentiate France/Québec from the other members of *La Francophonie*, in this case various people from the African continent. The message seems clear: France and Québec are members of a family, with all that presupposes, while the other (African) members of *La Francophonie*, though French-speaking, are a racially diverse group that falls outside the bounds of the French-Québec family.

One way this *racial* bond is solidified is in how the French produce cultural difference and the racialized Other through the exhibits, while at the same time signifying the Québécois as the Self/Same in the introductory panel (“put aside *our* Western notions and open *our* minds”). Besides calling attention to the French and Québécois as one family, a reference to race as kinship in Balibar’s sense, the statement also interpellates a Western subject meant to open its minds to cultural diversity. Much as in the example of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission I discussed in chapter 3, one can only locate oneself

outside diversity if one sees oneself as universally un-differentiated, or in this case, as the raceless subject I discussed in the opening chapter.

It is not that the project of constructing the extra-national French-Québec subject is totally coherent or even hegemonic. It is, as Winddance Twine and Gallagher (2007) argued about whiteness in chapter 1, a highly flexible project with shifting boundaries. In the case of the Québec 400, the normative Québécois subject – raceless and without difference – comes to define difference itself, as I am arguing is the case in the exhibits at the MCQ. Yet, at the same time as the French-Québec subject claims universal subjecthood (e.g., celebrating “difference” in the exhibit through a focus on the diversity of *La Francophonie*), it also claims a particular innocence in doing so (e.g., obfuscating ongoing colonialism through defining the very terms of difference). The split towards an unmarked and universal subject defining difference while claiming innocence in doing so, is, I argue, a constitutive component of the *extra-national raciality* present in the France-Québec subject position. As the example at the MCQ suggests, the unraced manager of difference constitutes itself through defining the boundaries of *La Francophonie* and the family beyond its boundaries, *while* positing this as a natural configuration.

What I am arguing then, following the work of scholars such as Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall, and Bill Marshall on transnational social and historical formations, is that the events in France (and Québec) point to the production of what Goldberg calls an *extra-national raciality*, a type of transnational and imperialist whiteness that transcends the national, solidifying itself in global networks of symbolic exchange. I understand this as *transnational* and *imperialist* because a) it exceeds national borders; and b) it relies on a

shared understanding of the civilizational goals of French imperialism and French-Québec colonization. In both cases, this extra-national subject is organized around a flexible notion of whiteness, in following the dual white subject I outlined previously.

The next chapter builds on my analysis in chapters 4 and 5 by considering a significant exhibit at the Cap-aux Diamants Redoubt, the Governor-General's official residence in Québec City. The exhibit, *Le Grand livre de Champlain* [Champlain's Great Book], highlights Champlain's imperial ambitions, counter to the intercultural discourse otherwise on display in chapter 4. The juxtaposition of *Le Grand livre*, produced and sponsored by the French government, with Québec-based discourses of Champlain's unmatched heroism and benevolence, stands out as a key site to examine the French-Québec subject.

Chapter Six

Contradictions and Conquest: *Le Grand livre de Champlain* and the Imperial Subject

The previous chapter presented the process of transnational French-Québec subject formation as relying on tropes of space and family during the Québec 400. Along with the “encounter” discourse I introduced in chapter 4, the Québec 400 featured many other notable discursive constructions. There was one significant event that at once stood out as an exception to the discourse on cultural pluralism on display in the Québec 400 and also solidified the French-Québec subject: *Le Grand livre de Champlain* [Champlain’s Great Book], an exhibit presented at the Redoubt, part of the Governor-General’s official residence at La Citadelle in Québec City. In this chapter I examine *Le Grand livre* and argue that while it represents a marked fracture from the intercultural-man in *Rencontres*, it nonetheless plays a significant role in building the French-Québec subject I discussed at length previously.

Le Grand livre de Champlain: An Introduction

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Michaëlle Jean, Governor-General of Canada, traveled to France in May 2008 with a large delegation of officials, including the mayor of Québec City, Régis Labeaume, the chief of the Huron-Wendat, Max Gros-Louis, and the president of the Société 400, Daniel Gélinas. The visit was meant to coincide with several major events marking the relationship between France and Québec, especially the Québec 400, throughout Western France.

On a beautiful spring day in a park overlooking the Atlantic, Jean received, on behalf of the Canadian government, *Le Grand Livre de Champlain*, a large book that brings together Samuel de Champlain's notes, maps, and etchings. Set in a metal binding and made of canvas on wood, the six pages, which are 2.2 metres high and 1.5 metres wide and weigh nearly 300 kilograms, were drawn and written by hand by two French artists. A copy of the book, a gift courtesy of the cities of La Rochelle, Rochefort, and the Communauté d'agglomération Royan-Atlantique, was presented during a large ceremony in La Rochelle on May 2, 2008. Originally commissioned by the Communauté d'Agglomération Royan-Atlantique to mark the quatercentenary of the settlement of Sainte-Croix Island in New France in 1604 by Sieur Dugua de Mons, *Le Grand Livre* was an important component of a traveling exhibit entitled *Lorsque les gens d'ici découvraient l'Amérique* [When our people discovered America] that began in 2004. The original exhibit, including the *Grand livre de Champlain*, is now on permanent display at the *Musée du Patrimoine du Pays Royannais* in Royan, Dugua de Mons' hometown. Writing on the Governor-General's official blog, the designer of *Le Grand Livre*, Bernard Mounier, explains the project,

It gathers under one cover almost all the engravings found in Champlain's five books about his journeys. To make the engravings more visible and understandable, some details were isolated, laid out and commented on with excerpts from Champlain's books. For the first time, the words of the author and the related illustrations were brought together, offering a new and stimulating interpretation. (Government of Canada, 2008d, my translation)

He goes on to explain how "*Le Grand Livre* represent[s] an invitation to visitors and readers to continue and complete the amazing adventure that gave birth to New France. It also honour[s] the founders of French Canada, the representatives from the First Nations

that they met, and the peoples to which it gave birth” (Government of Canada, 2008c, my translation).

The exhibit features stunning artwork accompanied by classic calligraphy on a large scale. Everyone I saw at the exhibit on a hot July day in 2008 was in awe of its unique artistic representations and especially, at its sheer size. After all, it is very rare to turn the pages of a book that is nearly twice as tall as you.

Jean first encountered the exhibit in 2006 on an official state visit to Western France. She later requested that *Le Grand livre* be put on display during the Québec 400 celebrations in the newly renovated Redoubt at The Citadelle, just a few steps from the Residence of the Governor General of Canada in Québec City. The exhibit was inaugurated on May 29, 2008, and ran until the middle of October (see Figure 6.1).

The Imperial Subject of *Le Grand livre*: Cartography and Subject-Making

This section provides an analysis of *Le Grand livre* through relying on Sherene Razack’s (2002) notion of “unmapping” as a tool that undermines the idea of white settler innocence, or the “notion that European settlers merely settled and developed the land” (p.5). The point of such an approach is that it “question[s] how spaces come to be, and trace[s] what they produce as well as what produces them” as Razack (2002) argues, “unsettl[ing] familiar everyday notions” (p.7). One way I undertake this is by examining Champlain’s cartographic project, represented in *Le Grand livre*, in order to place it within the broader Québec 400 story. Specifically, I argue that *Le Grand livre* plays a constitutive role in forming the French-Québec subject I describe in chapter 5. Yet, the link with the French-Québec subject is not a straightforward one, since the conquest

Figure 6.1 – A Photo of *Le Grand livre de Champlain*



Le Grand Livre de Champlain at the Redoubt, La Citadelle, Québec City, July 9, 2008. Set in a metal binding and made of canvas on wood, the ten pages, which are 2.2 metres high and 1.5 metres wide, were drawn and written by hand by two French artists. Photo by Darryl Leroux.

Figure 6.2 – A Photo of a Beaver



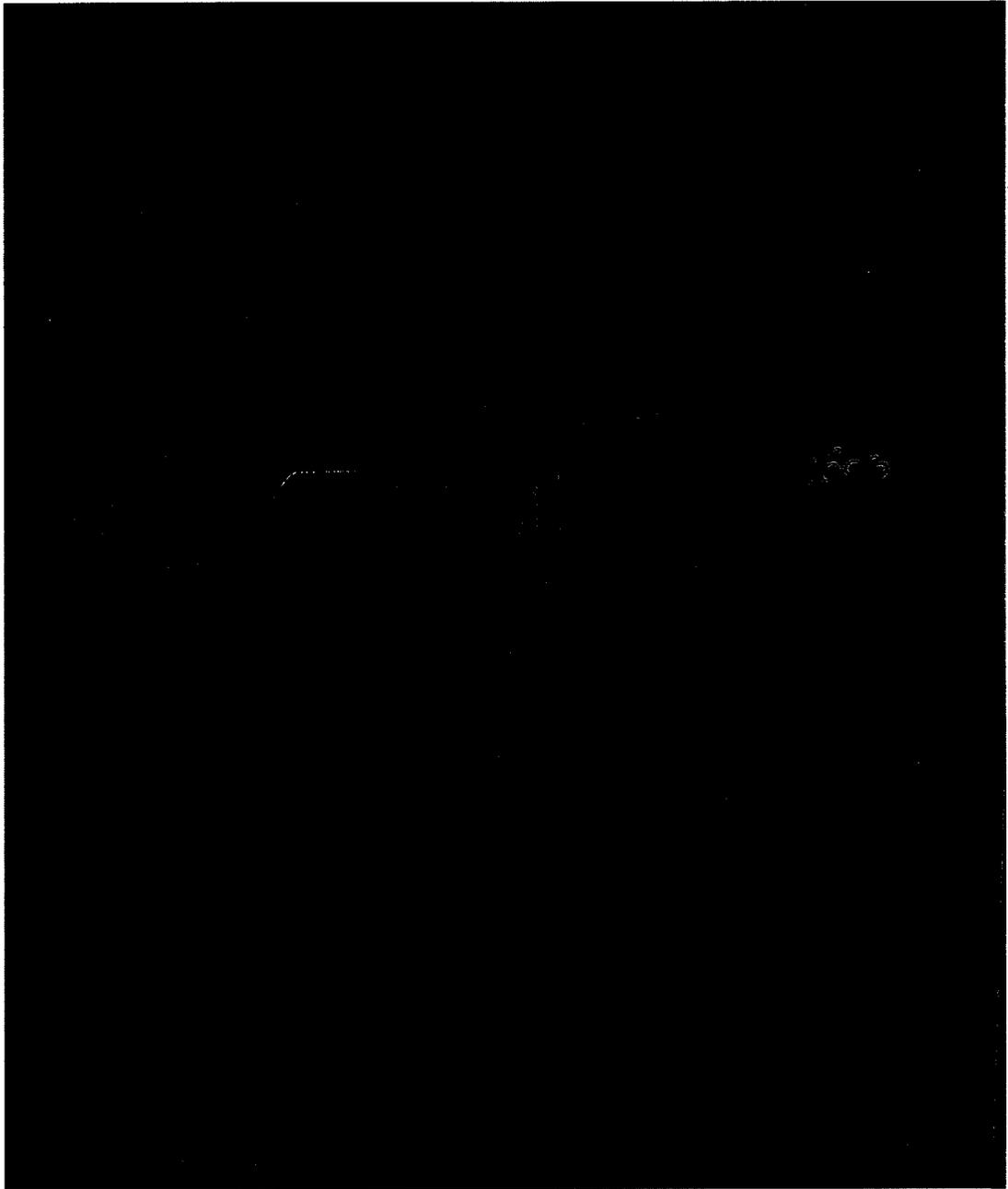
Drawing of a beaver, *Le Grand Livre de Champlain*, at the Redoubt, La Citadelle, Québec City, July 9, 2008. Photo by Darryl Leroux.

Figure 6.3 – A Photo of a Chestnut



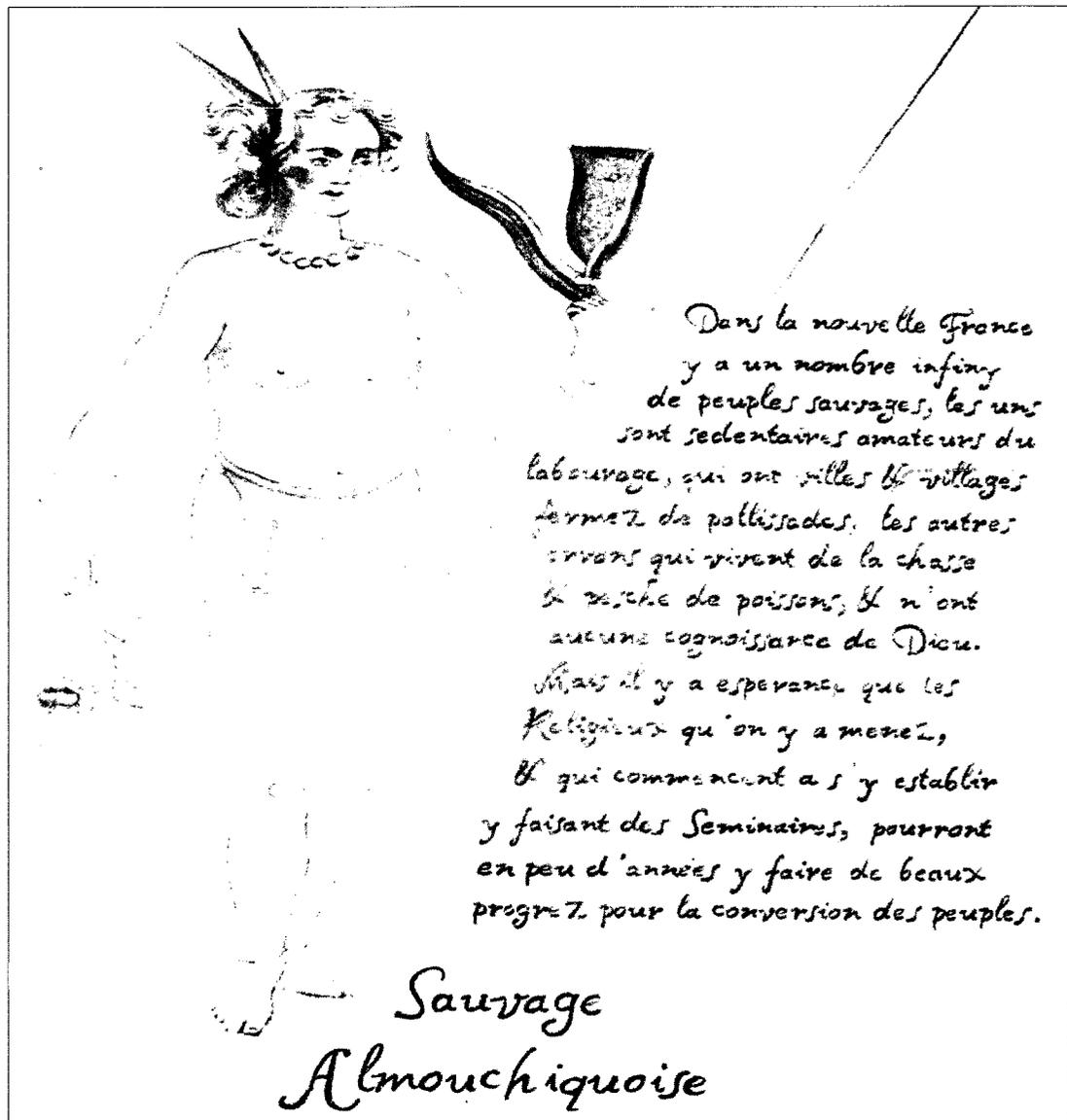
Drawing of some plants, *Le Grand Livre de Champlain*, at the Redoubt, La Citadelle, Québec City, July 9, 2008. Photo by Darryl Leroux.

Figure 6.4 – Champlain’s Drawings



A map and some drawings from *Le Grand livre de Champlain*, at the Redoubt, La Citadelle, Québec City, July 9, 2008. Photo by Darryl Leroux.

Figure 6.5 – *Sauvage Almouchiquoise*: An Illustration of an Indigenous Woman



A drawing of an “Almouchiquoise Savage” from *Le Grand livre de Champlain*, at the Redoubt, La Citadelle, Québec City, July 9, 2008. “In New France there is an infinite number of savage peoples, some of whom live a sedentary lifestyle from their labour and have towns and villages with palisades. Others live from hunting and fishing. They have no knowledge of God. But there is great hope that the Clergy who have begun to settle and build seminaries, will be able to make inroads with conversion in a short time.” Photo by Darryl Leroux.

Figure 6.6 – An Illustration of Indigenous People

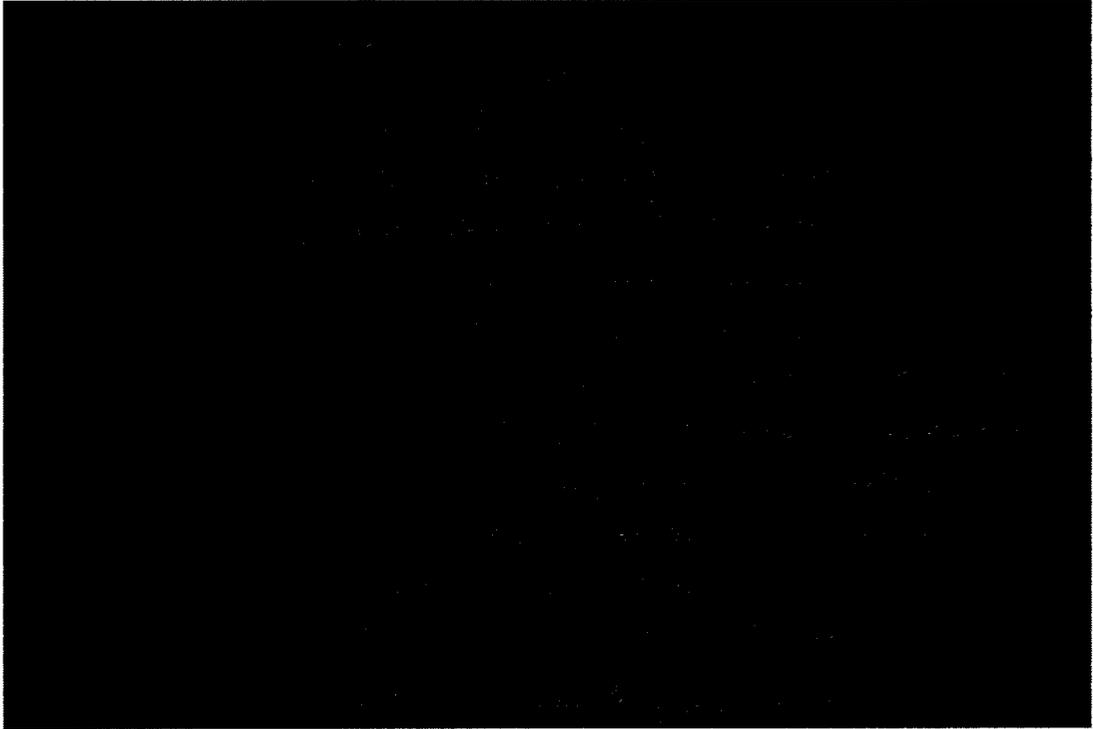


Photo from *Le Grand Livre de Champlain*, at the Redoubt, La Citadelle, Québec City, July 9, 2008. “They took this young Iroquois boy as a hostage, and ripped out his nails, burned him with branches, made him suffer a thousand torments. They tied him to a post and burned him slowly. While in this extreme pain, they cut off his hands and arms while raising his shoulders, and still alive, they stabbed him so many times that he died cruelly. Each took away their piece, which they ate.” Photo by Darryl Leroux.

discourse the exhibit articulates is at odds with the Champlain as-intercultural-man discourse I present in chapter 4. I begin with an overview of the relationship among cartography, imperialism, and subject formation through the example of *Le Grand livre*, before returning to the Québec 400.

As Mounier explains above, *Le Grand livre* represents Champlain's notebooks, diaries, and maps in an imaginative organization of drawings, writing, and commentary. Its representations of Champlain's cartographic techniques, embodied as they are in the survey, rely on a geographical imagination. As Paul Carter, in his work explicating the spatial techniques involved in imperial history-making, writes, "The survey, with its triple artillery of map, sketches, and journal, was a strategy for translating space into a conceivable object, an object that the mind could possess." (cited in Blomley, 2003, p. 128). These objectifying practices are skillfully represented in *Le Grand livre* through its disembodied depiction of the land and objects on the land. Such practices are an essential component of the imperial project, or what Edward Said (1993) defines as "thinking about, settling on, and controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and involves untold misery for others" (p.7). As I explained in chapter 2, the imperial project fundamentally relied on a spatial imaginary, what Said calls an "imagined geography," instantiated through practices such as the survey.

In its artistic representation and selection of Champlain's work, *Le Grand livre* presents key imperial techniques, such as cartography and the survey, as true representations of the colonial encounter, as evidenced by the original French title for the exhibit: "When Our People Discovered America," one that subsequently suggests that the discovery of America is merely *reflected* by *Le Grand livre*. Yet, as I explain in chapter

4, the discovery discourse has largely been left out of the Québec 400, replaced by the “encounter” discourse. How, then, does *Le Grand livre* call subjects into the discovery story of imperialism and conquest? How does it reconcile its conquest discourse with the discourse of encounter(s)? One significant way is by naturalizing the authority and legitimacy of the imperial subject, in this case represented by Champlain himself, thereby solidifying everyday notions of the production of space and above all, the power involved in such work. The imperial subject, as the one who maps and tames the unknown wilderness, is a strong interpellative symbol to settler-subjects intent on re-creating their control over space and especially, their legitimacy over the land.

One case illustrates the strength *and* instability of such discourses. While I was photographing the *Grand livre* and taking notes on July 9, 2008, a family of three entered the small, rather humid stone exhibit hall. My guess was that they represented three generations of a French-Canadian family: a grandfather, mother, and son. As I was turning one of the large pages, the mother exclaimed rather loudly at the impressive drawings slowly coming into view. The teenaged son, on the other hand, seemed relatively unmoved. The mother pointed out several images to her son as the page settled into place. The conversation proceeded in a predictable fashion: she pointed to a beaver and said, in French, “look... a beaver” and then to a flower “look, the same flower we saw yesterday.” But the truly notable moment occurred when she came to an image of “Iroquois” warriors on the opposite page. The mother launched into a history lesson that followed the traditional French-Canadian script of the threatening “Iroquois savage.” In her story, one I touched upon in my discussion of Québec history in chapter 2, she explained to her son how the Iroquois were enemies and attacked the French (“nous” or

“us”) with barbaric abandon. Her exact term in describing the Iroquois was the well-worn “sauvage.”

Interestingly, under the war-like language she used to describe the encounter between the French and “Iroquois,” her son became animated and engaged with *Le Grand livre*, firing questions about the French and their Iroquois enemies. His ignorance about the “Iroquois” enemy stood in stark contrast to his mother’s familiar confidence with the discourse. It is more likely the young boy would be intimately familiar with the discourse on cultural pluralism on display throughout the Québec 400 and in the Bouchard-Taylor Commission; a discourse with a relatively different understanding of the threatening Other. The generational gap exemplifies the shift from the “discovery” to “encounter” discourse I present in chapter 4. I return to the significance of this shift to the making of the French-Québec subject in the final section of this chapter. For now I resume my discussion of the imperial subject and cartography.

The most salient aspect of the spatial re-imagining brought forth by the cartographic revolution and by association, the imperial subject, was the epistemological transformations it produced. Geographer David Harvey explains this shift in thinking: “What made the cartographic revolution of the 16th century was not simply the discovery and acceptance of new techniques...it was a revolution in the ways of thought of those who used them” (cited in Blomley, 2003, p.127). No longer transcendent and abstract, space could now be measured, ordered, and controlled. And subjects within space could be defined within and against space itself. As Kathleen Kirby (1996), writing about Champlain among other early cartographers, has suggested, “The Western subject during the Enlightenment tended to define itself by cataloguing *others* (woman, native, criminal,

insane) which [the Western subject] opposed because it did not require definition” (p.47, emphasis in original). Kirby directs us to the power involved in the cartographic project: the cartographer reserved his naming practices only to that/those unknown to his gaze. All others (European men) needed no place in space since they were the universal norm.

Samuel de Champlain, himself deeply embedded in the ontological relation between the utterly unknown, threatening horizon beyond European shores, and the set of relations behind him in Europe, re-articulates these gendered and raced relations by rendering the landscape intelligible, knowable in the imperial imagination (Kirby, 1996). John Rajchman (1988), building on what he calls Foucault’s “Art of Seeing,” counters these representations of space as an inherently transparent vessel one can describe objectively. He argues that spaces are designed to make things/people seeable in specific ways. Rajchman explains how the organization of space plays a fundamental role in the constitution of the subject, citing Foucault (1984):

I think it is somewhat arbitrary to try to dissociate the effective practice of freedom by people, the practice of social relations, and the spatial distributions in which they find themselves. If they are separated, they become impossible to understand. Each can only be understood through the other. (p.246)

Rajchman explains how Foucault sees a fundamental relationship between subjects and space. Building on Foucault’s understanding, he develops the notion of “spaces of constructed visibility” to exemplify the constitutive relationship between space and subjects (p.103). Rajchman (1988) explains the concept:

We are surrounded by spaces which help form the evidences of the ways we see ourselves and one another. Where we ‘dwell,’ how we are housed, helps in this way to determine who and what we think we are-and so they involve our freedom. We are beings who are ‘spatialized’ in various ways; there is a historical spatialization of ourselves as subjects. Foucault’s analysis of ‘spaces of constructed visibility’ brings out how they serve to

‘constitute the subject,’ the way they serve to construct the spatialization of the subject or his ‘being in space.’ ‘The art of light and the visible,’ which such spaces are designed to deploy, is one which makes certain kinds of properties of ourselves stand out as self-evident. (p.103)

Rajchman’s allusion to “how we are housed” runs parallel to Said’s understanding of the “poetics of space” from the previous chapter. According to both, we must trouble the story of space as self-evident and/or immanent. Still, Rajchman, via Foucault, builds on the suggestion that spaces are imaginatively conceived by developing how processes of making space and subjects are intimately linked. According to Rajchman, the spaces of constructed visibility regulate not only what is seen in any particular social and historical configuration, but also how subjects define themselves according to what they *can* see: “[V]ision is always partial and provisional, culturally produced and performed,” as Derek Gregory (2004) argues, “and it depends on spaces of constructed visibility that — even as they claim to render the opacities of ‘other spaces’ transparent — are always also spaces of constructed invisibility” (p.12). The following contemporary example from Canadian society illustrates the visibility-invisibility connection.

At this particular historical juncture, it is exceedingly difficult to see beyond the legitimacy of the nation-state in all matters related to national borders. State security infrastructure in North America created post-911 (e.g., United States Department of Homeland Security and Public Safety Canada) has only solidified the state’s role in policing its borders through border control, immigration policy, refugee law, and so forth. Seeing the world through the lens of borders and states therefore limits and regulates national subject’s ability to see beyond the state’s authority to police its borders or deport refugee claimants towards, for example, the forces that motivate individuals to move and/or displace individuals in the first place (i.e., political economic relations, history of

imperialism). Instead, national space is constructed as one that must be protected against threats coming mostly from outside its borders. In this spatial imaginary, one captured well in the Bouchard-Taylor deliberations, terrorists, immigrants, and refugees (almost exclusively *from* the Global South) are all conflated. While it is true that national subjects regularly resist and re-form such national fantasies, the (in)visibility engendered by these conditions limits *who* can see *what*.

As I write this in the summer 2009, a large-scale military-type convergence by the Canadian Border Security Agency (CBSA) and the United States' Department of Homeland Security has amassed at the international border crossing at Akwesasne, Mohawk Territory near Cornwall, Ontario. The main issue revolves around a new policy allowing CBSA agents to carry sidearms, which Mohawk protesters refuse to allow agents to carry on Mohawk territory. By denying the authority of both the U.S. and Canadian border guards in order to uphold their sovereign right to territory, the Mohawk are illustrating how they operate under a different set of socio-spatial referents or spaces of visibility than normative Canadian national subjects. The border, to Mohawk protestors, is an imaginary line, though one they are forcefully confronted with on a daily basis in traveling to visit family and friends, to hunt, to fish, to gather, or to conduct commercial activities. Yet, to most national subjects, whose positioning *as* subjects depends on the materiality of the border and the disavowal of indigenous sovereignty and ongoing forms of resistance in their very constitution, the border serves a legitimate and lawful intrusion in Mohawk life. The same border struggles are ongoing in Wabanaki Confederacy territories in the Maritime provinces, Vermont, New Hampshire and New York; Anishnaabe territories in Ontario and Minnesota; Okanagan territories in Central

British Columbia and Washington State; and Coast Salish territories on the West Coast, Tuscarora territories along Ontario and New York State, among many others. The spaces of constructed visibility necessarily rely on the *invisibility* of certain socio-spatial configurations, playing a fundamental role in constituting subjects. So then, following this discussion of the spaces of visibility, what does Champlain see?

In looking to my photos of *Le Grand livre*, there are many vivid descriptions of indigenous people, plants, animals, and all else Champlain encounters, drawn or written with great detail. The impressive series of dates, measures, and descriptions provided in *Le Grand livre* lends itself quite usefully to representing the rational, disembodied cartographic project (see Figures 6.2 and 6.3).

By naming his specimens, in this case “beaver” and “chestnut” and rendering them authoritatively in a drawing within the cartographic logic foregrounding his endeavour, Champlain makes them knowable to imperial subjects back in Europe. Nicholas Blomley (2003), building on the work of Timothy Mitchell, explains this process:

Western modes of seeing serve to present the world as set before and logically prior to a disembodied viewer. The effect, as [Mitchell] puts it, is to ‘enframe’ an a priori world of objects. The abstract space of the survey helps make a world that exists, not as a set of social practices, but as a binary order: individuals and their practices set against an inert structure. Space is marked and divided into places where people are put. In the process, space is desocialized and depoliticized. Yet, at the same time, enframing conceals the processes through which it works as an ordering device. (p.127)

The enframing process is doubly relevant to *Le Grand livre*, since it is a representation of Champlain’s representation of New France. Producers (artists, designers, funders) necessarily selected an assortment of Champlain’s work, perhaps that which most clearly

related to their needs in the context of the “When Our People Discovered America” exhibit in Western France. I doubt that images of the beaver and chestnut hold any intrinsic value to exhibit audiences today, except to underline the exceptional contribution Champlain made to the study of plants and animals. The audience, then, is invited to honour and share in Champlain’s genius. His contribution is in fact *our* contribution to the world, as the title of the exhibit in France suggests.

Difficult as it is to ascertain which of Champlain’s numerous works *Le Grand livre* depicts, the exhibit itself exudes legitimacy around its own enframing process, re-signifying the authority of the cartographic project through representing Champlain’s fanciful images. The image – a drawing in Champlain’s time and increasingly, photographs in ours – continues to hold considerable ethnographic weight in contemporary societies.

I still remember the shock I felt the first time I manipulated a digital photograph. I could not believe what could be done to what I had previously assumed to be a transparent representation of reality. While the widespread use of software such as Photoshop is undoubtedly putting into question the authenticity of photographs and images more broadly, images continue to exert a considerable amount of power in contemporary societies. Susan Sontag has long recognized the image’s inherent role in regulating discourses in society. In her study of war photography, she explicates how one of the photographer/artist’s primary roles is to frame and that framing necessarily involves exclusion (Sontag, 2003, p. 46-55). Photography is thus quite explicitly a dimension of larger social processes. Jay Ruby (2003) in his work in what he calls the “anthropology of visual/pictorial communication,” explains the emerging field as one that

“view[s] the visible and pictorial worlds as social processes, in which objects and acts are produced with the intention of communicating something to someone.” (p.165). While it is notably difficult to read “intention” into a subject’s actions, Ruby and Sontag usefully point to images as part of a larger social process. This might seem fairly straightforward, but the following section introduces some examples from *Le Grand livre*.

Enframing Context and Process

In Figure 6.4, we can see several representations of Champlain’s work, all brought together by artists in this one section of *Le Grand livre*. First, in the bottom right corner, we see a map of the Port of Tadoussac along the St-Lawrence, with a point-by-point overview of the different sites in the area. Enumerated among the list are: “a) a round mountain; b) Port of Tadoussac; c) a little freshwater stream; d) the location the savages stay at when they come for the fur trade; f) the point of all devils; g) the Saguenay River; h) Skylark point; j) very evil mountain full of rabbits and birch; l) the Bade mill; and m) the dock where ships wait for the tide and wind.” At the bottom right corner of the map is a scale (in *toise*, a measurement that equals six feet) and in the centre-bottom the cardinal directions. Underneath the bottom (south) image on the map are two canoes carrying indigenous people with spears, accompanied by the following description: “They came to us in two or three canoes to fish cod and other fish, of which there is a large quantity.”

Under the tutelage of Francois Dupont-Gravé, Champlain sailed to New France in 1603 aboard the *Bonne-Renommée* (see Fischer, 2009). The ship, flanked by the drawings of a compass and a codfish, frames the centre of the page of *Le Grand livre*. The *Bonne-Renommée* sails towards New France guided by navigational markers. The text to the left

(west) and below (south) of the ship explains Champlain's mission: "Here I am dispatched. I left Paris aboard so-called Pont's ship in 1603. We had an enjoyable trip all the way to Tadoussac." I see, by the centrality of the ship in the image, that Champlain, has the ability to move through space, to re-make himself as he travels. The ship is in the centre of the *tableau* flanked to the north by vast pieces of seemingly unmapped coastal land. Kirby (1996) explains, in her own analysis of Champlain's maps and writing:

Graphically, the individual might be pictured as a closed circle: its smooth contours ensure its clear division from its location, as well as assuring its internal coherence and consistency. Outside lies a vacuum in which objects appear within their own bubbles, self-contained but largely irrelevant to this self-sufficient ego. Will, thought, perception might be depicted as rays issuing outward to play over the surface of Objects, finally rejecting them in order to reaffirm its own primacy. (p.45)

In *Le Grand livre*, the *Bonne Renommée* emanates solid lines in each cardinal direction, embodying the rays Kirby describes. They represent Champlain's ability to name Objects on the horizon, featured partly by the detailed description of Tadoussac and the coastline above, buttressed by *Le Grand livre*'s prominent displays of compass, scale, and cardinal directions. The solid lines radiating from the ship also create the circle Kirby refers to above. While the circle is hardly "closed" in any conventional sense, it is demarcated as separate from that which it encounters. As Kirby (1996) argues, "The solid lines that cartography draws between the subject and the land reinforces the lines drawn between European white subjects and Others" (p.49). So it is with this image in *Le Grand livre*, where the *Bonne Renommée* and its European subjects are separated from their surroundings.

Interestingly, in the image above (Figure 6.4) *Le Grand livre* directs the observer to a little-known aspect of colonial history. The following caption lies underneath the

second, more prominent image of Tadoussac's main building: "The Chauvain du Cap building circa 1600. Sieur Chauvain undertook this trip. He employed a few workers to build a residential house 24 feet long by 18 feet wide." It seems the image is marking the founding of a French settlement prior to Champlain's fateful voyage in 1608. Denis Vaugeois (2008) has explained how Sieur de Chauvain, a French navigator, was just one among several other men from Western France vying for the riches of "New" France with King Henri IV's support. Chauvain's attempt at settlement ended prematurely when he returned in May, 1601 to the 16 men he left at Tadoussac the previous fall only to find five barely clinging to life. Besides Chauvain's foray into the St-Lawrence, several other European mariners traveled to the region, a phenomenon still relatively unknown in Québec. Vaugeois (2008) lists at least three separate accounts by European mariners from 1598-1599 that claim seeing up to 500 European ships fishing in the Gulf of St-Lawrence. In addition, David Hackett Fischer (2009) describes the Grand Banks off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador and the St-Lawrence River of the same period as crowded waterways full of Basque, Norman, and Dutch fishing and trading vessels. For example, Fischer (2009) refers to Champlain's own observations of this phenomenon: "In 1607, Champlain estimated that eighty ships were trading illegally for furs in the St-Lawrence" (p.233). The small, barely discernable caption places Champlain's masculine heroism into question, contradicting *Le Grand livre*'s otherwise singular construction of Champlain as hero.

As Trouillot foreshadows in chapter 4, both the process that brought Champlain to New France and the broader socio-historical context of Champlain's eventual landfall in 1608 are concealed. Still, clues haunting the edges of the traditional historical discourse

on display in *Le Grand livre* are evident everywhere. Whether in the complex process crowning Champlain father of Québec or in the subtle traces of the context of intense imperial competition and conflict in which Champlain was engaged, we can see how Champlain is himself part of a broader social movement to settle New France.

Starting with Jacques Cartier 70 years before, constant effort and resources were expended to found a settlement in the name of the King of France. This was not an uncomplicated process; it depended on the wishes of the French Crown and court, often deeply divided on the question of overseas settlement. Yet, the ascendance of King Henri IV gave the French colonial project an all-important ally (Fischer, 2009). Given this context, Champlain was trained by other mariners, notably Francois Dupont-Gravé, and relied on maps and navigational markers fashioned by at least two generations of sailors to New France (Vaugeois, 2008). His was not a trip up an empty Gulf of St-Lawrence, as depicted by the drawings in *Le Grand livre*. Quite the opposite, he entered a busy waterway rife with competition and conflict over resources. It also featured ships captained by Dutch, Norman, Basque, English, Mi'kmaq, Innu and other people still. He also undoubtedly gained from the support and resources of other mariners, who he would have been quite familiar with given his extensive travel throughout the Americas. Yet, the political economic context for his travels does not fit into *Le Grand livre*'s discourse of Champlain, the singular masculine hero overcoming all odds.

Lastly, and germane to my discussion below, the photo at the beginning of this section contains an image of an indigenous woman, detailing her clothing and demeanour. Named the *Sauvage Almouchiquoise*, she holds a squash in one hand and a lacrosse stick in another. I analyze this drawing and others like it found on every page of

Le Grand livre at length in the next section of this chapter. Overall, the image above is typical of the representations found in *Le Grand livre* that assert European supremacy, on the one hand, through a focus on settlement (viz. Tadoussac) and technology (e.g., ship and mapping techniques) and, on the other hand, through the savagery and unknowability of the landscape (e.g., empty coastline, strange creatures). Whatever the focus, Champlain's descriptions are done with seeming cartographic precision. The next section examines the representation of indigenous people in *Le Grand livre*.

The “Seeing Man:” Ambivalence and Desire

As Figure 6.5 illustrates, in *Le Grand livre* we see Champlain applying the newfound techniques of cartography to his drawings of indigenous peoples. In fact, he describes and illustrates indigenous people in quite the same way he identifies plants and animals, evoking the opening scene to *Rencontres*. In that scene, Champlain re-creates his voyage up the St-Lawrence, pointing to movement along the shoreline. He asks his crewmates: “A forest that walks? Let's get closer. Row faster. Along the shorelines, among the trees, are strange shapes. Are they giant birds? Or beasts?” No, we are told, they are people, men, women and children there to greet him and his ship. The observation is undoubtedly meant to portray Champlain, *the actor*, as a playful and benevolent narrator. But given the history on display in *Le Grand livre*, the conflation of plants, animals, and indigenous people as Objects seems central to Champlain's vision.

His innocent mix-up belies the representation of indigenous people in *Le Grand livre*, which is full of representations of the indigenous body. Men are uniformly portrayed as hunters, fishers and especially, warriors. They are always in groups and take

up only a small portion of any page. Women, on the other hand, are portrayed alone or holding a child, and like in the figure on the previous page, are mostly exposed for the viewer. They are consistently featured in the bottom corner, taking up fully one-quarter of the page. As a result, *Le Grand livre* gives Champlain's representation of indigenous women, focused as it is on the detail of the indigenous female body, prominence.

Such a focus on the indigenous female body is not unique to Champlain. Anne McClintock's (1995) work on the raced and gendered dimension of the imperial project explains the governing themes of Western imperialism; the first being "the transmission of white, male power through control of colonized women" (p.1). While this rather instrumentalist understanding of the "colonial contest," as McClintock calls it, was de rigueur in anti-colonial social analysis for several decades, more recent post-colonial theory based on the psycho-analytic work of Frantz Fanon and later, Homi Bhabha and McClintock, has opened up the contact zone to competing understandings. McClintock explains how the desire for abundance captured by *Le Grand livre's* depiction of empty coastline is counteracted by the fear and anxiety over the lack of any recognizable boundaries. In fact, McClintock describes how the "fantasy of conquest" in 16th century exploration journals is combined with a "dread of engulfment" (1995, p.27). The tropes of expansion and control, then, are present alongside tropes of anxiety, liminality, and desire. In this way, cartographic techniques can also be read as portends of the crisis in male imperial identity, in that the "dread of engulfment" is everywhere present in the feminized landscape (McClintock, 1995, p.27). It is as if without recourse to conquest, Champlain himself would be emasculated, lost in the proverbial wilderness, without bearings. The example of the *Sauvage Almichiquoise* demonstrates this well: her value

lies as an Object open to conversion by French male clergy. The imperial subject, threatened by the surprising appearance of other peoples, regains a sense of mastery over his surroundings by placing indigenous women within an ordered grid of intelligibility: an Object to be desired and controlled, and ultimately, civilized. What is the legacy of such representations in *Le Grand livre*, which offers no contextualization or discussion of Champlain's writings?

In *Le Grand livre*, we see one of the key features of the nascent science of mapping, European cartography: the cartographer, in this case, Samuel de Champlain, removes himself from the landscape. Nowhere is there an image of Champlain or any of his European crew. In this way, Europeans maintain their mastery through a removal. They are of a different order than the Objects encountered, contrary to the Québec 400's efforts to present the encounter as one between equals.

By constructing such a discourse, *Le Grand livre* is able to frame Champlain as the knower, the "master" of his environment, thus occupying a superior position in relation to it. No longer liminal to a new, threatening space, Champlain's boundaries are secured. We can juxtapose the figure of the cartographer to Radhika Mohanram's (1999) notion of the black body, in the case of *Le Grand livre* represented by indigeneity: "First, whiteness has the ability to move; second, the ability to move results in the unmarking of the body. In contrast, blackness is signified through a marking and is always static and immobilizing" (p.4). The image of the *Sauvage Almouchiquoise* provides a strong example of the racial line at play in Champlain's cartographic techniques, since he portrays her as an uncivilized Object waiting for European insemination. As I discussed

previously in chapter 3, civilizational discourses are racialized and gendered discourses, building as they do on European modes of differentiation.

The undeniable power involved in the cartographic exercise goes un-remarked by Champlain and his fellow imperial discoverers, who are involved in a quasi-scientific endeavour, much as Mary Louise Pratt demonstrates in her analysis of 18th century European travel writing. In some ways, as in the naming of animals and plants above, Champlain is the “anti-conquest” man of Pratt’s narrative. By “anti-conquest,” she,

Refer[s] to the strategies of representation whereby European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony....The main protagonist of the anti-conquest is a figure I sometimes call the ‘seeing-man,’ an admittedly unfriendly label for the European male subject of European landscape discourse – he whose imperial eyes passively look out and possess. (Pratt, 1992, p.7)

The power of the “seeing-man” re-circulates through *Le Grand livre*, where the imperial mapping project is not only presented, but celebrated as a form of European mastery.

Again, Blomley (2003) explains how this mastery was dependent on organized amputation, “If colonial possession was dependent upon dispossession, the survey served as a form of organized forgetting” (p.128). So strong is the authority of the survey still today that nowhere in the exhibit space is Champlain’s work put into question.

Instead of Pratt’s travel writers and naturalists though, who focus almost exclusively on cataloguing plants and animals, Champlain systematically sets the parameters of his innocence by focusing, at least in the representations from *Le Grand livre*, on the inherent threats emanating from the landscape *and* indigenous people. For example, Figure 6.6, describing the actions of Champlain’s indigenous allies, demonstrates the latter rather well.

Besides reifying land as an abstract space to possess, as I argue Champlain does in *Le Grand livre*, he produces this space as one legitimately *French*, since it is in need of European civilization. Two such techniques of civilization on display in *Le Grand livre* are religious conversions and the ordering of space. I will explicate the focus on religious conversions, before turning to an analysis of the ordering of space.

As an example of Champlain's desire to convert indigenous people, the following quote, which accompanied the previous image of the indigenous woman, suggests a clear European civilizational role: "There is great hope that the Clergy who have begun to settle and build seminaries, will be able to make inroads with conversion in a short time." In addition to this image, there can be no mistake from Figure 6.6 featuring a scene of torture that Champlain is merely a detached observer. His passionate writing is peppered with judgment and scorn and leaves little doubt that the parties in his depiction are in need of civilizational guidance.

Regardless of Champlain's intentions, the overlap between his overwhelming concern with indigenous peoples' "barbaric" practices and the same concerns expressed in recent discourses in Québec and in Canada is noteworthy. For instance, the Héraultville Code of Conduct and Canada's new citizenship guide both *closely* focus on the cultural Others' most extreme practices of gender inequality at the expense of any sustained focus on gender inequality in Québec or Canada. The imperial subject engages in very similar discursive strategies. While Champlain and *Le grand livre* focus on scenes like the one described above, nowhere is there any discussion of the murderous and devastating Wars of Religion ongoing in Champlain's home region, during which thousands upon thousands of people were killed, often by torturous means. Historian

David Hackett Fischer (2009), in his recent biography of Champlain's heroism, argues that during the Wars of Religion, "The violence was beyond imagining" (p.50) and perhaps even led to Champlain's desire to escape France. My point here is not to suggest that one practice of violence is more barbaric than another, nor to evaluate the quantitative level of violence. Instead, I want to point our attention to the ways in which the civilizational discourses Champlain mobilizes conflate the Other with barbarism, a story all-to-familiar to Québécois subjects. In the case of Champlain, this is done along a Christian religious ethic. During the Bouchard-Taylor Commission and in the Hérouxville Code of Conduct this is done mostly in the name of liberalism, as I demonstrated in chapter 3.

In the second case of ordering space, Figure 6.4 captures the intricacy of imperial ordering in the example of the Port of Tadoussac. Champlain painstakingly describes the landscape, something Pratt suggests the imperial "seeing-man" does in order to possess it. Both of these civilizing techniques, relying as they do on "constructed visibility," are cleverly obscured by Champlain's objectifying practices; after all, he is merely describing what he sees. *Le Grand livre* captures this movement between innocence and possession, between describing the "seen" and advocating civilization quite spectacularly. In betraying Champlain's assumed objectivity, the exhibit points to a central contradiction in the cartographic project: by emphasizing boundaries over sites, it indicates the primacy in European mapping of ownership and property (see Kirby, 1996, p.4; Blomley, 2003, p. 127-29 for a discussion). The results of such moves to innocence are profound. As Sherene Razack (2002) reminds us, discussing Champlain as an example of the imperial subject constituted through cartography: "[Champlain's] sense of self is directly derived

from controlling rigid boundaries and specific practices of knowledge production to create racial space, that is, space inhabited by the racial Other” (p.12). Razack’s analysis echoes Edward Said’s understanding of the centrality of dispossession and displacement in the imperial project, both of which highly depend on spatial practices such as those represented in *Le Grand livre*.

As I have explained, *Le Grand livre* is a project designed as the most important part of a traveling exhibit commemorating France’s role in “discovering” America. In fact, the exhibit was more a regional one, touring the Western regions of France, precisely those regions of France I examined earlier as marking a “cartography of origins” for the Québécois in France. The exhibit is now on permanent display in this region of France. Importantly, the *Grand livre* later became a gift to Québec, solidifying the France-Québec bond. Pratt (1992) provides us with one way to understand the French pre-occupation with conquest: “[The metropolis] habitually blinds itself to the ways in which the periphery determines the metropolis – beginning perhaps, with the latter’s obsessive need to present and re-present its peripheries and its others continually to itself” (p.6). There is no doubt that the Québec 400 provided ample opportunities to quench French needs to represent Québec and colonialism to itself. Whether through exhibits like “When our People Discovered America” or in the numerous events in France throughout 2008, France turned to its relationship with Québec and its history of imperialism with fervour. But this need is not solely one of representing its subjugated peripheries, since Québec, sharing in France’s history of imperialism, fully participates in these representational strategies, as evidenced by the staging of *Le Grand livre de Champlain*

in Québec City. What is to be gained by such transnational exchanges? What do these exchanges make possible?

The Intercultural-Man and the Colonial Present

It is noteworthy that nowhere else in the Québec 400 did I witness such an open celebration of colonial violence as in *Le Grand livre*, where the lines that Champlain drew between himself, the land, and the people who inhabited it, reinforced and reproduced the lines between European white subjects and racialized Others. In all other representations of Champlain's arrival, whether in the National Film Board of Canada film *Champlain retracé*, the Parks Canada archeological dig on the Terrasse Dufferin, the official commemorative spectacle entitled *Rencontres* with Champlain in the lead role, or any number of other events, the *colonial* dimension of Champlain's arrival was above all mediated by good relations with indigenous peoples. This quite overt narration of innocence in conquest was on full display. It is as if Champlain was a map-making diplomat, a *peacekeeper* before his time. In the *Rencontres* spectacle, he oversees a vast sea of land and competing interests with great flare and a zest for justice. Gesturing to the liberal logic at play in notions of tolerance and diversity in Western liberal democracies, the designer of *Le Grand livre*, Bernard Mounier, even goes so far as to suggest that *Le Grand livre* achieves the same goal. "*Le Grand livre*," he says, "honour[s] the representatives from the First Nations that [the founders] met." (Government of Canada, 2008d, my translation). While I do not doubt that the exhibit might be received differently in France than in Québec, the representations of indigenous peoples as either warriors or vixens in the exhibit are nonetheless hardly complimentary. Where is the

honour in men being shown as blood-thirsty brutes and women as half-naked seductresses? I cannot reconcile my notions of honour or respect with the representations of indigenous peoples in *Le Grand livre*.

In my opinion, *Le Grand livre* tells a significantly different story. Not that Champlain is any less the hero than in the intercultural discourse, but the violence of the colonial enterprise is laid bare. Most notably, the savageness of indigenous peoples is everywhere present in the *Grand livre*, a marked shift away from all other Québec 400 events I attended, and a notable move away from the intercultural discourse, since it attests outright to the strength of European supremacy. Through a reliance on cartography, the rationale of which I developed previously, this narrative of innocence is left intact, since it interpellates the audience through familiar tropes of scientific objectivity. Thus, within the script of the transnational cultural exchange between France and Québec, the racial boundaries first produced in the imperial encounter are free to circulate relatively unabated. In other words, even though what can be produced in a French political context, especially vis-à-vis indigenous relations, is markedly different than in Québec, the shared bond between France and Québec means such knowledge *makes sense* in Québec. What I am suggesting is that bond is a *racial* bond, one that relies on tropes of blood and belonging and space and place. It is evidence of the *extra-national* *raciality* at play in the making of the French-Québec subject, a *super-whiteness* that transcends national borders.

It is this *extra-national* *raciality* that brings France and Québec together to celebrate the Québec 400. Sometimes the *racial* dimension manifests itself through the logic of brotherhood or biological lineage, as we saw in the previous chapter, and at other

times, as in *Le Grand livre*, it is through a shared understanding of the colonial project. In these cases, the mutual intelligibility of tropes such as civilization and savagery and techniques such as cartography and surveying lay the groundwork for the *racial* bond, one based in shared belonging to whiteness. This is not a coherent project. The conquest discourse seems to work in contradistinction to the liberal discourse on cultural pluralism. In some ways, I cannot resolve viewing Champlain's writing and drawings with the benevolent, all-understanding man of *Rencontres*. The former adds credibility to my argument that the intercultural-man is a fanciful construction, since the "seeing-man" in *Le Grand livre* narrates the discovery story quite differently than the narrator in *Rencontres*. *Le Grand livre* makes no room for men smoking grasses or boiling bark, the central image bringing French and indigenous peoples together in *Rencontres*.

Despite their apparent contradictions, both of the discourses work together to construct *possibilities* for the normative Québécois subject. Whether in the understanding of itself as intercultural, and perhaps inherently *more* tolerant than French and other European subjects, but also sharing several salient markers of belonging with French subjects (e.g., territory, family), the Québécois subject is defined by its *flexibility*. The normative Québécois subject can understand French representations of the colonial encounter, as in the example of the mother educating her son, but can also choose to resist such discourses on the grounds of the Québécois' inherent intercultural tolerance and respect for differences. How can I be so sure, after all, that the son was not in fact teaching the mother in my previous anecdote?

However the story of colonial conquest is received, *Le Grand livre de Champlain* stands out as a key site of interpellation through which the transnational French-Québec

subject is called into being, one accomplished by relying on a shared understanding of the colonial encounter. The exhibit, then, solidifies the main organizing principle for the territorial and familial bonds constructed through the Québec 400 events in Western France, notably, the double move so essential to subject formation that I first introduced in chapter 1; one that defines difference even while claiming innocence or sameness in doing so. As I have stated, *Le Grand livre* captures this move spectacularly well. Yet, by depicting indigenous savageness with such abandon, the exhibit also raises the spectre of colonial violence on the part of early French colonists, thereby disrupting the more nuanced forms of innocence expressed in France and Québec and allowing for competitive readings of the past.

The next chapter picks up on this idea of competing ideas, by examining two social movements protesting the Québec 400 celebrations from very different political positions. The first is the largely decentralized and anti-colonial anarchist movement, represented by the Optative Theatrical Laboratory's theatre production "Sinking Neptune II." The second is the Québec nationalist movement, represented by Commémoration Québec 1608-2008, an organization set up to protest the official Québec 400 events. I now turn to this analysis.

Chapter Seven

Protest Movements, the Politics of Denunciation, and Nation-Building: Resisting the Québec 400

As they did during Columbus quinqucentenary events throughout the Americas in 1992, protest movements used the Québec 400 celebrations as a platform to mobilize resisting subjects. Puncturing the edifice of “celebrations,” two notable protest movements participated in the lead-up to and during the Québec 400. The Québec City wing of the North-Eastern Federation of Anarchists/Communists (NEFAC) led the anarchist-inspired, anti-colonial movement, while Commémoration Québec 1608-2008 (CQ 400) led the Québec *indépendantiste* contingent. Though their strategies and politics differed widely, they were the two most visible movements organizing against the official celebrations.

This chapter examines their attempts to protest the Québec 400 from distinct political positions in order to reconsider the problematic of subject formation in the Québec 400. In other words, the primary intellectual work of this chapter is to investigate the ruptures, disjunctions, *and* convergences between events celebrating the Québec 400 and those questioning the cause for celebration. As the events in Québec demonstrate, protest itself does not signify the undoing of a given discourse. In some cases during the Québec 400, opposition further solidified and crystallized the very legitimacy of the celebrations. This chapter is not an evaluation of the political effectiveness of Québec 400 protest movements. Instead, I consider how two protest movements with quite distinct political projects commingle with official Québec 400 discourses to provide Québécois subjects with a variety of possibilities to enter into the Québec 400. While the work in previous chapters focused almost entirely on institutional attempts to interpellate subjects into the Québec 400, this last chapter considers a set of localized political

concerns. Not only does this chapter represent my effort to document and analyze the work of two protest movements, but it also serves as a way to resolve some of my own uncertainties with the normative Québécois subject I have already sketched. I begin with an overview and discussion of the anarchist-themed protests, before moving on to the Québec *indépendantiste* movement.

Introducing Optative Theatre: *Sinking Neptune II* and the Limits of Denunciation

On July 3, 2008, the day chosen to mark officially the founding of Québec City, several significant events took place throughout the city, such as *Rencontres* (see chapter 4), the Salute to Champlain, the Military March through the Old City, and the Fireworks display (the largest in Canadian history), among others. All of these events took place in the Old City at the height of the usual tourist season. These events were wildly successful in drawing crowds, contributing to record numbers of visitors to Québec City. However, in a small corner of the Saint-Roch neighbourhood, a quickly gentrifying working-class area of Québec well below the Old City's ramparts, a protest event also took place. *Sinking Neptune II* (see Figures 7.1 & 7.2), a play produced by the Optative Theatrical Laboratories of Montreal (Optative), was a piece of *reality theatre*¹ meant to disrupt the official commemorative events. In Optative's words, from their website,

¹ In the dramaturgical note to the play, the producers of *Sinking Neptune* explain that "reality theatre" or "verbatim theatre" denotes that "all words have been taken from real sources...because this deconstruction is a work-in-progress, the text can be altered to add in new pieces of source text."

Figure 7.1 – Cover of Official Programme for Sinking Neptune

Sinking



Neptune

The image above is the graphic depicted on the official programme to Optative Theatre's play *Sinking Neptune*. Courtesy of Optative Theatre's website.

Figure 7.2- Anarchist Protest Sticker



The protest sticker above could be seen throughout Québec City, especially in the Lowertown area of the city. It reads: "400 Years of Colonialism: Nothing to Celebrate!"

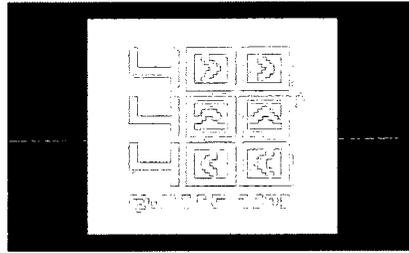
Photo by Darryl Leroux

Figure 7.3- Official Orange Banner



An official Québec 400 banner hanging in front of an *auberge* on Avenue Grande-Allée.
Photo by Darryl Leroux.

Figure 7.4 – Official Québec 400 Logo



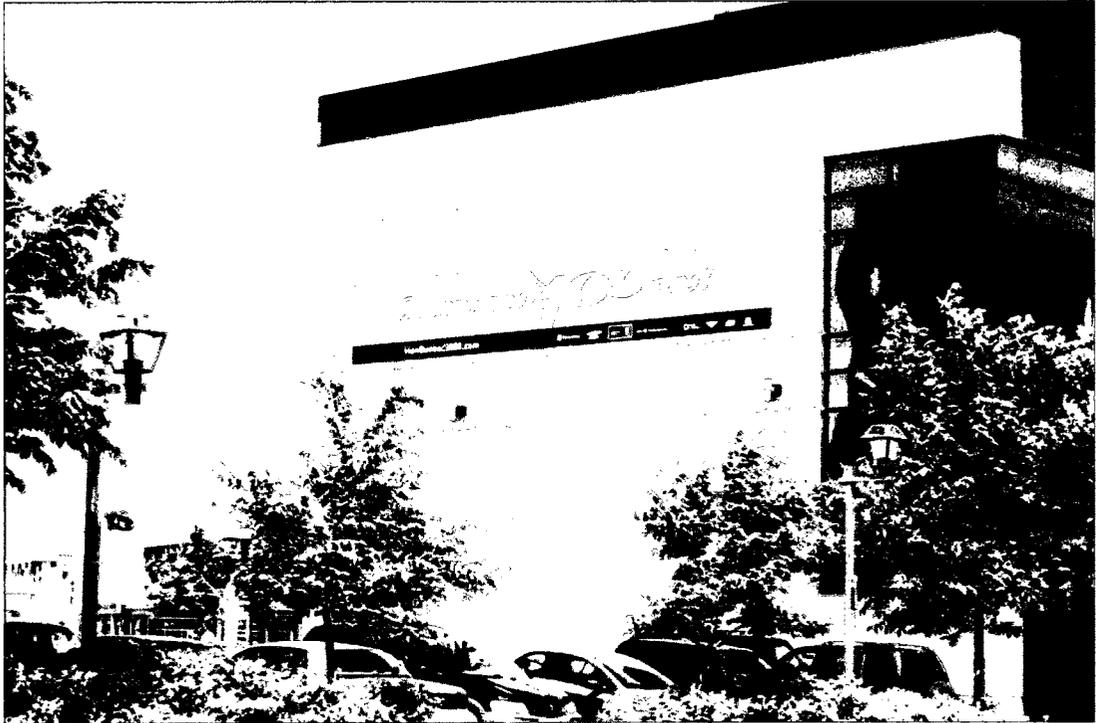
The official Québec 400 logo, as the Société 400 website explains it: “The Société for the 400th anniversary’s graphic foregrounds the celebration’s vivacity in orange, the past-present-future trinity, and a squared modernity, with a nod to the city’s architectural past that continues to mark the city. The superimposition of ‘400’ presents the accumulation of meetings and events that shaped not only our heritage, but also our imaginary.” Image courtesy of the Société 400 website.

Figure 7.5 – Official Green Banner



An official Québec 400 banner in the front window of a bike shop in Québec City. Photo by Darryl Leroux.

Figure 7.6- Official Fuchsia Banner



An official Québec 400 banner on the side of a building in Québec City that reads, "Let's celebrate 400 years!" Photo by Darryl Leroux.

Figure 7.7 - Commémoration Québec 1608-2008 Banner



CQ 400's banner for the Québec 400. From their website, "The banner that we created reproduces the blue and white emblem of the French region of Saintonge that Champlain flew on his ship *Don-de-Dieu* when he founded Québec in 1608....On the other side we see Québec's current flag....The background is covered by France's *fleur-de-lys*; its gold colour, narrowly associated with the French monarchy, has been replaced by the white in the Québec flag." Image courtesy of the CQ 400 website.

Figure 7.8- CQ 400 Banner in Shop Window



The official CQ 400 banner in the window of a bookstore in Old Québec. The two books framing the banner are: *Québec: A Military City* and *Québec: Four Centuries of a Capital*. Photo by Darryl Leroux

Figure 7.9 – *Le grand rassemblement* poster

Rassemblement à Québec le 3 juillet
Fête citoyenne de la parole et de la chanson

❖ **Célébrons nos 400 ans aux couleurs du Québec** ❖

Animation de **Luck Mervil** en compagnie de : Raymond Lévesque, Biz de Loco Locass,
Yves Beauchemin, Michel Lessard, Hugo Latulippe, Marie Tifo, Danielle Proulx,
Luc Archambault, Caroline Desbiens, Mario Brassard, Gaston Deschênes, André Gaulin,
Jean-Claude Labrecque, Jacques Lemeux, Claude Michaud, Éric Waddel et plusieurs autres.



le jeudi 3 juillet 2008,
entre 11 h et 13 h 30,
au Parc de l'Amérique-Française.

(en face du Grand Théâtre)

Une initiative du Collectif Commémoration 1608-2008

www.commemoration1608-2008.org

The image above is the official poster inviting people to CQ 400's major counter-commemorative event: *Le grand rassemblement*. Image courtesy of the CQ 400 website.

Sinking Neptune is a radical deconstruction of the ‘first play’ ever written in the so-called ‘New World,’ Marc Lescarbot's ultra-racist *Theatre of Neptune in New France*. It is also a verbatim theatre exposé of people in the arts community, journalists, politicians, bloggers and others in the public eye that, sometimes unknowingly, promote a colonialist agenda. Ignorant of or apathetic to the cultural genocide wrought on aboriginal peoples by works like Lescarbot's play, and neo-colonialist celebrations.
(Optative, 2008)

Optative styles itself an anti-colonial theatre group, part of a larger movement that staged the July 3 protest march through the business district and down to the walls of the Old City, where it was ultimately stopped by heavily-armed police in riot gear. In his recent sociological study of what he calls the “newest social movements,” Richard J.F. Day (2005) identifies a break between the radical social activism of the 1960s to 1990s to that of the last decade. The break is a strategic one: a move away from counter-hegemonic to anti-hegemonic politics. In other words, these newest social movements, with which the anti-colonial march and Optative identify, do not seek to take state power, as did the bulk of previous radical social movements in North America. Instead, theirs is a shift towards “non-branded strategies and tactics” that display an “affinity for affinity” or anarchist-influenced politics (Day, 2005, p.8-9). It is a move away from revolutionary politics to devolutionary politics (see Churchill, 2005 for a discussion). Though not a social movement in the conventional sense employed by sociologists – many of whom work within a liberal or Marxist framework that centres on the state, as Day (2005) points out – the anarchist, anti-authoritarian movement is defined primarily by its decentralized decision-making and diversity of tactics. Optative’s decision to stage an anti-colonial play along with satirical displays of street theatre mocking Champlain’s landfall throughout the streets of the Old City, manifests their affinity with anarchist principles.

Optative's main performance took place at *L'Agitée Bar-Coop*, a local bar-restaurant-performance space that operates under a non-authoritarian, membership-driven structure. Formerly a working-class pub, several activists from the anarchist *Page Noire* bookstore next door bought the building and transformed it into a popular performance space (Page noire, 2010). It holds weekly slam poetry sessions and punk concert nights, operates a soup kitchen in the basement, provides meeting space to community organizations, and runs a bar and restaurant. With its links to Montréal-based anti-authoritarian collectives, *L'Agitée* was the obvious location for *Sinking Neptune's* premiere in the capital. Before the performance, I recognized many of the people in the small audience that night from the afternoon's march through the Old City. In fact, the couple sitting behind me, dressed in black tank tops and displaying tattoos, was at the front of the barricades at around 2pm earlier in the day, exchanging barbs and insults with a group of angry municipal police officers who, it seemed, did not appreciate their taunts to military personnel marching through the streets of the Old City.

Optative first performed the original version of *Sinking Neptune* in 2006 as a response to the planned 400-year anniversary performance of Marc Lescarbot's play in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, the site of the first permanent French settlement in New France (called "Port Royal" by the French). Lescarbot was a lawyer, artist, and childhood friend to Port-Royal's second governor, sieur de Poutrincourt. Upon Poutrincourt and Champlain's return from a disastrous expedition on November 16, 1606, down the coast of New England, Lescarbot and his men met the returning ships in canoes and performed the *Theatre of Neptune* on the frigid north Atlantic. Historian David Hackett Fischer (2009) explains the scene on that cold November day:

[*Theatre of Neptune*] had a cast of eleven actors: The Sea Neptune, six Tritons, and four Frenchmen dressed as Indians, plus at least one trumpet and drum. Poutrincourt and Champlain were asked to take seats in their *barque*, while a shallop approached, bearing Neptune in a regal blue robe, wearing a crown and carrying a trident. He greeted the sieur de Poutrincourt with a poem for his courage. (p.212)

The drawing at the beginning of this chapter (see Figure 7.1) is a visual representation of this encounter by artist C.W. Jeffreys. In 2006, a Nova-Scotia-based amateur theatre company, Theatre 400, planned a representation of Lescarbot's play, along with a conference celebrating the milestone in Canadian theatre. In order to disrupt what it called the "neo-colonialist" celebrations, Optative developed a counter-play, with performances in Montreal, Halifax, and later in Annapolis Royal. Optative's work led to a heated debate about the significance of the original play, Lescarbot's *Theatre of Neptune in New France*, in the local and even national media (see CBC, 2006; Posner, 2006).

Following the success of these performances, Optative decided to focus on the Québec 400, "to challenge another colonial celebration, the *400e anniversaire de Québec*, and expose Samuel de Champlain's involvement with the racist *Theatre of Neptune in New France*" (Optative, 2008). Before the July 3 performance in Québec City, Optative performed the new version (*Sinking Neptune II*) twice at McGill University in Montreal, once at CEGEP Montmorency in Laval, once at the University of Guelph, and in the Montreal Infringement Festival.

In keeping with Optative's reality theatre approach, *Sinking Neptune II* weaves together a complex narrative exploring a wide range of issues linked to the Québec 400. This pastiche makes for a performance based on movement and inter-connection. The first scenes (Units) introduce the planning of the Québec 400, segments of Lescarbot's play, and controversies surrounding the anniversary staging in Annapolis Royal in 2006.

The play's seemingly unrelated structure, in which the narrative shifts between past and present and between press conferences and 17th century theatre, manages to bring the events together in an innovative *mélange*. The one constant throughout the play is the use of quotations by prominent indigenous writers and activists repudiating the claims made by various key figures, whether Josée Verner, federal minister responsible for the Québec 400; Ken Pinto, actor and member of Theatre 400, an organization formed to commemorate 400 years of theatre in Canada and later disbanded due to the controversy raised by *Sinking Neptune*; or any number of journalists reporting on the Québec 400 planning.

The following exchange takes place in Units 31 and 32², between Josée Legault, a journalist at the *Montreal Gazette* played by a member of the Optative team and Kahentinetha Horn, a Mohawk writer and publisher of the *Mohawk Nation News*, whose words were displayed on a screen at the front of the stage:

Legault: The show that kicked off the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City on New Year's Eve was a disappointment. *Le Devoir* called it a 'historical mistake.' *Le Soleil* branded it 'improvised.' Even *Bonhomme Carnaval* [Québec City's Winter Carnaval mascot] would have been a critic. Although the outdoor stage at *Place D'Youville* was impressive, the choice of songs and performers was outrageously disconnected from the nature of the event. It was closer to the lineup one would expect at a late-night talk show than for a bash intended to mark such a history-filled event. Most of Quebec's major artists were notoriously absent. So was the rich poetry and music for which Quebec is internationally renowned. If this is the least bit indicative of what's to come for the year-long celebration, it makes you wonder if anyone at the *Société du 400e anniversaire*, the committee responsible for it, understands the true meaning of it all.

Horn: What's to celebrate? Theft of our land? Vandalism? Plagues? Genocide? Complete denial of our existence? Establishment of twisted and

² Optative uses "Units" instead of the conventional "Scenes" to denote changes in the action or location of the play.

diseased European social customs on our land? Pollution and destruction of our environment? We would have all been better off if the French and English had stayed home and cured their sickness instead of contaminating the rest of the world.

In the first excerpt, Legault enumerates a common list of complaints following the Québec 400's inaugural event that eventually led to the wholesale replacement of the Société 400's management team. Legault repeats a familiar narrative regarding the Québec 400, citing bad planning, a lack of historicity, and poor administration as a means to re-signify the "true meaning" of the celebrations. In this way, the anniversary becomes *ipso facto* cause for a grand celebration. Anything less, at least in the terms Legault puts it, would do a major disservice to Québec's international reputation. On the other hand, Horn denies the very basis for celebration: she cannot celebrate the ongoing genocide of indigenous communities. By forcefully juxtaposing these two opposing historical epistemologies, Optative re-signifies the terms of the debate: no longer is it about whether the Société 400 is properly celebrating Québec's glorious history, but the more salient question becomes whether the framework of celebration is warranted in the first instance.

In the next example, pulled from Units 24, 25, and 5, we again see the back-and-forth between those wanting to commemorate colonial-era events, in this case manifested by Lescarbot's play, and indigenous counter-claims. The first exchange is between Ken Pinto and Bill Van Gorder, two of the original members of the Theatre 400 organization, both played by members of the Optative team. The next character is Ernest J. Dick, a journalist based in Nova Scotia, again played by Optative actors. And finally, Daniel Paul, a well-known Mi'kmaq writer and author of the best-selling *We Were Not the Savages*, wrote the citations from Unit 5.

Ken Pinto (speaking at a press conference): It's a very simple play, but it's a good play and it started theatre in this country.

Bill Van Gorder (speaking at a press conference): Good theatre, real theatre has a purpose. This play was aimed at guaranteeing the survival of this group of people for the rest of the winter.

Ernest Dick (reading his article from a computer screen): Forced to stand in the wings during these contentious anniversary events is a Halifax theatre maven who was guiding a group that was organizing gatherings linked to the 400-year-old play. Ken Pinto said this week his hopes were dashed after two applications for Canada Council for the Arts grants were rejected. He said requests for about \$35,000 in grant money were turned down last year and in 2004. Pinto, director of the annual Atlantic Fringe Festival, said his now-defunct group, Theatre 400, had wanted to promote the 400th anniversary of the Lescarbot play by mounting productions in Annapolis County and Metro [Halifax] and by hosting a major theatre conference that, if deemed feasible, would be going on this weekend...

Ken Pinto (speaking to Van Gorder): It's political correctness gone crazy. I mean, I just hate political correctness. The word 'savages' – that was the way it was back then.

Bill Van Gorder (speaking to Pinto): Good theatre, real theatre has a purpose.

Ken Pinto (speaking to Van Gorder, agitated): It's a very simple play, but it's a good play and it started theatre in this country.

Bill van Gorder: Good theatre, real theatre has a purpose.

Daniel Paul (on a slide on stage): To be called a 'savage' and to be treated like one is the ultimate insult to an Amerindian. The term was never applicable...

Daniel Paul (another slide): Four centuries after the European invasion began, all the civilizations of two continents lay in ruins and the remaining people were dispossessed and impoverished. The uncontested victors were greed and racism.

In this last example we again see a didactic repudiation of celebration. We hear Pinto and Van Gorder painstakingly critiquing Optative's attempts to shut down their commemorative intentions. Theatre 400, we find out, wants to celebrate good theatre, a

seemingly *aesthetic* question. In its anti-commemorative movement, *Optative* attempts to discredit the colonial legacy inherited by Champlain, in this case, through a sustained focus on Lescarbot's work, one of Champlain's settler-colleagues. Daniel Paul becomes the voice of indigenous resistance in this instance, underlining the same history of dispossession and impoverishment Horn outlines later in the play.

Sinking Neptune II continues in this manner, providing examples of enthusiastic or passionate calls for the celebration of early-17th century events, especially the Québec 400, followed by indigenous appeals for recognition of the racist, settler history of the Americas. I argue, then, that this protest discourse raises an important consideration: whether commemoration, with its institutional and political origins in the nation-state, can ever be a liberating practice. While *Optative* succeeds in raising some important questions about the logic of colonialism and the ethics of settler-indigenous relationships, their rather straightforward protest might, however, work to uphold the colonial legacy it is meant to disrupt. I explore this issue in the next section.

Thinking Outside the Box: Protesting Commemoration

Writing about the Columbus quincentenary, Roger Simon has reflected on the politics of remembrance and specifically, the many counter-commemorations aimed at denouncing the so-called discovery of the Americas. He explains how many of these attempts to protest the history of European imperialism and colonialism in the Americas fall short of their primary aims to destabilize colonial institutions, since in simply denouncing Columbus, they recreate colonial frames of reference. In his words, "The weakness of a pedagogy of remembrance that discredits the dominant narratives of discovery is the

failure to interrogate the basis for their intelligibility in the first place” (Simon, 2005, p.21). It is a hallmark of denunciation to undercut the logic of colonial institutions, yet as Simon argues, within these protest discourses there is hardly any consideration of how settler-colonialism became possible in the first place. In a similar sense to Trouillot’s explication of the making of a founding moment in chapter 4, the history of European debates over the morality of imperialism at the time is totally ignored. Instead, it is replaced with too-easy stories of moral certainty: Bad imperialists and good indigenous people. Optative does not explore what conditions existed and continue to exist that allow celebrations of colonialism to take place. Instead, certain public figures are inserted into their roles as villain or hero.

It is within these politics of denunciation that *Sinking Neptune II* sets out to re-create the narrative of discovery by calling into question its very validity. Yet, as I am arguing, the result of such work is not necessarily transgressive, since denunciation does not lay the groundwork for remembering otherwise. To do so, as Simon (2005) explains, groups and individuals must do the hard work of building a new, insurgent memory: “If remembrance practices are only concerned with ‘correcting memory’ and do not explicitly function to renew a reconstructed living memory for a community, the potential insurgency in such practice will be greatly diminished” (p.18). *Sinking Neptune II* demonstrates a popular style of anti-colonial resistance that focuses almost entirely on denunciation, without considering *how* certain conditions normalize colonial relations. As Simon (2005) explains:

Within this premise, to alter what is heard in First nation accounts, not only must one engage in an active re/membering of the actualities of the violence of past injustices, but one must also initiate remembrance of the emergence, circulation, and maintenance of the discursive practices that

underwrote the European domination, subjection, and exploitation of indigenous peoples. (p.18-9)

Instead of building an insurgent form of popular public memory to which subjects might respond, Optative stops short, denouncing current strategies of commemorating the past to subjects who are already mobilized by such resisting discourses. If the size and diversity of the crowd is any indication, Optative's anti-colonial discourse failed to interpellate subjects in the same way they claim to have done previously in Nova Scotia.

While denunciation is no doubt an important part of any protest movement, in some ways it simply re-iterates well-worn binary distinctions between right and wrong. Geoffrey Hartman explains the results of such attempts, "Denunciation is not enough; it tends to foster a paranoid style of localizing evil that removes the issues too far from our time" (cited in Simon, 2005, p.21). Not only does it tend to re-figure the colonial encounter as a past event, but, as Simon suggests, it also takes the events outside the realm of an individual's own experience. How do settler-subjects, long-accustomed to their role in upholding colonial institutions, hear calls to challenge the very basis for their national-territorial existence? Without much contextualization of the historical and social forces that continue to create the conditions for the existence of colonial institutions, these attempts fall flat.

In watching *Sinking Neptune II*, it was difficult for me not to be seduced by the story of good versus evil presented with rhetorical flourish and theatrical flare. Self-consciously oppositional subjects are called into this story, meant to cast a light on past events. In this representation, subjects are not meant to see themselves as involved in this history, except to take sides between clearly demarcated combatants. Contrary to the Québec 400 events, which present a one-dimensional story of the Good Québec subject

respectful of diversity and itself diverse, Optative's play is decidedly a story of Good versus Evil, a story the Québec 400 rejects. In fact, as I explain in chapters 4 and 6, the Québec 400 excises all signs of violence from the past in its grand intercultural discourse.

Lest this be read as a call for more discursive "balance," which it is decidedly not, my concern lies with the ways in which anarchist protest movements, and Optative in particular, fail to provide subjects with alternative historical epistemologies. How many subjects identify with Evil? Surely, as Hannah Arendt (1973) so poignantly demonstrated years ago, when we tell a story of Good and Evil we remove ourselves from the epistemological frame. The result is apparent in the case of Optative and even the anarchist protest events in Québec City more generally – what is fundamentally a political question is reduced to one of morality. These strategies of de-politicization, some of which I identify in relation to the Bouchard-Taylor Commission in chapter 3, are not, in my opinion, the foundations for a new, more equitable society. Mind you, by working through the *anti-hegemonic* frame I introduced above, Optative is not looking to *counter* commemoration with a coherent, re-imagining of the colonial encounter. Instead, theirs is a strategy aimed at building de-centralized affinity groups working towards the state's eventual demise. The key theoretical and political tenets of anarchism necessarily oppose such meta-narratives. Sociologist Avril Bell's (2008) understanding of "generative tension" provides an explication of the politics of anti-colonial protest from a settler perspective:

Similarly here, the notion of 'generative tension' points to the limitations of all our political attempts to secure justice and of all our epistemological schemas. What is then required, while pursuing knowledge and justice, is an ongoing vigilance, reflexivity and openness to the dangers of violence inflicted on others, all others – a preparedness to decenter one's own views and assumptions. (p.860)

Unlike the official Québec 400, Optative does provide a corrective to the “encounter” between Europeans and indigenous peoples in its presentation of resisting indigenous voices throughout *Sinking Neptune II*. The strength of the play is in its focus on indigenous points of view of the contact zone, the only such views on display during the entirety of the Québec 400, besides the *Territories, mémoires, savoirs* exhibit in Wendake I discuss in chapter 4. Simon (2005) explains the importance of such a focus: “Narratives of discovery must be rejected and replaced, not simply with the problematic notion of an encounter that initiated reciprocal exchange, but with realities of what happened from the indigenous point of view” (p.20). By continuously turning to various indigenous points of view, including many already available in the public realm (e.g., through books, films), *Sinking Neptune II* does gesture to the kernel that could eventually lead to a re-constituted memory of the colonial period.

Yet, Bell, building on Emmanuel Lévinas’ work on ethics, the subject, and the Other, recognizes the limitations of settler strategies to de-centre colonial knowledge. She argues the need for a “politics of disappointment,” one that remains radically open to *not* knowing, since knowing the Other is a colonial-era project fraught with contradiction (p.865). Instead, she argues, the settler-indigenous relationship must be based on ethics, not epistemology, since we can never truly know the Other. Too often, epistemological frameworks such as the one promoted by Optative become little more than acts of redemption for settlers searching for indigenous recognition (“Am I good?” asks the settler), modes through which settlers self-identify with indigenous claims (“I feel for them, we share a lot,” says the settler), and/or narratives that lead to ethnographic

curiosity (“How *did* they survive?” asks the settler) (see Bell, 2008, p.863; Simon, 2005, p.25).

If we keep the question of ethics in mind, then, settlers must remain disappointed, since the task is not to know, but to remain open to the very possibility of not knowing. Bell (2008) explains this ethical move: “While decentering clearly involves costs for settler subjects, it also involves the possibilities of new learning and new forms of social relation with indigenous peoples, of ‘coming clear’ about what it means to co-exist with the fact of indigenous difference” (p.865).

In some ways, *Sinking Neptune II* falls short precisely because it borrows familiar binaries that are much too easy for subjects to dismiss. Their discursive approach risks slipping into the common liberal epistemology of “getting to know each other,” in which racialized Others have continuously been judged and evaluated by the imperial West (see Bell, 2008, p.854). Who is interpellated by such stories of Good and Evil? As Simon suggests, most subjects can easily dismiss these calls simply because very few see themselves as being/representing Evil. Despite its stated intentions, without tying their production into contemporary indigenous resistance movements (e.g., indigenist politics, land rights, reparations, etc), *Sinking Neptune II*'s narrative remains obscurely in the past. The present, on the other hand, is full of promise, as the liberal discourse dominating the Québec 400, evidenced in the hugely popular *Rencontres* production, reminds us.

The next section introduces and analyzes the second, and perhaps most visible protest movement during the Québec 400: the Québec movement for political sovereignty.

Commémoration Québec 1608-2008: The Lack of History and the Politics of Commemoration

With the 400th of Québec, governmental authorities are aiming to create a totally legitimate space of celebration for the benefit of the public. But this homage to Québec can't erase the undeniable significance this city represents in the history of French life in the Americas, as well as in the edification of modern-day Québec, the only French-speaking state on the continent....Making reference to the origins of Québec and to its future is an obligation we can't simply evacuate from the landscape, no less than its colours and emblematic references, which have perpetuated themselves through time.

Commémoration Québec 1608-2008

In addition to the anarchist movement loosely organized around disrupting the Québec 400, Commémoration Québec 1608-2008 (CQ 400) was the most significant counter-commemorative protest movement. Following the inaugural Québec 400 event on December 31, 2007, several Québec *indépendantistes* formed a protest movement at the next meeting of the *Conseil de la souveraineté de la capitale nationale* [The National Capital Council for Sovereignty] in Québec City. As we see in the epigraph to this section, the Québec-City-based sovereignty movement reacted strongly to the celebratory dimension of the Québec 400, since they claimed it displaced History from the quatercentenary's agenda. As CQ 400 (2008) explained on its website, under the rubric "The Origins of the Collective:" "The December 31 event confirmed the strategy we needed to adopt: give the historical meaning of the anniversary back at all costs" (Commémoration Québec 1608-2008, 2008). The focus on re-injecting History into the Québec 400 celebrations would be CQ 400's primary preoccupation during their short existence³.

³ As an example, their website featured a genealogical chart of the original French settlers in New France and a 400-year history re-capping key events.

By doing so, CQ 400 moved beyond the politics of denunciation I describe in the previous section into the realm of building an alternative historical consciousness, highlighting the politics of commemoration Michel-Rolph Trouillot discussed in chapter 4 (e.g., making a public face and creating a founding moment). Their primary strategy in offering an authentic version of history was to highlight Québec's and, specifically, Champlain's role in founding French civilization in the Americas. Therefore, CQ 400's main mission was to build a viable historical narrative alternative to the official Québec 400, based as it was in Québec *indépendantiste* dissatisfaction with the lack of History in the Québec 400 events. According to Francine Lavoie (2008), founding board member, "It is from this observation that a group of citizens – in association with a group of historians wanting to promote Québec's history – gave itself the mission of offering to the public tools and activities of a historical and identity-based character" (p.199). Also, quite unlike Optative, CQ 400's attempts at instituting an alternative pedagogy of remembrance did manage to receive quite a bit of media attention, especially within Québec. The next part of this chapter examines two tropes through which CQ 400 discursively constructs its alternative commemorative project throughout 2008: History and Justice.

Symbols and Sameness: Blue versus Red, the Iris versus the Rose

As part of their attempts to re-situate History in the Québec 400, CQ 400 organized several high-profile campaigns. The most visible among them were their attempts to place the colours of Québec front and centre throughout the events. As the most evident symbols of the Québec 400 were unfurled in 2008, first, throughout the city's many

neighbourhoods and second, throughout the region and province, CQ 400 reacted promptly both with critique and the production of counter-symbols. The Société 400 website offers a concise description of the official symbolic field to which CQ 400 addressed its resistance:

The Société for the 400th anniversary's graphic foregrounds the celebration's vivacity in orange, the past-present-future trinity, and a squared modernity, with a nod to the city's architectural past that continues to mark the city. The superimposition of '400' presents the accumulation of meetings and events that shaped not only our heritage, but also our imaginary. (Société 400, 2008a)

The statement correlates quite clearly with the organizing committee's focus on the idea of encounters at the forefront of the official celebrations. For CQ 400, one of the gravest affronts to their vision was the lack of the *fleurdelisé* (Québec's national symbol) and the colour blue (Québec's national colour) in the official quatercentenary events, both of which are featured prominently on Québec's national flag (see Figures 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7 & 7.8 for an array of symbols on display in Québec City).

In early January, the City of Québec began adorning streetlights and buildings with the orange, fuschia, and green banners produced by the Société 400, all announcing the city's 400th anniversary in large font. Pierre-Paul Sénéchal, CQ 400's spokesperson, explains CQ 400's position regarding the Société 400's visual representations: "The 400's entire visual landscape erased all references to the past and to the memory of *les Québécois*...Are we ashamed? Is it embarrassing? Taboo? Do we want to eradicate Memory?" (cited in Vallée & Beaumier, 2009, p.16-17). The Société's orange and red hues replaced the Québec flag as the most prominent visual symbol on display in Québec City sometime by early spring 2008. I was surprised by the shift that took place from my initial research visit in February 2008 to my extended stay in July 2008: fuschia, pink,

orange, and green were present everywhere, especially within Old Québec and the downtown core.

CQ 400's response to what they perceived as the marginalization of Québec symbols and colours during 2008 was to devise its own banner representing a mix of old and new (see Figure 7.4). As CQ 400 explained on its website:

The banner that we created reproduces the blue and white emblem of the French region of Saintonge that Champlain flew on his ship *Don-de-Dieu* when he founded Québec in 1608....On the other side we see Québec's current flag....The background is covered by France's *fleur-de-lys*; its gold colour, narrowly associated with the French monarchy, has been replaced by the white in the Québec flag. (Commémoration Québec 1608-2008, 2008)

In some neighbourhoods in Québec City, CQ 400 banners could be widely seen in the summer of 2008. In particular, along the major east-west artery to downtown, René-Lévesque Boulevard, CQ 400's unique banners outnumbered the usual display of Québec's *fleur-de-lys* in apartment building windows. In this way, CQ 400's appeal to history in relation to nationalist symbols, such as colours, flowers, and flags, did manage to mobilize certain subjects to their counter-discourse. Most importantly, though, it positioned CQ 400's discourse within the politics of nationalism in Québec. By re-signifying easily identifiable symbols and introducing them into the public realm, CQ 400 presented itself as the defenders of Québec History. From the re-signification of visual symbols, CQ 400 moved onto constructing a counter-commemorative history. Unlike Optative and the anarchist-influenced movement, CQ 400 was careful *not* to question the grounds for celebration. Instead, it re-signified symbols, events, and individuals in order to underline the *French Canadian Québécois* dimensions of the celebration. In this way, its argument was fundamentally opposed to Optative's: there are

indeed grounds for celebration, but these grounds must be clarified through a proper understanding of history. In other words, CQ 1608-2008 knows the truth, and if only they could educate people about history, the truth would become clear to them.

Le Grand Rassemblement: The Spectacle of Counter-Commemoration

In addition to the production of flags and other material symbols, CQ 400 produced a series of historical documents, available on its website throughout 2008 and published as an edited collection entitled *Québec 2008: Des célébrations 400 fois détournées de leur sens* [Québec 2008: 400 Ways to Lose A Celebration's Meaning] by *Éditions du Québécois* in July 2009 as part of its "Essays for a Free Québec" series. The most notable event organized by CQ 400 took place on July 3, the official anniversary date. Called *Le Grand Rassemblement à Québec* [The Great Gathering in Québec], it featured a number of high-profile Québec-based artists, musicians, and intellectuals and attracted nearly 200 people. Here is the logic behind the July 3 events, as it appeared on the CQ 400 website:

On this historic day, we see soldiers in [British] uniform[s], but there is no site, no platform, no moment to evoke and pay homage to what the Québécois have in their hearts: the beautiful and great adventure of French life in the Americas, the miraculous building of modern Québec, the only French-speaking state on the continent, whose national colours and culture have been totally evacuated from the official celebrations.

(Commemoration Québec 1608-2008, 2008)

Under grey skies and ample rain, the CQ 400 collective set up a stage surrounded by a sound system draped in tarps in the *Parc de l'Amérique-Française*, a major park in the centre of the city. While the crowd was gathering in the park for the CQ 400 event – many wearing Québec flags and blue and white outfits – a much larger crowd was waiting to begin the anti-colonial march through the downtown core. The juxtaposition

was stark: the almost entirely white, middle-aged CQ 400 supporters carrying umbrellas on one side of the park, and the mostly white, under 25 year-old back-clad crowd carrying placards, banners, musical instruments, and handing out flyers to passers-by on the other. A buffer of green grass and mud acted much like a fence between the groups.

Despite its counter-hegemonic *political* aims, CQ 400's protest strategy closely parodied the structure for the official Salute de Champlain: a well-worn tradition of speaker after speaker delivering short addresses. The exception at the Great Gathering was the musical component, strategically sandwiched in between speeches to keep the event moving in the thundering rain.

After several minutes of technical difficulties, Pierre-Paul Sénéchal opened the event by explaining CQ 400's mission:

To get the population to participate in the 400th anniversary of Québec in our way, with our colours, so that it can become something that reflects us all. The colours of Québec that we see so little of or not at all in the organization of the 400th anniversary of Québec, you see them here today in the *Parc de l'Amérique française*, these are colours that bring us together. There's something unique in this ceremony today... it's for citizens by citizens. There are no dignitaries on stage, that is, you are all dignitaries today.

After his opening address, Sénéchal introduced Luck Mervil, the Montréal-based singer-songwriter, actor, and 2005 recipient of the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society's Patriot of the Year award, who emceed the event. After welcoming the crowd, Mervil read a poem he wrote specifically for this event. Entitled, "In our hearts, there's much more than blood," here is the first verse:

I must talk to you like they once did
I must chat with you because it's very, very important.
I must say it in my choice of words,
My language is not just an artifact,
It's the fire that burns inside,

That carries flesh to light
That lights the flame of love
Around the fires of our inner child's spirit
That lets it be known, my friend,
That in our hearts, there's much more than blood.

As we can see, Mervil re-iterates CQ 400's appeal to pay homage to what the Québécois have in their "hearts" (see epigraph to this section), through his elegant metaphors. After the poem, the small crowd responded favourably, yelling "Bravo!" and clapping enthusiastically in the pounding rain.

The next part of the event was particularly notable. Singer-songwriter Caroline Desbiens came onto the stage and introduced what she called "Québec's national anthem," written by Raymond Lévesque, who also happens to be the author of *Front de Beu*, featured prominently in the *Rencontres* show I discuss in chapter 4. On this day, Desbiens sang the song Lévesque wrote to promote Québec independence, *Je Me Souviens* [I remember]. Before Desbiens' performance, Lévesque himself introduced the song: "In the buildup to independence, I wrote a national anthem, to the tune of Calixa Lavallée's [the author of the music to O Canada] song. It's called *Je me souviens*." He then stayed on stage and sang the song with Desbiens, who, realizing that Lévesque was staying on stage to sing, enthusiastically exclaimed: "The Last of the Patriots...My God, what luck! I don't believe it." Here are the lyrics to Lévesque's song:

I remember
Courageous men,
Cartier, Champlain
Inaugurating their wishes,
The development of new lands
Our ancestors' work
And I want to stay loyal
To this generous heritage.

I remember...

And will defend my language
And my country,
I will defend my language
And my country.

So that mine
Will see the future,
A pleasant road,
Without fear of perishing.
That my sons will lead their lives,
Liberated from the worry
Of struggling for their Homeland
And of always being on borrowed time.
(Chorus)

Here we see Champlain (and Cartier) remembered for his heroic masculinity, much as in the exhibit I examined in the previous chapter. In this formulation, the Québécois subject, re-constituted in the *Grand Rassemblement* as those who are loyal to history, struggle for their homeland. The synergy with the *Rencontres* show on display the same day, only five blocks east and two hours later, is striking. Both shows open with similar odes to the French-Canadian past through Lévesque's songs: *Rencontres* with a rousing and energetic rendition of *Front de Beu* and *Le Grand Rassemblement* with an equally passionate, if not comparably understated, version of *Je me souviens*. In both cases, Champlain (and Cartier) is held up as a heroic founder. In some ways, CQ 400's return to history is hardly discernable from the Société 400's lack of History. After all, what is more historical in these examples? Is it *Rencontres*' focus on the peaceful encounter or *Le Grand Rassemblement*'s focus on the threatened Québécois? The tensions between these versions of history became more apparent as the shows went on.

After Desbiens' performance of the Québec classic *Quand les hommes vivront d'amours* [When Men Will Live for Love], Mervil repeats a major theme of CQ 400's message, while honouring Lévesque's legacy: "He is a man with lots of passion,

animated by a great hope for justice. He is a loyal and lucid patriot, who has always fought for Québec.” Besides re-claiming a particular version of history, CQ 400’s major claim vis-à-vis the official Québec 400 events is that theirs is part of a movement towards righting past and present injustices. The following postcard, written exclusively for CQ 400’s Québec 400 counter-commemorations, was submitted to the Québec National Archives as an example of CQ 400’s political vision. André Gaulin, CQ 400 collective member, wrote the following text, featured on the postcard:

Québec *fleurdelysé*, citizen of America
You celebrate today your life in centuries
You tell us in French of your impressive historical feats
And you keep in our hearts your beautiful humanity.

We sing your proud permanence
To the north of a continent where you became a country
Give to our arms strength and perseverance
To keep home and hearth and to live full lives.

Québec today, O united homeland
We will win the taste of liberty
Your name brings us together across your expanses
The carriers of peace and equality.

The poem, along with Mervil’s comments above introduces the second trope of the CQ 400 campaign: its vision of Québec as the legitimate carriers of the Enlightenment ideal of justice. CQ 400’s claim to justice rests on the fundamental assumption that its nationalist vision of Québec sovereignty is effectively *just* because the current socio-political situation in Québec is undeniably *unjust*. Writing in *Québec 2008: 400 Ways to Lose A Celebration’s Meaning*, which he also edited, Jean-Francois Vallée illustrates this logic when he compares the political situation in Québec to that of Tibet:

Hopefully Hugo Latulipe will forgive us for our title [*What Remains of Us*], inspired by his documentary on China’s genocide of Tibet. Even though our bodies are not attacked like the Tibetans in *What Remains of Us*, the

Québécois are attacked, much like them, in their deepest souls. (Vallée & Beaumier, 2009. p.42-43)

Here again we see the focus on suffering I identified in chapter 5. In this case though, support for Québécois nation-building means struggling against Québécois subordination. Strangely, both Ségolène Royal and Vallée compare Québécois and Tibetan suffering. The most salient *effect* of this discursive interplay is that Québec is represented as having no history of colonialism itself, except as a British colony. In this way, CQ 400 and the broader nationalist movement become the bearers of justice in Québec, one that is deeply vested in *French Canadian Québécois* equality vis-à-vis English Canada. CQ 400's struggle over truth was largely organized around these two tropes: History and Justice. Before moving to the conclusion to this chapter, I want to direct your attention to one more way in which CQ 400 discusses the tropes of History and Justice in its counter-commemorative campaign. The most relevant way its project was expressed was through references to multiculturalism. Thus, the final section of my analysis returns to the topic of the first section of my analysis in chapter 3: the politics of cultural pluralism.

The Politics of Cultural Pluralism and the Québec Nationalist Movement

One of the primary ways CQ 400 and the broader Québec nationalist movement expressed their opposition to the official Québec 400 celebrations was in pointing to the multicultural nature of the Québec 400. In some ways, both CQ 400 and I share an observation that the Québec 400 represents a marked discursive shift towards a version of the discourse on cultural pluralism now prominent in Western liberal democracies (see Hage, 2000; Mackey, 2002; Brown, 2006). In this way, Québec takes its place among the family of Western nations through the Bouchard-Taylor deliberations and the Québec

400, as my discussion of the France-Québec relationship also demonstrates. The CQ 400 and I also agree quite broadly that this multicultural shift, despite its seemingly benevolent liberalism, represents a political process as *anti*-political.

Yet, we diverge in some fundamental ways as well. The following statement by Gaston Deschênes, a CQ 400 member and speaker at the Great Gathering in Québec, expresses a typical example of CQ 400's opposition to the multicultural model on display in Québec City. In discussing the Passagers/Passengers exhibit at *Espace 400*⁴, he says: "This exhibit is a model of multiculturalism, a particularly inappropriate approach in a 2008 context that essentially marks Québec's celebrations of its 400th anniversary in America" (cited in Vallée and Beaumier, 2009, p.234). We see here CQ 400's reliance on history to support its political vision. Under their historical vision, the multicultural discourse is unacceptable because it is inherently anti-historical: it is an example of historical revisionism. Like many of his colleagues though, Deschenes does not specify what *precisely* is inappropriate with the multicultural discourse. How does this version of history oppose CQ 400's political project?

Journalist Nathalie Petrowski, in a review of the *Rencontres* show I analyze in chapter 4, answers this question forthrightly and thus captures the commentary featured on the CQ 400 website and in the edited collection I have been analyzing so far:

Yves Jacques' performance was of an equally reasonable and accommodating man, a man who could have chaired the Bouchard-Taylor Commission and measured interculturalism's virtues. In fact, we were presented with an intercultural show, one where half of the performers were of non-Québécois origins, and where the other 'old stock' half

⁴ The Passagers/Passengers exhibit marked Québec City as an important historical site of migration. Its exhibit focused on representing successive waves of migration to the city, whose port has received the third highest amount of immigrants in North America since the arrival of Europeans.

displayed red and black, like we were celebrating the 400th anniversary of a Canadian mining city. (cited in Vallée and Beaumier, 2009, p.254)

In the first place, her statement echoes my own observations that the discourse on cultural pluralism on display in *Rencontres* closely resembles that which I observed in the Bouchard-Taylor Commission. Champlain, in his grand intercultural narrative, could indeed chair a second Bouchard-Taylor Commission to great effect. His liberal pedigree is unquestionable. As I explained in chapter 3, this corresponds to the rise of intercultural discourses in Western liberal democracies since the 1980s. My own concern with examining this discourse in Québec is in analyzing its racialized dimensions, linked as they are to the management of (racial) difference and the subsequent constitution of normative Québécois subjects. I have outlined my preoccupations throughout the pages of this dissertation, though most astutely when it comes to the politics of cultural pluralism in chapters 3 and 4.

In the second half of Petrowski's statement, she expresses our analytical divergences well. To her, the main problem with the multicultural display during *Rencontres* is that it features *too much* diversity. Besides disagreeing quite strongly with her assessment of people's place of birth – a cursory internet search quickly disproves her claim – her rather candid *racial* geography is precisely the type of discourse common at the time of the release of the Hérouxville Code of Conduct and the ascendance of the *Action démocratique du Québec* (ADQ) party under the leadership of Mario Dumont. We see here a search for the “old stock” Québécois, meant to denote the *French Canadian Québécois* introduced by the same Bouchard-Taylor Commission Petrowski derides. The obsession with defining and managing those who are Québécois and those who are not, is present in all forms of nationalism in Québec, whether in the scholarly liberal approach

Bouchard and Taylor take or the more conservative nationalist form CQ 400 expresses. While the modes of management change with each approach, they both fundamentally rest on clear definitional boundaries that rest on common-sense understandings of racial difference.

Not surprisingly, CQ 400 uses many of the same discursive techniques as several other Québec-based institutions throughout 2007 and 2008. In some ways, it explicitly mobilized uses of racial knowledge in their campaign, whether in the call to History and Justice or their opposition to the multicultural discourse. Yet, in reading its statements and in attending its main event, CQ 400 only rarely defined whom precisely the “old stock” founders were. Much like Deschênes’ statement above, it is very unclear where the opposition to multiculturalism lies, besides a general political strategy against the Canadian state. In this way, the appeal of CQ 400’s own discourse rests with subjects who share an understanding of Québécois’ historical suffering, and perhaps sees it as continuing on into the present through the ascendance of discourses on cultural pluralism.

Anti- and Counter-Protest: Opposition to the Québec 400

This chapter has examined two significantly different protest movements. The anarchist protest movement was organized around de-centralized decision-making processes and affinity-based groupings. It is evidence of an anti-hegemonic protest movement that seeks the abolition of state power in all its forms. The Québec sovereignty movement represented another significant protest movement in Québec. As opposed to the anarchist movement, its focus is on taking state power to support its national aspirations. This is evidence of a counter-hegemonic protest movement.

These different political strategies were apparent in Québec. The anarchist movement focused primarily on denouncing the colonial nature of the celebrations. I pointed to the limits of this strategy above, highlighting the narrow focus on moral certainties that hold out limited appeal for subjects. The strength of this approach was its introduction of indigenous points of view of the contact zone, which were otherwise barred from all official events.

Due to its desire to wrest state power away to form a Québec state, the *indépendantiste* movement focused intently on devising strategies that are readily adaptable and identifiable to Québécois national subjects. By mobilizing various symbols and narratives about the past, CQ 400 assured that its message would reach an audience with a recognizable story about the past. Despite their avowed political aims, their narratives resemble those on display throughout the Québec 400. It seems unlikely from my vantage point that their counter-commemorative discourse could appeal to Québécois subjects who do not already identify with their nationalist message. To a well-trained outsider, their discourse about the past is hardly discernable from official accounts.

Both protest movements succeeded in mobilizing subjects around their message, though in both cases their impact was minimal at best. While this chapter is not meant to be an evaluation of their effectiveness, it is nonetheless important to note that not all individuals celebrated the Québec 400. In some cases, certain individuals denounced the very logic of celebration, casting themselves off as resisting subjects. This move, largely organized against the state *in any form*, is a move away from the very idea of a Québécois subject. In a sense, in its anti-statist politics, it is decidedly anti-nationalist. Others sought to make for more accurate historical accounts that better reflected *French Canadian*

Québécois political aspirations. In this case, celebration was important, but with a vision of the legitimate *Québécois* subject.

The next chapter restates my main analytical claims, connects many of my arguments, and points to some directions for future research.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

This study has examined the various ways that the Québec 400 calls subjects into its commemorative project. Using the primary conceptual tools regarding nation, race, and memory I outline throughout my study, I raise several important questions about the changing nature of race and culture in Québec and, also, the transnational ways in which race is mobilized in the 21st century. I argue that the Québec 400 celebrations are best understood as a set of subject-making practices that define an ideal Québécois national subject. The Québec 400 draws boundaries around this normative subject by glorifying and prioritizing French(Canadian) colonial heroes, and by doing so, further subjugating and marginalizing indigenous and/or non-French Others. From this main argument, I proceeded to make three sub-arguments.

First, I argued that the liberal discourse of cultural pluralism common in Western liberal democracies since the 1980s is mobilized in Québec throughout 2007 and 2008. In particular, my analysis began with an overview of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission. I connected its deliberations with several other high-profile events and policies inaugurated during the same period in Québec, including the Hérouxville Code of Conduct, the rise of the *Action démocratique du Québec* political party, the Québec Identity Act, and the Government of Québec's new immigrant integration policy. Through this exploration, I pointed to the production of discourses on difference in Québec that consistently focus on defining difference as coming from *outside* Québec. This socio-spatial epistemology provides a normative Québécois subject position to those who share a vision of managing difference in order to uphold Québec national space and identity. This discourse on

difference is part of a process of *de-politicization*, one that is common in liberal democracies promoting *tolerance* since the 1980s.

In some ways the Québec 400 holds fast to this liberal discourse of cultural pluralism, as I demonstrate in chapter 4. The politics of commemoration are on full display in Québec City in 2008, quite similar to the dynamics of history-making during the Columbus quinqucentenary (see Trouillot, 1995) and Canada 125 celebrations (see Mackey, 2002) in 1992. In following the multicultural move fundamental to racial liberalism, the Québec 400 presents subjects with a compelling narrative of the past, featuring most prominently a historical encounter between equals. This story about equality is mobilized through *strategies of familiarity* that call normative Québécois subjects in through a semiotics of space and a *spectacularized politics* that create a festive, and thus seemingly innocent mode of subject formation.

Through this story, Champlain is re-constituted as the original intercultural-man, managing difference according to the colour-blind approach fundamental to racial liberalism. According to the main tenets of this discourse, there never has been conflict between settlers and indigenous peoples; the conflict that continues to exist is with difference itself, embodied by those deemed diverse. The major commemorative event, *Rencontres*, picks up where the Bouchard-Taylor Commission left off, presenting Québécois subjects with a historical narrative that further legitimizes the discourse on difference on display throughout 2007 and 2008.

Third, one of the most remarkable aspects of the Québec 400 was the rapprochement between France and Québec. Not only did France play a key role in several large-scale events in Québec, but Québec itself was on display in France.

Chapters 5 and 6 explore the strategies and techniques that produce a transnational French-Québec subject. One of the primary discursive techniques through which this is accomplished is in re-imagining the space of Western France as the home of the Québécois. What I call the *cartography of origins* depends on an imaginative geography that re-situates the normative Québécois subject temporally and spatially in a small region of France. From their origins in this region 400 years before, the Québécois set out for a new world, a heritage now shared by France. The spatial origins then justify the discursive articulation of tropes of family that mobilize ancestral metaphors and blood relations. The slippage into *family* speaks to the racial dimensions of the transnational French-Québec subject, one based in an *extra-national raciality* forged in European white supremacy. In an important sense, the French-Québec subject position I describe correlates with the rise of racial liberalism in Western liberal democracies since the 1980s and positions Québec in the family of Western nations through a shared understanding of the colonial-settler project in Québec and France.

Not surprisingly, this discourse manifested itself on a number of occasions during the Québec 400, speaking to its recent ascendance in the discursive realm and the overall flexibility of national discourses. Nowhere is this more apparent than in *Le Grand livre de Champlain*, where the narrative of conquest manifests itself quite transparently. Champlain is largely remembered here as the imperial subject, a narrative seemingly at odds with the intercultural-man *Rencontres* presents. Above all, the exhibit directs the audience to the *violence* between French settlers and indigenous peoples in the contact zone. As I demonstrate though, the conquest narrative appeals to the French-Québec subject precisely because it celebrates French imperial power. The sense of belonging

organized around a shared understanding of colonialism operates as another technique constituting the French-Québec subject. Added to the cartography of origins and the family tropes, the shared colonial heritage, while not evidence of racial liberalism *per se*, still stands out as a constitutive component of the French-Québec *extra-national raciality*. These two chapters represent my contribution to the emerging scholarly field of transnational studies and deserve further study.

The last chapter of my study is my attempt to explore events in 2008 that question my own analysis in the previous four chapters. In particular, given my theoretical imperative to analyze fluid and non-essential subject *positions* or *possibilities*, examining social phenomena that put my own narrative of the normative Québécois subject into question was important. In order to do so, I looked at both anti- and counter-commemorative movements. Both provided resisting subjects with a variety of avenues for expressing their opposition to the official commemorative events. While neither was particularly successful at mobilizing large segments of the population, they did, in their own ways, open up historical narratives to competing readings. In this sense, they revealed some of the tensions behind the politics of commemoration in a way that usefully points to the struggle over Truth involved in history-making. Despite the presence of protest movements in 2008, the celebrations went on with great fanfare and a record number of visitors to the city. The largely unchallenged processes of subject-making I describe throughout my study speak to the compelling nature of discourses on difference and of racial liberalism to Québécois subjects.

At the risk of falling into the practice of denunciation I critique in the previous chapter, it seems important to reflect on my own project of critical inquiry. As Roger

Simon suggests, the challenge for any attempt at “insurgent memory” is to build an alternative historical consciousness. This is not easy intellectual or political work, precisely because the grounds for such work are fraught with the history of colonialism. What would a project of disaffiliation from colonial frames of reference and white supremacist epistemologies look like in the 21st century?

So far, my critique has mostly avoided the thorny issue of Québec sovereignty. As I explained in chapter 1, I purposefully adopted an intellectual strategy to distance my analysis from the conventional Québec-Canada debate, with all the discursive baggage this conversation entails. Having conducted an analysis of the ways in which race operates through the Québec 400, I can now present some tentative suggestions for change in Québec. One of the most interesting phenomena in Québécois stories about the past is the near-obsession with the representation of the peaceful nature of the encounter between French colonizers and indigenous peoples. Any scholar of Canadian history will know that the Métis settlements and communities along the Red River during the 19th century did represent a set of very intriguing possibilities for exchange and solidarity between Europeans and indigenous peoples. That the Government of Canada’s first military expedition was to crush the Métis Rebellion at Batoche in Saskatchewan tells us something important about the threat the Métis represented to the young Canadian state.

Yet, the discursive re-signification of the normative Québécois subject as the rightful descendant of the mix between French settlers and indigenous peoples, while politically astute, is controversial at best. If the Québécois and indigenous peoples are one and the same, how do we explain the very real fact that, except in some very rare instances, both sit on quite opposite sides of the negotiating table when lands claims,

resource extraction, political sovereignty, and even indigenous resistance are at issue? And perhaps even more to the point, both sides have very recently been on opposite sides of the barricades at Oka, Barriere Lake, Kahnawake, Listuguj, and so forth, when indigenous protests have met extreme physical violence. Besides other more nuanced ways in which violence against indigenous peoples operates in Québec, the claim that French colonizers and indigenous peoples operated on an equal plane historically, while dubious at best, does not hold up in contemporary society. If the Québécois subject seeks a *rapprochement* with indigenous peoples, then such opportunities exist *on the grounds* indigenous peoples have been setting for several centuries now, not on the fantastical notions of peaceful co-existence common in Québec during the Québec 400. Without concrete political action, these Québécois attempts at claiming a shared past resemble little more than rhetoric that contributes to the continued marginalization of indigenous peoples.

Similarly, Québécois political claims to sovereignty build a very narrow understanding of normative Québécois subjects. I have demonstrated this phenomenon throughout my study. Of course, there are other ways in which the Québécois relationship with Others could be constituted. By relying on the civilizational tropes available to them as European settlers, the normative Québécois subject does little to break down the bonds of white supremacy and colonialism that are its heritage. The ways in which France and Québec articulate a close familial bond is evidence enough that Québec nationalism is based on an understanding of its place within the Western family of nations. My reluctance to support the Québec political project is based in the same ambivalent relationship I have with the history of my own ancestors, early residents of French

Canada (i.e., 1665), who for all intents and purposes, were in the first wave of permanent French settlers in the Americas. My response to my ancestors, largely peasants looking for a better life who in some cases became militia officers fighting indigenous resistance, is not to celebrate their very presence, but to question mine. Québécois moves to re-situate the colonial encounter as one between equals and to re-new the French-Québec relationship at the expense of building solidarity with ongoing anti-imperial struggles in the French-speaking world render Québécois state-based nationalism part of a broader Eurocentric movement that holds little to no appeal for resisting subjects.

As I am suggesting, there are other ways to narrate Québec's history of resistance to British colonization. Why not support the people of Haiti's two-century battle against European imperialism, from the successful slave rebellion of the early 19th century to the fight against neo-liberalism in the 21st century? Can you imagine the majority of Québécois people who claim independence from the Canadian state participating in a political movement among ex-British and/or ex-French colonies, tying their analysis of political struggle to those of Algerian, Haitian, or even Senegalese resistance movements? Small kernels of this political position were present in the early sovereignty movement, as I highlight in chapter 2, but are now mostly relegated to the past. Such a re-invigorated movement could also embrace a radical openness to immigrants and refugees that imagines and creates a Québec with fluid borders between former French (and perhaps, British) colonies.

Or still, why not also stand in solidarity with indigenous peoples opposing the Canadian state's ongoing colonialism? Can you imagine thousands upon thousands of Québécois subjects standing shoulder to shoulder with the Miq'maq of Listuguj in their

next battle with the Canadian/Québec government, fully recognizing indigenous forms of sovereignty? Unfortunately, I cannot imagine such scenarios under the current set of discursive possibilities available to subjects in Québec. Besides divesting from the state form, Québécois subjects must disaffiliate from the history of white supremacy and imperialism. This study is but a modest contribution to the genealogy of the Québécois subject; more work in this vein remains to be done by scholars keen on investigating the history of nationalism in Québec and its contemporary articulations.

In the near future, I intend to study the ways in which Québec and its colonial history continue to be remembered in France, in order to fully entertain the normative Québécois subject's affiliation with the history of white supremacy and imperialism. In particular, I plan on conducting a research project studying several new museums and exhibits in France marking French contributions to colonialism in Québec. My time in France will be divided in two regions. First, I will spend some time at the *Musée de l'Emigration française au Canada* [Museum of French Emigration to Canada] in Tourouvre, Lower-Normandy, a museum opened in 2006. The museum's exhibits represent the French migration to Québec, especially the stories of the many individuals from the region who left for the Americas in the 17th and 18th centuries. The latest exhibit, *Du Perche au nouveau monde, une aventure humaine* [From Perche to the New World, a Human Adventure] opened on February 15, 2009. All exhibits are directly related to France's history in Québec, thereby providing a wealth of documentation related to the question of the French-Québec subject.

Second, I will also conduct research in the La Rochelle region of Western France, the site of all the major Québec 400 celebrations in France in 2008. Among the key sites

are the permanent exhibit *La Rochelle – Québec* at the Tour de la Chaîne in La Rochelle. Also in the region is the permanent exhibit *Le Grand livre de voyages de Champlain* at the *Musée du patrimoine du pays royannais* [Museum of Royannais Heritage] in Royan. This exhibit features the original *Grand livre de Champlain*, providing an important comparative look into how the exhibit is presented in France. And lastly, in Brouage, south of La Rochelle, *La Maison de Champlain* was also opened in 2008 with two permanent exhibits: *Nouvelle-France, Horizons Nouveaux: Histoire d'une terre française en Amérique* [New France, New Horizons: The History of a French Land in America] and *Champlain, une aventure saintongeaise en Amérique* [Champlain, a Saintonge Adventure in America]. Along with the previous exhibits, these two mark France's contributions to the development of French civilization in the Americas. Together, the four museums and five exhibits marking Québec's place in French history all speak to the problematic I outline in this project: how the French-Québec subject is based on a shared understanding of the colonial encounter.

Another important project for future research in the field of public commemoration are the Canada 150 celebrations in 2017. I attended the inaugural national planning meeting for the events in March, 2010, at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. The Institute of Public Administration of Canada, a professional association representing senior public servants and MASS LBP, an Ontario-based consulting firm organized the event. Featuring public servants, corporate representatives, and non-profit organizations, the meeting brought together a wide range of Canadians (nearly 500) to set several priorities for the *sesquicentennial* celebrations. Among the many speakers on the opening day were Beverley MacLachlin, Canada's Chief Justice, speaking on citizenship;

Peter Aykroyd, Canada's Centennial public relations director, speaking on the success of the 1967 celebrations; Barbara Stymiest, a Royal Bank of Canada manager, speaking on the business of nation-building; and Roch Carrier, the author of the best-selling book *The Hockey Sweater*, speaking on Canada's future. Beyond the very remarkable synergy among these speakers, the most notable aspect of the first day was the participation of the Société 400. Luci Tremblay, the Société 400's public relations director, spoke glowingly about the success of the Québec 400, and especially, the sense of pride and fire it has lit under the people of Québec. As examples of this renewed sense of *togetherness*, she referred to two forms of evidence: the first was a quantitative figure claiming that 97% of residents of Québec City were satisfied with the celebrations; the second was how the success of the events has led residents to begin the process of bidding for the 2022 Winter Olympic Games (Tremblay, 2010). The planning and organization for the Canada 150 will provide many salient instances of nation-building in the years to come. If the conference in March 2010 was any indication, the events promise to be on a grand scale. Following my research in this study, comparing different practices of national commemoration seems to be a potentially rich intellectual pursuit.

To end, my hope is that this study has contributed to the work many scholars are conducting in order to understand the making of Québec. Its unique contribution is a close study of how various forms of racial exclusion work within Québec. By examining commemoration, I provide an innovative study of cultural practices that invite normative Québécois subjects into a story of dominance and subjugation. These are invitations that are compelling, relying as they do on shared memories of belonging and resistance, but they are nonetheless grounded in histories of imperialism and white supremacy, as this

study demonstrates. To resist these invitations is difficult, but necessary, if we are to build a world based on new social arrangements.

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Appendix I¹

Municipalité de Hérouxville

Préambule

Depuis toujours, des hommes et des femmes originaires de villes parfois cosmopolites, de régions ou de villages voyagent partout dans le monde. Cela leur permet de découvrir les us et coutumes de différents pays. De nos jours, que ce soit par le biais de la radio, de la télévision, du cinéma ou de l'internet, nous avons la possibilité de savoir comment vivent les humains partout sur la planète, bref, de lever le voile sur différentes cultures.

Pour toutes sortes de raisons, des gens de partout dans le monde viennent s'établir chez nous, apportant avec eux leur culture propre. Ils savent que nous sommes accueillants, tolérants et respectueux de leurs différences parce que nous croyons au multiculturalisme, car c'est une richesse pour un pays, une province, une région.

Or, ce multiculturalisme engendre de plus en plus fréquemment des chocs entre la culture d'accueil et certaines cultures immigrantes. Afin de régler ce problème, les tribunaux ont créé le concept d'accommodement raisonnable. Son but est noble : maintenir l'harmonie sociale et faciliter l'intégration des immigrants par des concessions qui, sans menacer la culture d'accueil, favorisent l'acceptation d'éléments culturels étrangers. Et cela, en vertu des chartes québécoise et canadienne des Droits et Libertés.

Malheureusement, il est aisé de constater que certains accommodements sont franchement *déraisonnables*. Par exemple, l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes est reconnue par les chartes québécoise et canadienne, d'où le cheminement qui vise à concrétiser cette valeur dans la vie quotidienne : équité salariale, présence féminine dans les métiers et professions traditionnellement masculins, etc. Alors comment cette même société peut-elle accepter qu'on recommande aux policières de ne pas interpellé un juif hassidique en confiant cette tâche à un policier? Bien qu'émanant de l'administration, une telle directive est-elle raisonnable dans une société qui reconnaît l'égalité des sexes? La tolérance doit-elle accommoder l'intolérance, le refus de s'harmoniser avec un espace social laïc?

Le Québec est une province où il fait bon vivre (paix, égalité, liberté) et nous voulons que cela continue. Les gouvernements provincial et fédéral doivent s'asseoir et trouver des solutions aux problèmes des accommodements *déraisonnables*. Si nécessaire, ils devront modifier les chartes des Droits et Libertés afin d'établir des balises qui permettront aux tribunaux ainsi qu'aux administrations d'être plus équitables face à la culture d'accueil, celle de tous les citoyens et citoyennes du Québec et du Canada qui tiennent à leur identité.

Il est sain, pour un système démocratique comme le nôtre, de dire ce qui ne va pas et de se demander ce qu'il faut faire pour favoriser l'épanouissement de tous. C'est dans

¹ I included the original French-language version of the Code in this appendix, as well as an English-language version available on the official Hérouxville website (<http://municipalite.herouxville.qc.ca>). I included the *verbatim* French-language version and a slightly abridged English-language version, since the latter included some front matter that did not resemble the French-language original. Otherwise, I re-formatted both texts in order to make them more reader-friendly.

cet esprit que s'inscrit notre démarche. En tant que terre d'accueil, nous n'avons pas à renoncer à nos valeurs. Tolérants, nous sommes prêts à faciliter l'intégration des immigrants, mais pas à n'importe quel prix.

1- Par intégration, nous entendons partage entre deux cultures, c'est-à-dire que l'immigrant adopte la culture d'accueil qu'il enrichit avec des éléments de sa culture propre.

Qui sommes-nous?

Cette question fondamentale vise à dessiner le portrait de ce que nous sommes en définissant les principales valeurs qui guident notre vie collective. Ce sont ces valeurs que nous désignons par l'expression *Normes de vie*. À qui s'adressent-elles? Aux immigrants éventuels. Mais à quoi bon puisque Hérouxville n'en compte pas, ou si peu? Pour la simple raison que, face aux problèmes vécus dans les grandes villes, les responsables des ministères de l'Immigration encouragent de plus en plus les nouveaux arrivants à s'établir en région.

Notre objectif est de clairement communiquer à ces derniers toute l'information nécessaire pour qu'ils exercent un choix éclairé en décidant d'habiter notre territoire. De cette façon, ils pourront s'intégrer plus aisément à notre vie communautaire et sociale. Nous comptons ainsi leur fournir l'assurance que les conditions de vie qui leur ont fait quitter leur pays d'origine ne sauront se reproduire ici. Nous désirons les accueillir sans discrimination, c'est-à-dire sans égard à la race, la couleur de peau, la langue parlée et écrite, l'orientation sexuelle, la religion ou toute autre croyance.

De plus, nous voulons démontrer aux citoyennes et citoyens de Hérouxville que nous sommes à leur écoute d'une part et que, d'autre part, nous tentons de leur assurer que la paix sociale qu'ils connaissent saura demeurer.

Ces *normes* résultent des lois municipales, provinciales et fédérales, toutes démocratiquement votées. Elles s'inspirent de nombreux comportements sociaux généralement admis par les personnes occupant le territoire et font ainsi partie de nos us et coutumes ainsi que de nos droits acquis. Elles font partie intégrante de notre culture.

Prises dans leur globalité, ces normes dessinent notre portrait collectif. Si celui-ci leur convient, ils n'auront qu'à venir s'établir sur notre territoire. Ils seront accueillis à bras ouverts et heureux de vivre parmi nous, car ils connaîtront la paix, la liberté et la tolérance parmi des gens qui affirment leur culture avec dignité.

Afin d'amorcer ce processus de définition, un sondage (cf. document en annexe) a été effectué auprès de la population de la MRC Mékinac à laquelle appartient Hérouxville. Ce sondage a permis d'identifier un certain nombre d'éléments qui permettent, d'entrée de jeu, de dresser un portrait partiel de la population que nous avons par la suite complété en examinant d'autres aspects de la vie collective. Nous sommes toutefois conscients que ce portrait ne saurait être total et définitif. Il offre toutefois l'avantage de donner à l'immigrant éventuel une idée exacte de ce que nous sommes afin que la tranquillité d'esprit et la paix sociale que nous vivons présentement puissent demeurer.

Normes de vie

À propos des femmes

Nous considérons que les hommes et les femmes sont égaux et ont la même valeur. Une femme peut donc, entre autres : conduire une voiture, voter librement, signer des chèques, danser, décider par elle-même, s'exprimer librement, se vêtir comme elle le désire tout en respectant les normes de décence généralement admises ainsi que les normes de sécurité publique, déambuler seule dans les endroits publics, étudier, avoir un métier ou une profession, posséder des biens et en disposer à sa guise. Tout cela fait partie de nos us et coutumes, de nos droits acquis.

Par conséquent, nous considérons comme hors norme toute action ou tout geste s'inscrivant à l'encontre de ce prononcé, tels le fait de tuer les femmes par lapidation sur la place publique ou en les faisant brûler vives, les brûler avec de l'acide, les exciser etc.

À propos des enfants

Nos enfants doivent fréquenter les écoles reconnues par le Ministère de l'éducation du Québec pour assurer leur développement social et favoriser leur intégration à la société et au marché du travail. D'autre part, toute forme de violence à l'endroit des enfants est proscrite.

À propos des festivités

Nous écoutons de la musique et nous buvons des boissons alcoolisées dans les lieux publics et privés, nous dansons et, vers la fin de l'année civile, nous décorons, individuellement ou collectivement, un sapin ou une épinette avec des boules et des lumières. C'est ce que nous appelons communément «décorations de Noël» ou «arbres de Noël», faisant ici allusion à la notion de réjouissances patrimoniales qui ne leur confèrent pas obligatoirement un caractère religieux. Ces festivités se manifestent autant dans les lieux publics (écoles, hôpitaux, édifices publics, milieux de travail) que dans les lieux privés.

À propos des soins de santé

Dans les résidences pour personnes âgées, les hommes et les femmes sont pris en charge par des hommes ou des femmes responsables. Aucune loi n'empêche une femme d'être soignée par un homme, ni l'inverse.

De même, dans nos hôpitaux et nos CLSC, les femmes médecins peuvent soigner aussi bien les femmes que les hommes; ainsi en est-il pour les hommes médecins.

Le même principe s'applique aux infirmiers et infirmières, ambulanciers et ambulancières, pompiers et pompières, policiers et policières, etc. Les responsables des soins n'ont aucune permission à demander à qui que ce soit pour effectuer une transfusion sanguine si leur jugement et leur savoir en indiquent la nécessité pour la survie ou la santé de leur patient.

Depuis plusieurs années, des cours prénataux sont dispensés aux futurs parents; les hommes et les femmes y assistent ensemble. Au moment de l'accouchement, les futurs pères assistent leurs épouses à l'accouchement.

Dans les établissements mentionnés plus haut, les patients mangent la nourriture traditionnelle qu'on leur offre. Il est courant d'y entendre de la musique, d'y voir des

revues, magazines, journaux ou toute autre forme de media (radio et télévision par exemple).

À propos de l'éducation

Dans nos écoles, des hommes et des femmes diplômés enseignent, à visage découvert, et aux garçons et aux filles, sans distinction de sexe.

Les enfants ne doivent porter aucune arme ou semblant d'arme, symbolique ou non. Ils peuvent aussi chanter et applaudir, pratiquer des sports ou jouer en groupe.

Pour des raisons d'éthique et de décence, les écoles ayant adopté un code vestimentaire, afin d'éviter toute discrimination et exclusion, se doivent de le faire respecter.

Depuis plusieurs années, en vertu de la laïcisation de nos écoles, aucun local n'est fourni pour les prières ou toute autre forme d'incantations. D'ailleurs, dans plusieurs écoles, il n'y a plus aucune prière. On y enseigne de plus en plus la science et de moins en moins la foi.

Dans les établissements scolaires, privés ou publics, à la fin de l'année civile, on peut voir un arbre ou des décorations de Noël. À cette occasion, les enfants chantent ensemble des chants dits de Noël.

Plusieurs écoles ont une cafétéria pour servir des repas constitués de nourriture traditionnelle. Mais il est possible d'y apporter sa propre nourriture ou de manger ailleurs.

À propos des sports et des loisirs

Depuis très longtemps, les garçons et les filles pratiquent les mêmes sports, souvent ensemble, y compris la baignade dans une même piscine. Pour nous, c'est normal.

Vous verrez aussi des hommes et des femmes faire du ski ensemble, sur les mêmes pistes ou encore jouer au hockey dans la même équipe, sur la même patinoire.

Dans les piscines publiques, nous avons des gardiennes et gardiens de sécurité en devoir lorsque ensemble baigneuses et baigneurs s'amuse.

À propos de la sécurité

Notre immense territoire est patrouillé par les policières et policiers de la Sûreté du Québec. Depuis toujours, un policier ou une policière peut questionner, donner un avertissement, signifier une infraction, peu importe si la personne interpellée est un homme ou une femme.

Dans les lieux publics, il est de mise de se montrer à visage découvert, en tout temps, pour faciliter notre identification.

Pour respecter les lois votées démocratiquement, nous acceptons d'avoir notre photo sur les passeports, cartes d'assurance-maladie, permis de conduire et cartes d'identification scolaire.

À propos des lieux de travail

Les employeurs sont tenus de respecter les lois gouvernementales régissant les normes du travail. Par conséquent, les jours fériés sont connus d'avance et acceptés par les employés.

Les conventions de travail sont négociées de façon démocratique et, une fois

acceptées, les deux parties les respectent. Aucune convention de travail ne commande actuellement aux employeurs de fournir à leurs employés des lieux de prière ou de réserver des moments pour prier durant les heures de travail. De plus, hommes et femmes peuvent travailler côte à côte. Lorsque requis par la loi, nous portons des casques de sécurité.

À propos des commerces

Nos commerces sont régis par une multitude de lois municipales, provinciales et fédérales, lesquelles ont été adoptées démocratiquement. Dans nos commerces, hommes et femmes travaillent ensemble. Ils peuvent s'adresser indifféremment aux clients et aux clientes.

Les produits vendus sont de toute nature. À titre d'exemple, les produits alimentaires doivent être approuvés par différentes instances gouvernementales avant d'être offerts au public. Le commerçant peut les afficher et les vendre en toute liberté. Il est donc normal de voir dans un même étal plusieurs sortes de viandes: bœuf, poulet, agneau, porc, etc.

D'autres commerces offrent à leur clientèle des lieux et de l'équipement pour faire des exercices physiques. Ces lieux sont généralement pourvus d'une vitrine pour regarder à l'extérieur tout en s'entraînant. Cette clientèle est constituée d'hommes et de femmes qui portent les vêtements appropriés.

À propos des familles

Les parents gèrent ensemble les besoins de la famille; la mère et le père ont la même autorité légale.

Les personnes formant le couple peuvent être de même race ou non, originaires du même pays ou non, de même religion ou non, de même sexe ou non.

Filles et garçons se marient librement en choisissant eux-mêmes leur conjoint ou conjointe dans un esprit d'égalité.

Autre point

Dans nos campagnes, quelques croix du chemin témoignent encore de notre passé. Elles font partie de notre histoire et de notre patrimoine et doivent être considérées comme telles.

The Standards

Our Women

We consider that men and women are of the same value. Having said this, we consider that a woman can; drive a car, vote, sign checks, dance, decide for herself, speak her peace, dress as she sees fit respecting of course the democratic decency, walk alone in public places, study, have a job, have her own belongings and anything else that a man can do. These are our standards and our way of life.

Consequently, we consider as undesirable and prohibit any action or gesture that would be contrary to the above statement such as: killing women by lapidation or burning them alive in public places, burning them with acid, excising them, infibulating them or treating them as slaves.

Our Children

Our children are required to attend public or private schools to insure their social development and to help integrate into our society. Any form of violence towards children is not accepted.

Our Festivities

We listen to music, we drink alcoholic beverages in public or private places, we dance and at the end of every year we decorate a tree with balls and tinsel and some lights. This is normally called "Christmas Decorations" or also "Christmas Tree" letting us rejoice in the notion of our national heritage and not necessarily a religious holiday. These festivities are authorized in public, schools, and institutions and also in private.

Our Health Care

In our old folks homes men and women are treated by responsible men and women. Please note that there is no law voted democratically that prohibits a woman treating a man and a man treating a woman. In our hospitals and CLSC's woman doctors can treat men and women and the same for the men doctors. This same principle applies for nurses, firemen and women, ambulance technicians. These responsible people do not have to ask permission to perform blood transfusions or any task needed to save a life. For the last few years men have been allowed into the delivery room to assist in the birth of their baby. They have been with their wives to prenatal courses to help them in this task. In the said establishments the patients are offered traditional meals. There is often music playing in the background. There are magazines or news papers available and any other form of multimedia that shows our community spirit and our way of life.

Our Education

In our schools certified men and women teach our children. The women or men teachers can teach boys or girls with no sexual discrimination. They do not have to dress any different to accomplish their tasks. In our schools the children cannot carry any weapons real or fake, symbolic or not. The children can sing, play sports or play in groups. To promote decency and to avoid all discrimination some schools have adopted a dress code that they strongly enforce. For the last few years to draw away from religious influences or orientation no "prayer room" is made available for prayer or any other form

of incantation. Moreover, in many of our schools no prayer is allowed. We teach more science and less religion. In our scholastic establishments, be private or public, generally, at the end of the year you will possibly see “Christmas Decorations” or “Christmas Trees” The children might also sing “Christmas Carols” if they want to. Many of our schools have cafeterias that serve traditional foods. Students may decide to eat elsewhere. The history of Quebec is taught in our schools. Biology lessons are also given.

Our Sports & Leisure

For the longest time boys and girls have played the same games and often play together. For example, if you came to my place we would send the kids to swim together in the pool, don't be surprised this is normal for us. You would see men and women skiing together on the same hill at the same time, don't be surprised this is normal for us. You would also see men and women playing hockey together, don't be surprised this is normal for us. In our public swimming pools we have men and women lifeguards for our security to protect us from drowning, don't be surprised this is normal for us. All the laws adopted that permit these phenomenons have followed a strict democratic process. You would appreciate this new life style and share our habits & customs.

Our Security

Our immense territory is patrolled by police men and women of the “Sûreté du Quebec”. They have always been allowed to question or to advise or lecture or to give out an infraction ticket to either a man or woman. You may not hide your face as to be able to identify you while you are in public. The only time you may mask or cover your face is during Halloween, this is a religious traditional custom at the end of October celebrating all Saints Day, where children dress up and go door to door begging for candy and treats. All of us accept to have our picture taken and printed on our driver's permit, health care card and passports. A result of democracy.

Our Work Place

The employers must respect the governmental laws regarding work conditions. These laws include holidays known and accepted in advance by all employees. These work conditions are negotiated democratically and once accepted both parties respect them. No law or work condition imposes the employer to supply a place of prayer or the time during the working day for this activity. You will also see men and women working side by side. We wear safety helmets on worksites, when required by law.

Our Business

Our businesses are governed by municipal, provincial and federal laws. In our businesses men and women work together and serve the clientele whether they be man or woman. The products sold by these businesses can be of any kind. Food products for example must be approved by different governmental agencies before being offered to the general public. You might see in the same store several different types of meat, e.g., Beef, chicken, pork and lamb. Other stores offer their clientele a place and equipment to exercise. These places have windows that their clientele can look outside while exercising and are composed of men and women dressed in clothing appropriate for exercising.

Our Families

You will appreciate that both parents manage the children needs and both have the same authority. The parents can be of the same race or not, be from the same country or not, have the same religion or not, even be of the same sex or not. If a boy or girl wants to get married, they may, they have the liberty to choose who their spouse will be. The democratic process is applied to ensure each and everyone's liberty to choose. In our families, the boys and girls eat together at the same table and eat the same food. They can eat any type of meat, vegetables or fruit. They don't eat just meat or just vegetables they can eat both at the same time and this throughout the whole year. If our children eat meat for example, they don't need to know where it came from or who killed it. Our people eat to nourish the body not the soul.

Other

You might still see crosses that tell our past. They are an integrated part of our history and patrimony and should be considered as such.

To publish all the laws and standards of Municipalité Hérouxville would be a tedious task. The standards published above are just a sample so the new arrivals to this territory can clearly identify with us before making their decision to move here. Certainly, being the elected members, we would give the new arrivals the assurance that the conditions that they have fled from in their country would not happen again here in our territory.. Consequently, the peace of mind that we live with will always be. It must be very clear that any person or persons, groups legal or not that would like to modify our habits and customs or our general way of life cannot do so without going through a referendum process following all laws put forward by our towns and municipalities. These referendums will be at the petitioner or petitioner's cost.

Signed jointly by the mayor and 6 city counselors of Hérouxville, all democratically elected.

Appendix II

EXTRAIT DU DÉCRET DU GOUVERNEMENT DU QUÉBEC

Numéro 95-2007

CONCERNANT la constitution de la Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles

ATTENDU QUE la société québécoise est attachée à des valeurs fondamentales, telles que l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, la séparation de l'Église et de l'État, la primauté de la langue française, la protection des droits et des libertés, la justice et la primauté du droit, la protection des minorités et le rejet de la discrimination et du racisme;

ATTENDU QUE la société québécoise a fait le choix d'être une société ouverte;

ATTENDU QUE les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles résultent de choix de société dans lesquels s'inscrivent notamment la Charte des droits et libertés de la personne (L.R.Q., c. C-12), la Charte de la langue française (L.R.Q., c. C-11), la politique gouvernementale pour l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes ainsi que la réglementation et les programmes en matière d'immigration et d'intégration;

ATTENDU QUE certaines pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles pourraient remettre en cause le juste équilibre entre les droits de la majorité et les droits des minorités;

ATTENDU QUE l'intégration et la pleine participation des citoyens à la vie collective constituent une priorité pour le gouvernement;

ATTENDU QU'il y a lieu de dresser un portrait des pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles et de mener une consultation auprès des personnes et des organismes qui souhaitent s'exprimer sur celles-ci;

IL EST ORDONNÉ en conséquence, sur la recommandation du premier ministre;

QUE soit constituée une commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles;

QUE cette commission soit autonome et indépendante;

QUE cette commission ait pour mandat :

– de dresser un portrait fidèle des pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles et d'effectuer une analyse des enjeux qui y sont associés en tenant compte

notamment des expériences à l'extérieur du Québec;

– de mener une vaste consultation auprès des personnes et des organismes qui souhaitent intervenir sur la question des pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles;

– de formuler des recommandations au gouvernement visant à s'assurer que les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles sont conformes aux valeurs de la société québécoise en tant que société pluraliste, démocratique et égalitaire.

Appendix III

Spécimen de la déclaration sur les valeurs communes de la société québécoise à signer par la personne immigrante

Le Québec est une société pluraliste qui accueille des personnes immigrantes venues des quatre coins du monde avec leur savoir-faire, leurs compétences, leur langue, leur culture et leur religion.

Le Québec offre des services aux personnes immigrantes pour faciliter leur intégration et leur participation pleine et entière à la société québécoise afin de relever les défis d'une société moderne tels que la prospérité économique, la pérennité du fait français et l'ouverture sur le monde. En retour, les personnes immigrantes doivent s'adapter à leur milieu de vie.

Tous les Québécois, qu'ils soient natifs ou immigrés, ont des droits et responsabilités et peuvent choisir librement leur style de vie, leurs opinions ou leur religion; cependant tous doivent respecter toutes les lois quelles que soient leurs convictions.

L'État québécois et ses institutions sont laïques : les pouvoirs politiques et religieux sont séparés.

Tous les Québécois jouissent des droits et libertés reconnus par la Charte des droits et libertés de la personne et d'autres lois et ont la responsabilité de respecter les valeurs qui y sont énoncées.

VALEURS COMMUNES

Les principales valeurs énoncées dans cette charte qui fondent la société québécoise sont les suivantes :

- Le Québec est une société libre et démocratique.
- Les pouvoirs politiques et religieux au Québec sont séparés.
- Le Québec est une société pluraliste.
- La société québécoise est basée sur la primauté du droit.
- Les femmes et les hommes ont les mêmes droits.
- L'exercice des droits et libertés de la personne doit se faire dans le respect de ceux d'autrui et du bien-être général.

La société québécoise est aussi régie par la Charte de la langue française qui fait du français la langue officielle du Québec.

En conséquence, le français est la langue normale et habituelle du travail, de l'enseignement, des communications, du commerce et des affaires.

DÉCLARATION

COMPRENANT la portée et la signification de ce qui précède

et

ACCEPTANT de respecter les valeurs communes de la société québécoise,

JE DÉCLARE vouloir vivre au Québec dans le cadre et le respect de ses valeurs communes et vouloir apprendre le français, si je ne le parle pas déjà.

Signature

Date

Appendix IV



Map of Western France. Image courtesy of Microsoft Maps.