

Liberalism, Quebec's Political Culture, and George-Étienne Cartier, 1864-1871

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## **Abstract**

The political career of George-Étienne Cartier has traditionally been described as either that of a great nation-builder or that of a self-interested opportunist. This thesis suggests that these two views can be reconciled through a study of liberalism—a philosophy that elevates the role of the individual. Throughout his career Cartier stressed the importance of each citizen’s right and responsibility to follow their self-interest and acquire property. Individual success and wealth would contribute to stronger and more prosperous communities, which in turn, would create a strong nation. When situated within the political culture of 1860s Quebec, Cartier’s reliance on liberal language and logic highlights a previously unexplored similarity between his party, the Bleus, and his chief critics and opponents, the Rouges. Despite opposing each other on matters of policy, this thesis will suggest that the two parties shared a liberal logic with matters of property, progress, cultural protection, and cultural cooperation.

## **Acknowledgements**

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### George-Étienne Cartier, Quebec and Canadian History

“On peut trouver des actes à critiquer dans ma carrière politique, tout homme est peccable; mais je puis vous dire, en toute sincérité, que j’ai toujours travaillé pour obtenir pour mes compatriotes, la plus grande somme d’avantage et de bonheur possible.”<sup>1</sup> With this regretful acknowledgment to the electorate in Montreal-East, George-Étienne Cartier, an iconic figure in Canadian history, effectively ended his political career. A key author of Confederation, Cartier was essential in securing French-Canadian support for the plan. He had aggressively encouraged settlement of the Northwest and negotiated British Columbia’s entrance into Canada. His career ended with a humiliating loss in the 1872 federal election. His political actions have frequently been highlighted in traditional political narratives. More recent studies of social, economic and intellectual histories in Canada and Quebec have come to new conclusions about the interaction of ideas and the nature of political culture. One such approach, and the focus of this study, is the analysis of politicians’ actions and beliefs in the context of the period’s liberalism. Despite the traditional understanding of Quebec society as conservative, these examinations of political culture have shown that liberal ideas about the individual, progress and property had an important influence on society and politics. Because of his role and influence, Cartier needs to be understood within this political culture, and this thesis will explore Cartier as an important example of mid-nineteenth-century Quebec’s emerging liberal politics. The intention throughout is to compare Cartier’s stances and language with those of his colleagues and critics, and to situate his politics within a larger context.

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<sup>1</sup> George-Étienne Cartier, *Discours de Sir George Cartier*, Joseph Tassé, ed., (Montreal, 1893) 758.

Cartier was the most powerful politician in Quebec<sup>2</sup> throughout the 1850s and 1860s. He cemented his position by carefully balancing the interests of the Seminary of Montreal, the Conservative party and the Grand Trunk Railway. Cartier reconciled his commercial and class aspirations with his cultural allegiances by arguing that through economic expansion French Canadians could become more politically and economically influential, and therefore more culturally secure. By 1870, however, the institutional base of Cartier's power was fragmented and challenged. Quebec's Ultramontane movement was feuding with the Seminary of Montreal for religious hegemony. Divided religious interests fractured the Conservative party. Similarly, the Grand Trunk Railway's dominance was challenged by the upstart Pacific Railway. With Bright's disease attacking his legs and kidneys, Cartier did not have the stamina or the energy for the 1872 campaign. He attended only two public meetings and sat through them both. On August 28, 1872 Cartier lost in his riding to the young liberal Louis-Amable Jetté.<sup>4</sup> Despite subsequently being handed a seat in Manitoba, he put an end to his political career. He traveled to London, where he would remain until his death on 20 May 1873.

After his death, Cartier was heavily implicated in the campaign corruption of the Pacific Scandal. John A. Macdonald convincingly suggested that railway magnate Hugh Allan had manipulated Cartier, who was sick and desperate to win the election.<sup>5</sup> In a 1965 speech, historian Mason Wade suggested that the "importance [of Cartier's career]

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<sup>2</sup> To avoid confusion, except when quoting from a source, I will refer to Quebec and Ontario throughout, by their modern names. The Constitutional Act of 1791 named this province Lower Canada. The Act of Union, in 1841, joined Upper and Lower Canada into the United Province of Canada; Ontario and Quebec were then referred to as Canada West and East, respectively. The Confederation Act of 1867 once again split the United Province of Canada, and Ontario and Quebec took their modern names. At times these terms were used interchangeably. Similarly, the term 'Canadien français' was capitalised and hyphenated inconsistently; I attempt to keep the form of the quote.

<sup>4</sup> Brian Young, *George-Étienne Cartier: Montreal Bourgeois* (Montreal, 1981), 119-125.

<sup>5</sup> Alastair Sweeny, *George-Étienne Cartier* (Toronto, 1976), 324.

to the evolution of Canada is still underestimated because of the shady circumstances of its close.”<sup>6</sup> Since then, there have two biographies published, which reach two different conclusions.<sup>7</sup>

### **Biographies and Quebec’s Conservatism**

Political biographies can offer windows into a period’s political culture. The biographies of Cartier isolate his political accomplishments from his interests; recent works informed by liberal philosophy refute this distinction. The first modern biography was historian Alastair Sweeny’s *George-Étienne Cartier*, published in 1976. Relying largely on archival collections and Cartier’s speeches, Sweeny argues, “George-Étienne Cartier is the foremost nationalist ever to appear on our political stage. If anything, he can be described best as a Canadian expansionist, a forceful, dynamic proponent of the creation and survival of a workable political nationality.”<sup>8</sup> Sweeny, who was motivated by the spectacle of Canada’s centenary, painted a decidedly favourable portrait of Cartier and wrote that “[h]opefully this is a partisan biography.”<sup>9</sup> His goal in writing was to inspire the reader with Cartier’s passion and love for Canada as a northern power. He succeeded in showing the important role Cartier played in Canada’s development into a

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<sup>6</sup> Mason Wade, “An Introduction to French-Canadian Intellectual History,” in Laurier C. Lapierre, ed., *French Canadian Thinkers of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Montreal, 1966), 16.

<sup>7</sup> In his bibliographic note, Brian Young gives a good list of the several other biographies of Cartier. Most of these are laudatory. John Boyd’s *Sir George-Étienne Cartier, Bart., His Life and Times: A Political History of Canada from 1814 until 1873* (Toronto, 1914), Alfred de Celles, *Cartier et son temps* (Montreal, 1913), L.O. David, *Biographies et portraits* (Montreal, 1876) and Benjamin Sulte, “Sir George Cartier,” in Gérard Malchelosse, ed., *Mélanges historiques*, 21 vols (Montreal, 1918-1934), are all part of this tradition. More balanced, and forming basis for the modern interpretation are Jean-Charles Bonenfant’s entry in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* and Henry Best’s 1969 PhD thesis, “George-Étienne Cartier.” Young, *Montreal Bourgeois*, 171.

<sup>8</sup> Sweeny, 12. Regarding the importance of Cartier’s speeches, Sweeny claimed that “few Canadians have seen better into the future—reading them [his speeches] is like reading prophecy” (10).

<sup>9</sup> Sweeny, 13. Sweeny is currently the executive director of the educational foundation the Civics Channel, dedicated to promoting and teaching politics and citizenship. He has also worked as a researcher for W.L. Morton, Peter C. Newman, Pierre Berton, Richard Gwyn and Jeffrey Simpson.

transcontinental nation. The problem with this approach is that Cartier's nationalism is exalted, but his actions are little analysed and his personal and economic motivations are rarely discussed.

Five years later, Brian Young, in *George-Étienne Cartier: Montreal Bourgeois*, took a different approach to Cartier's life. Young, a historian of business in nineteenth-century Montreal, argues that partisan biographers and historians have been too generous in their examination of Cartier's interests. Revising these interpretations, Young connects Cartier's politics to his business interests and presents him as a colonial entrepreneur rather than a nationalist. Young draws from similar sources as Sweeny, but bases his conclusions on the "assumption that the pocketbook strongly determines actions."<sup>10</sup>

Another text that deals with Cartier's personal interests is *La petite loterie*, by Stéphane Kelly. This text examines the political evolution of Étienne Parent, Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine and George-Étienne Cartier, all of whom were republican rebels in 1837 and later became the leading French Canadians supporters of Confederation. Kelly, a sociologist, argues that the British Crown succeeded in acquiring their loyalty because the French Canadian leaders succumbed "à l'attrait de la petite loterie [patronage]."<sup>11</sup> This policy would reward federal loyalty by centering politics on personal interest. Kelly shares Young's view that his personal economic interests mainly determined Cartier's politics.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Young, *Montreal Bourgeois*, xii, xiii.

<sup>11</sup> Stéphane Kelly, *La petite loterie : comment la Couronne a obtenu la collaboration de Canada français après 1837* (Montreal, 1997), 25. He draws from Hannah Arendt's theory of the pariah and the parvenu. Parent, LaFontaine and Cartier were parvenus, Kelly argues, as they personally improved their positions by abandoning the associations and prejudices associated with their heritages.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 201.

The differences in the biographies reflect the tensions between traditional and socio-economic approaches to political history; one focuses solely on Cartier as a nation builder, while the other minimized his political role and explores his class interests. Young and Kelly are much more critical of Cartier than Sweeny.<sup>13</sup> This critical interpretation is a valuable contrast and counterpoint, to Sweeny's admiration. Rather than assuming some idealistic, generous and romanticized motivation, Young and Kelly succeed in examining Cartier's personal interests in his political career. In doing so, Young and Kelly, however, minimize the possibility that there were ideas or influences on Cartier's actions other than his commercial ambitions. In a review of Young's biography, historian of Quebec finance Ronald Rudin suggests that to understand Cartier, his personal ambitions and interests need to be reconciled with his nationalist policies.<sup>14</sup> The present study follows this suggestion, and proposes that a possible way to bridge these two tendencies is situate Cartier within the broader political culture. This does not mean to imply that Cartier's nationalism was not motivated by his interests in land owning and railway expansion, but it rather proposes that pursuing individual financial motivations demonstrated an adherence to a common liberal discourse on government and social interactions. The language and ideas used by Cartier and many of his colleagues indicated a belief that, in a prosperous country, all different groups could thrive and coexist. This advocacy of cooperation based on economic self-interest connected their federal policies to their defense of French Canadian traditions. Furthermore, his critics

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<sup>13</sup> In *The Writing of Canadian History* Carl Berger discusses social history's effect on political biography. According to Berger, social history emphasized ignored groups, class and common experiences. Proponents of this type of history criticized top-down biographies as "propagating a false consciousness about historical change." Young and Kelly's studies on Cartier used social history to come to new, critical interpretations about political figures. Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing Since 1900*, Second Edition (Toronto, 1993), 271.

<sup>14</sup> Ronald Rudin, "Review of Brian Young's *George-Étienne Cartier: Montreal Bourgeois*," *Queen's Quarterly* (Summer 1983), 520.

similarly suggested that the individual pursuit of property and economic development could serve French Canadian nationalist goals. Politicians and journalists of liberal and conservative allegiances alike shared a way of speaking, acting and governing that balanced the needs and ambitions of the individual and the community.

The tensions and contradictions between the personal and the collective have been the subject of several important Canadian studies. A.A. den Otter's *The Philosophy of Railways*, for one, argues that Canadian nationalism in general was largely motivated by the tenets of liberalism. According to den Otter, the "rhetoric of cooperation and social progress, mutual understanding, economic advancement, faith in steam technology and evangelical civilizing" was the common ground for political and economic discussions leading to Confederation.<sup>15</sup> Confederation and Canadian expansion allowed the fruition of the belief in progress, civilization and economic development; a transcontinental railway was a symbol of man's domination over nature and space. Den Otter's study focuses largely on English Canada. In his last chapter he states that "few French Canadians were exposed to or excited by the philosophy or railways and its western settlement and nation-building components."<sup>16</sup>

Here he echoes the arguments of A.I. Silver, who claims that French Quebecers generally saw the Northwest as savage and distant. Silver also claims that French Quebecers initially had an isolationist attitude. This isolationist stance caused them to ignore the Métis, stressing that the Métis were half-savage, rather than focusing on their

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<sup>15</sup> A.A. den Otter, *The Philosophy of Railways: The Transcontinental Railway Idea in British North America* (Toronto, 1997), 158.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 225.

common language and religion.<sup>17</sup> According to Silver, the attitudes of both French Canadian farmers and elites were incompatible with expansion. The agricultural class was resistant to change, and intellectuals thought that English Canadians had an unhealthy obsession with growth and expansion. French Canadian attitudes, therefore, were not well suited to expansion and development, as they were inherently conservative and inward looking. Silver attributes this conservatism to a “social demoralization” and lack of confidence in Quebec culture. Dating from the Constitutional Act of 1791, he claims, Quebec considered itself conquered and had to collaborate politically with its conquerors.<sup>18</sup> This demoralization developed into conservatism and isolationism.

Silver and den Otter represent the long-standing belief in Quebec’s inherent conservatism and anti-modernism. An early exploration of anti-modern tendencies in Quebec was Marcel Trudel’s two volumes on *L’Influence de Voltaire au Canada*. The second volume focused on 1850-1900. Trudel cited newspaper editorials and pamphlets to explore how members of L’Institut canadien and other liberals used Voltaire’s writing.<sup>19</sup> Throughout the 1850s and 1860s, l’Institut was engaged in a political and ideological battle with Catholic authorities over the scope of ecclesiastical authority. The liberal institute’s anti-clericalism developed from their commitment to Voltaire’s ideas; Voltaire’s most important influence in Canada, according to Trudel, was combative

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<sup>17</sup> A.I. Silver, *The French Canadian Idea, 1864-1900* (Toronto, 1982), 67. Later in the century, Silver argues, people from Quebec did look outward and want to protect the rights of French Catholics across the country. French Canadian interests in the rest of Canada were brought to Quebec’s attention only through the mistreatment of the Métis in the Northwest, the dismantling of Catholic schools in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Manitoba. The citizens of Quebec also resented the contrast between the highly influential role of the English minority in Quebec and the lack of rights given to French Canadians in the English territories and provinces of Canada (49, 51, 61, 220).

<sup>18</sup> A.I. Silver, “French Canada and the Prairie Frontier, 1870-90,” *Canadian Historical Review* (March 1969), 36.

<sup>19</sup> L’Institut canadien was an organization made up of politicians, journalists, lawyers, notaries, businessmen and other professionals. Dedicated to public education, the members opened libraries, gave public lectures and published their essays in newspapers. It will be discussed throughout this work, and with a particular attention in chapter four.

anticlericalism.<sup>20</sup> He suggested that liberalism existed in Quebec history, but its influence was ultimately negative. The rise of anticlericalism and polemics was destructive to Quebec's culture. He claimed that

[I]e voltairianisme nous a fait bien du mal; c'est lui bien plus que le Régime anglais, qui a mis en péril l'Église canadienne; c'est lui qui fait perdre de vue à nos premiers journaux leurs buts essentiels: la défense de nos droits; il amène les chefs des Patriotes à prendre position contre l'Eglise; il fausse *l'Histoire de Garneau*; il fait crouler l'Institut canadien qui groupait les plus beaux talents de notre société et marquait un brillant réveil scientifique et littéraire.<sup>21</sup>

The battle between ultramontane Catholics and liberals moved Quebec elites away from what should have been their main goal, cultural and social development. Because of this lack of social and cultural development, Trudel claimed, Quebec society did not change after 1840.<sup>22</sup>

In 1966 Fernand Ouellet explored another dimension to Quebec's conservative character. While Trudel focused on Quebec's lack of progress in literature and philosophy, Ouellet explored the province's economic inferiority. According to Ouellet, French Canadians were not suited for commercial success. Like Trudel, he suggested that there was a lack of progress in Quebec. Where Trudel blamed the liberals from engaging in counter-productive disputes, Ouellet accused the nineteenth-century francophone elites of having kept the "mentalités d'Ancien Régime."<sup>23</sup> Quebec's conservatism meant that the population and economy failed to industrialize and modernize. Trudel focused on cultural and political history and Ouellet on economic history, but both suggest that Quebec did not develop and modernize like the rest of Canada.

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<sup>20</sup> Marcel Trudel, *L'influence de Voltaire au Canada*, vol. II (Montreal, 1945), 163-165.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 256.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>23</sup> Fernand Ouellet, *Histoire économique et sociale du Québec* (Montreal, 1966), 595.

## Liberalism in Quebec History

The anti-modern and conservative nature of French Canada initially promoted by Trudel and Ouellet, and later accepted by English-Canadian historians, was heavily criticized by a group of historians who were educated during Quebec's Quiet Revolution. Influenced by new methods, such as quantitative theory and Marxism, these revisionists saw the province as more complicated than it had traditionally been presented.<sup>24</sup> Historians began writing about entrepreneurs, business, and ideas in French Canadian history. Brian Young's *George-Étienne Cartier: Montreal Bourgeois* is an example of this trend. He situated Cartier as a typical member of the Montreal capitalist, landowning class. Common interests among this class were property expansion and railway development.

Young retains a focus on capitalism in his study of Cartier's alma mater, the Seminary of Montreal, from 1816-1876. Interested in the transition from feudalism to capitalism, he uses the Seminary as an example of a French Canadian institution adapting to the emerging capitalist culture. The Seminary was one of Montreal's key seigneurial landowners. With the abolition of the seigneurial system in 1854, the Seminary's practices changed. Their traditional income gave way to subdivision sales, office rents, and stocks and bonds.<sup>25</sup> Young argues that reforms to the land system were more than just a sign of "anglicanization"; they were the result of the larger transformation in Lower Canada from feudalism to industrial capitalism.<sup>26</sup> The Seminary of Montreal was a

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<sup>24</sup> Ronald Rudin, *Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec* (Toronto, 1997), 172.

<sup>25</sup> Brian Young, *In Its Corporate Capacity: The Seminary of Montreal as a Business Institution, 1816-1876* (Montreal, 1986), 37. It is worth noting that the Sulpician order was Gallican and not Ultramontane. This degree of freedom from Papal authority gave them "a political suppleness that allowed it to navigate political changes and upheavals" (xii).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

conservative, Catholic organization. The fact that it was able to adapt to the changing urban landscape and embrace capitalism indicates that the Quebec clergy was not monolithically opposed to modernization. This text is useful for this thesis because Cartier was initially a student of and later lawyer for the Seminary. Young also highlights and explores the type of flexible capitalism with which Cartier was aligned.

The theme of adaptation to capitalism also informs the whole of Brian Young and John A. Dickinson's survey of Quebec history. They describe nineteenth-century Montreal as marked by urbanization and the movement to industrial capitalism. This move to capitalism helped overcome ethnic tensions between French Canadian and English Canadian elites. There was political consensus on financial, regulatory and development projects for roads, bridges, canals and railways.<sup>27</sup>

Social relationships are similarly connected to economic concerns in Paul-André Linteau's *The Promoter's City*. Linteau traces the role of industrial capitalists in the development of Maisonneuve, a Montreal suburb at the turn of the twentieth century. Maisonneuve's town policy was to attract companies, which in turn would develop land and attract workers. Linteau concludes, "it is becoming increasingly recognized that the economic growth of the 1896-1914 period took off from an industrial base established earlier."<sup>28</sup> Like Young and Dickinson, Linteau also rejects the notion that French Canadian attitudes were not compatible with business. Published at the same time as *The Promoter's City*, Ronald Rudin's *Banking en Français* reaches similar conclusions. He examines nine francophone banks in Quebec, from 1835-1925. English banks were

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<sup>27</sup> John A. Dickinson and Brian Young, *A Short History of Quebec: A Socio-Economic Perspective* (Toronto, 1988) 107, 159.

<sup>28</sup> Paul-André Linteau, *The Promoter's City: Building the Industrial Town of Maisonneuve, 1883-1918*, translated by Robert Chodos (Toronto, 1985), 177.

reluctant to set up in small towns, creating opportunities for French Canadian commercial expansion. French entrepreneurs took advantage of these openings and set up banks. Rudin and Linteau both highlight that the distinction between English and French Canada was not openness to business but the scale of operations.

Linteau and Rudin's books are useful to understand the economic context in which Cartier acted. Rudin notes that the French banks were sensitive to changes in Quebec's economy. As the banks developed, Rudin argues, they represented the evolution of the French Canadian bourgeoisie. The earliest bank directors were men who considered themselves merchants and who were involved in few other enterprises. By the end of the nineteenth century, the bank directors, comparably to Cartier and the Sulpicians in the mid-nineteenth century, adapted to the changing economy and had diverse industrial and financial interests.<sup>29</sup> The bankers described by Rudin stand in contrast to the stereotype of French Canadians not possessing the appropriate attitudes for business.

Rudin also addresses the problem of Quebec's economic inferiority. He states, "commercial activity took place on various levels. While the English may have dominated the most lucrative operations, there were nevertheless francophone merchants involved, as were many English merchants, in internal trade."<sup>30</sup> Accepting that French Canadians were traditionally not as prosperous as English Canadians, he does not attribute the cause of this inferiority to their attitudes or character.

John McCallum's *Unequal Beginnings* also criticizes the perception of Quebec as economically backward. An economist, McCallum uses a "modified staple thesis" to

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<sup>29</sup> Ronald Rudin, *Banking en Français: The French Banks of Quebec, 1835-1925* (Toronto, 1985), 143,

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

compare agriculture in Quebec and Ontario until 1870.<sup>31</sup> Ontario, he suggests, developed according to a classic agricultural staple model. The importance of wheat exports increased and laid the foundation for Ontario's economic prosperity after Confederation.<sup>32</sup> Quebec, on the other hand, had no lucrative staple. Similarly to the Northeastern United States, Quebec's climate and soil were not suitable for agriculture. The reasons for Quebec's economic inferiority, then, were economic and continental factors.<sup>33</sup> McCallum blames neither British domination nor the French Canadian character for Quebec's economic problems. In light of the French Canadian economic ambitions explored by McCallum, Rudin and Linteau, Cartier's commercialism should be revisited. Rather than solely serving Montreal's dominant Anglophone community, his focus on economics may indicate an alliance with the large French Canadian business class.

Fernande Roy's *Progrès, harmonie, liberté* also builds on the suggestion that Quebec was not as Catholic, conservative, or economically backwards as it had been portrayed. She explores French business councils and the business press in turn-of-the-century Montreal. Unlike Linteau and Rudin, who use a socio-economic approach, Roy states that "c'est strictement l'idéologie qu'il s'agit de faire ressortir."<sup>34</sup> Despite her different approach, however, she reaches similar conclusions as Linteau and Rudin. Ideas

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<sup>31</sup> John McCallum, *Unequal Beginnings: Agriculture and Economic Development in Quebec and Ontario until 1870* (Toronto, 1981), 115. He expressly modified Harold Innis' staple thesis to fit it to Quebec. McCallum was interested in how Quebec, a region with no staple product, could distribute links between regions.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 36. The idea that attitudes towards business in Quebec were similar to those in the rest of Canada is one of the main themes in Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher and Jean-Claude Robert, *Quebec A History: 1867-1929*, translated by Robert Chodos (Toronto: 1983).

<sup>34</sup> Fernande Roy, *Progrès, harmonie, liberté: le libéralisme des milieux d'affaires francophones à Montréal au tournant du siècle* (Montreal, 1988), 9. Roy draws on a wide variety of European liberal thinkers and Canadian historians and political philosophers to construct her definition of liberalism. One of her significant influences, which I also use, is Andre Vachet's survey of liberal thought.

of progress and liberty, she argues, were common amongst the discourse of French Canadian businessmen.<sup>35</sup> Roy's book explores a later period than this thesis. She suggests, however, a link between end-of-the-century liberal businessmen and pre-Confederation politicians and thinkers. This link was the belief in economic development and progress. She also calls for political histories to better study the economic ideas amongst Confederation politicians, such as Cartier and the members of the Conservative party.<sup>36</sup> Roy adds to the tradition of historical reconsideration, by combining an interest in business history with an examination of ideas. This combination provokes new questions and interpretations about Quebec's history.

Roy promotes a fusion of social-economic history with a study of ideas. One significant study of political ideas in Quebec is Jean-Paul Bernard's 1971 text, *Les Rouges*, which argues that the importance of the liberal Rouge party should be reestablished in Quebec's history. Traditional historians, like Abbé Groulx, had downplayed their importance because the Rouges were anticlerical and liberal. Trudel had argued that their polemics against the clergy hurt Quebec's intellectual development. The Rouges were also overlooked in traditional political histories, because they did not fit the story of political compromise and pragmatism.

Bernard examines the Rouge opposition to Confederation and their interaction with Church officials. While Trudel suggests that Quebec's liberals stifled the growth of literature and philosophy in the province, Bernard presents a more positive and constructive understanding of their political contribution. After the failure of the Rebellions of 1837-38, Bernard maintains, it was the Rouges who kept ideas of liberty

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

and democracy present in Quebec. They applied these ideas to their two main goals: opposing Confederation and their limiting religion to the private sphere. By citing liberal newspapers and pamphlets published during the period, Bernard succeeds in showing that there were ideological differences in the province. He argues, however, that the Rouges were “victimes du triomphe du conservatisme et du cléricisme.”<sup>37</sup> With the passing of Confederation and the continual rise of clerical authority, the Rouges had failed in their two main aspirations. The party ceased to exist in its traditional form as liberals like Wilfrid Laurier lessened their opposition to the Church.

*Les Rouges* is an interesting revisionist text because it treats Quebec history as complicated, dynamic and fragmented. Bernard, however, accepts traditional assumptions about the failure of liberalism. He concludes that by the end of the nineteenth century Quebec had assumed its shape as ideologically conservative and Catholic. He also notes that by the mid-nineteenth century, the English bourgeoisie dominated French Canadian society, while the French bourgeoisie was rural and strictly tied to the clergy.<sup>38</sup> Bernard repeats Trudel’s assertion that the French Canadian character did not change after the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>39</sup> Throughout the upcoming chapters, Rouge politics are compared and contrasted with those of Cartier and the Bleus. Rather than focusing of the competition between Rouge and Bleu, though, I am interested in the parallels in their stances and in their language.

The dominance of the conservative-clerical alliance in the nineteenth century is questioned by Fernande Roy’s textbook *Histoire des idéologies au Québec aux XIXe et*

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<sup>37</sup> Jean-Paul Bernard, *Les Rouges: libéralisme, nationalisme et anticléricalisme au milieu du XIXe siècle* (Montreal, 1971), 5.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 320-321.

<sup>39</sup> Trudel, 13; Bernard, 320.

*XXe siècles*. She states, “les positions ne sont ni univoques ni statiques.”<sup>40</sup> Rather than competing and struggling, she suggests that nineteenth-century ideas were complementary and adaptable. In this light, she suggests that conservative politicians and the Catholic clergy worked together in the 1850s and 1860s despite their differences. Similarly, she suggests that the supporters of Confederation and its critics shared ideas over private property and individual enterprise. Their differences were over policies not ideas, and developed as they adapted and reacted to social pressures. This is quite different than Bernard’s view that the catholic-conservative stream was ideologically dominant Quebec’s history. The existence of shared ideas between Confederation’s supporters and opponents raises new questions to ask of Cartier and his critics. Rather than accepting a dichotomy between the liberal Rouges and the conservative Bleus, their language and ideas can be understood as interactive and intersecting.

Roy suggests that liberal ideas existed in Quebec since the late eighteenth century. This was a significant challenge to the traditional stream of thought. Another work that examines liberalism in nineteenth-century Quebec is Claude Couture’s *Paddling with the Current*. Couture compares the thinking of Pierre Elliott Trudeau with that of Étienne Parent. He explores Trudeau’s assertions, in his writings and speeches from the 1950s to the early 1990s, that despite industrialization and urbanization, French Canadian society was stuck with an outdated ideology. Trudeau, according to Couture, accepted the English Canadian stereotype of French Canada—that it lagged behind the rest of the country because it was dominated by nationalist and conservative elites.<sup>41</sup> Couture agrees

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<sup>40</sup> Fernande Roy, *Histoire des idéologies au Québec aux XIXe et XXe siècles* (Montreal, 1993), 24.

<sup>41</sup> Claude Couture, *Paddling with the Current: Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Étienne Parent, Liberalism and Nationalism in Canada*, translated by Vivien Bosley (Edmonton, 1998), xv. In this suggestion, Couture

that Quebec was a conservative society. He, like many revisionist Quebec historians, disagrees with Trudeau, however, over Quebec's monolithic character. Like Roy, he argues that while the radical liberalism discussed by Trudel and Bernard was marginalized, classic liberal ideas of property and enterprise developed along side the Church.<sup>42</sup>

Couture's contribution to this study is his insistence on the importance of classical liberalism in Quebec history. He uses Étienne Parent as an example. Between 1846 and 1847, Parent gave three important lectures to the Institut canadien. Each of these lectures discussed industry as a means of preserving the French Canadian heritage. Parent combined the ideas of liberalism and nationalism.<sup>43</sup> The understanding of individual enterprise mixing with collective protection fits with Fernande Roy's description of dynamic and flexible ideologies among the business class.

Couture and Roy attempt to reconcile the apparent contradictions between liberalism and nationalism. The former elevates the position of the individual; the latter subordinates all to the nation. Michel Ducharme's article "Penser le Canada" explores the combination of liberalism and nationalism following the Rebellions of 1837-38. Like Roy and Couture, he accepts that the two seemingly oppositional streams can coexist. He goes further and suggests that rather than simply coexisting, these principles were "hierarchized" differently in different discourses.<sup>44</sup> Drawing from Anthony Smith's definition of nationalism, Ducharme understands that nationalism can have ethnic and

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draws from Edward Said's *Orientalism*, which claims that the essence of colonialism lies in the representation of the colonized society by the colonizer.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>44</sup> Michel Ducharme, "Penser le Canada : La mise en place des assises intellectuelles de l'État canadien moderne (1838-1840)" *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* (Winter 2001), 369. Ducharme's hierarchization of principles provides an interesting comparison to Kelly's argument that the republican leaders collaborated with the Crown out of opportunism.

civic aspects; civic nationalism is political and founded on an attachment to a country and its institutions, whereas ethnic nationalism is cultural and centered on the preservation of ethnic traditions.<sup>45</sup> Ducharme, who refers to political correspondence and newspapers discussing the Rebellions of 1837-38 and reaction to the Durham report, suggests that the rebels of 1837-38 initially demonstrated civic nationalism. After the failure of the Rebellions, and under the ideological guidance of Étienne Parent, they shifted to ethnic nationalism. This ethnic nationalism prioritized the protection of language and religion over political sovereignty. The main tool to preserve language and tradition was individual success and prosperity. The prioritization of individual interests over political sovereignty will be explored throughout this thesis. As we will see, Cartier was dedicated to the preservation French Canadian culture, but argued that the cultural protection was an individual responsibility. His hierarchization of the individual over the collective also caused him to argue that the community should act as if it was an individual.<sup>46</sup>

Works written by Ducharme, Couture and Roy explore the influence of liberal ideas in Quebec history. Yvan Lamonde combined their type of intellectual history with a study of what he calls the “circuit complet des idées, de leur production, de leur diffusion, de leur réception.”<sup>47</sup> The resulting survey is the *Histoire sociale des idées aux Québec*. Lamonde finds liberal ideas in literature, speeches and pamphlets, and ties them to the rise of democracy. Lamonde’s social history of ideas deals with the privileged elite. His work is distinctive, however, because he grounded the elite’s ideas within the social

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 366.

<sup>46</sup> This, admittedly, is a contested statement. Recent debates amongst historians, as well as debates between nineteenth-century philosophers, question the place of the nationalism in liberal thought. Throughout this thesis, however, I suggest that Cartier’s rhetoric reflected a way of organizing society that understood individual interests as the driving force for social and political action.

<sup>47</sup> Yvan Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec* (Montreal, 2000), 9.

context. According to him, “les débats d’idées sont rythmés par la dynamique culturelle, celle des medias, des échanges, des institutions.”<sup>48</sup> Lamonde’s survey is useful for this thesis because he suggests that ideas amongst the elites are sensitive to social and cultural changes. It is also noteworthy because he addresses the development of French Canadian liberalism in a colonial and monarchical context. Lamonde asks questions about the production and expansion of liberalism in Quebec history. He tends, however, to focus on political liberalism and reach similar conclusions as Bernard. Throughout the 1850s and 1860s, he argues, liberals were increasingly marginalized by the alliance between the clergy and the conservatives.<sup>49</sup> Rather than focus on competition and marginalization, I intend to explore the similarities and congruencies between the political rhetoric of Quebec’s conservative and liberal parties.

In the conclusion to his historiographical essay *Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec*, Ronald Rudin cautions historians not to take the “whiggish view of a discipline that was constantly getting closer to the ‘truth’ about the past.”<sup>50</sup> This caution is worth noting with regards to studying George-Étienne Cartier. Both his biographies have made valuable contributions to Canadian and Quebec history. Sweeny’s biography tells the iconic story of a father of Confederation. Cartier, in this work, is a man of clear vision, decisive action, and skilful compromise. Brian Young’s Cartier is stripped of his national-hero trappings. Young’s Cartier was fixed to his class, parish and property interests. Despite their value, these views are too dichotomous in their interpretations. There will not be a clear understanding of Cartier’s role and support for Confederation without studying these two aspects of his life simultaneously.

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 492.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 318, 356.

<sup>50</sup> Rudin, *Making History in Twentieth Century Quebec*, 219.

The difference between Sweeny and Young reflects the historian's traditional treatment of nationalism and liberalism as oppositional. Many of the works explored so far describe the two main ideologies in Quebec as being clerico-nationalist and liberals. The former stressed Quebec's Catholic, French, and rural character. The latter ideology was made up of businessmen who were interested in industrialization and economic development. Cartier can be understood in both these ways. He played a key role in the alliance of the Catholic Church and the Conservative party. He was also a railway investor and Montreal businessman. The radical liberals, explored by Bernard and Lamonde, were critical of the influence of religion in politics. They, however, shared with Cartier and the Conservative party an interest in individual interests and commercial development.

### **Approaches and Definitions**

A possible bridge between the two interpretations of Cartier can be found in recent studies of liberalism and governmentality in Canada. Young is openly hostile to exploring Cartier's ideas, as Cartier claimed, "reading was of little use in the marketplace or the political arena."<sup>51</sup> Young mainly centres Cartier's actions on political pragmatism and opportunism. Recent scholarship in Canadian political history has begun to explore the conceptual underpinnings found in the pragmatism and opportunism of Confederation's supporters. Drawing from Bernard Bailyn, who defined the politics of the American Revolution-era as a competition between republicanism and liberalism, Peter J. Smith and Janet Ajzenstat have offered a new model for the history of Canadian political ideas. Ajzenstat challenges the views of Gad Horowitz and George Grant—that

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<sup>51</sup>Young, *Montreal Bourgeois*, 41.

Canada was founded on conservative ideas—and suggests that mid-nineteenth-century Canadian politics were not divided among conservative/liberal lines, but rather among liberal democratic/radical democratic divisions. Similarly, Peter J. Smith goes back to the writings of the Scottish Enlightenment, specifically to David Hume, to see how commerce and virtue were reconciled in Canadian political thought.<sup>52</sup> In light of these new understandings, the specific ideas and the specific language Cartier used to garner support for his political and commercial ambitions can be explored as an important actor and example of the period's political debates.

A useful approach to explore Cartier's conception of government and commerce can be found in governmentality theory. The term governmentality, first used by Michel Foucault in a February 1978 lecture at the Collège de France, refers to the exploring the “conduct of conduct,” and “seeks to distinguish particular mentalities, arts and regimes of government.”<sup>53</sup> Foucault suggested that the “history of ideas must no longer be written as a mere checklist of innovations, it must be a descriptive analysis of the different transformations effectuated.... The discursive subjects form part of a discursive field and must be placed within its functions.”<sup>54</sup> He went on to explain that, “discourses are limited practical spaces, which have boundaries, rules of formation and conditions of existence.”<sup>55</sup> I will try to identify these spaces, their boundaries, their rules of formation, and their conditions of existence. These rules, boundaries and conditions affected the

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<sup>52</sup> Janet Ajzenstat, “The Conservatism of the Canadian Founders,” in William Gardiner, ed., *After Liberalism: Essays in Search of Canadian Freedom, Virtue and Order* (Toronto: Stoddard, 1998), 23; Peter J. Smith, “The Ideological Origins of Canadian Confederation,” in Janet Ajzenstat and Peter J. Smith, eds., *Canada's Origins: Liberal, Tory or Republican?* (Ottawa, 1995), 51, 69. Smith criticizes P.B. Waite's *Life and Times of Confederation* as a text that explores ambition without considering ideas.

<sup>53</sup> Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (London, 1999), 2. Foucault uses the term interchangeably with “art of government” and “rationalities of government.”

<sup>54</sup> Michel Foucault, “*The Politics and Study of Discourse*,” in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Toronto, 1991), 58.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

debates on Confederation, railway development, and Canadian expansion, all of which are repeatedly examined in this thesis. The objects of interest throughout are not the developments themselves, but the logic and language used to describe and argue them.

Although influenced by Foucault and the writing on governmentality—especially the definition of government as the ‘conduct of conduct’—this thesis does not take a traditional governmentality approach. Rather than exploring the tools of government, such as census taking and cartography, it focuses on how Cartier’s actions and language developed from—and mixed with—the social, political and economic circumstances.<sup>56</sup> An exploration of the interaction of socio-economic circumstances and political ideas is similar to Lamonde’s survey. This thesis differs from Lamonde, however, because it is concerned with the accord between different groups rather than differences. This focus is influenced by Mitchell Dean’s elaboration of Foucault’s work. Dean suggests that within a mentality there can be differences in beliefs and opinions, but there is “an underlying sameness that is taken for granted.”<sup>57</sup> The sameness between Quebec’s conservatives and liberals—Cartier, his colleagues, and his critics—is the focus of this study. My argument throughout is that the leading Quebec journalists, activists and politicians of the 1860s shared liberal ideas and language. The common reference points between different political groups reflect one of the period’s important mentalities.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Bruce Curtis’ *The Politics of Population: State Formation, Statistics, and the Census of Canada, 1840-1874* (Toronto, 2001) is a Canadian example of how bureaucrats used and applied new information to affect conduct. In an American context, Matthew G. Hannah’s *Governmentality and the Mastery of Territory in Nineteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, 2000) explores how techniques of geography and land settlement were used to govern society. These are interesting and valuable approaches, but because of the focus on language and ideas, they are not used here.

<sup>57</sup> Dean, 16.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* Dean describes a mentality as “as a condition of forms of thought and is thus not readily amenable to be comprehended from within its own perspective. The idea of mentalities of government, then, emphasizes the way in which the thought involved in practices of government is collective and relatively taken for granted.” He goes on to explain that mentalities are not “necessarily identified to specific classes

Dean states, “to analyse mentalities of government is to analyse thought made practical and technical.”<sup>59</sup> Cartier did not write elaborate programmes, and he had a well-known distaste for political theories. His understanding of government can be understood, however, through his actions and the language he used to describe these actions—that is to say, the practical outcomes of his thought. However pragmatic this thought and behaviour may have been, Cartier and other politicians, journalists, and campaigners who attempted to influence and control the population’s behaviour acted within the period’s dominant mentality. I will argue that, in campaign and parliamentary speeches as well as newspaper reports and editorials, the period’s language was marked by liberal ideas of progress and independence. By exploring the ideas amongst Cartier and Quebec’s Confederation-era politicians this thesis attempts to bring the new approach of social and intellectual history to the realm of politics. It explores a well-researched period and topic, but emphasizes ideas and language, which have been downplayed in Cartier’s politics and in histories of Confederation.

Governmental theory deals generally with liberal societies. Liberalism can be a precarious concept; Fernande Roy suggests the term suffers “à la fois de surcharge et de pauvreté sémantique.”<sup>60</sup> It is a term with very broad definitions and implications. In 1869, Montreal’s liberal paper *Le Pays* highlighted this problem of surcharge. It claimed

les vaines disputes sont toujours impuissantes et stériles; les déclarations exagérées sur les principes de 89, la libre-pensée, la démocratie, etc., prouvent peu dans une thèse particulière; les casseroles du libéralisme, tout le fracas de

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or groups, although it might be also be possible to examine the relation between the different mentalities of specific ruling or subordinate groups” (16).

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>60</sup> Roy, *Progrès, harmonie et liberté*, 45. Philip Resnick, in *The Masks of Proteus*, makes a similar point about the different manifestations of nationalism in Canadian political discourse. Resnick draws on a variety of theoretical and philosophical streams, including Mill, Montesquieu and German political theorists, to explore the different manners in which politicians used and relied on nationalist ideas. Philip Resnick, *The Masks of Proteus: Canadian Reflections on the State* (Montreal, 1990).

cette batterie de cuisine, accuse plutôt la faiblesse d'arguments que la force des convictions.<sup>61</sup>

The newspaper stressed the need to return the discussion to “son véritable terrain.”<sup>62</sup>

Drawing from a variety of texts, liberalism is defined throughout this work as a way of thinking that puts a primacy on the individual and its rights, especially the right to hold property. As we will see, in mid-nineteenth-century thought the pursuit of property is crucial to demonstrating the qualities, such as rational behaviour and self-sufficiency, which were central to be considered an individual.

To ground this work in nineteenth-century liberal thought, I draw from the writing of J.S. Mill, primarily in *On Liberty* (1859), *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861), and *Utilitarianism* (1863). Mill's thought developed from Jeremy Bentham's prescription of the role of liberal government. Bentham, who was Mill's mentor, suggested that “it has been shown that the happiness of individuals, of whom a community is composed, that is their pleasure and security, is the end and the sole end which the legislator ought to have in view.”<sup>63</sup> The government's role is to let people individually pursue their happiness. Although Mill was one of many liberal philosophers, his views are most appropriate to understand the debates in Quebec of the 1860s. Throughout this thesis we will see that the tensions in Mill's thought regarding nationalism, equality, and minority rights were similar to the concerns of the politicians and journalists explored in this work.

A useful guide to navigate the tensions and contradictions of liberalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is André Vachet's *L'idéologie libérale*, a survey of

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<sup>61</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, September 3 1869.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty: Including Mill's 'Essay on Bentham' and selections from the writings of Jeremy Bentham and John Austin*, Mary Warnock, ed., (Oxford, (2003), 37.

different ideas on liberalism in history, society and philosophy. In the introduction to Vachet's text, Henri Lefebvre claims that Vachet highlighted a common element in liberal thought: "la propriété privée (de quoi? De la terre, bien entendu, mais surtout de l'argent, du capital, des moyens de productions.)"<sup>64</sup> Although Lefebvre lists several types of property, the main focus in mid-nineteenth-century Quebec and this thesis is land. Vachet ties the pursuit of property to a variety of elements and themes in liberal thought, such as independence, nature, and reason. These themes are found in Mill, and will be explored throughout this work.

Important aspects of Canadian liberalism and politics are addressed in Ian McKay's influential article the "Liberal Order Framework." McKay proposes a new model for Canadian history where the Dominion's population internalizes liberal assumptions. Drawing from Fernande Roy, he defines liberalism by three core elements: liberty, equality and property. Vachet similarly highlights these elements in liberal thought, but adds security as a fourth. Property is the crucial theme in both their definitions. To the nineteenth-century liberal, McKay suggests, independence was a goal, not a given; only a self-possessed man could be considered independent. Property was the necessary component to be considered self-possessed and independent.<sup>65</sup> Vachet similarly states that economic opportunity is "le terrain par excellence de l'activité humaine et de l'affirmation individuelle."<sup>66</sup>

McKay's focus on property, independence and equality of opportunity will be used in this thesis. He describes the liberal belief in equality as based on the potential for

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<sup>64</sup> André Vachet, *L'idéologie libérale : l'individu et sa propriété*, Second Edition (Ottawa, 1988), xiv.

<sup>65</sup> Ian McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review* (December 2000), 624, 625.

<sup>66</sup> Vachet, 20.

equality between men, where primacy was placed on the possession of property, especially real estate. As we will see in chapter four, many nineteenth-century actors, such as Mill and Cartier, were tolerant of a multitude of social inequalities, but hoped that people could and would be offered the opportunities and skills to improve their own circumstances. Cartier's commercial attitude made property an important part of his politics. He tied ownership to civic responsibility, stability and morality.<sup>67</sup> Mill's definition and McKay's focus on property are certainly not the only definition applicable to 1860s Quebec, but they are reflective of how the elites governed themselves and others.<sup>68</sup>

A problem with fitting McKay's framework to Quebec history is that he suggests that nationalist behaviour was a compromise of the liberal order. He uses the example of the language provisions in the British North American Act as a far-reaching compromise of the liberal order to achieve its broader goals.<sup>69</sup> This assertion treats liberalism and cultural protection as in a necessary opposition, as we will see, beyond the simple process of 'compromise.' As Ducharme argues, rather than statically opposing each other, these two principles can coexist and interact. Quebec's leading politicians in the 1860s had a concern for culture and religion. These cultural concerns, they suggested, could be met through individual initiatives to accept modernity, progress and prosperity.

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<sup>67</sup> Young, *Montreal Bourgeois*, 19.

<sup>68</sup> Jean-Marie Fecteau, in *La Liberté du pauvre : crime et pauvreté au XIXe siècle québécois* (Montréal, 2004) is critical of this definition of liberalism, which he deems elitist. He urges historians to refrain from reducing liberalism to the "triptyque liberté-égalité-propriété qui constituera le credo stable des hommes d'affaires" (10). He defines liberalism as constructing social links, which include a variety of ideologies. Crime and poverty are important, he suggests, because they represent breaks from and challenges to the liberal conception of society (9). He does note, however, that nineteenth-century elites "ont réussi à réinterpréter cette pulsion fondamentale [le libéralisme] en la réduisant à sa portion congrue" (10). With this in mind, although limited, the liberty-equality-property themes still seems useful in explaining how Cartier and his contemporaries combined their own interests with those of the populations they governed.

<sup>69</sup> McKay, 640.

The interplay between conservatism and liberalism was addressed by Mill in *On Liberty*. Mill's essay "asserts one principle, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their members is self-protection."<sup>70</sup> Government action is acceptable in a liberal society when it develops the conditions for people to pursue their rights. Fernande Roy also addresses the differences between the streams of thought. She argues that understanding conservatism and liberalism, in the nineteenth century, as opposites is a false dichotomy. Rather than viewing one as the antonym of the other, liberalism should be understood as "un discours du pouvoir, veillant surtout à défendre les droits et les libertés des privilégiés du nouvel ordre établi."<sup>71</sup> Foucault allows space for contradictions and inconsistencies by describing liberalism as a possible way in which government works and is used to affect the population's behaviour. In the introduction to *The Foucault Effect*, Gordon Campbell writes "the formation and development of liberalism as a governmental method can only be properly grasped when one recognizes that its constituent elements are far less mutually cohesive than ideology-critics have been apt to suppose."<sup>72</sup> Given the difficulty of definition, and the tensions that existed within nineteenth-century liberalism, this is a useful technique. This thesis will explore the fact that, although not monolithic in their thought, the Rouges and Bleus of the 1860s did seem to share ideas on property, development and progress. They also shared a way of thinking, a way of acting, and a way of controlling behaviour; in short, the Rouges and

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<sup>70</sup> Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty*, 94.

<sup>71</sup> Roy, *Progrès, harmonie et liberté*, 56.

<sup>72</sup> Colin Gordon, "Governmental Rationality: An Introduction," in *The Foucault Effect*, 18. By 'ideology-critics' Gordon specifically refers to neo-Marxists, who see "a kind of pre-established liberal harmony between Lockean political jurisprudence (civil society, the social contract and the sanctity of individual property rights) and the political economists' conception of a commercial society."

Bleus shared a ‘mentality.’ The governmental aspect of this thesis is the exploration of these shared principles between Cartier his party and his critics. Ideas are not always absolute, nor are they always clearly defined. In nineteenth-century Quebec, liberal ideas—the individual pursuit of property, progress, and reason—were tied to conservative ends.

### **Sources and Outline**

Studying Cartier can be complicated as there is no complete collection of his writing. He died overseas and, after his death, his colleagues John A. MacDonald and Hector Langevin carefully sorted his papers. Because of his involvement in the Pacific Scandal they were they were interested in closely vetting the collection. Allegedly, Langevin took all the political papers, and they have never been seen again. A note from Cartier’s notary explains that private papers and those with no use were burnt.<sup>73</sup> The collection in the Library and Archives Canada consists primarily of letters requesting patronage positions and consolations for his 1872 election loss. There are some letters in this fonds regarding industrial development. The papers in the McCord Museum’s archives contain more personal papers and correspondence with his colleagues and acquaintances. Also useful in this collection are various pamphlets and newspaper clippings regarding Cartier, his career and various organizations that he was interested in, including l’Institut canadien and l’Institut canadien français.<sup>74</sup> Joseph Tassé’s collection of Cartier’s speeches, the Confederation Debates of 1865, and Canada’s Parliamentary debates from 1867 to 1872, are the documents from which I have drawn most of Cartier’s

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<sup>73</sup> Young, *Montreal Bourgeois*, 171.

<sup>74</sup> Library and Archives Canada, MG27-ID4, George-Étienne Cartier Fonds; McCord Museum Archives, P197A, George-Étienne Cartier Fonds.

quotes. These are the same sources used by Young and Sweeny. My focus is different from theirs, as I focus less on what he did, and more on how he described these actions. Since this work is focused on Quebec's political culture, my reading of Parliamentary debates focuses largely on the interaction of Cartier and other representatives of Quebec. This focus omits numerous exchanges between Cartier and Ontario's liberals.

Newspapers are valuable in constructing an understanding of Cartier and Quebec's political environment. Two papers are used throughout this work: *La Minerve* and *Le Pays*. These papers were both Montreal-based and written in French. *La Minerve* faithfully expressed Cartier's position throughout his career. It also had ties to French Canadian cultural organizations, like the Saint-Jean Baptiste Society. *Le Pays*, on the other hand, consistently took an oppositional stance to Cartier. One of its founders was A.A. Dorion, an important member of l'Institut canadien and the Rouge party. In addition to highlighting the period's political discussions, newspapers also published speeches, reports and advertisements for the various intellectual and colonization societies. To survey the ideas in these papers, the first week of every month, from 1864-1871, was read. A number of reports and speeches microfiched by the Canadian Institute for Historical Micro-reproduction were also useful in analyzing the ideas of Cartier's contemporaries.

This thesis consists of three main chapters. The first deals with Canadian nationalism, and the various metaphors and comparisons used to support and explain the development of the new Dominion of Canada. It is primarily in this chapter that Cartier's role in Confederation is explored. The chapter's focus is not on the narrative of Canadian development, but an analysis of the debates, language and strategies that made those

developments possible in Quebec. The next chapter focuses on the pursuit of property and the mastery of territory. This chapter takes McKay's focus on the individual accumulation of property and explores how it affected the political discourse. The final chapter explores the language of progress and reason, and how it affected ideas of education, self-government, and moderation. This later chapter deals, more than the others, with reconciling the Bleu's desire for authority and stability with ideas of liberty and equality.

In each of the main chapters the theme of French-Canadian nationalism is present. In his response to Ronald Rudin's historiographical essay, Jean-Marie Fecteau suggests that most themes in Quebec history "have been stimulated by the centrality of the national question."<sup>75</sup> Even though Cartier's politics, and consequently this study, focused largely on federal events, the conservation of French Canadian traditions braced his policies. A common, although still underdeveloped, theme in nineteenth-century Quebec is how progressive and liberal ideas were used for conservative and traditional ends. The following chapters will explore the interplay of these forces regarding nationalism, property and progress.

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<sup>75</sup> Jean-Marie Fecteau, "Between Scientific Enquiry and The Search For A Nation: Quebec Historiography As Seen by Ronald Rudin," John Reid, trans, *Canadian Historical Review* (December 1999), 664.

## Chapter 2

### The New Nation, The Liberal Nation: Ambition, Competition and Metaphor

*“If we remain alone we can aspire to no position, we can rein to no ambition as a people.”* Hector Langevin, February 21, 1865<sup>76</sup>

*“The old form of nationality in French Canada had restrained men’s passions and subjected individuals to the common good; the new is subject to the individual, one of means by which he achieves personal aims.”*

Janet Ajzenstat, “Liberalism and Nationality”<sup>77</sup>

In a famous speech during the Confederation debates, Cartier suggested that once the British North American provinces were united they would form a “new nationality.”

In this new nation, he claimed,

we would form a political nationality with which neither the national origin, nor the religion of any individual would interfere. It was lamented by some that we had this diversity of races, and hopes were expressed that this distinctive feature would cease. This idea of unity of races was utopian—it was impossible. Distinctions of this kind would always exist. Dissimilarity, in fact, appeared to be the order of the physical world, as well as of the political world. But with regard to the objection based on this fact, to the effect that a great nation could not be formed because Lower Canada was in great part French and Catholic, and Upper Canada was British and Protestant, and the Lower Provinces were mixed, it was futile and worthless in the extreme.<sup>78</sup>

In Cartier’s description of a political nation, the provinces within the nation would remain culturally distinct. This continued the policies of cooperation suggested by Étienne Parent and Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine after the failure of the Rebellion of 1837. On the national level politicians of both nationalities would be able to focus on commerce and

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<sup>76</sup> Canada, Provincial Parliament, *Parliamentary Debates on the Subject of the Confederation of the British North American Provinces*, 8<sup>th</sup> Provincial Parliament, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, 1865. (Quebec, 1951), 365.

<sup>77</sup> Janet Ajzenstat, “Liberalism and Nationality,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (September 1981), 592-593.

<sup>78</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, 60.

their mutual interests. The separate provinces, however, would remain culturally independent, and be able to conserve their traditions, especially language and religion.<sup>79</sup>

Encouraging culturally autonomous provinces within a political federation was reflective of two of Cartier's main political roles. He was a key member of the Canadian government and he was the province of Quebec's most influential representative. A type of nationalism is linked to each role: pan-Canadian to the former, and French Canadian to the latter. Anthony D. Smith, in *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, discusses this question of the dual allegiances of ethnic minorities in nations. According to Smith, many members of ethnic groups organize their lives and careers around the practices and expectations of the larger nation, while remaining deeply rooted and attached to, what he calls, their ethnicity.<sup>80</sup> Similarly, in a Canadian context, P.A. Buckner suggests that Canadians simultaneously have not only dual but multiple identities.<sup>81</sup>

According to Smith, this dual allegiance is especially apparent when people are aware of both their heritage and their environment. Cartier is an interesting example of this. His education, which was based on the classical studies of pre-Revolutionary

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<sup>79</sup> Michel Ducharme, "Penser le Canada : La mise en place des assises intellectuelles de l'Etat canadien moderne (1838-1840)" *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* no.3 (2003), 385; David Chennels, *The Politics of Nationalism: Cultural Conflict since 1760* (Toronto, 2001), 133; Jennifer Smith, "Canadian Confederation and the Influence of American Federalism," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (1988), 454.

<sup>80</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford, 1986), 151.

<sup>81</sup> P.A. Buckner, "Limited Identities Revisited: Regionalism and Nationalism in Canadian History," *Acadiensis* 30,1 (2000), 12. Buckner does not refer to Smith, but he is critical of the notions of ethnic and civic nationalism. He suggests that, since national identity is an intellectual construct, it cannot be reduced to a single formula. He is interested in the ways that different interpretations of identity and nation interact to form an imagined community (13-14). The concept of limited, or multiple identities is also found in Ramsay Cook, "Identities Are Not Like Hats," *Canadian Historical Review* (June 2000), 260-292. Cook suggests that identities are relational and need to be placed in their political and ideological context (264-265). Both Cook and Buckner both refer to J.M.S. Careless, who first coined the term in "Limited Identities in Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* (March, 1969), 1-10.

France, stressed ecclesiastical authority.<sup>82</sup> His first employer, Édouard-Étienne Rodier, emphasized a dedication to French Canadian traditions. In letters to Cartier, Rodier wrote that “c’est de la jeunesse canadienne que dépend le salut de la patrie” and “n’ayez jamais d’autre ambition que de vous élever un monument dans le cœur de tous vos compatriotes.”<sup>83</sup> Cartier’s business interests, on the other hand, were largely based in English Canada. To develop these interests and build support he needed to appeal to French Canadians and the Catholic Church. In order to synthesize these aspects, Cartier approached nationalism by arguing that economic progress would protect French Canadian culture.

Cartier’s French Canadian nationalism is rarely analyzed; it is frequently downplayed and neglected, or it is tied to compromise and accommodation.<sup>84</sup> His pan-Canadian nationalism tends to be glorified and mythologized or reduced to the self-interest of an opportunistic railway developer.<sup>85</sup> Rather than dismiss Cartier’s politics as based on self-interest, I suggest that interests and his national politics should be studied together. Cartier himself saw the pursuit of self-interest as a social and political virtue.

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<sup>82</sup> McCord Museum Archives (hereafter McCord), P197A (George-Étienne Cartier Fonds), vol. 2, 2a, *Notes on the life of Cartier/School Record/ Appointment as Captain*.

<sup>83</sup> Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), MG27-ID4 (George-Étienne Cartier Fonds) vol.1, 1, 4, E-E Rodier to Cartier, 1831.

<sup>84</sup> The first view was demonstrated by Abbé Groulx, who suggested that Cartier and his colleagues did not do enough to defend French Canadian rights because of a “naïve lack of foresight” and a misguided trust in English Canada. Abbé Groulx, *Variations on a Nationalist Theme*, Susan Mann, ed., (Montreal, 1973), 145. Stéphane Kelly is more damning in his treatment of Cartier. He suggests that Cartier improved his status by abandoning the prejudices associated with French Canadian traditions. Kelly, *La Petite loterie : comment la Couronne a obtenu la collaboration du Canada français après 1837* (Montreal, 1997), 171. Reflecting the second view, which stresses how French Canadians accommodated themselves to the English Canadian hierarchy, W.L. Morton claimed Cartier “realized French Canadian rights could be preserved in a new context.” W.L. Morton, *The Critical Years: The Union of British North America, 1857-1863* (Toronto, 1964), 65,

<sup>85</sup> Not surprisingly, Sweeny’s biography lionized this nationalism. He writes for instance: “The political and personal friendship of the ‘Siamese Twins’ [Cartier and Macdonald] is the most significant relationship in Canadian history, and a microcosm of our greater nationality.” Alastair Sweeny, *George-Etienne Cartier: A Biography* (Toronto, 1976), 104. Young, who is more interested in questions of power, class and interest, refers to Cartier’s political activities as merely “the extension of bourgeois power.” Brian Young, *George-Etienne Cartier: Montreal Bourgeois* (Montreal, 1981), 134.

This acknowledgement of self-interest reflects Cartier's understanding of social ordering and governance, based on the individual's freedom to make rational, economic decisions. In the national and provincial practices he advocated extreme self-interest; individual pursuits were beneficial for both French Canadian culture and pan-Canadian ambitions.

The importance of the relationship between class interests and national policies has been well documented. In the introduction to *On Liberty* Mill wrote, "Whenever there is an ascendant class, a large portion of the morality of the country emanates from its class interests, and its feelings of class superiority."<sup>86</sup> Although not the only source of influence, the desires and ambitions of the dominant elites are directly related to social relations and government actions. More recently, Marxist scholarship has highlighted this link. One such example is sociologists Gilles Bourque and Nicole Laurin-Frenette, who suggest that nationalist ideologies must necessarily be class ideologies, since nationalism "only makes sense through the class that become its propagandist."<sup>87</sup> Cartier's defense of French Canadian traditions and his support for an expansionist and transcontinental Canadian nation were both related to his class and profession. We will see that through the promotion of both types of nationalism, Cartier was advocating liberal beliefs in accumulation and independence. Moreover, similar ideas and language were used as much by his political allies as by his opponents.

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<sup>86</sup> John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty, Including Mill's Essay on Bentham and selections from the Writings of Jeremy Bentham and John Austin*, Mary Warnock, ed., (London, 2003 (1859-1863)), 92. This notion of class, individual interests and government fits with the work of governmentality theorists. Colin Gordon, in his summary of Foucault's lectures on governmentality, writes that an important element for the police state—a state that uses its administration and knowledge to conduct the population's behaviour—is "to develop those elements of individual lives in such a way that their development also fosters the strength of the state." The elites, who make up the political apparatus and the other institutions of governance, attempt to guide the population so that each citizen freely makes choices that serve the common good. Colin Gordon, "Governmental Rationality: an Introduction" in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago, 1991), 10.

<sup>87</sup> Gille Bourque and Nicole Laurin-Frenette, "Nationalist Ideologies in Quebec, 1760-1970," in Gary Teeple, ed., *Capitalism and the National Question in Canada* (Toronto, 1972), 193.

This chapter aims to place Cartier's Canadian and French-Canadian nationalisms within the context of his liberal discourse. Rather than explore the constitutional, administrative or legal aspects Confederation history, as most histories of Canadian nationalism do, it will look at the language and ideas used to describe and promote the 'new nationality.'<sup>88</sup> In Foucauldian terms, it is more important to study the strategies and tactics used to promote the goals of the state than the institutions of the state as structures.<sup>89</sup> Confederation's supporters and its critics used similar signposts to discuss Canadian and French Canadian goals, and similar strategies to garner support. Cartier's combination of personal ambition, national aspirations and cultural conservation can better be understood when his insistence on the pursuit of self-interest is examined.

### **National Competition and Interests**

There is a rich body of literature on nationalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One of the works that offers a useful way to understand Cartier's approach to nationalism is Peter Alter's *Nationalism*, which explores the political roots of nationalism in eighteenth-century Europe. Drawing from Anthony Smith and Benedict Anderson, Alter links the development of nations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to modern technologies of communication and transportations. Nations were developed to achieve economic and political ends. He describes several different types of nationalism

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<sup>88</sup> Philip Resnick's *The Mask of Proteus: Canadian Reflection on the State* (Montreal, 1990) should be noted as a text that effectively explores the influence and effect of ideas in Canadian political history. Eva Mackey's *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (New York, 1999) also focuses on discourses of national identity, with regards to ideas of race and cultural difference. This chapter is closer to Resnick's collection of essays than Mackey's text, which is ultimately a study of race, specifically of whiteness. A significant difference between my focus and Resnick's is that he examines representations of nationalism, whereas this chapter is more concerned with how nationalist politics reflected liberal ideas.

<sup>89</sup> Barry Hindess, *Discourses on Power: From Hobbes to Foucault* (Oxford, 1996), 108; Gordon, "Governmental Rationality," 31.

and the factors behind their development. The type most suited to the Canadian example is what he labels “Risorgimento nationalism,” which is based on the Italian example. This type of nationalism can be unifying, if a national state is created by joining politically separate parts, or secessionist, if its aim is to separate from a multinational empire.<sup>90</sup> Alter’s unifying nationalism meets Mill’s suggestion that a federation is advantageous for “protection against the aggression of powerful states.”<sup>91</sup> Since entering a nation is for self-protection, Mill describes it as acting out of self-interest and keeping in accordance with liberal ideas. He further links nationalism and liberalism by suggesting that, for the successful creation of a nation-state, there needs to be some degree of sympathy and common interest among the different parts. Again, the different groups would associate based on their self-interests.

One of the necessary conditions set out by Alter for the development of a national identity is a “social awakening.” Better communication, transportation and news transmission, together with higher literacy, are preconditions for people to think nationally.<sup>92</sup> In nineteenth-century Canada, the development of railways helped people share news across greater distances. Throughout the 1840s and 1850s there was a rise in the number of newspapers and their circulations. These papers began featured reports

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<sup>90</sup> Peter Alter, *Nationalism* (New York: Edward Arnold, 1989), 19. A second type of nationalism is “reform nationalism,” which is the assertion of traditional values against outside economic influence and foreign political and cultural domination. The third type of nationalism Alter suggests is “integral nationalism,” which defines “one nation as absolute.” This is the aggressive, militant and expansionist nationalism. All three of these classifications involve groups wanting to maintain or expand their sovereignty (23, 26).

<sup>91</sup> Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, Curtis C. Shields, ed. (New York, 1958 (1861)), 237,

<sup>92</sup> Alter, 55. That national identities develop, in part, from technological advances echoes the arguments made by Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York, 1982). Although Alter does not refer to Foucault, his conditions for the formation of a national conscious are similar to the necessary conditions for a discursive field.

across British North America.<sup>93</sup> In an 1871 article, *La Minerve* highlighted the link between technology and national strength, in the context of British Columbia joining Confederation:

[n]aguère le Canada n'était qu'une simple lisière de terre à peine baignée par les eaux d'un golfe. Bientôt nous allons étendre d'un océan à l'autre, riches en ports de mer sur l'Atlantique comme sur le Pacifique, voisin tout à la fois de l'Europe et de l'Asie, à la porte de la Chine aussi bien qu'aux avants-postes du commerce anglais. Dans quelques années la civilisation canadienne mettra Vancouver à 6 jours de marche d'Halifax, sillonnera tout un continent et il nous semble que le jour où nous pourrons montrer la Nouvelle-Écosse reliée à la Colombie par une immense voie ferrée de 3025 milles, le Canada aura mérité d'être compté parmi les nations.<sup>94</sup>

To nineteenth-century politicians and promoters, technology was central to connecting the separate provinces and overcoming distance. As Lucius Huntington, a member from Quebec, stated: "A railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific, over British territory, would do a great deal to consolidate the Dominion," and help Canada increase its trade and take its place on the international stage.<sup>95</sup> Even more ambitiously, Cartier declared, "the Dominion of Canada was now as well known as the United States, and it was known that we intended to be great."<sup>96</sup>

Another necessary condition, besides the 'social awakening,' for the favourable development of a national consciousness, according to Alter, is the perception of an economic, cultural or political threat, either real or constructed.<sup>97</sup> It was not enough to have the infrastructure for a transcontinental nation. For those who were not won over by

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<sup>93</sup> Ron Verzuh, *Radical Rag: The Pioneer Labour Press in Canada* (Ottawa, 1998), 10.

<sup>94</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2 April 3, 1871. In *Citizens and Nation*, Gerald Friesen applies Anderson's theory of nationalism to Canada, and explores the development of a Canadian identity as a response to developments in technology and communication. Gerald Friesen, *Citizens and Nation: An Essay on History, Communication and Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

<sup>95</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1<sup>st</sup> Parliament, 3rd Session, 1870, (Ottawa, 1979), 394-395.

<sup>96</sup> Cartier, 482.

<sup>97</sup> Alter, 12.

the promise of trade, the Fathers of Confederation needed a national threat. The threat that supporters used to support Confederation was American ambition and the fear of annexation. Frank Underhill, in one of his Massey lectures, highlighted the importance of this national threat, suggesting that on Parliament Hill “there should be erected a monument to this American ogre who had so often performed the function of saving us from drift and indecision.”<sup>98</sup> A booklet sent to Cartier in the early 1860s, colourfully demonstrated contemporary perceptions of America. “Canada’s neighbor is a dangerous lunatic, possessed by a blind rage,” the author claimed. He proceeded to accuse America of “committing follies such as never before were committed on this continent; drunken with excitement and armed to the teeth.”<sup>99</sup> Cartier often used this fear of American expansion to garner support for the Confederation plan. In a 1963 lecture to the Royal Society of Canada, historian Jean-Charles Bonenfant suggested that, at the start of 1864, French Canadian opinions were divided over Confederation. By the end of the year, however, most were supportive of it because of Cartier’s hard work and his skillful manipulation of the threat of American ambitions.<sup>100</sup>

Other conservative politicians also used the American ambitions to promote Confederation. In the Confederation debates’ opening speech, E.P. Taché, a life-long moderate and then Prime Minister of the province of Canada, highlighted the fear of American ambitions and influence. He presented Confederation as a defense against American expansion and ideas, stating,

if the opportunity which now presented itself were allowed to pass unimproved, whether we would or would not, we would be forced into the American Union by

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<sup>98</sup> Frank H. Underhill, *The Image of Confederation*, (Toronto, 1964), 4.

<sup>99</sup> McCord (Cartier fonds), vol. 6, *Canada and Invasion* (Montreal, 1865), p. 1.

<sup>100</sup> Jean-Charles Bonenfant, “La Confédération telle qu’on la voyait en 1864 chez les Canadiens français,” *Transcripts of the Royal Society of Canada* (June 1964): 23, 24.

violence, and if not by violence, would be placed upon an inclined plane which would carry us there insensibly.<sup>101</sup>

Thomas d'Arcy McGee, one of Montreal's conservative representatives in parliament, stated

[t]he policy of our neighbours to the south of us has always been aggressive. There has always been a desire amongst them for the acquisition of new territory, and the inexorable law of democratic existence seems to be its absorption.... The acquisition of Canada was the first ambition of the American Confederacy, and never ceased to be so, when her troops were a handful and her navy scarce a squadron.<sup>102</sup>

The British North American provinces were perceived as goals for American expansion.

If the provinces remained independent from one another, they would be small and isolated. As Cartier argued, "la séparation implique nécessairement une certaine somme de faiblesse."<sup>103</sup> Once Canada united through Confederation, however, there "would be found amongst its population a number of sturdy arms, with the aid of Great Britain, to repel foreign aggression."<sup>104</sup>

Cartier's aggressive actions in having British Columbia enter Confederation also represented such a reaction to the threat of American expansion. Following America's purchase of Alaska in 1867, there was a feeling amongst Canadian politicians that the United States were trying to outflank Canada on the west. To counter this, many thought it essential to secure British Columbia as part of the British Empire.<sup>105</sup> In 1871, Cartier acted as Prime Minister in Macdonald's absence and led the negotiations. To entice the British Columbian delegation into Confederation, Cartier promised the completion of a

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<sup>101</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, 6.

<sup>102</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, 132.

<sup>103</sup> Cartier, 394.

<sup>104</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, 181.

<sup>105</sup> Waite, *The Life and Times of Confederation*, 304-306, 320. Waite quotes Alexander T. Galt, who expressed a fear of America's ambitions. He said "this country cannot be surrounded by the United States—we are gone if we allow it.... We must have our back to the North." (306)

Pacific Railway within ten years. When Parliament balked he threatened to dissolve the House if they did not ratify the proposal.

In having British Columbia join Confederation, Cartier saw a possibility to build on the progress made by the acquisition of the Northwest, in 1870, and a chance to increase Canada's commerce and population, making it more able to balance American imperial ambitions.<sup>106</sup> A letter to Cartier highlighted competition with America, and the combination of population and commerce in national development. Thanks to western expansion, the letter suggests

Canada will now be in a position to compete successfully with the United States for the share of vast immigration, which annually goes to elevate the population of the northern portion of the continent. What you have accomplished will enable thousands in the country to remain under their own flag, who would otherwise find a home in the western states.<sup>107</sup>

This excerpt highlights the interaction between commerce, population and expansion in the Conservative party's thought. As the country increased in size trade would become easier. Increased trade would attract more settlers and, more significantly, stop French Canadian emigration to the United States; both of these would help the country grow. While expansion is importantly tied to trade, it is underscored by a need to compete with America. This competition seems to be for trade and for settlers, but also for national pride.

The Conservative's fears of annexation were, in part, a reaction to Quebec's liberals, who actively promoted annexation to the United States. The Rouge politicians suggested that the central government would be too strong in the Confederation and that there would be an English majority, which would be dangerous for French Canadians. *Le*

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<sup>106</sup> Parliament, *Debates*, 1870, 480; Morton, *The Critical Years*, 247.

<sup>107</sup> LAC (Cartier fonds) vol.1, 276, M. Matthews to GEC, 22 April 1869.

*Pays* promoted joining the United States, as French Canadian traditions would be better protected by the larger autonomy the American Constitution conferred to the States. The distribution of powers was clearer in the American system. “Aux États-Unis,” the paper suggested “le congrès n’a que les pouvoirs qui lui sont délégués; chaque État est indépendant et peut exercer tous les pouvoirs dont il ne s’est pas expressément départi.”<sup>108</sup> Like Cartier and *La Minerve*, *Le Pays* also addressed perceived threats to curry favour for their solution. In 1868 the paper suggested that “cette nation pourrait, si nous le demandions, nous protéger par la force de son bras qu’elle étendrait autour de nous, contre toutes les attaques.” Although the paper does not specify what the threat could be, it suggests Quebec should join the States with the same type of argument regarding defense as that of Confederation’s supporters, only with a different alliance. If reacting to a threat was not enough, the article went on to point out that “nous verrions notre commerce grandir avec elle.”<sup>109</sup> Again, like Confederation’s supporters, *Le Pays* used increased commercial opportunities as a reason to support their plan. The Rouge desire to unite with America was based on the same kind of reasoning as the Bleu desire to develop a strong and United British colony. Rather than reflecting differing views on citizenship, cooperation and commerce, this difference highlights their differing views of Great Britain.

Cartier and the conservatives admired British institutions and wanted to establish and strengthen colonial links to Britain. *La Minerve* wrote, in 1867,

La confédération a pour but de maintenir et de consolider le lien colonial, jusqu’au jour où nous serons assez grands pour nous passer de soutien étranger. Or, les démocrates [les Rouges] veulent précisément rompre nos relations avec la

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<sup>108</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, September 3 1864.

<sup>109</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, July 1 1868.

Métropole; ils sont opposés à la constitution britannique, et le but principal de leurs efforts, c'est l'annexion.<sup>110</sup>

This passage suggests that once the Dominion is strong enough it will be able to defend itself, and will be less dependent on Great Britain's aid. There is a similarity here between national and individual development. To exercise freedoms and liberties, individuals needed to be able to make rational choices and control their own behaviour. Like nations, until they had developed these qualities there needed to be a stronger, more authoritarian body to govern them. The cultivation of reason among individuals is the focus of chapter four.

By the 1840s, Étienne Parent, journalist, intellectual and an important influence on the Bleu party, argued that French Canada's survival in North America could only be achieved through British institutions.<sup>111</sup> This link to Britain, and its military, the Bleus suggested, would also prove a valuable deterrent to American expansionist hopes. In contrast, *Le Pays* and the Rouges saw British institutions as privileging the already privileged, and creating and strengthening social divisions. As L.A. Olivier, a member from De Lanaudière, explained, the Confederation plan, based on British institutions was

a retrograde step in the political progress of the country. The spirit of modern society is to give as much political liberty as possible; and it is my belief that by this plan of Confederation we shall sacrifice whatever liberty is already possessed by the people of this country.<sup>112</sup>

Distrusting of Ontario's Liberal party, they feared that Confederation was the completion of Durham's plan, and as such would lead to the end of French Canada.<sup>113</sup> Quebec's

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<sup>110</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, June 6 1867.

<sup>111</sup> Jacques Monet, "Les idées politiques de Baldwin et de Lafontaine," in Marcel Hamelin, ed., *The Political Ideas of the Prime Ministers of Canada* (Ottawa, 1968), 18.

<sup>112</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, 175.

<sup>113</sup> Jean-Paul Bernard, *Les Rouges: libéralisme, nationalisme et anticléricalisme au milieu du XIXe siècle* (Montréal, 1971), 181, 250-255.

liberals were also doubtful of the use of Britain's army as defense against American ambitions. Rather than uselessly resisting annexation, the Rouges suggested to embrace it and for democracy to be used to preserve French Canadian traditions.

In her survey of French Canadian intellectual history, Fernande Roy draws similar conclusions. Asking of the liberals, “comment peut-on se prétendre les défenseurs de la nation canadienne-française et vouloir noyer celle-ci dans le grand ensemble américain?,”<sup>114</sup> she concludes that because of the freedom guaranteed in the American system, French Canadian liberals thought that language and faith could be better preserved. Of Confederation, *La Minerve* similarly wrote that it was important for “le corps entier de la confédération, pour les majorités comme pour les minorités respectives de chaque État, que ces garanties soient aussi distinctes et aussi précises que possible; que les droits et les libertés du faible soient mis à l’abri des empiètements du fort.”<sup>115</sup> Although offering different solutions, both sides suggested that minority rights would be preserved through some kind of political union. By promoting American annexation, the Rouges paralleled the arguments of ethnic cooperation, based on self-interests and progress, made by Confederation's supporters.

If Canadian nationalism, at least in rhetoric, was largely a reaction against the fear of American aggression, another influence on Cartier and Confederation's supporters was a distrust, and even a disdain, for the American political system. Canadian politicians generally felt that the cause of the Civil War was the Constitution, which was too

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<sup>114</sup> Fernande Roy, *Histoires des idées au Québec aux XIXe et XXe siècles* (Montreal : Boréal, 1993), 42. Ramsay Cook states that even critics of Confederation (Rouges) were willing to accept the idea of a political community housing more than one cultural nation. Ramsay Cook, *Canada, Quebec and the Uses of Nationalism* (Toronto, 1986), 188.

<sup>115</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, October 6 1864.

democratic and had left politicians subservient to what they saw as the whim of the electorate.<sup>116</sup> Cartier stated,

quiconque parmi nous a conversé avec des hommes publics ou des écrivains des États-Unis, peut attester que tous admettent que le gouvernement y est devenu impuissant par l'introduction du suffrage universel, en d'autres termes, que le pouvoir de la populace a supplanté l'autorité plus légitime.<sup>117</sup>

The difference between American and British North American policies, Cartier explained was that “nous jouissons d'une existence beaucoup plus nationale que celle des États, qui ne peuvent voter de tarif ni régler autres choses que les affaires intérieures.”<sup>118</sup> As he saw it, a more centralized government would be better able to deal with any potential obstacles cooperation, progress and commerce.

Closely related to perceptions of the American system and an equally important influence on Confederation-era politicians was the memory of the American Revolution. Stéphane Kelly, in *Les fins du Canada*, suggests that Canadian politicians choose between two theories of liberal government developed in the wake of the American Revolution: the Federalism of Alexander Hamilton or the Republicanism of Thomas Jefferson.<sup>119</sup> In Quebec, it seems that the Rouges aligned with Republicanism. Jefferson's conception of government—more democratic and egalitarian than Hamilton's federalism—was the dominant influence in nineteenth-century America. This different point of reference, in part, explains why the Rouges preferred union with America. The Bleus took a Hamiltonian approach, which was more focused on commerce, and called

<sup>116</sup> Waite, *The Life and Times*, 34; Sweeny, 153.

<sup>117</sup> Cartier, 421.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 272.

<sup>119</sup> Stéphane Kelly, *Les fins du Canada : selon Macdonald, Laurier, Mackenzie King et Trudeau* (Montréal, 2001). Kelly suggests that among the four prime ministers he explores Hamilton's federalism was the dominant influence. In proposing a paradigm for Canadian politics that is outside the liberal-conservative dichotomy of George Grant and Gad Horowitz, his work is in the same vein as Ajzenstat and Smith's *Canada's Origins: Liberal, Tory or Republican*.

for a stronger central government to limit the need for civic virtue in the population.

Although Cartier does not explicitly refer to Hamilton, *The Federalist* papers were in his library and there seems to be an overlap in ideas between the two.<sup>120</sup>

In his paper *The Federalist No. 9* Hamilton defined a confederate republic as  
 an assemblage of societies, or an association of two or more states into one....  
 So long as the separate organization of the members be not abolished, so long as it  
 exists as a constitutional necessity for local purposes, though it should be in  
 perfect subordination to the general authority of the Union.<sup>121</sup>

According to this definition, state governments are an essential part of the national existence. Since the states are given direct representation in the central government, their interests are protected.<sup>122</sup> This is similar to Cartier's idea of a political nation where the colonies would remain culturally independent. At the Charlottetown Conference in 1864, while most of the English-speaking Fathers of Confederation wanted a unitary political system, Cartier argued for a federation. He wanted to make sure that there was provincial jurisdiction on issues where the attitudes and institutions of the two cultures disagreed most strongly.<sup>123</sup> In a federal system, Quebec would enjoy the advantages of being part of a larger and more powerful nation, while still having its culture protected. Although Hamilton is generally considered a liberal and Cartier a conservative, they used similar ideas. Their arguments are also similar to J.S. Mill's, who wrote that "under the more

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<sup>120</sup> *Catalogue de la bibliothèque de feu l'Hon. Sir G.E. Cartier, baronet, pour être vendu mercredi, le 24 septembre 1873* (Montreal, 1873), 10. The influence of Hamilton on the Confederation-era Tories has also been highlighted by Reg Whitaker. Reg Whitaker, "Images of the Canadian State," in Leo Panitch, ed., *The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power* (Toronto, 1977), 38.

<sup>121</sup> Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay, *The Federalist*, ed. Terence Ball (Cambridge, 2003 (1788)), 39.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>123</sup> Donald V. Smiley, *The Canadian Political Nationality* (Toronto, 1967), 5. Bonenfant points out that Cartier was vague and simplistic in his federalism. When asked in Parliament, by Luther Holton, what he meant by federalism, Cartier summarized it as "égalité dans une des branches de la législature, et pour ce qui regarde la représentation dans l'autre branche, la population et le territoire doivent être pris en considération." Jean-Charles Bonenfant, "Les idées de George-Étienne Cartier," in Hamelin, *Les idées politiques des premiers ministres du Canada*, 44.

perfect form of federation, where every citizen of each particular State owes obedience to two governments, that of his own state and that of the federation.”<sup>124</sup>

In addition to converging with Cartier’s idea of the political nation, Hamilton’s *Federalist* papers preached the unifying advantages of commerce. He declared that “a commercial republic, like ours, will never be disposed to waste themselves in ruinous contentions with each other. They will be governed by mutual interest and will cultivate a spirit of national amity and concord.”<sup>125</sup> Hamilton believed that the nation would take care of itself if the federal government took care of the economy; people would happily coexist if they had mutual interests.<sup>126</sup> Cartier echoed this sentiment during the 1865 Confederation debates when he said

we are different races not for strife, but to work together for our own and the common welfare. We cannot by law cause the difference of race to disappear, but I am persuaded that English Canadians and French Canadians will appreciate the advantages of each other. Placed one beside the other, as in large families, their contact will produce a spirit of happy emulation. Thus the diversity of race will contribute, believe me, to the common prosperity.<sup>127</sup>

This intertwined approach led him to argue that French Canadians could best secure their language and culture through cooperation, which would lead to progress and development.

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<sup>124</sup> Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, 241; Michael J. Rosano suggests that Hamilton’s radical interpretation of liberty and self-interest was combined with his religious background to develop his understanding of nationalism. Michael J. Rosano, “Liberty, Nobility, Philanthropy, And Power In Alexander Hamilton’s Conception Of Human Nature,” *American Journal of Political Science* 2003 47(1), 61-74.

<sup>125</sup> Hamilton, Madison and Jay, 22.

<sup>126</sup> E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationhood since 1780* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), 29.

<sup>127</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, 60.

## National Metaphors and Self-Interest

There is a flexible pragmatism inherent in Cartier's combination of personal, community and national interests. Cooperation between provinces served his interests as a railway investor and helped strengthen his political position. The fact that his politics were self-interested should not be taken as a sign that they were devoid of ideas or influences. As we have seen from Peter Smith's work on Confederation and the writings of David Hume, commerce and virtue were related in Canadian political thought.<sup>128</sup> The ideas and language Cartier used to develop support for his ambitions deserve re-examination because they offer insights into the relations between government and interests.

Even when describing national ambitions, Cartier used liberal, individual-centric terms. In 1869 he stated: "Une nation comme un individu doit aspirer à grandir et à devenir plus fort."<sup>129</sup> In this light, his nationalism can be reconciled with his liberalism and self-interest. People must be competitive and ambitious to increase commerce and development. If nations act like individuals it is important that they prosper, because "pour la nation, la pauvreté est synonyme avec la dépendance."<sup>130</sup> To the nineteenth-century liberal, for a person to be regarded as a fully realized individual they had to be independent and own property.<sup>131</sup> This same mentality applied to nations. For a nation to realize its potential, it had to be independent and wealthy.

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<sup>128</sup> Peter J. Smith, "The Ideological Origins of Canadian Confederation," in Janet Ajzenstat and Peter J. Smith, eds., *Canada's Origins: Liberal, Tory or Republican?* (Ottawa, 1995), 51, 69.

<sup>129</sup> Cartier, 608.

<sup>130</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, May 6 1865.

<sup>131</sup> Ian McKay, "Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review* (December 2000), 627.

Self-government is a key feature of the liberal state. In his lecture to the Collège de France, Foucault described the role of the individual in liberal understandings of government. He noted that a person who wishes to govern the state must first govern himself, his goods and his family. Conversely, when a state is well run the individual will know how to manage his family and his affairs.<sup>132</sup> Cartier was often successful in drawing an analogy between personal interests and state goals. Referring to the defeat of the conservative government in 1862, he summarized his attitude towards personal and political successes. He stated, “je n’aime pas à être battu. Tous ceux qui m’entourent ont eu une fois ou l’autre, une mauvaise étoile; mais pour l’homme d’énergie, l’insuccès n’est qu’un stimulant qui l’anime à redoubler ses efforts; pour les énergiques, l’échec porte toujours leçon à fruit.”<sup>133</sup> Important characteristics of the individual were hard work and a dedication to improvement. This competitive and ambitious attitude could be applied to the nation. To the American consul, Cartier declared that “nous sommes aussi ambitieux qu’eux et que nous ne voulons point rester en arrière.”<sup>134</sup> This competitive community spirit did not only apply to the nation. In a speech given to the merchants of Quebec City, Cartier congratulated them because “[vous] luttez bien contre Montréal.”<sup>135</sup> While these comments are isolated from each other, they reflect a larger way of thinking. Cartier acted and governed in reference to self-interest. His work on the national stage can be reconciled with his position as French Canadian representative and a Montreal-based lawyer because he underscored individual self-interests as the driving force in all sectors of life.

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<sup>132</sup> Foucault, “Governmentality,” 91-92.

<sup>133</sup> Cartier, 711.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 637.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 644.

This way of ordering the world could be seen in other French Canadian commentators. National ambition was encouraged and was compared to personal ambition. *La Minerve* wrote that “l’égotisme est naturel aux peuples comme aux individus.”<sup>136</sup> As with individuals, this self-interest was moderated by social interactions. Mill referred to trade as a social act; any one who wants to sell a product “affects the interests of other persons, and of society in general; and thus his conduct, his principle, comes within the jurisdiction of society.”<sup>137</sup> In such a view, social interests limit and govern the behaviour of individual interests. National interests are limited in the same manner. Nations united “pour mieux assurer le développement de leurs ressources, pour se donner plus de force et plus de courage, pour marcher plus vite à la prospérité, à la grandeur, au progrès.” In such an association, *La Minerve* suggested, “Le succès est attaché à l’équilibre qui doit régner entre les diverses parties de cet édifice.”<sup>138</sup> When interacting with other groups, communities or provinces, national egoism is moderated by the desire to interact and develop common interests.

The interaction between individual and national interests has been well explored. According to Michael Rosano’s writing on Hamilton, when individuals recognized their true interests they served the public good. In case they were unable to rationally identify their interests, Hamilton promoted a strong central government to “make the passions of men conform to reason.”<sup>139</sup> In *Considerations on Representative Government*, Mill states, “a portion of mankind may be said to constitute a nationality if they are united among

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<sup>136</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2 May 5 1866.

<sup>137</sup> Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty*, 164. Michel Ducharme also notes that self-interest and egoism are not necessarily interchangeable. The liberal concern for public good through private initiatives tempers egoism. Ducharme, 363.

<sup>138</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, July 2 1867,

<sup>139</sup> Rosano, 68.

themselves by common sympathies which do not exist between them and others.”<sup>140</sup> Mill sees no contradiction between liberalism and nationalism. Individuals may come together to better pursue their interests. *La Minerve* makes a similar argument but ties it to national behaviour. In the wake of the passing of the British North America Act, the paper stated “l’association est de l’essence du progrès des nations comme des individus. Les nations se réunissent pour poser ensemble les bases de leur existence.” Just as individuals may group themselves into a nation, the paper suggests that the British North American provinces entered Confederation to further progress and development. The article goes on to make an explicit link between nationalism and development, stating that “la Confédération n’est pas seulement un but; c’est un moyen.... La Confédération est un outil à nous de nous en servir, et de faire un bon usage.”<sup>141</sup> Confederation was described as a tool to develop commerce and trade. Since the provinces were acting out of self-interest, they were acting like individuals. In a commercially successful and independent nation, a citizen could become

plus grand moralement et intellectuellement, que celui d’une colonie. Son esprit est plus large, son intelligence plus vaste, parce que son regard intellectuel s’accoutume à embrasser, dans ses observations, de plus vastes horizons, des questions plus graves, des intérêts plus sérieux.<sup>142</sup>

There seems to have been a belief that, rather than competing with each other, individual and national interests cooperated. This cooperation, to the nineteenth-century liberal,

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<sup>140</sup> Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, 229.

<sup>141</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, July 2 1867. The paper also describes nationalism in terms that fit Alter’s theory. It states that nations “réunissent pour se défendre contre un ennemi communal elles se réunissent pour mieux assurer le développement de leurs ressources, pour se donner plus de force et plus de courage, pour marcher plus vite à la prospérité, à la grandeur, au progrès.”

<sup>142</sup> *Sir George Cartier sur la défense de Canada*, Collected from *La Presse*, 1872, 12.

established a reciprocal relationship between national achievement and individual development.<sup>143</sup>

While Quebec's liberals were critical of the Confederation plan, their objections demonstrated a thought shared with the conservatives. Luther Holton, a leading member of Quebec's liberal party, was initially opposed to Confederation because he was worried it would endanger French Canadian institutions. He stated, however, that "he had not been opposed to the Union of these Colonies on federal principles, but had opposed the scheme as immature."<sup>144</sup> Holton's opposition was over practical concerns rather than ideology. While remaining critical of the government, he became supportive of the transcontinental nation once Confederation had been passed. In doing so he followed in the tradition of adaptation and cooperation, started by Parent, LaFontaine and Cartier.

Just as Holton's opposition was based on a flexibility comparable to that of the conservatives, the liberal press used similar metaphors as *La Minerve*. In 1869 *Le Pays* printed an article that stated that "les nations comme les individus contractent entr'elles des obligations qu'il est important de ne pas méconnaître." Since society was the individual's representative, it was necessary that that nation respected and protected people's individual rights. This fits Mill's liberal understanding of government, as he suggests people group together and sacrifice some personal liberties for self-protection.<sup>145</sup> *Le Pays* concluded the article by stating that, when the nation fails to adequately represent the people

elle tombe dans l'intolérance et la négation d'elle-même, et n'a pas plus droit à la clémence de ses voisins que le simple citoyen qui, au mépris de la loi et du bon

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<sup>143</sup> Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, 10; Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty*, 95.

<sup>144</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1<sup>st</sup> Parliament, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 1869, (Ottawa, 1975), 708.

<sup>145</sup> Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty*, 147.

ordre, intervient dans les affaires de son semblable pour lui causer du tort, et cela sans aucune provocation.<sup>146</sup>

This article is critical of the federal government. It implies that its representatives were ignoring the rights of the people. These criticisms, however, are based on the suggestion that governments should act like individuals. Like Cartier and *La Minerve, Le Pays* demonstrated a social ordering that puts the individual, at least conceptually, in a position of primacy.

The comparison of communities to individuals does not just refer to the nations.

In 1868 *La Minerve* argued that the municipality

joue, dans la législation, le rôle même de l'individu dans la société. L'individu a certainement la liberté de faire tout ce que la loi ne défend pas. Il n'est soumis, en principe, à l'autorité de qui que ce soit. La municipalité, commune ou corporation, représente aussi aux yeux de la loi une personne morale, qui, comme individu, a droit de se mouvoir, en toute liberté, dans le cercle que lui trace la loi.<sup>147</sup>

If municipalities acted like individuals it follows that they would enter associations to further their prosperity. Just as individuals enter communities for self-protection and advancements, municipalities should willingly join larger, national communities. The multilayered metaphor also supports the conservative suggestion that French Canadian traditions could be better preserved in Confederation.<sup>148</sup> In a liberal society people can freely choose to retain their traditions and to follow customs “after a process of critical

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<sup>146</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, May 1 1869.

<sup>147</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, March 7 1868.

<sup>148</sup> This multilayered metaphor, which suggests individuals have multiple loyalties—to their municipality, province and nation—is comparable to the notion of the *Heimat* during German Unification, explored by Alon Confino in *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Wurttemberg, Imperial Germany and National Memory, 1871-1918* (Chapel Hill, 1997). Confino suggests that “nationhood is a metaphor for social relations among millions of people.” (4) Drawing as well from Benedict Anderson, he investigates how this metaphor helps individuals make links between their locality and the distant, national space. The German conception of *Heimat* (a sense of multiple identities) helped create these links by suggesting that each community was a part of the whole. The “*Heimat* harmonized the heritage of local identities and the single national identity” (158).

reflection.”<sup>149</sup> Similarly in a liberal nation, French Canadian society could retain their desired traditions, and English Canada would let them exist freely. In nineteenth-century Quebec the desire to preserve French Canadian traditions was expressed through the liberal language and ideas of chosen communities and, in this way, was not inherently anti-modern.<sup>150</sup>

The notion of self and cultural-protection through association fit with Cartier’s hope that Confederation would let people united politically while remaining culturally autonomous. He argued that religion was socially and culturally important, and that politics had to look beyond divided, cultural interests. “Dans un pays composé de races hétérogènes,” he stated, “il faut que les droits soient sauvegardés, que toutes convictions soient respectées. Le Canada doit être un pays, non de licence, mais de liberté, et toutes les libertés doivent être protégés par la loi.”<sup>151</sup> He described the new government as a tool to protect minorities.

In one of his most famous speeches, given in Ottawa to various workers, politicians and representatives of the Society St. Jean-Baptiste, Cartier suggested how this new political nation should work.

La Confédération, c’est un arbre dont les branches s’étendent en plusieurs directions et qui sont fermement attachées au tronc principal. Nous, franco-canadiens, nous sommes l’une de ces branches. À nous de le comprendre et de travailler au bien commun. Le patriotisme, bien entendu, est celui qui ne lutte pas

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<sup>149</sup> Bruce Baum, *Rereading Power and Freedom in J.S. Mill* (Toronto, 2000), 30.

<sup>150</sup> Janet Ajzenstat, based on a rereading of the Durham report, has commented on the changing nature of French-Canadian nationalism in the nineteenth century. She sees the 1830s as a turning point in the transition from conservative nationalism, which subjected the individual to the common good, to a liberal one, where personal ambition served the collective. Janet Ajzenstat, “Liberalism and Nationality,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (September 1981), 592-593. Jacques Monet’s chapter in *Les Idées politiques des premiers ministres du Canada* makes a similar point. He discusses how LaFontaine adapted to and manipulated political changes to serve French Canadian interests.

<sup>151</sup> Cartier, 527. Chapter four will come back to the distinction between authority and liberty, and its applications to self-discipline.

avec un esprit de fanatisme, mais qui, tout en sauvegardant ce qu'il aime, veut que son voisin ne soit pas plus molesté que lui-même.<sup>152</sup>

Following this model, Confederation would create a country where the provinces remained culturally independent, but would be politically united. Culturally, the branches were separated and able to conserve their traditions. Politically, however, each branch was connected to the national trunk and helped developed the common good. It seems that the “bien commun” referred to by Cartier was increased commerce and industry. He claimed that

la gloire de notre nationalité n'est point dans l'isolement. Elle est dans la lutte et le combat : luttés à mains armées autrefois contre le despotisme et la tyrannie; luttés généreuses pour la défense du drapeau de la mère-patrie. Aujourd'hui des luttés pacifiques, pour faire sa place dans le monde des affaires, à côté de ses rivales, et de leur disputé, s'il est possible, le haut du pave.<sup>153</sup>

Again, he suggests that association may be beneficial for French Canadian interests. This is a liberal understanding of nationalism, as it is based in self-interest.

The specific use of a tree to describe a developing and progressive nation is also telling, as it demonstrates another facet of nineteenth-century liberal government: rationalism. A liberal state treats the world as “consisting essentially of forces that can be harnessed, at least in principle, to human purposes.”<sup>154</sup> The tree metaphor reflects this, as it indicates that the separate provinces, made up of individuals, could be governed and

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<sup>152</sup> Cartier, 542. Martin Pâquet's *Tracer les marges de la cité : étranger, immigrant et État au Québec, 1627-1981* (Montréal, 2005), addresses similar themes of nature metaphors and nationalism, especially in the chapter “Classification organique de la Cité, 1853-1945.” Interested in state formation, identity and immigration, he suggests that conceptions of a “Cité organique” and self-interest affected how potential immigrants were attracted, and how new immigrants were classified and governed. One of the colonization and immigration agents he examines is the Curé Antoine Labelle, who in 1889 described Canada as “une nation du nord, composée de différents éléments, greffée sur le tronc canadien et nourrie de la même sève.” (127). As I will address more in the next chapter, Curé Labelle and Cartier had similar interests and agendas, based on railways, progress, expansion, and a commitment to French Canadian traditions and institutions. Also, Cartier's use of the notion “fanatisme” is significant. I explore the use of reason to temper extreme beliefs in the fourth chapter.

<sup>153</sup> *Cartier sur la défense de Canada*, 12.

<sup>154</sup> Barry Hindess, *Discourses of Power: From Hobbes to Foucault* (London, 1996), 114-115.

improved by the laws of nature. Nature was linked to reason, and was frequently used by liberals to describe the ideal government for a society; government was based on laws that could be understood and subjects that could be influenced.<sup>155</sup> The association of reason with organic metaphors can be found in Mill's writing. He writes that "human nature is not a machine to be built after a model and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing."<sup>156</sup> In his study of the notion of power in Mill's liberalism, Bruce Baum analysed this statement. The tree that needs to "grow and develop," he argues, highlights the need to develop the "faculties of reasoning, judgment, deliberation, discrimination and self-control, which are constitutive of mental freedom and autonomy, as common human potentialities."<sup>157</sup> As we will see later, these faculties are developed through education, and they are used to identify self-interest and govern social relations. Although Mill refers to individuals, not nations, his proposal seems to correspond with Cartier's description of Confederation as a tree. Both examples highlight the connection between nature, reason, and self-interest. This connection becomes clearer in light of Cartier's assertions that nations should behave like individuals.

Cartier's use of an organic metaphor seems to place him within a larger nineteenth-century liberal discourse. This language was common in Canadian and Quebec politics. In the introduction to her book on the role of science in pan-Canadian

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<sup>155</sup> Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London, 1976), 187-188; André Vachet, *L'idéologie libérale : l'individu et sa propriété*, Second Edition (Ottawa, 1988), 109; Hindess, 115. As we will see in the next chapter, nature is also a subject, that needs to be governed and controlled to fit social, political and economic ends.

<sup>156</sup> Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty*, 134.

<sup>157</sup> Bruce Baum, *Rereading Power and Freedom in J.S. Mill* (Toronto, 2000), 56.

nationalism, Suzanne Zeller uses the Confederation Debates to show that conceptions of nature affected the ideas and the language of Canadian politicians. She defines science as “the rational study of nature,” and suggests that the increased focus on scientific knowledge was linked to optimism for the future. She quotes supporters of Confederation, both English and French speaking, to suggest that failures were described in mechanical terms, while organic terms, like Cartier’s national tree, were used to speak of visions of the future.<sup>158</sup>

Another French-Canadian supporter of Confederation, Louis-Charles Boucher de Niverville, a lawyer and the Member of Parliament from Trois-Rivières, referred to nature to promote the scheme. In the most important speech of his career, he stated that he shared the concerns of “French-Canadians who are afraid of suffering wrong in the Federal Parliament, being as they are an insignificant minority of that body.” Once Confederation was achieved, however, the less populated provinces, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, could form a block to protect themselves against Ontario. He stated that

[e]ver since nations began to comprehend their true interests, a certain equilibrium has been established, which it will always be their aim to maintain. This constitutes the protection which the union of two weak parties affords against a strong one, which would aggrandize itself at their expense. This law of equilibrium is reproduced in all times and places—among nations and among individuals: it is found even among animals.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Suzanne Zeller, *Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation* (Toronto, 1987), 5-9. A pertinent example of a mechanical metaphor, underlined by Zeller, was regarding the American Civil War. She writes: “Canadians were also shocked to witness in the Civil War the collapse of the looser American federation, where ‘instead of those institutions framed with such mathematical precision, and that mechanisms so finished and so regular in its course, there are to be seen but violent and jerking motions, overturnings, and the collision and smashing of the component parts of the disconnected machinery of state.’” (7). It may also be worth noting that she does not explicitly mention Cartier.

<sup>159</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, 949; Nive Voisine, “Louis Charles Boucher de Niverville,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <<http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=38430&query=de%20AND%20niverville>>. Interestingly, despite referring to the laws of nature, Boucher de Niverville sought the advice of two clerics.

The final sentence of this statement is interesting. He first compares nations and individuals. This seems to indicate a liberal reasoning. Like Cartier, he suggests that liberal ideas could be used to preserve French Canadian traditions. The second important suggestion is of the laws of nature. This also indicates that government can be organized and managed according to the principles of science.

Gonzalve Doutre, a professor of law at McGill and a prominent liberal opponent of Confederation, also maintained that nations were based on reason and self-interest. In an 1864 lecture to the Institut canadien, he defined a nation as “la réunion de tous les habitants d’un même pays.” Language, religion and history, the traditional touchstones for nationalism, were secondary in his eye to “l’intérêt bien entendu, qui lie tous les habitants d’un même pays.”<sup>160</sup> Doutre’s support of self-interest and association, by his own admission, were similar to Cartier and Confederation’s supporters. This similarity, however, “n’a été qu’à un point de vue tout-à-fait philosophique ou plutôt sociale.”<sup>161</sup> In the lecture he also suggested that Canada could not treat nationalism the same way as England and France, because it was a country of immigrants. The nation could not unite if people were primarily loyal to traditions; rather, individuals should pursue their self-interest, which would bring them together in the spirit of cooperation of progress.<sup>162</sup>

One of Doutre’s main disagreements with the Bleus and the clergy was over their linking of religion to the French Canadian identity. After his speech critics, notably Laurent-Olivier David, an editor of *l’Union nationale*, accused Doutre of sacrificing French Canadian interest to material progress. He replied

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<sup>160</sup> Gonzalve Doutre, *Le principe des nationalités : Lecture publique faite devant l’Institut de Montréal* (Montreal, 1864), 44-45.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>162</sup> Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées à Québec* (Quebec, 2000), 346; Doutre, 6.

je n'ai pas dit que les distinctions nationales dussent disparaître, mais seulement qu'une nationalité ne doit pas avoir la suprématie sur les autres; que toutes ces nationalités distinctes doivent se confondre en Canada dans une nationalité générale, fusionnant les diverses fractions de la nation pour ce qui regarde les intérêts généraux de ces nationalités.<sup>163</sup>

Doutre promoted a nation that was united in its ambitions, although made up of multiple minorities. Despite coming from political opponents, this fit with Cartier's understanding of the political nation. Also, like Cartier, he accepted linguistic and religious traditions, but hierarchized them below self-interest.<sup>164</sup>

Where Cartier described the political nation as a tree, each branch representing a province, Doutre compared the union of nations to a man entering a marriage. He drew the attention to

l'intérêt bien entendu de cet homme qui s'allie à une famille étrangère, le guide dans toute sa conduite; il jette des fleurs sur la route souvent épineuse de l'existence; il fait dépendre l'intérêt matériel de l'intérêt moral et il détruit tout ce que l'égoïsme peut laisser de désagréable.<sup>165</sup>

It is in each partner's interest to cooperate with their spouse's family. In this example egoism is managed through the mutual pursuit of material interests. As we have seen, association and the realization of common interests, formed what Doutre called a "moral interest," which tempered egoism among nations. In Doutre's example, the same principles apply.

There is a wide literature on the use of family metaphors to reflect social and political relations. Raymond Boudon and Francois Bourricaud suggest that conceptions

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<sup>163</sup> Doutre, 26-27.

<sup>164</sup> The term hierarchized is taken from Ducharme.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 46-47. The comparison of provincial-federal relations to marriages was recently used by Ronald Beiner in "Citizenship and Nationalism: Is Canada a 'Real Country'?" in Karen Slawner and Mark E. Denahm, eds., *Citizenship After Liberalism* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998), 195-196. The article explores the debates between Pierre Trudeau and Quebec separatists. Beiner suggests that treating your spouse as lecture audience, while you engage in "uncompromising truth-telling" is not best way to secure political unity.

of the family are socially constructed. Because of this, they warn against “trying to identify a type of family organization (nuclear, extended, patriarchal), which would be the most favourable to economic development, demographic expansion, political stability.”<sup>166</sup> If we accept that the references to family made by the politicians of 1860s’ Quebec were constructed by their Victorian and patriarchal outlook, it is still illuminating about how they conceived of society and government. Imperial relations were frequently described in parent-child terms.<sup>167</sup> Doutre’s family-nation comparison is unique because it describes the behaviour of spouses. He expressly describes this behaviour in liberal terms, based on self-interest. Doutre promotes a kind of political association that is very similar to Cartier’s political nation.

Family and organic metaphors both reflect liberal governmental techniques.

Foucault suggests that to effectively govern means

to apply economy, to set up an economy at the level of the entire state, which means exercising towards its entire inhabitants and its wealth and behaviour of each and all a form of surveillance and control as attentive as that of the head of a family over his household and goods.<sup>168</sup>

Whether nations are like a tree, like an individual negotiating business relations or like a spouse negotiating family relationships, rational self-interest is a key factor in achieving

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<sup>166</sup> Raymond Boudon and Francois Bourricaud, *A Critical Dictionary of Sociology*, Peter Hamilton, trans, (Chicago, 1989), 175.

<sup>167</sup> Some other examples of family metaphors are Philip Resnick, in his study of the varied expressions of Canadian nationalism, notes that throughout the Confederation Debates Great Britain was referred to as the “Parent State.” Resnick, 60. In this case the reference describes imperial power relations and not the government of relations between provinces. A letter to Cartier, regarding the Codification of Quebec’s Civil Code, also used the parent-child metaphor to speak of imperial relations, but combined it with liberal ideas of progress, which he likens to the process of maturation of a child. It read “I am quite pleased to see that the children are so far advanced of their parents, and that Canada boasts of a Book of Codified Laws when the mother country is still struggling and strangling under a heap of precedents.” McCord, P197-A/3-1@13, J.M. Strasser to Cartier, January 8, 1867. Recently, Nicholas Thomas has examined the use of family metaphors in discussions of hierarchy, race and empire. Thomas, “Colonial Conversions: Difference, Hierarchy, and History in Early Twentieth-Century Evangelical Propaganda,” in Catherine Hall, ed., *Cultures of Empire A Reader: Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Manchester, 2000): 298-328.

<sup>168</sup> Foucault, “Governmentality,” 95.

the goals of the government. This link between government and households, individuals and institutions, is an example of a liberal political understanding.<sup>169</sup>

## Conclusion

In the debates on nation and government leading to Confederation, Quebec's liberals and conservatives both made appeals to tradition, religion and language. In an article studying sports metaphor in politics, historian Martin Pâquet suggests that there are two sets of 'rules' for political action: formal and informal. Formal rules are laws regulations and codes. The informal rules are generally customs that were instilled via education and that governed behaviour.<sup>170</sup> It seems that in nineteenth-century Quebec one of the informal rules was a commitment to the preservation of language and tradition.

This commitment to tradition existed alongside a promotion of economic liberalism. This ideological coexistence was made possible by the suggestion, made by both conservatives and liberals, that nations and communities behave like individuals who associate to better pursue their self-interest. As Fernande Roy has argued the dichotomy between liberalism and conservatism and between the individual and the collective that existed in the seventeenth century did not hold in the nineteenth. By the nineteenth century economic liberalism, based on the individual and its right to property,

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<sup>169</sup> Hindess, 108.

<sup>170</sup> Martin Pâquet, "Le 'sport de la politique:' Transfers et adoption de la culture britannique au Québec, 1791-1960," in Jean Morency, Hélène Destrempes, Denise Merkle, et Martin Pâquet, eds., *Des cultures en contact: Visions de l'Amérique du Nord francophone* (Quebec, 2005): 154-155. Pâquet explores how these sport metaphors represented a code that helped engrain a social order of players (the governing elites) and spectators (the citizens) in Quebec's political structure. The existence of a code with rules that govern political behaviour is analogous to the conditions of discursive space highlighted by Foucault.

was common to conservative and progressive thought.<sup>171</sup> The reconciliation of liberalism with nationalism was one of the conditions of existence of Quebec's political discourse.

Cartier's career was an example of the reconciliation of these two streams. Cartier's political prominence was linked to his support from the clergy. He suggested that "la religion est la sauvegarde des peuples. Quelle reconnaissance la race canadienne-française ne doit-elle pas à son clergé! Si elle a conservé sa nationalité, sa langue, ses institutions, à qui le doit-elle surtout, sinon à ce corps vénérable?"<sup>172</sup> Here he demonstrated the traditionalism that has been well-documented in Quebec history. At the same time, however, he claimed that French Canadians were "des citoyens Anglais parlant Français."<sup>173</sup> He argued that French-Canadian nationalism was primarily cultural and "nous devons la conservation de notre nationalité aux libres institutions que l'Angleterre nous a données."<sup>174</sup> Quebec's political culture was unique because there was an overt concern over language and religion, but this concern seems to develop alongside an interest in progress and self-interest; as Jean-Marie Fecteau has persuasively argued, historians need to place religion "dans l'espace libéral."<sup>175</sup> Within this liberal space, religion and traditions were protected through individual and modern means. It was this same reconciliation between the collective and the individual that made a variety of

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<sup>171</sup> Fernande Roy, *Progrès, harmonie et liberté : le libéralisme des milieux d'affaires francophones à Montréal au tournant du siècle* (Boréal, 1988), 56-58; Roy, *Histoire des idées au Québec*, 43. Claude Couture similarly suggests that although radical liberalism was marginalized after 1840, classical liberalism developed along side the Catholic Church. Couture, *Paddling With the Current: : Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Étienne Parent, Liberalism and Nationalism in Canada*, Vivien Bosley, trans., (Edmonton, 1998), 37.

<sup>172</sup> Cartier, 693.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 646.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 390.

<sup>175</sup> Jean-Marie Fecteau, *La liberté du pauvre : crime et pauvreté aux XIXe siècle québécois* (Montreal, 2004), 268. Concerned with regulatory institutions, especially those addressing crime and poverty, Fecteau suggests that rather than reconciling the discourse of modernity with the Catholicism, historians should situate the Church "dans l'économie régulatoire qui se déploie à partir de la seconde moitié XIXe siècle au Québec." (267) The role of the Church as a regulatory institution is another condition of existence in Quebec society.

political actors suggest that the nation should be governed like the individual, through the pursuit of its interests.

### Chapter 3

#### The Pursuit of Property, the Mastery of Territory and the Nature of Nation

*“La terre c’est la grande nourrice du genre humain.”*  
Cartier at Rimouski, 1870<sup>176</sup>

*“For history must be our deliverer not only from the undue influence of other times, but from the undue influence of our own, from the tyranny of the environment and the pressure of the air we breathe.”*  
Lord Acton, “The Beginning of the Modern State,” 1894<sup>177</sup>

George-Etienne Cartier, in an 1870 speech to the citizens of Rimouski, stated that “l’attachement au sol, c’est le secrèt de la grandeur du futur du peuple canadien-français. On parle beaucoup de la nationalité, eh bien, je vous dis, la race qui emportera dans l’avenir, c’est celle qui aura su conserver le sol.” He went on to state that “la possession du sol donne le titre si honorable de propriétaire.”<sup>178</sup> Here he illustrates both the centrality of land in his conception of property and the importance of property in Quebec politics and discourse. An individual’s right to acquire property is one of the key elements of liberalism. In nineteenth-century Quebec questions of property were mainly addressed around the themes of the acquisition and the management of land.

‘Property’ is not a term that should be taken as self-evident. As renowned Canadian political theorist C.B. Macpherson suggested, the common usage of property is at odds with the meaning the word property has in legal systems and philosophy. Typically, he argues, property is understood as things, when law it treated as the rights to

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<sup>176</sup> George-Étienne Cartier, *Discours de Cartier*, Joseph Tassé, ed., (Montreal: 1893), 692

<sup>177</sup> Lord Acton, *Essays in the Liberal Interpretation of History*, William H. McNeill, ed., (Chicago: 1967), 402.

<sup>178</sup> Cartier, 692, 693.

use and benefit of something.<sup>179</sup> In her article “The Language of Property in Early Modern Europe,” historian Martha C. Howell explores the transition and development of property rights. She suggests that the transition of land from immovable to movable property was central to Europe’s modernization. The new idea of movable property was tied to the development of capitalism, as land could be rented, divided or sold according to market needs.<sup>180</sup> New techniques in surveying and geography allowed land to be priced and were central to this change in definition.<sup>181</sup>

The use of new technology and knowledge to improve a government’s reach and efficiency is a typical liberal technique. Bruce Curtis’ *The Politics of Population* explores the development of the census in mid-nineteenth-century Canada as a process of state formation and as a tool for administration. He suggests that the census became important in the 1840s and 1850s because population distribution became a criterion for the allocation of government resources.<sup>182</sup> Matthew Hannah similarly draws from Foucault and explores the census as a technique of government. Hannah studies American census-maker and writer Francis Walker to suggest that those who control the techniques of geography play a leading role in how the land is settled and society is governed.<sup>183</sup> Hannah and Curtis suggest techniques of geography affect the governance of territory,

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<sup>179</sup> C.B. Macpherson, *Property: Mainstream and Critical Positions* (Toronto: 1978), 2-3.

<sup>180</sup> Martha C. Howell, “The Language of Property in Early Modern Europe,” in Henry S. Turner, ed., *The Culture of Capital: Property, Cities and Knowledge in Early Modern England* (London, 2002): 18-22.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 24. In *The Promoters’ City*, Paul-André Linteau revisits traditional thoughts about business interests amongst Quebec’s French Canadians. Drawing from Marxist thought and urban geography, he stresses the importance of a land capital, as opposed to banking, industrial and commercial capital, as central in Quebec’s history. Paul-André Linteau, *The Promoter’s City: Building the Industrial Town of Maisonneuve, 1883-1918*, Robert Chodos, trans. (Toronto, 1985), 19-21. The changing conception of property in Quebec is also explored in Brian Young’s *The Politics of Codification: The Lower Canadian Civil Code of 1866* (Montreal, 1994). One of the concerns of Young’s study is how real estate laws were changed to meet the expectations and desires of Quebec’s business class.

<sup>182</sup> Bruce Curtis, *The Politics of Population: State Formation, Statistics, and the Census of Canada, 1840-1874* (Toronto, 2001), 3, 4, 10.

<sup>183</sup> Matthew G. Hannah, *Governmentality and the Mastery of Territory in Nineteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, 2000), 9, 37.

while Howell suggests that these same techniques affected business and conceptions of property. All seem to suggest that advances in technology allowed for land to be conceived and manipulated differently.

### **Property, Expansion and Confederation**

Land development was a key aspect of the changing face of Canadian politics in the 1850s and 1860s. In the eyes of ambitious politicians, the idea of the new nation would enable the separate provinces to grow and develop. Frank Underhill referred to Confederation as an experiment “of a nationality that should link together a variety of isolated, little colonial communities scattered across the northern half of the continent.”<sup>184</sup> Developers in Ontario and Quebec promoted expansion to find an eastern seaport not in American control and to access areas in the west for settlement and trade. If the colonies were to together there would be an opportunity for the country to reach westward for arable lands.<sup>185</sup> Railways were an essential part of this expansionist vision—as they were to the development of a national consciousness—because they enabled people to imagine a single united nation. British North America had a small population that was separated by vast stretches of forests; through railways people’s concept of distance changed. P.B. Waite, in an article on Canadian politics in the 1860s, wrote that that railways made “worlds that once seemed comfortable and viable now seem narrow and visionless.”<sup>186</sup> In 1865, Hector Langevin, Cartier’s Quebec lieutenant,

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<sup>184</sup> Frank H. Underhill, *The Image of Confederation* (Toronto, 1964), 1.

<sup>185</sup> William Morton, *The Critical Years: The Union of British North America, 1857-1863* (Toronto, 1964), 21; P.B. Waite, *The Life and Times of Confederation* (Toronto: 1962), 16.

<sup>186</sup> P.B. Waite, “The 1860s” in J.M.S. Careless, ed., *Colonist and Canadiens, 1760-1867* (Toronto, 1971), 250.

whom contemporary critics referred to as “un petit écho de Cartier,”<sup>187</sup> stressed this frustration with the scale of colonial politics and expressed the optimism attached to expansion. He claimed that

with a Confederation of colonies extending from one ocean to another, what limits shall we assign to our greatness, our material progress and our political aspirations? Instead of seeing the talents of our statesmen fettered, harassed and restrained within the narrow limits of local politics, we shall find its scope extended to a whole continent.<sup>188</sup>

This statement highlights the ambition and optimism of Confederation’s supporters.

These ambitions were mainly focused on land expansion. It was the pursuit of property that would let the newly formed country prosper.

A focus on land and expansion was central to Cartier’s politics. This focus was thrust on him from a young age. As landowners and merchants, his family’s wealth was based on the prosperity of the Richelieu Valley and the successful exploitation of the land.<sup>189</sup> His background as a landowner contributed to his interest in expansion. His family relied on the ability to accumulate property to increase its fortune.

This link between acquisition and private gains was similarly applied to his politics; Cartier came to equate property with French Canadian nationalism. In his 1855 eulogy of publisher Ludger Duvernay, given at a large, public ceremony in Montreal, Cartier demonstrated this link between land and nationalism, stating that “l’expérience démontre que pour le maintien et la permanence de toute nationalité, il faut l’union

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<sup>187</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, January 3 1870.

<sup>188</sup> Canada, Provincial Parliament, *Parliamentary Debates on the Subject of the Confederation of the British North American Provinces*, 8<sup>th</sup> Provincial Parliament, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, 1865 (Quebec, 1951), 381.

<sup>189</sup> Christopher Moore, *1867: How the Fathers Made a Deal* (Toronto, 1997), 138; Brian Young, *George-Etienne Cartier: Montreal Bourgeois* (Montreal, 1981), 5.

intime et indissoluble de l'individu avec le sol."<sup>190</sup> Despite the reference to national survival he emphasized that individual union with the land that is key.

Cartier's education also stressed the importance of land and property. He was educated at the Collège de Montréal, between 1824 and 1831, which was run by the Sulpician monastic order. Despite being socially and politically conservative, the Sulpicians were economically liberal.<sup>191</sup> In sharp contrast to other monastic orders, they did not take vows of poverty, and retained ownership of their individual wealth.<sup>192</sup> Based out of Montreal, the Order was an important seigneurial landowner but shifted its practices after the abolition of seigneurialism in 1854. The Sulpicians taught and promoted ecclesiastical authority and the importance of traditions, but also promoted railway development, notably by buying shares in the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railway, which linked Montreal, Maine and Portland.<sup>193</sup> The Sulpician's transition reflects an adaptation to their circumstances. This is an example of the changing discursive boundaries. As Fecteau has argued—and as we saw in the last chapter—religion exists in liberal space and is one of the institutions that reconstructs “des valeurs passées selon les termes du présent et de l'avenir.”<sup>194</sup>

Cartier shared this combination of cultural conservation and commercial development. Amongst what he considered to be the several key elements in nationhood, there was what he called the “personal national element,” which was made up of race, language, education and morals. Property was essential to the development of the

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<sup>190</sup> Cartier, 65. Duvernay died in 1852, but in 1855 his remains were moved from the cemetery on Saint-Antoine St. to the Côtés-des-Neiges cemetery.

<sup>191</sup> Young, *Montreal Bourgeois*, 8.

<sup>192</sup> Young, *In Its Corporate Capacity: The Seminary of Montreal as a Business Institution, 1816-1876* (Montreal, 1986), 6.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 37, 89; Careless, *Colonist and Canadians*, 211.

<sup>194</sup> Jean-Marie Fecteau, *La liberté du pauvre : crime et pauvreté aux XIXe siècle québécois* (Montreal, 2004), 268, 270.

personal element, Cartier argued, because without the possibility of ownership people would not be motivated to work.<sup>195</sup> There also needed to be a territorial element. For the survival of a nationality, Cartier argued, the population needed to be united with the land. Therefore, for the nation to prosper, the acquisition of land was essential.<sup>196</sup> Confederation was the first step in this national design. In 1866, before going to London to negotiate the completion of Confederation project, a dinner was held, in Montreal, in Cartier's honour. At this dinner he suggested that "qui dit Confédération, dit agrandissement, non seulement pour le Bas-Canada mais pour toutes les provinces de l'Amérique du Nord." We have seen that Cartier was a growth-oriented, bourgeois lawyer, and that the acquisition of territory was part of the belief in progress and expansion that came from this social position.<sup>197</sup> His class interests, however, do not suffice to explain his position.

Cartier made many references to the material acquisition of land. At times, however, he discussed nationhood in more general and abstract terms. During the Confederation debates he asked "[v]oulons-nous demeurer séparés? Voulons-nous conserver isolément une existence toute provinciale, quand ensemble, nous pourrions devenir un grande nation?"<sup>198</sup> By combining into a single country, he argued, the British North American colonies could combine and improve their industry, commerce and public prosperity. It is true that his national and community hopes, however, could not be separated from his enterprising tendencies, since he argued that commerce was "l'agent

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<sup>195</sup> This is itself a liberal attitude. André Vachet, in his survey of liberalism, argues that in liberalism "il faut donc à l'individu la présence d'un intérêt propre pour sortir de son inaction. Voilà qui élimine toute possibilité de motivation altruiste et réduit l'homme à un réseau d'égoïsme. L'amour de soi en est le résumé et l'explication suffisante." André Vachet, *L'idéologie libérale : l'individu et sa propriété*, Second Edition (Ottawa, 1988), 98-99.

<sup>196</sup> Cartier, 65, 403.

<sup>197</sup> Moore, 142.

<sup>198</sup> Cartier, 421.

par lequel une nation devient prospère, heureuse, et réellement grande.”<sup>199</sup> But the benefit of national expansion went beyond his own interests, towards those outside society’s elite. All people would be better off in a larger, commercially successful nation than they would be in separated provinces.

The way liberal pursuits of wealth and community interests served each other and worked together is similar to the ideas of J.S. Mill. In *Utilitarianism*, Mill proposed that the utilitarian standard “is not the agent’s own happiness, but the happiness all together.”<sup>200</sup> Langevin similarly combined national and individual interests. During the Confederation Debates, he stated that

half a dozen provinces laying adjacent to each other and having one and the same power, having different tariffs, exhibit a state of affairs which, from its very nature cannot continue long. However, setting aside this anomaly, we find the North American colonies for which a more vast political career must be provided. The people have too long laboured under the weight of disabilities which, by wounding their pride, have placed them in a humiliating position before the eyes of the world.<sup>201</sup>

Once the Confederation plan was passed, Langevin suggested, the state could govern more effectively and the Canadian people could take advantage of increased opportunities offered by the larger and more important nation. The elite linked their ambitions to all citizens by promoting a nation made up of individuals pursuing their own interests. A larger Confederation would create more opportunities for the citizens. Establishing the goals of the elite as the goals for all citizens is a typical governmental technique of a liberal state. But, in the meantime, by privileging and encouraging an

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<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 530. The linking of happiness and property is an interesting characteristic of nineteenth-century liberals. Joyce Appleby’s chapter on “The Promise of Property” explores this relationship amongst American republicans of the 1790s. New understandings of capitalism as way to govern social relationships deeply affected politics, economics, and “deeply held convictions about human purpose.” Joyce Appleby, *Capitalism and the New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s* (New York, 1984), 38.

<sup>200</sup> John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty: including Mill’s ‘Essay on Bentham,’ and selections from the Writings of Jeremy Bentham and John Austin*, Mary Warnock (Oxford, 2003 (1859-63)), 189.

<sup>201</sup> *Debates on the Subject of the Confederation*, 381.

expansionist outlook the dominant class spreads its project and strengthens its authority.<sup>202</sup>

This relationship between individual and national interest applied in Quebec as well as in Canada. In 1855 Cartier declared that “Canadien-français, n’oublions pas que, si nous voulons assurer notre existence nationale, il faut nous cramponner à la terre. Il faut que chacun de nous fasse tout en son pouvoir pour conserver son patrimoine territorial.”<sup>203</sup> By pursuing property and acquiring land, Cartier suggested that the individual could conserve French Canadian traditions.

For citizens to acquire and settle property, railway development was necessary. Mitchell Dean writes that “government is an activity that shapes the field of action, and thus, in this sense, attempts to shape freedom.”<sup>204</sup> Railways were important tools for Confederation-era politicians to shape the fields of action; people would be more likely to choose to settle land if there was an infrastructure to help the process. In a speech given at Halifax to Nova Scotia’s leading politicians, in 1864, Cartier applied the importance of railways to collective interests. He asked of the audience:

[v]ous refuseriez-vous à être absorbés par le commerce? Grâce au chemin de fer Intercolonial, Halifax sera envahie par celui qui maintenant enrichit Portland, Boston et New York. Si vous ne voulez pas faire toute en votre pouvoir pour nous aider à accomplir une grande œuvre, vous nous forcerez d’écouler aux Etats-Unis tout ce commerce qui devrait vous appartenir. Les habitants du Nouveau-Brunswick ou de la Nouvelle-Écosse seraient-ils dans un meilleur état, s’ils repoussaient ce commerce absorbant, cette source de prospérité envahissante? Il est bien manifeste que lorsque le chemin de fer Intercolonial sera construit—et

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<sup>202</sup> In his study of governmentality Mitchell Dean highlights the conflation of elite ambitions and popular interest. He suggests that liberal ways of governing often “conceive of the freedom of the governed as the technological means of securing the rights of government.” Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (London, 1999), 15.

<sup>203</sup> Cartier, 65.

<sup>204</sup> Dean, 13.

cela doit nécessairement arriver avec la Confédération—il y aura presque chaque jours des steamers qui quitteront Halifax pour Liverpool.<sup>205</sup>

This stressed a key aspect of Cartier's political outlook: self-interest as the engine of progress. Railways were essential for the maturation of these interests. If the separate provinces acted as individuals they would choose to accept Confederation because, once linked by a railway, they could improve their material interests.

Within the Quebec context, the proposal that provinces, like individuals, should pursue material interest and land expansion takes on important nationalist overtones. If the province prospers, its population could better preserve its language and traditions. In a report to Cartier, Stanlisas Drapeau, a rural colonization promoter, emphasized the relationship between expansion and nationality. Working for colonization, he claimed, helped him to “payer sa dette de patriotisme.”<sup>206</sup> In Drapeau's report the interaction of the individual, the community and technology is also underscored. He wrote that

le Bas Canada, pourtant, n'aurait pas un seul homme à perdre, si tous voulaient sincèrement le bonheur de pays; car plus il y aura d'hommes disposés et capables de faire du bien au pays et à la race qu'ils représentent, plus ainsi la nationalité canadienne-française grandir aux yeux de notre peuples.<sup>207</sup>

Individuals had to work for the security and prosperity of French Canada. He was hopeful, however, because there was land in the province's interior to use, “mais comment y parvenir, sans chemin? Impossible.”<sup>208</sup> In this example, railways were

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<sup>205</sup> *Cartier*, 396. This importance of railways in Cartier's political program is an example of what British historian, Chris Otter, calls “subject-object dualism.” In an article on city planning and vision in London, Otter argues that humans and material objects behave in relation to each other. Drawing on ideas of liberal governmentality, he suggests that in a liberal project people manipulate technology according to their needs, and modern technology allows individuals to continually improve their behaviour and surroundings. Chris Otter, “Making Liberalism Durable: Vision and Civility in the late Victorian City,” *Social History* (January 2002), 3.

<sup>206</sup> McCord Museum Archives (hereafter McCord), P197-A (George Etienne Cartier Fonds) vol.3, Stanlisas Drapeau, *Mémoire de la question de la colonisation du Bas-Canada*, 4 October 1861.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*

important for community interests. Community interests, however, depended on individuals choosing to stay in the province and settle the land.

The political discussions amongst French Canadians leading to Confederation illustrated this focus on land and the positive effects of expansion. During the Confederation debates, E.P. Taché reasoned that

we have vast forests not yet opened or occupied, and yet we have a population numbering over two and a half million souls. With such an extent of territory and so fertile a soil, he had no doubt whatsoever that in less than half a century Canada would embrace a population equal to that of the empires of the old world.<sup>209</sup>

Land expansion was central to the hopes of the Confederation scheme. The promise of land would bring settlers and lead to prosperity.

Immediately following the passing of the British North America Act, the Conservative Party's mouthpiece, *La Minerve*, celebrated the relationship between land, expansion and nationality:

nous sommes les enfants du sol; c'est le Canadien-Français qui a dompté la sauvage nature de notre Canada. Emporté sur son esquif, il sillonnait intrépidement les ondes courroucées du fleuve géant comme pour le soumettre à sa domination; sous sa hache altière, la forêt a perdu l'ostentation et la puissance; le tomahawk de l'Indien s'est abaissé devant l'arme meurtrière du vainqueur héroïque, et l'âme farouche de l'enfant des bois s'est rendue à cette force irrésistible de la civilisation, annoncé par la croix et implantée dans le sang de martyrs.<sup>210</sup>

Ostensibly, this was a celebration of Quebec's French-settler history. The language, however, was filled with political messages for the present. While stressing the centrality of land in the French Canadian identity, the paper also suggested that this history of territorial mastery be continued. In refusing to be limited by natural boundaries the article demonstrates an arrogance that was common in nineteenth-century liberal rhetoric.

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<sup>209</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, 6.

<sup>210</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, July 4, 1867.

The idea of nations behaving as individuals is applicable to *La Minerve's* encouragement of aggressive land settlement. The language of perseverance and triumph used by the paper to describe national success is very similar to the language Cartier used to describe his personal successes. In a speech given in Ottawa he stated, "il en est, Messieurs, des succès politiques comme de ceux de la vie privée; il faut les obtenir par un labeur incessant, une persévérance jamais ralentie, un courage dans les luttes, qui ne trébuche pas sur les obstacles."<sup>211</sup> Although these statements refer to different subjects, they reflect a common mentality. Whether in the accumulation of land or in career advancement, both statements suggest, people should determinedly pursue their own interests.

The above passage from *La Minerve* is not only outward looking, it presents French Canadians as the conquerors of the land. The article went on to state that "au nom de la religion, de l'humanité, de l'héroïsme, de l'intérêt individuel, le Canada a donc pris possession de ces riches territoires qui réclament aujourd'hui un titre plus brillant et plus digne de son importance.... Nous sommes les maîtres du sol."<sup>212</sup> This echoed the combination of personal ambition, cultural preservation and national expansion championed by Cartier. Canada was important because of its size, which was a result, at least in part, of the individual pursuit of property.

Land was important because it created links with history and offered society important opportunities to expand. It was also the key to political participation in nineteenth-century Quebec. To be given the right to vote a citizen had to be a male, at least twenty-one years old, and own real estate of a certain value, or if a tenant have an

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<sup>211</sup> Cartier, 541.

<sup>212</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, July 4 1867.

equivalent income.<sup>213</sup> Because of its social and political importance, anything that promoted the acquisition of land was celebrated. In an article discussing possible gold mines in eastern Quebec, *La Minerve* wrote:

S'il n'y a pas d'or en grande quantité, cette excitation aura toujours un bon effet, elle aura réussi à amener, sinon d'heureux mineurs, de forts et courageux colons, car on sait que ceux qui se rendent en pays étranger, pour y chercher de l'or, ont du courage et sont bien décidés à travailler hardiment pour gagner leur vie. Si la fortune leur est contraire dans l'exploitation des mines, ils trouveront toujours, dans une bonne terre, de quoi vivre.<sup>214</sup>

Even if there was no gold, *La Minerve* saw multiple advantages to the prospects. It would bring settlers who could expand and develop the eastern part of the province. As for the interests of settlers themselves, the papers suggested that even without gold, landowning was rewarding enough. If there was no gold, E.P. Taché was still excited by the prospects of exploring and developing a mineral industry, which “as practical men asserted, [were] much more valuable than the richest auriferous regions could be.”<sup>215</sup>

In addition to the link between land development and material improvement, there was also a perceived connection between industry and expansion. Leading to Confederation, *La Minerve* suggested that

Montréal s'enorgueillit, et à bon droit, des progrès de son industrie. Au milieu de la ville et partout dans les environs, nous voyons s'élever des fabriques qui, en même temps qu'elles agrandissent le marché nécessaire aux produits de la campagne, donnent de la paix aux ouvriers, attirent l'émigration étrangère, et préviennent l'éloignement de nos compatriotes.<sup>216</sup>

Confederation would improve Montreal's commercial potential, which would spread to the surrounding areas. The relationship between Montreal as a commercial center and its

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<sup>213</sup> Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher and Jean-Claude Robert, *Quebec: A History, 1867-1929*, Robert Chodos, trans (Toronto, 1983), 240. Linteau, Durocher and Robert specify that only 14.8% of Quebec's population was registered to vote. They also point out that women lost the right to vote in 1849.

<sup>214</sup> *La Minerve*, “Les Mines de la Chaudière, p. 2, June 2 1864.

<sup>215</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, 6.

<sup>216</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 3, January 3, 1867.

periphery was mutually beneficial. As the links became more fruitful Montreal's periphery would have more increased material comforts. Commerce was also described as leading to better social conditions. In a commercially successful society, the paper argued, workers would be more comfortable. This is comparable to the working-class agenda put forth by Médéric Lanctot, a lawyer, journalist, labour organizer and anti-Confederation activist. In his pamphlet *L'Association du Capital et du Travail*, he suggested that if workers and their families were more comfortable, a violent social revolution would be avoided. The association of labour and capital would be of national benefits because workers would be able to buy more, leading to a higher national production.<sup>217</sup>

Despite disagreeing with *La Minerve* over most policies and social trends, *Le Pays* also highlighted commerce and industry's role in serving civilization. The liberal paper called for the opening and development of "des chemins de colonisation indispensables,"<sup>218</sup> and suggested that the paucity of means of communication with the Saguenay region "paralyse presque entièrement le progrès de la colonisation."<sup>219</sup> During a dispute with one conservative paper, *Le Pays* even tied industry to Christianity, asking "en facilitant les communications, en effaçant les distances et rapprochant les peuples, l'industrie n'ouvre-t-elle pas la voie au christianisme?"<sup>220</sup> Cartier, of whom *Le Pays* was

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<sup>217</sup> Médéric Lanctot, *L'Association du capital et du travail* (Montreal, 1872), 27-29. The importance of property for political participation can be highlighted by Lanctot's early political career. In 1866 Lanctot won a seat on Montreal's city council. This was the launching pad for 1867 federal campaign against Cartier. To slow his momentum conservatives quickly began attacking him. They successfully had his municipal victory annulled, based on the fact that he did not meet the property qualifications to hold office. Jean Hamelin, "Médéric Lanctot," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <<http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=39208&query=lanctot>>, 2000.

<sup>218</sup> *Le Pays*, "L'état colonial," p. 2, January 5, 1866.

<sup>219</sup> *Le Pays*, "Colonisation," p. 2, September 6, 1866. Colonisation will be discussed in more detail later this chapter.

<sup>220</sup> *Le Pays*, "Le Courrier du Canada et l'industrie," p. 2, October 7, 1865.

a fierce critic, made a similar claim at an 1866 banquet in Saint-Jean, for the Bishop of Saint-Hyacinthe. “Si l’industrie est l’expression du génie départi à l’humanité,” he claimed, “nous devons faire valoir nos facultés pour mettre le travail au profit de la religion.”<sup>221</sup> This ideological resemblance is interesting. Cartier and the liberal paper shared a focus on progress and an interest (albeit a mild interest in *Le Pays*’ case) in serving religion. Despite their differences both sides had similar ideas about how economy and society should be managed.

It is important to recognize, however, that if there was a great deal of support for expansion and development, among French Canadian politicians and journalists, this was not a monolithic support. *La Minerve*’s treatment of land is interesting, as it reflects the period’s tensions between progress and tradition, industry and agriculture. An 1866 article celebrated the ease with which farmers were growing and selling their grain. At the same time, however, the paper cautioned that

Si notre pays est jeune, si le sol est d’une étonnante fertilité, il ne faut pas en conclure à l’éternité de cette richesse. Le sol est une machine à production, une machine très puissante pour celui qui sait en faire un usage rationnel; mais qui se détériore promptement si on en fait un mauvais usage, ou si on veut en obtenir des résultats sans proportion avec ses moyens.<sup>222</sup>

In her article “La nature comme légitimation,” Anne Gilbert suggests that Canadian representations of nature have taken two simultaneous and contradictory paths; on the one hand nature should be exploited, while on the other it should be respected.<sup>223</sup> By

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<sup>221</sup> Cartier, 501.

<sup>222</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, April 5, 1866.

<sup>223</sup> Anne Gilbert, “La nature comme légitimation,” in Caroline Andrew, ed., *Dislocation et Permanence : L’invention du Canada au quotidien* (Ottawa: Les presses de l’Université d’Ottawa, 1999), 41. Gilbert also suggests that this dual representation was present in the discourse of natives as well as that of Canadians of European descent. These two conceptions of nature are interesting given the use of organic metaphors explored in the previous chapter. On the one hand, nature was elevated as a guide to explain social relations and governance. On the other hand though, the comparison of society to a tree meant that it could be manipulated and controlled.

treating the land as a productive machine, *La Minerve* suggested a liberal and modern understanding of nature, which seeks to exploit and benefit from it. The paper also promoted a rational and moderate usage of land. The belief in reason fits with the larger ideas of liberalism. *La Minerve*, however, also warned farmers not to be greedy or thoughtless in their pursuit of material improvements, so that agriculture, “cette précieuse et solide richesse de la nation,” could continue in the future.<sup>224</sup> This caution seems to reflect the conservative tendencies that have been seen as central to the French Canadian identity.

*La Minerve*'s discomfort with unfettered progress and expansion can also be noted in an article that condemned the American example, where

le progrès s'éloigne de plus en plus de l'idée morale que doit entretenir toute nation civilisée, et leur prétendue prospérité a déjà vu des sacrifices à l'humanité.... Il n'y a plus de sûreté aux Etats-Unis; les étrangers passent en tremblant parmi des légions d'escrocs de New York et sont obligés de se hérissier d'armes pour inspirer le respect dû à la propriété.<sup>225</sup>

They use the example of railway crashes to drive this point home; because of dishonest developers who cut corners, an object which was intended to bring comfort and progress was causing harm. Similarly, in a discussion of whether or not Lower Canada should be industrial or agricultural, *La Minerve* wrote “plusieurs séduits par les doctrines économiques anglaises et par l'apparence des richesses dont elles colorent un peuple, ont répondu sans hésiter que le Bas-Canada doit être avant tout industriel, et que son avenir repose dans les entrailles des manufactures.” The paper went on to criticize this position, however, because “la prospérité anglaise est instable.... les doctrines économiques n'ont fait qu'enrichir un certain nombre d'entrepreneurs d'industrie, et plonger dans le

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<sup>224</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, April 5, 1866.

<sup>225</sup> *La Minerve*, “L'ère des catastrophes,” p. 2, November 3, 1865.

paupérisme la grande masse des ouvriers et du peuple.”<sup>226</sup> Rather than isolating these quotes as proof of conservative distrust of progress, we should combine their analysis with that of the paper’s progressive and developmental stances. Taken together, these conservative moments seem to reflect a discomfort with unregulated materialism. The unfettered pursuit of property could create disorder. While *La Minerve* seems to support progress, it also advocates maintaining a link to tradition and agriculture. Without this link, they fear, the benefits for the people will only be superficial, and will be followed by poverty.

Amongst these groups who expressed reservations about unlimited expansion were those who opposed Confederation. Land development also featured heavily in these arguments. Luc Letellier de Saint-Just, a member of the Rouge party, admitted that “we have a rich country as represented; we have wheat fields, mineral resources, forests, rivers, and lakes, but to make them available did we require an increase of territory? We have territory enough and an increase would be a source of weakness, not of strength.”<sup>227</sup> His opposition was based in ideas of land development, arguing that it would be better to develop the resources already possessed, rather than acquire new resources. Similarly, Rouge leader A.A. Dorion claimed: “I do not say that I shall be opposed to their Confederation for all time to come. Population may extend over the wilderness that now lies beyond the Maritime Provinces and ourselves, and commercial intercourse may increase sufficiently to render Confederation desirable.”<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, October 2, 1866.

<sup>227</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, Feb 3, p12

<sup>228</sup> *Debates on the Subject of Confederation*, 248. Dorion’s and the Rouge opposition to Confederation was discussed in the previous chapter.

In his lecture to the Institut canadien, Gonzalve Doutre stated this even more strongly. Despite opposing Confederation he claimed that “la proximité des provinces britanniques obligerait un jour ou l’autre le Canada à s’unir avec ses provinces, et à ne former qu’une seule et même nationalité.”<sup>229</sup> It was the details of the Confederation that he opposed. It seems that there was a philosophical agreement amongst Confederation’s supporters and its critics.<sup>230</sup> Both sides appealed to the same principles of land expansion and development. The differences between the two groups were over how and where these principles should be applied.

This divide between principles and practices was also noticeable in *Le Pays*, which frequently referred to expansion, technology and railways in favourable terms, but was critical of their pace, management and development. In a criticism of the Bleus suggestion that more land will necessarily attract more settlers, *Le Pays* wrote “on a parlé de nos immenses forêts, du courage des colons, des ressources innombrables du pays...et enfin de tout ce qui séduit l’imagination, mais rien de ce qui détermine la volonté, rien de ce qui fait vraiment l’émigration.”<sup>231</sup> Despite being a direct criticism of Cartier, the liberal paper demonstrated a shared thinking with the conservatives. Both groups are in agreement that the pursuit of land and resources is favourable and advantageous; their disagreement comes over how to encourage people to take advantage of the land and resources. Rather than speak in vague and optimistic terms, *Le Pays* suggests that “nous voulons parler des secours offerts aux squatters qui viennent s’établir dans nos bois en

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<sup>229</sup> Gonzalve Doutre, *Le Principe des Nationalités : Lecture publique fait devant l’Institut de Montréal* (Montréal, 1864), 6.

<sup>230</sup> As was noted in the previous chapter, he stated that the similarity between his position and Confederation’s supporters “n’a été qu’à un point de vue tout-à-fait philosophique ou plutôt sociale.”<sup>230</sup> Doutre, 5.

<sup>231</sup> *Le Pays*, “Patriotisme et colonisation,” p. 2, October 1 1864.

reculant les limites de nos prospérités et de notre avenir.”<sup>232</sup> Although a condemnation of the Bleus, the idea of expanding the limits of prosperity features the ideas of progress and overcoming the wild. Contrary to the arguments of Conservatives, however, *Le Pays* claimed that increasing the country’s landholdings was not enough to increase the population; the government should do more to develop the quality of life on the frontier.

The shared attitude between the two papers over land settlement and expansion was displayed by the two papers’ treatment of the death of Jean-Baptiste-Eric Dorion, a prominent liberal and Confederation’s *enfant terrible*. *Le Pays* lauded him for being a true patriot. It went on to suggest that

Jamais aucun homme n’a plus fait au milieu de nous pour le progrès de l’industrie, pour le bien-être du peuple. Ardent ami du prolétaire, du cultivateur, de l’homme de peine, il les a aidés de ses conseils désintéressés, de son exemple pratique, de son dévouement et souvent de sa bourse.<sup>233</sup>

His practical example and dedication to colonization was seen when he moved to an eastern township to promote and develop the land. *La Minerve* was critical of him for being an ideologue and strongly partisan. Nevertheless, the paper decided to follow “l’ancien adage que des morts, il ne faut rien dire si ce n’est pas bon.”<sup>234</sup> The paper celebrates the fact that he “s’enforça dans la forêt et créa un établissement dans le township de Durham, qui s’appela L’Avenir en mémoire de son journal. Grâce à cette persévérance qui l’avait distingué jusque-là il eut bientôt réuni autour de lui un bon

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<sup>232</sup> *Le Pays*, “Patriotism et Colonization,” p. 2, October 1 1864.

<sup>233</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, November 3 1866. There is also a similarity here between Dorion and Cartier’s combination of personal and class interests and governing the citizenship. As he encouraged people to settle, Dorion conducted popular behaviour according to his own interests as a developer and landowner. This is a liberal governmental strategy.

<sup>234</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, November 6 1866.

nombre de colons.”<sup>235</sup> The two papers disagreed about the merits of Dorion’s political career, but both celebrated his commitment to expansion and the settlement of new land.

That both papers call for the settlement of more land and the exploitation of resources suggests that there was some ideological agreement between elites in Quebec politics. The disagreements lie in the execution of policy. According to the tenets of modern liberalism, these disagreements were of the kinds that were beneficial to the execution of good government. Because humanity is fallible, Mill argued, “unity of opinion is not desirable.”<sup>236</sup> Such a practical disagreement, framed within a common theoretical understanding, is an example of different opinions with underlying sameness underlined by Mitchell Dean in his work on governmentality. Dean states, “the question of how to properly regulate and limit the activities of the governed is a key part of liberal rationality of government.”<sup>237</sup> The political debates over expansion and Confederation were debates about how the state should achieve its goals, not over what these goals should be.

### **Land, Nature, Nation and the West**

After the passing of the BNA Act, on July 1, 1867, debates over expansion and development continued among French Canadian politicians and journalists. One of the key areas for such debates was Canada’s westward expansion, which was one central points of Confederation. In *The Critical Years*, W.M. Morton referred to July 1, 1867, as “a beginning.” He went on the write that “Union to be Union had to include

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<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>236</sup> Mill, *On Liberty and Utilitarianism*, 131.

<sup>237</sup> Dean, 16, 117.

expansion.”<sup>238</sup> More recently, Anne Gilbert, in her study of historical representations of the Canadian landscape, makes a similar point when she writes that “Le Canada en 1867 ne comprend que l’Ontario, le Québec, le Nouveau-Brunswick et la Nouvelle-Écosse, mais dans l’esprit des pères de la Confédération, tout l’Ouest, jusqu’au Pacifique fait déjà partie du pays.”<sup>239</sup> As initially proposed by A.T. Galt, the minister of finance and leader of Quebec’s English-speaking politicians, in 1858, expansion was central to the Confederation scheme. In Galt’s model, once the separate provinces were united, they could expand to the east to find a winter seaport, and to the west to develop areas for trade and settlement. To the west there was also a hope that a trade route to Asia could be discovered. Technological innovations made such aspirations possible.<sup>240</sup> There was a feeling that the Intercolonial Railway, the building of which, Cartier suggested “doit nécessairement arriver avec la Confédération,”<sup>241</sup> would improve communication and trade it would strengthen Canadian ties with Great Britain. Canada’s link to Great Britain could act as a counter-balance to the republicanism of the United States.<sup>242</sup>

Cartier was initially slow to embrace the acquisition of the Northwest. Cartier saw western expansion, as it was first proposed, as a Clear Grit scheme to increase the English population and make representation by population more appealing. Cartier had been to London in 1858 to seek imperial permission for the federation of British North America, according to the Galt Plan. While he was in London, George Brown’s *Globe* accused him of defending French rights, and opposing the acquisition of the

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<sup>238</sup> Morton, 221-222.

<sup>239</sup> Anne Gilbert, “Territoires” in Andrew, *Dislocation et permanence*, 22.

<sup>240</sup> A.A. den Otter, “Alexander Galt, the 1859 Tariff and Canadian Economic Nationalism,” *Canadian Historical Review* 1982 63(2), 155, 162, 167.

<sup>241</sup> Cartier, 395-396.

<sup>242</sup> J.F. Conway, *The West* (Toronto, 1983), 12; Doug Owrarn, *The Promise of Eden* (Toronto, 1980), 31-33; Morton, *The Critical Years*, 21.

Northwest.<sup>243</sup> Years later, in an 1869 Parliamentary debate, Cartier explained his position. He acknowledged that people thought he was against expansion, “but he had never been opposed to the acquisition of the territory, per se, but only it being acquired by Ontario, adding to the undue influence of Ontario.”<sup>244</sup> While he was supportive of expansion, he argued that it needed to be balanced amongst the provinces, so that none would become dominant, and none would lose any of their rights.<sup>245</sup>

Despite his initial fear of an Ontario led expansion, Cartier played a major role in both the settlement of the Northwest and British Columbia’s entry into the Dominion. By the late 1860s the Hudson’s Bay Company’s charter for control of the Northwest was no longer acceptable to the Canadian politicians and journalists. *La Minerve* referred to the HBC as an obstacle to progress: a “terrible colosse qui refuse la civilisation et met une limite aux légitimes empiétements de progrès.”<sup>246</sup> Through expansion the Canadian government could increase its territory, and also spread civilization. Cartier and William McDougall were sent to London to negotiate the terms of transfer of Rupert’s Land to Canada. The agreement reached was that Canada would receive all the land from the Hudson’s Bay Company, except for one-twentieth in the fertile belt and the areas adjacent to its trading posts.<sup>247</sup> Cartier saw the transfer of land as a major step towards the Canadian transcontinental vision. In a speech in Montreal he said

[n]ous allons posséder un pays extrêmement fertile. Nous aurons là-bas 50 millions d’acres de terres en prairies pour faire concurrence aux éleveurs et cultivateurs de blé des Etats-Unis. Oui le Canada aura là d’immenses prairies propres au nourrissage et à la culture.<sup>248</sup>

<sup>243</sup> Careless, *Colonists and Canadiens*, 243; Morton, 65.

<sup>244</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1<sup>st</sup> Parliament, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 1869, vol 2 (Ottawa, 1975), 485.

<sup>245</sup> Morton, 235.

<sup>246</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, February 5, 1868.

<sup>247</sup> Morton, 233; Owsram, 79.

<sup>248</sup> Cartier, *Discours*, 609.

For Cartier, as we have seen, land was one of the key elements of nationhood. As Canada increased its territory, he suggested, it would grow more important and secure. At the same time as Canada increased its prestige by becoming physically larger it would also open up land for cultivation. This would make the country richer, because it could increase trade.

Cartier used American expansion as the example Canada should follow. This is interesting given the context of anti-Americanism in which confederation was born. In what Alastair Sweeny refers to as “the most severely nationalistic pronouncement every uttered by a prominent Canadian politician,” Cartier claimed that “it is necessary to be anti-Yankee. . . we can and will build a northern nation.”<sup>249</sup> Cartier’s disapproval of the United States seems to have been over the execution of policy, rather than over the ideas that motivated their policies. In a ninety-minute speech, given to Parliament in 1869, he stated that “considering the acquisition of so important a territory we were naturally induced to consider the history of the successive acquisition of territory by our neighbours in the United States.” There was opposition to expansion in the States, as some critics claimed “they had territory enough; but the other idea prevailed,” and America now stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific.<sup>250</sup> Cartier also presented the American example as a foil for Canadian successes. If the Northwest joined the young Dominion, he claimed that

we would acquire almost by one act a greater extent of territory, and in some respects more important, that the United States had acquired in the last fifty years. . . . It is a matter of glorification to us that it so short a time since we entered Confederation, we made such progress. Who, under such circumstances, could say that this Confederation had not been successful? In this measure we

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<sup>249</sup> Sweeny, 13.

<sup>250</sup>Parliament *Debates*, 1869, 481

were completing the territorial element for which protective provision had been made out in the Act of Confederation.<sup>251</sup>

Canada would become great because of its expansive territory, but also because of the speed in which it acquired this territory. For the nation to behave like an individual, as Cartier suggested it should, it had to be ambitious and acquire property. Just as Cartier worked and fought to be successful, he encouraged Canada to compete against the United States.

Western expansion was tied to Canadian expansion and national ambition. As with the settlement of land, this would personally benefit Cartier as a railway investor. In his study of the attitudes of French-Quebeckers towards French minorities across Canada, A.I. Silver suggests, that Cartier was interested in expansion, but never explicitly mentions French Canadian expansion to the west.<sup>252</sup> Cartier did, however, tie the West to Quebec and French Canada. At an 1869 banquet, held by the traders of Quebec City for Cartier and Langevin, he made an explicit link between Quebec and western expansion, and gave a telling example of the combination of influences on his politics. He began “Québec doit être chère non seulement à ses habitants, mais encore à ceux de tout le Bas-Canada, non seulement ses derniers, mais aussi aux habitants d’Ontario et de l’Ouest.”<sup>253</sup> These first lines described the ‘new nationality’ where the separate provinces would work together, each benefiting from the advances and prosperity of the others. Once the Northwest was acquired, the Red River region would reflect this new nationality. The new province, Cartier hoped, “ne doit pas être une province de Québec,

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<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 481.

<sup>252</sup> Silver, *The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation 1864-1900* (Toronto 1982), 73. Silver relies primarily on newspaper throughout his study. While cautious of the problems of attempting to explore public opinion, he suggests that “even papers that represented positions as far apart as rouge and ultramontane nevertheless shared certain common points of view. And indeed, the questions which we have asked of public opinion are particularly the sort to bring out common points of view.” (30)

<sup>253</sup> Cartier, 641.

d'Ontario, de la Nouvelle-Écosse ou du Nouveau-Brunswick, mais une province *sui generis*, ouverte à tous sans distinction. Si nous avons des relations plus suivies, plus intimes, nous deviendrions plus unis.”<sup>254</sup> By promoting a new solution, based on compromise, Cartier was acting in a liberal way, as described by Mill. In *On Liberty* Mill wrote “there is always a need of persons not only to discover new truths. . . but to commence new practices.”<sup>255</sup>

Cartier then moved from Canadian (new) nationalism to French Canadian nationalism. He stated that

[s]i l'Ouest est aujourd'hui prospère, c'est grâce à l'esprit d'entreprise, à la persévérance de la race intelligente, qui avait résolu, coûte que coûte, de se domicilier sur les bords du Saint-Laurent. Nos concitoyens de l'Ouest ont suivi le soleil, et avec ses deux éléments des prospérités : un heureux climat et un sol fertile, ils ont réussi. Mais ils ne seraient rien si nous n'avions pas d'abord colonisé cette province.<sup>256</sup>

Placing Quebec City in an important position demonstrates—at least superficially—a commitment to French Canadian nationalism. The last sentences of the comment are important because they tie the past to the present. Rather than rejecting expansion because of a conservative isolationism, Cartier presents western expansion as an extension of the settlement of Quebec.

By linking French Canadian nationalism and Canadian expansion Cartier effectively combined the goals of the elite with the goals for all citizens. As we have seen, this is a typical governmental technique of a liberal state. By privileging and encouraging an expansionist outlook, the dominant class spreads its project and

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<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, 651.

<sup>255</sup> Mill, *On Liberty and Utilitarianism*, 138,

<sup>256</sup> Cartier, 641.

strengthens its influence.<sup>257</sup> Cartier used two main reasons to support the link between survival and expansion. The first was that it would open up land for colonization and settlement. The second was that it would put Quebecers in contact with the Métis in the Northwest, who were also French-Catholic. Land and culture were two elements of nationality, and as such were linked. As with Canadian nationalism, he argued that if French Canadians expanded their territory, their culture and language would be stronger. Settlement of new land would allow farmers to increase their assets and fortunes; once they were richer, they would have more political power and influence. In the context of French Canadian emigration to the United States, these two benefits were important possible solutions. In 1872, Cartier stated that “the subject of immigration is of such vast importance, and so intimately connected with the development of the country and its resources, that it should command the earnest attention of the Government.”<sup>258</sup> The government, he suggested, should consider this question in tandem with the construction of the Pacific Railway and other public works.

Cartier’s suggestion that western expansion and technological development were the best way to solve the French Canadian exodus was echoed by other French Canadian elites. A sermon printed in *La Minerve*, quoted the pastor of Montreal’s Notre Dame Basilica who referred to “émigration comme mal et sur la colonisation comme remède.”<sup>259</sup> In his study of Curé Labelle, Gabrielle Dussault explores an elite reaction to colonization and expansion. Dussault refers to colonization, marked by the clearing of forests, settlement of land, and exploitation of resources, as a “social fact” nineteenth-

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<sup>257</sup> Dean, 15.

<sup>258</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1<sup>st</sup> Parliament, 5th Session, 1872, (Ottawa, 1872), 1872, 18-19.

<sup>259</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, May 7 1869.

century Quebec. It was supported by both ultramontanes and anti-ultramontanes, and by both rouges and bleu politicians.<sup>260</sup> Curé Labelle argued railways were central to messianic expansionism and French Canadian settlement of the west. Curé Labelle also made strong links between notions of progress and development to Catholicism, arguing that the most serious way to offend God was by not taking advantage of the resources provided by Providence.<sup>261</sup>

The response to emigration has often been treated as a conservative reaction to the province's social disintegration. More recent works have suggested that Quebec's colonization movement needs to be seen in a broader context. Serge Courville, in his study of colonization propaganda, has argued that, in fact, colonization societies and their supporters among the French-Canadian elite were following a colonial trend. Rural Quebec then, whether it was the Eastern Townships or the north of the province, became the promised land that the west was to Americans and Upper Canadians.<sup>262</sup> Within this new frame, the language used to promote and describe colonization needs to be revisited. *Le Pays* suggested that "cette émigration ne cessera que lorsque le Canada aura adopté les moyens efficaces pour développer les ressources immenses et incalculables que nous offrent nos beaux pays. Les pouvoirs d'eau abondent partout, et, cependant nous n'avons point ou peu de manufactures."<sup>263</sup> Capitalists within the province should follow the

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<sup>260</sup> Gabrielle Dussault, *Le Curé Labelle: messianisme, utopie et colonisation au Québec, 1850-1900* (Montreal, 1983), 7, 10.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>262</sup> Serge Courville, *Rêve d'empire: le Québec et le rêve colonial* (Ottawa, 2000), 13. J.I. Little has also made valuable contributions to studying Quebec's colonization movement in a larger context. He suggests that rather than "being a retreat from the modern world, Quebec's colonization movement was an attempt by members of the French Canadian bourgeoisie to deal with the forces of industrial capitalism." The colonization movement was compatible with industrialization, but resistant to the anglicizing affects of industrialization. J.I. Little, *Nationalism, Capitalism and Colonization in Nineteenth-Century Quebec* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 32.

<sup>263</sup> *Le Pays*, "Emigration Canadienne," p. 2, August 6 1868.

American example and build more manufacturing plants to provide people with jobs. Industry was the most powerful engine of civilization because it overcame distances and opened communication between people; it needed to be used to preserve French Canadian traditions.

*La Minerve*, like Cartier and Labelle, tied development, expansion and immigration together. “Nous avons nos terres immenses et fertiles, nos forêts inépuisables, nos innombrables pouvoirs d’eau, nos mines aussi nombreuses que riches et variées,” it read, “il nous manque du capital et des bras.”<sup>264</sup> The paper hoped that once the emigrants returned they would be well received, so long as they returned “mais qu’ils reviennent librement, de leur propre initiative.”<sup>265</sup> Once they returned “ils auront toute facilité de s’installer dans les terres incultes, soit en s’entendant avec les sociétés de colonisation, soit en obtenant du gouvernement des terrains à bon marché.”<sup>266</sup> The paper demonstrated a liberal understanding of government. It encouraged the government to facilitate settlement and land owning. In this instance, the government would shape conduct by helping citizens reach their full potential as landowning citizens.

The development of Quebec’s hinterland and the settlement of the Eastern Townships were also seen as possible solutions to the flood of French Canadians to the south. In a speech to Parliament, Pierre-Joseph-Olivier Chauveau, representative for Quebec City and the province’s first premier after the passing of the BNA, described the settlement of the West with the settlement of open land within Canada. “Now that we were enlarging our borders” he stated

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<sup>264</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, November 2 1868.

<sup>265</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, March 6 1869.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*

a very different system must be pursued, or else there will be very little use in annexing the North-West. If we acquire this vast stretch of territory we must certainly take measures not only to fill it up but to fill up the great, unoccupied areas in the Dominion as well. Unless we do this we will never attain to the dignity of a Dominion.<sup>267</sup>

Chauveau saw it as a matter of French Canadian pride that the Chicoutimi and Saguenay regions had been “transformed from primeval solitudes to flourishing communities which were now represented in the House.”<sup>268</sup> This local development had to be continued, but also turned outward to settle the Northwest. Like Cartier and *La Minerve*, he saw expansion as important to French Canadian survival and to Canadian nationalism.

*La Minerve*'s also suggested that French Canadians should settle in the Ottawa valley region. This was, in part, because it was based in Montreal. The paper stated

qui ne comprend que les vallées de l'Ottawa et de Matawa sont appelées un jour de devenir une des bases de la prospérité future de Montréal, si l'on compte les richesses minérales que doivent receler les montagnes du Nord, les nombreux et magnifiques pouvoirs d'eau parsemés à chaque pas la qualité énorme de bois de construction et de chauffage que renferme cet immense territoire qui n'aura que Montréal pour débouche de ses richesses agricoles, forestières et minérales.<sup>269</sup>

Again, this demonstrates the combination of an expansionist attitude with a desire for commercial development. The paper is urging French Canadians to acquire more land, for the benefit of Montreal. This is similar to Cartier's suggestion that individual efforts will help the community.

Technology and communication was central to this expansionist outlook. *Le Pays* claimed you could not open a newspaper without seeing a discussion of railways. The

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<sup>267</sup> Parliament *Debates*, 1869, 443-44.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>269</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, August 4 1870. In a 1987 lecture, J.M.S. Careless suggested that people in urban centres typically were supportive of national-expansion projects. Resulting from the concentration of information, population and opinion, the urban consciousness was more aware of national perceptions. The commercial ambitions of the urban bourgeois were tied to the increase trade that would result from expansion. J.M.S. Careless, *Frontier and Metropolis: Regions, Cities and Identities in Canada before 1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 31, 51.

discussions were inherently advantageous because “elles entretiennent un courant salubre dans l’esprit public, attirent l’attention sur certains besoins, éveillent les intérêts locaux, stimulent, font naître ceux des particuliers.” Regarding the acquisition of British Columbia, *La Minerve* illustrated the importance of railways. The paper stated that without the construction of the Pacific railway “ce pays éloigné ne saurait former que nominalement partie de la confédération. Il serait dans un état d’isolement complet, et nos relations commerciales n’étant pas plus étroites que par le passé.”<sup>270</sup> Again, like Cartier, the paper’s editors had selfish reasons to promote railway development. These personal interests, however, do not discredit the belief that railways would overcome distances and make a transcontinental national possible. The paper clearly stated this combination, in regards to the navigation of the Saint-Lawrence, claiming “la Compagnie de Richelieu a toujours si bien compris que les intérêts étaient intimement liés à la satisfaction qu’elle donnerait aux exigences du public et du commerce toujours croissant du pays”<sup>271</sup>

As with the how land should be used, *Le Pays* frequently agreed with the expansionism of the conservative discourse, but disagreed over how it should be organized and executed. Regarding the emigration to the United States *Le Pays* identified this theoretical agreement. “Tout le monde s’accorde à déplorer cet état des choses, et divers moyens sont suggérés pour y mettre un terme, mais rien n’a encore été tenté jusqu’ici pour arrivé à ce but.”<sup>272</sup> The article goes on to suggest that all the methods suggested by the government had been insufficient so far, as the Conservatives’ appeal to the nationality, without offering solutions. Similarly, *Le Pays* was supportive of

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<sup>270</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, February 1 1871.

<sup>271</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, December 3 1864.

<sup>272</sup> *Le Pays*, “L’émigration aux Etats-Unis,” p. 2, June 6 1865.

colonization societies, to encourage settlement in open land, but critical because the societies were linked too closely with the administration. These societies would not be effective and efficient, the paper argued, until economic and financial conditions improved.<sup>273</sup> Both the conservative and liberal press were supportive of colonization societies. Both sides also agreed that further expansion was desirable. The disagreement was over how this should be led and organized.

Like *La Minerve*, *Le Pays* suggested that communication and technology are central to stopping emigration, as they will facilitate expansion. In one instance, *Le Pays* accused the Conservative government of ignoring railway development, stating

Si le gouvernement faisait terminer les chemins de St. Urbain à la Baie de Ha! Ha!; de Chicoutimi au lac St.Jean et celui de l'anse St. Jean, en partant du township Tremblay, cela encouragerait les colons qui sont déjà établis dans ces endroits et en engagerait un grand nombre d'autres à aller s'y établir.<sup>274</sup>

Railways would allow people to settle in distant parts of the province, and let trade flow between these new settlements. *Le Pays* was not strictly isolationist about railways, however. In a discussion of the West, the paper claimed “les premières choses à avoir, ce sont des chemins, des routes ou des canaux.”<sup>275</sup> Once the infrastructure was established the transportation of products and of people would be more affordable. It would be easier for people to settle new land, and easier for these people to survive and prosper once they had relocated. The railway would be the most important, they suggested because it would have “l'avantage de devenir le premier tronçon de ce chemin de fer du Pacifique dont on a tant parlé.”<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> *Le Pays*, “Les agents de colonisations,” p. 2, August 4 1869.

<sup>274</sup> *Le Pays*, “Colonisation,” p. 2, September 6 1866.

<sup>275</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, October 5, 1869.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*

From their treatment of land development and technology, it seems that *Le Pays* shared an expansionist and developmental mentality with the *La Minerve* and *Cartier*. The two groups, however, were in frequent disagreement over how this mentality should be acted upon. While theoretically supportive of expansion, the paper was critical of the acquisition of the Northwest, referring to as “une œuvre artificielle; c’est une imitation qui pour un instant nous charme et replace la réalité. . . .”<sup>277</sup> They had similarly criticisms of the plan for the construction of the Pacific Railway, which

par ses avantages et sa nature semble plutôt un rêve, une utopie, que la réalisation d’un projet politique, ou d’une entreprise commerciale. On en parlait comme on parle de la navigation aérienne, c’est-à-dire d’une chose désirable, mais fort problématique et encore dans le domaine des songes.<sup>278</sup>

It was not the idea of development and expansion they opposed but how it was being achieved. It was more important, they suggested, to develop the infrastructure within Quebec than outside the province.<sup>279</sup>

The difference between ideas and execution was also present amongst Cartier’s political rivals. Luther Holton stated that, while he had been opposed to Confederation, “he felt that the natural consequence of this Confederation was undoubtedly the annexation of this territory [Northwest] to the country, and he had been and was now prepared to support the government in aiding that object.”<sup>280</sup> Once the Confederation scheme was passed, however, he supported it and worked for its expansion. Even though he was committed to Canada’s acquisition of the Northwest, Holton stated in 1869 that

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<sup>277</sup> *Le Pays*, “Revue parlementaire,” p. 2, June 1 1869.

<sup>278</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, November 2 1869.

<sup>279</sup> In their survey of Quebec history, Linteau, Durocher and Robert discuss the importance of Quebec’s internal development among, what they label, the petty bourgeoisie, which was made up of journalists, writers, teachers, and members of the liberal professions. Like the English-speaking elites, this petty bourgeoisie stressed progress and development, but it combined it with an idea of cultural “rattrapage.” Linteau, Durocher and Robert, 265, 141-148.

<sup>280</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1<sup>st</sup> Parliament, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1867, 245.

“[h]e had always contended that it was right to take steps to acquire it, although he might take exception to the terms on which it had been acquired.”<sup>281</sup> Holton demonstrated a political pragmatism and flexibility similar to Cartier’s.

In an early debate over the acquisition of the Northwest, A.A. Dorion, the leader of Quebec’s liberal *Rouges* party, stated that “with five or six more millions of acres of land in New Brunswick and Quebec, which would be opened up by the building of the Intercolonial Railway, there need be no hurry to send our people to the Northwest.” Dorion recommended settling New Brunswick and Quebec, because the Northwest was “more distant and less accessible.”<sup>282</sup> His opposition was based on the same ideas of property, expansion and development that Cartier used. His disagreement with Cartier was not ideological, but practical. In an 1871 discussion of British Columbia entering Confederation, Dorion demonstrated his practical over theoretical concerns even more clearly. He stated that “the question had two aspects, the political and the financial, the latter, however, was much the most important.”<sup>283</sup>

## Conclusion

On matters of property and acquisition Cartier articulated his ideas more clearly and consistently than in other matters. He created an example of an individual working simultaneously for his own and society’s gains. He repeatedly tied the acquisition of land to political participation, cultural conservation and national ambition.

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<sup>281</sup> Parliament *Debates*, 1869, 507. Similarly, Thomas Workman, an Anglophone from Montreal, opposed Cartier’s Pacific Railway plan, even though he encouraged the completion of Confederation. Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1st Parliament, 4th Session, 1871, Forthcoming, 286.

<sup>282</sup> Parliament *Debates*, 1867, 228.

<sup>283</sup> Parliament *Debates*, 288.

In Quebec *Le Pays* and *La Minerve*, the Rouges and the Bleus, seemed to agree that economy, society and government were intimately linked. Land played a central role in each of these categories. Partisan differences were concerned with the management of these categories, but all sides agreed that property was materially and culturally important.

Questions of management are linked to questions of governmentality. Foucault stated that “government is the right disposition of things, arranged so as to lead to a convenient end.... the targets of power are also things, on the one hand territory, and on the other its inhabitants.”<sup>284</sup> How land is settled and organized is a central concern for the government because it physically shaped the possible actions of the citizens. Property was similarly important for the individual, as it was essential to demonstrating an awareness of self-interest and opening the doors of political participation. When the individual citizens expanded their property through colonization it served the ends of the government. For both Quebec and Canada the settlement of new land would allow a more prosperous and influential population, which would be able to resist cultural and political encroachments from English Canada and the United States, respectively.

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<sup>284</sup> Foucault, “Governmentality,” 93.

## Chapter 4

### The Cultivation of Self-Government: Freedom, Reason, Progress and Development

*Nous vivons dans une époque et dans un pays de tolérance religieuse et de liberté politique, à une époque et dans un pays où les majorités, quelque'écrasantes qu'elles soient, doivent compter avec les traités qui consacrent les droits des minorités.*

*Le Pays, July 4 1865*

*Pour être libre, il faut pouvoir choisir. La liberté en acte est donc un acte de volonté intelligente. La volonté est la racine, mais la raison est la cause.*

*La Minerve, February 3 1870*

Any exploration of a system of liberalism should include a discussion of freedoms and liberties. This is the hardest element to reconcile with Cartier's thoughts and actions. The primacy of property can be seen in his personal and class interests, his expansionist stance, and in his description of how nations should be governed. An interest in the expansion of freedoms and liberties, however, is much less clear in his politics. Throughout the debates in 1860s Quebec, the rights and freedoms of citizens were discussed. As we will see, these discussions tended to be in terms of the ability to make rational choices, rather than the right to make those choices. It was over political participation and liberty that Rouge and Blue politics most differed. The Conservative party's moderate liberalism accepted a more hierarchal conception of society.

The Bleus' allegiance to monarchism reflected this limited view of liberty. Cartier's dedication to Britain's monarchy was because it placed restrictions on democratic excesses. At the Charlottetown Conference he explained that

*nous sommes Français d'origines, mais Français du vieux régime.... [les Canadiens français] ont été séparés de la France avant la Révolution française, sans cela, ils auraient péri dans la tourmente qui suivit cette page de leur histoire.*

Nous devons la conservation de notre nationalité aux libres institutions que l'Angleterre nous a données.<sup>285</sup>

He was specifically critical of American democracy as, he suggested, it put too much power in the hands of the people, who may not recognize their true interests. At an Ottawa banquet in 1865 he stated

le régime de la république représentent le vote du peuple, non pas toujours les intérêts. Encore une fois, je suis d'avis qu'un régime monarchique comme celui dont nous jouissons, est plus propre que tout autre à faire le bonheur du peuple. Le respect des bienséances sociales dans les relations, la liberté de conscience et de l'enseignement religieux, voilà entre autres choses, ce que nous n'aurions pu avoir aux Etats-Unis au même degré qu'en Canada.<sup>286</sup>

This quote illustrated a tension between authority and liberty. Montreal's conservative mouthpiece, *La Minerve* echoed the distrust of democracy and the need to secure authority. In 1869, the paper wrote

[n]ous sommes opposés aux institutions politiques des Etats-Unis, parce qu'elles font une part trop large à la démocratie parce qu'elles consacrent l'individualisme et la liberté poussés à ses extrêmes limites. Sous la constitution anglaise, dont nous avons apporté tous les éléments qui ne sont pas en opposition complète avec nos institutions sociales, nous trouvons assez de liberté, avec des garanties suffisantes pour le maintien de l'autorité.<sup>287</sup>

The Bleu paper highlighted the strains in political and social thought in nineteenth-century Quebec. Its editors were supportive of political liberties, but not excessive liberties that might come at the expense of authority.

This interaction between freedom and authority is common to liberal governments. Graham Burchell writes that "to govern individuals is to get them to act and to align their particular wills with the ends imposed on them through constraining

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<sup>285</sup> George-Étienne Cartier, *Discours de Sir George Cartier*, Joseph Tassé, ed., (Montreal, 1893), 390.

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*, 465.

<sup>287</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, September 2 1869.

and facilitating models of possible actions.”<sup>288</sup> Altering the behaviour of others, at times, involved creating opportunities. As we saw in the previous chapter, railway construction was a facilitating technique, because it opened the possibility for citizens to acquire property. Other times, the government limited the citizens’ choices so that it could act efficiently.

Cartier’s critics and opponents were clearer and more passionate in their defense of popular liberties. An 1868 editorial printed in *Le Pays* described civilization as a battle between liberal and conservative forces. The goal of this battle, it suggested, was

le triomphe de la démocratie; le triomphe de la majorité sur la minorité; le triomphe de la liberté sur l’esclavage. La démocratie c’est l’état de l’homme aisé à lui-même, se gouvernant par lui-même, mais en reconnaissant l’autorité des lois de la vertu et du respect ses semblables; c’est la conquête de l’égalité dans les mœurs et de la suprématie populaire dans le gouvernement; c’est la marche ascendante du peuple vers l’astre de la liberté destinée jusqu’à la fin des temps à illuminer de ses rayons les destinées de l’humanité. Voilà la véritable démocratie telle que les peuples les plus éclairés l’ont comprise et pratiquée.<sup>289</sup>

The rhetoric was more radical than that of the conservatives. *Le Pays* called for population have the freedom to recognize and respect the laws. *La Minerve*, on the other hand, feared that excessive freedom would erode the social order.

The different understandings of liberty and equality were especially well highlighted by the two groups’ attitudes towards the working poor. In certain strains of liberal thought poverty was an accepted phenomenon. André Vachet writes that

loin de devoir tenter de corriger ou de supprimer l’inégalité, [la société] doit être organisée en conformité avec l’ordre primitif et se constituer en un lieu privilégié où se rejoignent dialectiquement l’égalité de droit et l’inégalité des conditions et des fortunes.<sup>290</sup>

<sup>288</sup> Graham Burchell, “Peculiar Interests: Civil Society and Governing ‘the System of Natural Liberty’” in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago, 1991),

<sup>289</sup> *Le Pays*, “La Démocratie,” p. 2, August 1 1868.

<sup>290</sup> André Vachet, *L’idéologie libérale : l’individu et sa propriété*, Second Edition (Ottawa, 1988), 330.

Cartier's focus on property caused him to take a negative view of the poor. Brian Young, in his study of Montreal's Sulpicians, notes that Cartier attributed the peasants' reticence to commute their land—the process of transformation from feudal property to freehold—as the result of “a lack of motivation.”<sup>291</sup> In the eyes of the governing elite, it seems that by not taking advantages of the new real estate laws, the peasants failed to capitalize on the opportunities provided by the government.

The thought that the poor lacked the capacities for full citizenship was important in Cartier's conception of government.<sup>292</sup> A note in a manuscript given to Cartier, presumably by the donator, expressed this contempt. It attributed Canada's military weakness to the fact that “in Canada we have few rich men. Poor men are not likely to be honest. We have no nobility or landed gentrymen bred to trade, men have little honour and no chivalry.”<sup>293</sup> This statement is telling about elite attitudes on loyalty and respectability. Not only did the poor lack the character of the elites, but the booklet also suggested that this lack of character, motivation, and ambition endangered the country. As unjust as this perception was, it corresponded with classical liberalism. As Vachet

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<sup>291</sup> Brian Young, *In Its Corporate Capacity: The Seminary of Montreal as a Business Institution, 1816-1876* (Montreal, 1986), 106. Robert Sweeny in “Land and People: Property Investment in Late Pre-Industrial Montreal,” *Urban History Review* (October 1995): 42-51, addresses this issue. He suggests not commuting the land “was an act of passive resistance against an imposed system of commutation which involved significant payments to seigneurs by *ceusitaires* for improvements these families had made to their own land.” (43)

<sup>292</sup> Even when dealing with colleagues, he often demonstrated a confidence that he knew what was best. One critic, in a judicial report, claimed Cartier “had acquired the habit of treating the opinions and sentiments of his confreres with supercilious indifference and contempt.” Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), MG24 B21 (Henry Black Fonds) vol.1, *The Bar, the Bench and the Attorney General for Lower Canada* (Montreal, 1859), 29. Black was a member of the Legislative Assembly of Canada from 1840-1841 and a Judge of the Court of the Vice Admiralty from 1841-1873.

<sup>293</sup> McCord Museum Archives (hereafter McCord), P197-C (George Etienne Cartier Fonds), *Canada and Invasion* (Montreal, 1865), p. 6.

writes, “ce statut privilégié du propriétaire est un règle fixe qui mesure tout autre principe.”<sup>294</sup>

In sharp contrast to the Conservatives who accepted the gap between classes, *Le Pays* lamented the fact that “nos classes aristocratiques et ouvrières sont malheureusement séparées par un abîme.” They were hopeful, however, because through progress, knowledge, and justice “nous pouvons, si nous le voulons, les réunir. Rien n’est impossible à l’homme aujourd’hui.”<sup>295</sup> The editors’ optimism was based on the idea of improving social conditions with the tools of government, “la douce main de la bienfaisance et de la justice.”<sup>296</sup> Governing fairly, through reason, the paper suggested, would let all citizens be equal and self-regulating.

The differences between the two sides are striking. While the Rouges referred to the egalitarian doctrines of the French and American revolutions, the Bleus wanted to maintain monarchial links and aristocratic superiority; part of this difference, as was noted in chapter two, can be traced to the fact that the Bleus referred to Alexander Hamilton’s conception of liberty, while the Rouges to that of Thomas Jefferson. Despite different reference points, however, there were significant commonalities in their language and goals. Both of Quebec’s major parties, in the mid-nineteenth century, relied

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<sup>294</sup> Vachet, 341. Linteau, Durocher and Robert suggest that Canada’s and Quebec’s widespread conservatism “was especially clear in attitude of businessmen and politicians towards the social problems created by industrialization. There was no perceptible willingness on their part to change the situation and come to terms with new social realities.” Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher and Jean-Claude Robert, *Quebec: A History, 1867-1929*, Robert Chodos, trans (Toronto, 1983). This view, however, reflects the traditional dichotomy of conservatism with liberalism, and the combination of liberalism with democracy. As many have argued (Kelly, Roy, and Ajzenstat and Smith, to name a few), these terms are not as fixed or as neat as once believed. The attitude towards the poor seems to highlight distinctions between moderate and radical liberalism, or between liberalism and republicanism, more than between liberal and conservative thought.

<sup>295</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, December 1 1868. The desire to unite the aristocracy and the workers is similar to the arguments made by Médéric Lanctot in *L’Association du travail et du capital* (Montreal, 1872).

<sup>296</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2 December 1 1868.

on liberal ideas of reason, moderation and progress to promote development and secure traditions.

### **Reason, Progress and Education**

In liberal systems of thought rationalism plays an important role. For society's members to act as self-governing individuals they must demonstrate the ability to behave rationally. Mill states that "liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion."<sup>297</sup> Just as the self and communal-interests intersect and interact, the cultivation of reason affects the government of the self, of others and of nature. As knowledge and reason are developed, nature can be understood as a collection of laws and relationships. These laws and relationships are logical and can also be used to understand and govern the interactions between individuals.<sup>298</sup> Some analysts suggest that liberal states use education to make citizens internalize and accept certain expectations and assumptions. This is a technique to affect the conduct of others; by teaching a common understanding of self-interest, the state can affect decisions outside its formal, political reach.<sup>299</sup>

The idea of reason as a tool to guide the interactions between groups was central to his support of Confederation. At the Halifax port, after the Charlottetown Conference, he declared "nous pouvons former une confédération vigoureuse... Il n'y a pas ici des

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<sup>297</sup> J.S. Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty, including Mill's Essay on Bentham and selections from the writings of Jeremy Bentham and John Austin*, Mary Warnock, ed., (London, (1859-63) 2003), 95. To borrow a phrase from Jeffrey McNairn, for political participation people must demonstrate the "capacity to judge." These are the same faculties discussed in chapter two, regarding Mill's tree metaphor. Jeffrey McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge: Public Opinion and Deliberative Democracy in Upper Canada, 1791-1854* (Toronto, 2000).

<sup>298</sup> Vachet, 109; Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (London, 1999), 11.

<sup>299</sup> Dean, 107-108.

obstacles que la sagesse humaine ne puisse surmonter. Tout ce qu'il faut pour en triompher, c'est une volonté forte et une noble ambition."<sup>300</sup> As we have seen, he suggested people of different religions and backgrounds could exist together in a single nation once they acknowledged and followed their rational self-interest. Informed by reason, self-interest develops a progress because it allows people to overcome their ignorant prejudices. Drawing from David Hume and Foucault, Graham Burchell identifies reason, in liberal thought, as an "instrument of the practical conduct of life." When people can use reason to identify their best interests they can better control their passions and regulate their behaviour.<sup>301</sup>

In Parliament, Cartier took care to show his use of reason made for a fair rule. He stated that he "was as devoid of prejudices as any honorable gentlemen in this house."<sup>302</sup> His definition of prejudice seems to have been based on racial, linguistic and religious parameters, given his view of the poor mentioned above. He did not want personal backgrounds or associations to stand in the way of commerce, development and government. The possibility to overcome prejudices through the reasonable pursuit of self-interests was also raised by renowned railway promoter Thomas Keefer. In *The Philosophy of Railroads*, Keefer listed the civilizing aspects of railways. Of steam power, Keefer wrote that it had "waged war successfully with the material elements," and "will assuredly overcome the prejudices of mental weakness or the designs of mental

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<sup>300</sup> Cartier, 395.

<sup>301</sup> Burchell, 129-130. In his use of David Hume, Burchell converges with Peter J. Smith's article "The Origins of Canadian Confederation." Smith reads Hume into nineteenth-century Canadian politics, to show that Confederation's architects, in addition to their pragmatism, had a conception of rights and liberties. Peter J. Smith, "The Ideological Origins of Canadian Confederation," in Janet Ajzenstat and Peter J. Smith, eds., *Canada's Origins: Liberal, Tory or Republican* (Ottawa, 1995): 47-78.

<sup>302</sup> Canada. Provincial Parliament. *Parliamentary Debates on the subject of the Confederation of the British North American Provinces*, 8<sup>th</sup> Provincial Parliament, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, 1865 (Quebec 1951), 59.

tyrants.”<sup>303</sup> Examples of the mental weaknesses that Keefer referred to were bigotry and jealousy of different religious denominations. *The Philosophy of Railways* would have appealed to Cartier as a businessman, for he had a vested interest in railway expansion. The passages on the elimination of conflict between religious groups and the regulation of behaviour would have appealed to him as well. In Keefer’s popular suggestion, the development of commercial and communicative networks created the infrastructure for the cooperation based on common interests. This spirit of commercial cooperation would lead to the cultivation of progress and reason.

The elitist elements of Cartier’s understanding of rationality and progress were common among nineteenth-century liberals. Like Mill, he seemed to suggest only certain people possessed the necessary qualities for self-government. While giving a speech in London, he thanked the audience for the pleasure of speaking to them. “A pleasure,” he continued, “enhanced by the reflection that it proceeds from the members of a liberal and learned profession which justly holds a high position in the society of every portion of the British Empire.”<sup>304</sup> He highlighted the audience’s social class and their Britishness as the elements that make them a good audience. Their background, he seemed to suggest, made the group more thoughtful and possessive of higher faculties of reasoning and judgment.

This elitist understanding of rationality was expressed even more strongly by *La Minerve*.

An 1867 article in the conservative paper stated

les ouvriers de Montréal paraissent avoir conservé une excellente qualité qui n’existe plus au même degré chez les marchands et les avocats; c’est de pouvoir croire à la bonne foi de quiconque vient leur dire qu’il les aime et qu’il est prêt à se sacrifier pour leurs intérêts, si les circonstances l’exigent.<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> Thomas Keefer, *The Philosophy of Railroads*, H.V. Nelles, ed., (Toronto, 1992 (1849)), 10.

<sup>304</sup> McCord, vol.3, *Longhand for Speech*.

<sup>305</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, June 11 1867.

This statement was an overt criticism of Montreal's labour leaders, but it also reflected the attitude of Montreal's elites towards the working class. The paper suggested that workers were naively trusting because they did not possess the necessary faculties to identify their best interests. The inability of the working class to identify their interests was also why the Bleus opposed the popular democracy of the United States.

Despite the top-down elements of their worldview, the Conservatives at times demonstrated a political open-mindedness comparable to that of the Liberals. Édouard-Étienne Rodier, Cartier's first employer, enjoined Cartier in these terms: "détestez toujours l'Aristocratie ; méprisez l'orgueil et la marque des sots parvenus et de stupide noblesse."<sup>306</sup> Although a distrust of those who had become accustomed to privilege would prove ironic given the corruption of Cartier's later career, a disdain for "stupide noblesse" seems to fit with the focus on reason in Cartier's political life. To reconcile the distrust of aristocracy with Cartier's monarchism, it is worth noting that as a young man Cartier was aligned with the Rebellions of 1837 and 1838, and republicanism.<sup>307</sup> After the failure of the Rebellions he took a more moderate, traditional approach and seemed to have been comfortable with class-based inequalities.

Cartier's conception of rights was based in ethnic terms. At an 1865 banquet in Montreal, he described his platform; "ma politique, et je crois que c'est la meilleure," he claimed, "c'est le respect des droits de tous."<sup>308</sup> He specified that he meant equality

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<sup>306</sup> LAC (Cartier Fonds), MG27-ID4, vol.1, p. 1, Édouard E. Rodier to Cartier, n.d..

<sup>307</sup> Two works that deal with this transition from Republican opposition to cooperation with the Crown are Stéphane Kelly, *La petite loterie : comment la Couronne a obtenu la collaboration de Canada français après 1837* (Montreal, 1997) and Michel Ducharme, "Penser le Canada : La mise en place des assises intellectuelles de l'État canadien moderne (1838-1840).

<sup>308</sup> Cartier, 469.

between French Canadians, Irish Catholics, English, Scots and “même pour les Américains qui s’établissent au milieu de nous.”<sup>309</sup>

One group that was strikingly absent—especially given the expansionist nature of Canadian politics at the end of the 1860s—from the list of peoples who deserve equal treatment was Natives. By 1871, however, he offered a broader conception of equality, stating that “j’espère du moins qu’une politique constamment libérale envers tout le monde, sans distinction aucune, aura rendu notre pays plus heureux, plus prospère.”<sup>310</sup> This seems to fit with his larger platform of harmony through prosperity. Once the Northwest entered Confederation in 1870, he used a more inclusive description of equality. The language of progress and reason was used, at least rhetorically, to describe the government’s interaction with the inhabitants of the Northwest, notably the Natives and Métis. Cartier urged that while negotiating the settlement of the newly acquired province of Manitoba officials must speak to its inhabitants using “le langage de la raison, la vérité et de la justice.”<sup>311</sup> This is significant because he stressed the language of reason, which would lead to a better-governed society. Even more important, though, is that he is inviting rational discussion from people outside of English/French Canada, notably the Métis. This fits with goals of impartiality mentioned earlier, but also with larger ideas of equality.

In practice, however, there were some doubts amongst the Conservative government about the natives’ capacities for reasoning. Despite encouraging liberal policies and fair negotiations with the Métis, Cartier still tended to look down on them. He arrogantly dismissed their opposition to Canada’s annexation of the Northwest, in

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<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*, 718.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*, 667.

1869, in the following terms: “il est bien probable que ceux qui parlent d’indépendance ne comprennent pas assez la portée de leur parole.”<sup>312</sup> This dismissal of the Métis’ position is comparable to *La Minerve*’s view of the working class. Cartier suggested that Métis did not understand the ramifications of their calls for independence, just as *La Minerve* suggested that workers did not understand who their true allies were. Both criticisms were centered on a lack of the thoughtfulness and judgment required for participation in public life.

There was, among the Bleus, an expressed hope that Natives could possess the faculties for political participation, a position that placed them within the liberal tradition, however exclusive. In 1869, regarding native voting rights Langevin stated that

experience had shown that a number of Indians, by their education, good conduct, and intelligence could be entrusted with the same privileges as white men, but as the law stood—at least in Quebec and Ontario—for Indians to obtain the Franchise was so difficult that not one of them had ever been able to obtain it. The government had thought, therefore, that they should provide for the gradual enfranchisement of the Indians.<sup>313</sup>

Langevin proposed that “if a Superintendent of Indian Affairs found that an Indian, by his education, good conduct, and intelligence was qualified to be the proprietor of land, the Indian would receive letters patent for a lot of land on the Indian reserve.” Allowing natives the rights to own land was an important step in “the direction of civilizing the Indians,” and preparing them for political participation.<sup>314</sup>

In 1870 Cartier again demonstrated an optimistic understanding of relations with the Métis. He suggested that the government should

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<sup>312</sup> *Ibid.*, 623.

<sup>313</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1<sup>st</sup> Parliament, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 1869, vol. 2 (Ottawa, 1975), 83.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*

drown those difficulties by liberal measures...the people in the Territory were educated, and the conference at Red River would contrast favourably with theirs at Quebec....The Government intended to be liberal, and the claims of the half-breeds would be seen by those to have been considered.

The measures to which Cartier referred were offering land grants for the Métis and their children.<sup>315</sup> The two Bleus leaders seemed to suggest that given the right education all people, regardless of race, were capable of developing into self-governing individuals.

The attitudes of Cartier and Langevin towards the Natives and the Métis of the Northwest seem to fit with Mill's combination of education and government. Liberal ideas of self-government and individuality "are meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties.... Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement."<sup>316</sup> Mill's conception of liberty was limited to those who were capable of managing the responsibilities that accompanied it. Although Cartier did not refer to Mill he and his conservative colleagues seemed to act according to these ideas. If the natives were properly educated and rational, they could participate in "free and equal discussions."<sup>317</sup> This same principle applies to the condescending attitude of *La Minerve* towards workers, mentioned above. The workers were perceived as incapable of rational judgment, and therefore they needed to be strictly governed by an educated elite.

Another example of the notion of reason mixing with notions of race, class and government is *La Minerve's* comment on the emancipation of America's slaves. While generally supportive of this act, the paper suggests that it has created chaos in America. This social chaos "était facile à prévoir," the authors suggested, because

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<sup>315</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1<sup>st</sup> Parliament, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, 1870, vol. 2 (Ottawa, 1979), 1457-1458.

<sup>316</sup> Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty*, 95.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid.*

donner tout-à-coup la liberté à trois millions d'hommes, sans les avoir auparavant préparés à l'exercice de leurs droits nouveaux, sans les avoir bien pénétrés de l'importance de leurs devoirs, changer de tout un coup l'ordre politique et économique d'un pays, sans que rien ait préparé à pareil événement : voilà ce qui ne pouvait engendrer qu'un profond désordre.<sup>318</sup>

The problem, according to *La Minerve*, was not that the freed slaves were incapable of self-government, but that they had not been prepared for it. Although this statement is laden with racial condescension, there is still an element of nineteenth-century liberal optimism. Had the slave been educated for freedom, they could have acted as individuals in a free society.

An important element of education in the nineteenth-century was to instill the capacity for self-government, which refers to an individual's ability to make rational choices and control their behaviour.<sup>319</sup> In an article titled "L'ère nouvelle," Montreal-based *Le Pays* praised newspapers "qui se sont imposé la tâche noble mais ardue d'implanter le libéralisme dans les districts ruraux du pays." According to the liberal paper, prejudice and ignorance would complicate this, but "il leur faut lutter chaque jour contre le mauvais vouloir, la passion, la calomnie, l'insouciance générale, les tracasseries."<sup>320</sup> The passions and prejudices of individuals, like the natural landscape, should be controlled and governed. Just as railway development allowed people to overcome distance, education would allow them to cultivate their faculties and achieve their potential as individuals. Education was linked to ideas of equality. In liberal thought, and common to the Rouges and the Bleus, circumstances may still vary, but

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<sup>318</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, February 1 1866. There is a wide literature on the hierarchy of race within a liberal context. One such example is Nicholas Thomas's "Colonial Conversions: Difference, Hierarchy, and History in Early Twentieth-Century Evangelical Propaganda," in Catherine Hall, ed., *Cultures of Empire A Reader: Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Manchester, 2000): 298-328. As I noted in chapter two, this article also explores the use of family metaphors to structure these hierarchies.

<sup>319</sup> Bruce Baum, *Rereading Power and Freedom in Mill* (Toronto, 2000), 124.

<sup>320</sup> *Le Pays*, "L'ère nouvelle," p. 2, December 7 1865.

once education is broadened, citizens will have equal opportunities. Mill wrote, “every step in political improvement renders it more so, by removing the sources of opposition of interest, and leveling those inequalities of legal privilege between individuals or classes.”<sup>321</sup> In a response to criticisms of the importance and quality of classical education, *La Minerve* wrote that

nous inclinons à croire qu’il n’y a pas assez de maisons d’éducation, et que l’instruction, malgré les efforts les plus énergiques et les succès les plus éclatant pour sa diffusion, n’est pas encore suffisamment répandue. Si la masse de la population recevait une éducation plus soignée, plus élevée, les nombreuses incapacités qui sortent des collèges classiques ne se sentiraient pas au-dessous de la classe moyenne.<sup>322</sup>

With more opportunities for education and a higher quality of education feelings of superiority would be limited. The reference to stopping “les nombreuses incapacités” from feeling above the middle classes is also significant. It seems to suggest that political and social opportunities should be more widely available; when people are given those opportunities it should be based on their abilities.

*Le Pays*’s views on education differed from those of the conservative paper.

Arguing that there were already too many classical colleges, *Le Pays* promoted practical education that could improve working class conditions.<sup>323</sup> The liberal paper campaigned for the development and expansion of industrial schools, rather than the production of more middle-class professionals. Such institutions, the authors hoped, would let workers learn the necessary skills to improve their trade. A 1871 article promoting the development of institutions for industrial education claimed that “tous les grands d’hommes d’état, tous les économistes politiques, tous les hommes d’expérience sont

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<sup>321</sup> Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty*, 208.

<sup>322</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, June 18 1867.

<sup>323</sup> Linteau, Durocher and Robert, 210.

d'un concert unanime pour dire que cette étude est d'une importance immense pour le développement, la prospérité et la richesse d'un pays."<sup>324</sup> Even though their focus was on the working class, *Le Pays*, like *La Minerve*, tied education to improving conditions and expanding opportunities.

*Le Pays*'s support of industrial education linked education to two important aspects of nineteenth-century Quebec: economic prosperity and nationalism.<sup>325</sup> Education, and the cultivation of reason, had economic consequences because they let people understand and identify their best interests, and it gave them the tools and opportunities to pursue those interests. *La Minerve* warned that

négliger l'éducation commerciale, c'est priver une multitude de jeunes gens de gagner, de bonne heure, un salaire honorable et leur fermer, pour ainsi dire, la voie du commerce et des talents distingués qui peuvent les élever bien haut dans l'échelle sociale.<sup>326</sup>

Again, the different themes of liberalism are intertwined. Education helps people pursue their interests, which in turn improves their social conditions. More generally, as Michel Foucault suggested, as citizens are disciplined to be rational and independent actors, the pursuit of their own interests serves the goals of the state.<sup>327</sup>

Education, in nineteenth-century Quebec, engaged with nationalism because progress, adaptation and success were perceived as tools to protect French Canadian

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<sup>324</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, January 3 1871.

<sup>325</sup> For more on education in Quebec see Ruby Heap's Ph.D. thesis *L'Église, l'État et l'enseignement primaire publique catholique au Québec, 1897-1920* (Montreal, 1988) or Jean-Pierre Charland, *L'enseignement spécialisé au Québec, 1867 à 1982* (Quebec, 1982).

<sup>326</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, August 6 1870, 7.

<sup>327</sup> Graham Burchell, highlights this idea in Foucault's thought, noting that liberal government organizes individual citizens by their "marginal utility vis-à-vis the objective of strengthening the state by maximizing the appropriate and particular contributions of each and all." Burchell, 124. Although less critical of liberal government, André Vachet makes a similar point about the combination of commerce, development and rationality in liberal thought. He suggests that education is necessary because "le succès économique dépend non seulement de la qualité des matériaux, mais aussi de celle de l'énergie humaine qui s'y applique." Vachet, 7.

traditions. In a 1860 speech to the graduating class of his alma mater, the Collège de Montréal, Cartier explicitly tied success and education to religion and tradition. He referred to the College as where he received “l’enseignement de la morale et de la religion.” He continued,

pour vous, jeunes élèves, vous êtes à votre tour l’espoir de la famille nationale, ne l’oubliez pas. Dépositaires de ces sciences précieuses que l’on vous enseigne, vous aurez plus tard à les faire valoir au profit de la patrie, lorsque chacun d’entre vous sera entré dans la sphère d’action, que la divine providence vous a départie....c’est par notre ferme attachement à la religion de nos pères et à leurs mâles vertus que nous conserverons notre nationalité canadienne-française.<sup>328</sup>

This advice neatly summarizes the intersecting focuses of Cartier’s life and politics. The students should work hard to individually succeed; and he highlights science, or reason, as an important tool that will help them. This individual success will put them in a position to conserve their “patrie.” By encouraging the students to use their education in the “sphères d’action” Cartier promoted prosperity and development. By reminding them to remain loyal to their patrie he also promoted cultural conservation. Education was a realm where the combination of liberalism and conservatism, which so important in mid-nineteenth-century Quebec, was implanted in a portion of the population.

Once the faculties of reason and judgment were developed through schooling, it was important that they remain engaged and people continued to improve. Mill stated, “The capacity for the nobler feelings in most natures is a very tender plant, easily killed, not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance.”<sup>329</sup> There were two important groups in Quebec that promoted and facilitated such public and continuing

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<sup>328</sup> Cartier, 256-257. It is also worth noting that Cartier mentions the ‘famille nationale.’

<sup>329</sup> Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty*, 189. Again, as we saw in chapter two, Mill refers to the faculties necessary for political participation in organic terms.

education: l'Institut canadien (IC) and l'Institut canadien français (ICF).<sup>330</sup> Founded in 1844, the IC defined itself as

un centre d'émulation, ou chaque jeune homme entrant dans le monde pourrait venir s'inspirer d'un pur patriotisme, s'instruire en profitant des avantages d'une bibliothèque commune et s'habituer à parler en prenant part aux travaux de cette tribune ouverte à toutes les classes et à toutes les conditions.<sup>331</sup>

In addition to establishing a library, which included most of the important works of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the IC's members gave public lectures on a variety of political, social and ideological topics. The members were mostly professionals, who shared an interest in preserving French Canadian culture through education and progress. Throughout the 1850s the IC became increasingly radical, and increasingly critical of authority of Quebec's clergy and the Conservative party. Throughout the 1850s and 1860s, Bishop Ignace Bourget accused the Institut of being spiritually and morally subversive. In 1858 he excommunicated the Institut and its members. Throughout the 1860s the Institut Canadien entered a vitriolic polemic with the Ultramontanes over the separation of church and state and the limits of clerical authority.<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>330</sup> As Fecteau has explored, voluntary associations highlight tensions in liberalism. They are liberal because they are composed of individuals chose to participate and they, generally, promote progress. They are also, however, collective bodies that can influence and pressure the government. In the seventeenth century, he suggests, liberal thinkers saw such associations as menace to liberty. By the nineteenth century these tensions were not so important. In Quebec, they were seen as beneficial because association promoted individual progress, which could be used to preserve cultural traditions. This highlights the theme of individual progress for collective ends. Fecteau also joins Roy in calling historians to move beyond "le logique binaire [qui] est encore au fondement de la représentation du monde dans nos sociétés, et qui sous-tend par le fait mêmes les problématiques dominantes d'interprétation de l'histoire." Jean-Marie Fecteau, "État et associationnisme aux XIXe siècle québécois : éléments pour une problématique des rapports État/société dans la transition du capitalisme" in Allan Greer and Ian Radforth, eds., *Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto, 1992): 135-162. McNairn, drawing from Jurgen Habermas's writing on the public sphere, similarly examines voluntary associations, in Upper Canada. He refers to them as "among the colony's most important political institutions," because they created, defined and maintained spaces that encouraged sociability and political discussion. McNairn, 114.

<sup>331</sup> J.B.E. Dorion, "L'Institut canadien en 1852," *Le Pays*, 1853 in Bernard, *Les Rouges*, 29.

<sup>332</sup> Fernande Roy, *Histoires des idéologies au Québec aux XIXe et XXe siècles* (Montreal, 1993), 39; Yvan Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec* (Montreal, 2000), 292, 314. 334. The Ultramontanes were a religious movement that believed both the secular and political realms should be under the authority of the Church. They rose to prominence in the 1850s and 1860s as a reaction to the spread of liberalism.

After the excommunication of the IC's members, many left the organization. Some of these founded the Institut canadien français (ICF).<sup>333</sup> Maintaining an accommodating relationship with Bourget and other church officials, the ICF was a conservative counter-balance to l'Institut canadien. Its goal, as explained by its president Joseph Tassé, in 1872, was "la conservation de notre langue dans toute sa pureté et dans toute sa beauté." He went on to ask, "la langue n'est-elle pas, après la religion, le trait le plus caractéristique d'un peuple, et plus beau diamant du couronne?"<sup>334</sup> Like the IC, its members were mostly educated professionals. The biggest difference between the two groups' membership was the ICF had ties to the Bleu party, whereas the IC was made up of Rouges politicians and supporters. Cartier was an important member of the ICF, and helped found the Ottawa branch, which could serve as "un trait d'union entre les Canadiens de la ville et le temple national où tous venaient entendre la noble histoire de la patrie et le récit des hauts faits de nos héros."<sup>335</sup> This reverence of the past and elevation of the Catholicism is the main ideological difference between the two groups; the ICF wanted to conserve cultural traditions and maintain the link between society and the Church, whereas the IC was more overtly liberal and progressive.

Despite their different party loyalties and differing attitudes to the role of religion in society, there were similarities between the two institutes, especially in their treatment

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Knopff, "The Triumph of Liberalism in Canada: Laurier on Representation and Party Government" in *Canada's Origins*, 160; Linteau, Robert and Durocher, 198-200. The IC's radicalization occurred at the same time as Bleus, like Cartier and Parent were becoming more moderate. Throughout the 1850s and 1860s Cartier was allied with the Ultramontanes. After the dissolution of the Rouge party, however, he struggled against the movement's continual encroachment into the political realm.

<sup>333</sup> Philippe Sylvain, "Francis Cassidy," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online* <<http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=39009&query=cassidy>>.

<sup>334</sup> Joseph Tassé, *Deux discours prononcés par M. Tassé, président de l'Institut canadien-français d'Ottawa* (Montreal, 1873), p. 4.

<sup>335</sup> LAC, MG29 G18 (Benjamin Sulte fonds), vol.1, Sulte, *Etude rétrospective sur L'Institut canadien-français d'Ottawa suivie du Rapport annuel du bureau de secrétaire de l'Institut pour l'année 1892-93* (Ottawa, 1893), 3.

of youth, a congruency that they both acknowledged at the time. Both institutes expressly wanted to educate youth and prepare them to serve Quebec. Their similar purposes were underscored by an 1869 article in *La Minerve* that stated

[i]l est de rumeur que quelques membres de l'Institut-Canadien français [sic] en ont rencontré d'autres de l'Institut Canadien, en leur qualité privée et qu'il y aurait été question d'un projet de compromis, par lequel les deux Instituts disparaîtraient pour faire place à une autre organisation sous un nom nouveau, compromis qui rencontraient les exigences des deux côtés. Nous ne pourrions qu'applaudir dans l'intérêt de la jeunesse canadienne au succès d'un tel projet.<sup>336</sup>

The paper favoured a compromise between the two groups. This compromise would be based on reason, and the acknowledgement common interest. If both groups wanted to properly prepare the French Canadian youth, they could put aside their party differences to work together.

The two institutes had similar educative platforms. In 1870 the Institut canadien de Québec defined its general goal as “répandre parmi les sujets de Sa Majesté de la dite cité de Québec et de ses alentours, le goût de l'instruction, des arts, des sciences, et étendre les connaissances utiles et pratiques pour l'avantage général de la société.” It went on to specify that the members especially hoped to facilitate “la réunion des jeunes Canadiens, de les porter à l'amour et à la culture de la science et de l'histoire et de les préparer aux luttes plus sérieuses de l'âge mûr.”<sup>337</sup> As we have seen, in the nineteenth century, science was thought of as the rational study of nature. The desire to cultivate this type of knowledge had far-reaching consequences, as a well-trained reason could be used to understand business, politics, nature and oneself. As we have seen earlier, reason was

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<sup>336</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, September 4 1869.

<sup>337</sup> Institut canadien de Québec, *Acte d'incorporation, règlements du bureau de direction et catalogue* (Quebec, 1870), 1, 7.

tied to progress, because through the continual use of knowledge and science there could be continual moral and material improvements.<sup>338</sup>

The emphasis on science and personal improvement did not fit as neatly with the ICF's program, as they also had to accommodate a relationship with the Ultramontane officials who were generally opposed to all the tenets of liberalism.<sup>339</sup> The focus on preserving religion in society did not, however, stop the ICF from promoting science and the cultivation of reason. "L'Institut a encore pour mission principale," its president stated in 1872, "la culture du beau et du vrai, dans les sciences, la littérature et la philosophie. Ce rôle est parfaitement adapté à notre caractère national."<sup>340</sup> Tassé promoted the same cultivation of reason (science) as the members of the IC. The main difference is that, when passed through the Bleu lens, the liberal rhetoric was combined with French Canadian traditions and Catholicism. In the previous chapter a similar tension, between progress and conservation, was highlighted in *La Minerve's* discussion of moderate agricultural development. These tensions between reflect the interaction of ideas and circumstances.

The peculiar combination of nationalism and liberalism, tradition and progress, promoted by the ICF are similar to the arguments of Quebec's elites, like Cartier and the Curé Labelle. These combined interests were echoed also by the various Sociétés St. Jean-Baptiste (SSJB), another organization committed to the promotion of French Canadian culture and traditions and open to "tous les canadiens d'origines françaises de

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<sup>338</sup> Vachet, 120, 127. Vachet explains that this belief in continual progress is the basis for the liberal belief in "la perfectibilité de l'homme et de son milieu." (127)

<sup>339</sup> Linteau, Durocher and Robert, 198.

<sup>340</sup> Tassé, 6.

père ou de mère, âgés de plus de seize ans.”<sup>341</sup> The banner of the SSJB of Quebec highlighted the cultural preservation aspects of the society. Featuring two important Canadian and French Canadian symbols, the beaver and the maple leaf, its inscription read, “Nos Institutions, notre Langue et nos Lois.”<sup>342</sup> As with the ICF, the SSJB’s focus on culture and tradition did not lack progressive elements. The SSJB of Montreal hoped that it would facilitate a union between “tous les Canadiens;” it proposed “de leur fournir un motif de réunion et l’occasion de fraterniser et de se mieux connaître; de cimenter l’union qui doit régner entre les membres d’une famille.”<sup>343</sup> Again, there was the suggestion that the society’s members should act as a family. This is a liberal way of ordering behaviour. People interact and cooperate primarily out of mutual interests. If properly governed the family head will take the interests of others into account.<sup>344</sup> Nineteenth-century family metaphors also reflected a hierarchal society. In both society and a family, rights and freedoms were not evenly distributed among the citizens or members. Influence was concentrated in the ruling elite, whether it be the dominant classes or the family head. As we have seen, nineteenth-century liberalism accepted these inequalities.

The banner of SSJB of Montreal, like its Quebec City counterpart, features a beaver and maple leaves. The Montreal society’s inscription reads “Rendre le peuple meilleur.”<sup>345</sup> To the nineteenth-century liberal, improvement involved education, work, and the cultivation of reason. According to Mill, one of the central questions of

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<sup>341</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, June 6 1867.

<sup>342</sup> McCord Museum, *Statuts de la Société St. Jean Baptiste de Québec*, (Quebec, 1842), 14.

<sup>343</sup> McCord Museum, *Association St. Jean-Baptiste de Montréal, fondée en 1834, Statuts et Règlements*, (Montréal, 1846), 4.

<sup>344</sup> Hindess, 130, 135.

<sup>345</sup> McCord Museum, *Association St. Jean-Baptiste de Montréal*, 14.

government was to understand “the amount of capacity which a people possess for doing new things.”<sup>346</sup> The more developed, civilized and rational a people were, the more progressive their society and their government could be. The improvement referred to in the SSJB of Montreal’s banner suggests the cultivation of reason for continual improvements. The IC echoed this sentiment when the members changed their motto: whereas their old motto emphasized the importance of hard work and independence: “le travail triomphe tout,” the new one modified this idea: “le travail c’est le moyen, mais le progrès c’est le but.”<sup>347</sup>

Both Bleus and Rouges, in their respective societies and institutes, used the language of progress, education and reason. This rhetoric coexisted with a commitment to culture and tradition. At times, conservation took a lesser role and ideas of progress and rationality applied solely to economic, industrial, and intellectual development. Regardless of the hierarchy of principles, there is a great deal of intellectual and cultural correspondence between Quebec’s conservatives and liberals. Both groups demonstrate a belief that through education citizens, regardless of their backgrounds, can improve their social and economic positions. The capacity for development and improvement, evoked by these politicians and journalists, belongs to the general body of nineteenth-century ideas on liberal government, and especially those of Mill.

### **Reason, Moderation and Self-Government**

Closely intertwined with ideas of progress and reason is the notion of moderation. To the nineteenth-century liberal, education and self-government had moral as well as

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<sup>346</sup> Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, Curtis C. Shields, ed. (New York, (1861) 1958), 10.

<sup>347</sup> L.A. Dessaulles, *Discours sur l’Institut Canadien* (Montreal, 1863), 4.

intellectual overtones. A proper education and government would help individuals control their passions.<sup>348</sup> For successful self-government it was necessary to look beyond one's own personal biases and loyalties. Cartier, on numerous occasions, demonstrated an ability to be proud of his heritage and yet aware of the need for tolerance. "Vous savez que je suis Catholique" he told Montreal's citizens in 1866,

j'aime ma religion, la croyant la meilleure ; mais tout en me disant hautement catholique, je crois de mon devoir comme homme public, de respecter la sincérité et les convictions religieuses des autres. Je suis aussi Canadien-français. J'aime ma race ; j'ai pour elle une prédilection bien naturelle assurément ; mais, comme politique et comme citoyen j'aime aussi les autres.<sup>349</sup>

Cartier seemed to suggest that there was a separation between private and public life. Regardless of his personal tendencies, he publicly supported policy of tolerance and equality.<sup>350</sup>

One of the perceived advantages of being tolerant of others is that it could lead to progress. Applied to the context Cartier existed in, progress meant that French Canadians would be better able to protect their institutions. "Les Canadiens-Français ne doivent pas avoir peur des Anglais," he suggested, "après tout ils ne sont pas si effrayants. Admirons plutôt leur énergie et leurs persévérances, imitons-les. Pour être d'excellents Canadiens-Français, il faut posséder avec les qualités de notre race, les meilleures de celles des Canadiens-Anglais."<sup>351</sup> Progress and, to a certain degree, assimilation were tools to

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<sup>348</sup> Focusing on the political stances and writings of Lord Durham and Peter Beverly Robinson, Janet Ajzenstat explores similar themes of government, liberalism and moderation in an earlier period. Ajzenstat, "Durham and Robinson: Political Faction and Moderation," in *Canada's Origins*: 139-158.

<sup>349</sup> Cartier, 513.

<sup>350</sup> Jean Charles Bonenfant also highlights the difference between the public and private in Cartier's life. He focuses on Cartier as a lawyer, and suggests that Cartier's interests in politics made him much more passionate for civil law than private, personal practice. Jean-Charles Bonenfant, "George-Etienne Cartier, juriste," *Les Cahiers des dix*, 1966 (31): 9-25.

<sup>351</sup> Cartier, 515.

buttress French Canadian culture, rather than abandon it. In an atmosphere of tolerance and rationality, the two Canadas could improve and influence one another.<sup>352</sup>

The talk of tolerance and progress by most of the actors studied in this thesis concerned the use of, what they understood to be, stereotypes and prejudices to garner support for their policies. Referring to the 1862-1863 reform Cabinet, led by John Sandfield MacDonald and Louis-Victor Sicotte, *La Minerve* wrote, in 1864, that “les coupables sont ceux qui ont exploité avec un machiavélisme damnable, les préjugés nationaux et le fanatisme religieux, pour conquérir une influence considérable, mais éphémère comme tout ce qui pousse sur un sable mouvant.”<sup>353</sup> Similarly in 1864, *Le Pays* criticized an Ontarian election campaign, because it “offre une nouvelle preuve de ce que peuvent la corruption poussée jusqu’aux dernières limites et les appels désordonnés aux passions politiques et aux préjugés religieux.”<sup>354</sup> The two papers shared the stance that religious prejudices should be avoided in politics. *La Minerve* refers to the politicians who exploit them as *coupables*, while *Le Pays* equates the practice to corruption. The two papers, and the parties they represented, had different connections to the Catholic Church, and different views on the role of religion and politics. Regardless of these differences, however, they both suggest that politics should be based on rational and tolerant discussions. Rational actors should control their passions and prejudices and focus on the strength of the arguments.

Exploring ideas of moderation and tolerance amongst the Bleus and *La Minerve* opens the possibility of highlighting political stances and compromises in Quebec outside

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<sup>352</sup> As we have seen in chapter two on nationalism, progress and assimilation as tools for cultural defense are discussed, in the period immediately following the Durham report, by Janet Ajzenstat and Jacques Monet.

<sup>353</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, April 2 1864.

<sup>354</sup> *Le Pays*, “L’élection de Leeds et les calculs de l’opposition,” p. 2, February 2 1864.

of the traditional dichotomy between clerico-nationalists and liberals. Cartier's own career in the 1860s puts this perceived dichotomy into question. Leading to Confederation, Cartier opposed the IC's republicanism and their promotion of annexation over Confederation. His power was initially underpinned by his alliance with the Catholic Church. After the dissolution of L'Institut Canadien in 1869 he and *La Minerve* fought to limit Ultramontane powers in the political sphere.<sup>355</sup> It is interesting that conservative conflict with the Ultramontanes began only after the IC was no longer a common enemy. There was still a large degree of pragmatism in the Bleu position, as their opposition to church influence in politics was largely a defense of their own political power. Nevertheless, this seems to indicate that the policies of the Bleus were more complicated than previously believed.

The Bleus struggles with Ultramontane officials were largely over issues of power and influence. The Catholic Program of 1871 is one such example. A plan to increase clerical authority over politics, the program, unsuccessfully, forbade Catholics from voting for Liberals, and suggested abstention if the Conservative candidates did not agree to Ultramontane desires.<sup>356</sup> While the politicians pragmatically struggled to maintain their political autonomy, *La Minerve* sometimes theorized over the relationship between religion and politics. In 1871 the paper ran an article that stated “nous sommes

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<sup>355</sup> Roy, *Histoires des idéologies*, 52. Brian Young suggests that challenging the Ultramontanes significantly hurt Cartier's unsuccessful campaign in 1872. With the rise of the Parti national—a moderately liberal party that distanced itself from the anti-clericalism of the Rouges—there was a viable liberal candidate in Montreal, and Cartier's role in the federal government had made his commitment to French Canada come under criticism. Although the Ultramontanes would eventually support him, it was too late to mark him as the candidate with ecclesiastic support. Young, Brian. “The Defeat of George-Etienne Cartier in Montreal East in 1872.” *Canadian Historical Review* (Dec 1970): 386-406.

<sup>356</sup> Linteau, Durocher and Robert, 199-201; Knopff, 159-160.

ultramontains en religion, libéraux en politique.”<sup>357</sup> This stance allows for the combination of political liberalism and strict religion. Papal authority, they suggested, applied to religious matters, but not to constitutional or political questions. *Le Nouveau Monde*, a paper with ultramontane allegiances, criticized the article for promoting the separation of religious and political ideas. *La Minerve* replied:

Nous prions notre confrère d’observer que la pratique du régime parlementaire, c’est la pratique du libéralisme, dans le sens générique du mot (d’où notre parti tire son nom de libéral conservateur), et il comprendra ensuite facilement qu’on puisse être partisan de ce régime et de ce libéralisme sans admettre la doctrine fautive qui enseigne que la politique doit être séparée de la religion. Le libéralisme dans l’Eglise est absurde, parce que l’Eglise est gouvernée par un chef infaillible et par conséquent absolu; mais dans l’état le libéralisme est la chose la plus raisonnable, parce que dans un pays, comme le nôtre, c’est le peuple qui gouverne, le souverain ne faisant que régner.<sup>358</sup>

This is a moderate stance, based on liberal ideas. The article simultaneously promotes church authority and democratic government. There is a distinct separation between the private and the public spheres, and this separation is made possible by tolerant and moderate stances. This reflects the liberal understanding of the place of religion.

Fecteau’s work is again relevant. He notes that the rise of liberalism in Quebec should not be understood as a movement towards secularization. Conservative and liberal discourse interacted and continued.<sup>359</sup> Cartier reflected this view of religion within a liberal space.

Jean-Charles Bonenfant refers to Cartier “as a genuine Catholic,” but he “did not like to

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<sup>357</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, October 3 1871. In an 1877 speech in Quebec City, Wilfrid Laurier famously made a comparable suggestion. He differentiated between French liberalism, which was violent and anti-clerical, and English liberalism, which was gradual, progressive, and tolerant of religion. He supported the English model. Stéphane Kelly, *Les Fins du Canada selon Macdonald, Laurier, Mackenzie King et Trudeau* (Montreal, 2001), 81. Rainer Knopff’s article, “The Triumph of Liberalism,” also examines this speech.

<sup>358</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2 October 5 1871.

<sup>359</sup> Jean-Marie Fecteau, *La Liberté du pauvre : crime et pauvreté aux XIXe siècle québécois* (Montréal, 2004), 268-269.

brag about his beliefs.”<sup>360</sup> The moderate liberalism of the Bleus interacted and existed with religion and traditions.

Unlike *La Minerve*, *Le Pays* tended to be critical of religious authority. The liberal paper openly called for the separation of church and state. This was a patent contrast to relationship between the Bleus, Ultramontanes and Sulpicians that existed throughout most of the 1860s. Critics of the Liberals used this stance to paint *Le Pays*, and the Rouges, as anti-clerical and anti-religion. In the face of ultramontane attacks, the Rouges were forced to be more precise in their belief about the place of religion. The paper claimed that they simply were opposed to the clergy’s attempts

de dominer le temporel au moyen du spirituel.... Nous n’avons jamais attaqué le prêtre dans son rôle légitime de prêtre! Là nous le soutiendrons avec autant de sincérité que notre ami. C’est quand nous le voyons sortir illégitimement de son domaine que nous l’y repoussons.<sup>361</sup>

The distinction between the religious and the political is again highlighted. *Le Pays*, despite its polemics against Church officials, suggested that religion was generally positive, as long as its did not attempt to dominate politics. Like *La Minerve* and Cartier, *Le Pays* promoted the need for separate spheres.

When the notion of moderation, based on reason, was applied to the religious dimension of people’s lives, it lead to the promotion of ideas of tolerance, and to the belief in the separation of religious from political authority. When applied to political ends moderation moved people away from the dogmatic stances that would hamper cooperation. This cooperative attitude was necessary for successful parliamentary government. This advocacy of moderation was based on a deeper belief that, as Mill

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<sup>360</sup> Jean-Charles Bonenfant, “Sir George-Étienne Cartier,” in Laurier L. Lapierre, *French Canadian Thinkers of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Montreal, 1966), 50.

<sup>361</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, April 2 1868.

wrote, “Mankind are not infallible; that their truths, for the most part, are only half-truths; that unity of opinion, unless resulting from the fullest and freest comparison of opposite opinions is not desirable, and diversity not an evil, but a good.”<sup>362</sup> Rainer Knopff in “The Triumph of Liberalism” has also studied the liberal notion of willingness to compromise in the Canadian context. Knopff explores the transformation, in the nineteenth century, from what French political commentator Tocqueville called ‘Great Parties’ to political parties. Knopff writes that these

‘Great parties’ tended to see each other not as legitimate opponents in a game whose rules were understood and accepted by all sides, but as heretics whose victory would subvert the highest truths and most important human pursuits, and who thus had to be suppressed.<sup>363</sup>

This type of moral opposition between political parties rendered them inefficient and, at worst, could lead to civil war. Knopff suggests the liberal solution to this was “to turn the question of the best way of life into a matter of private choice and limit the public sphere to securing the condition of life itself.”<sup>364</sup> Rather than preach absolute ideologies, politicians in a liberal society were forced to find solutions that combined their own ideas with the will of the electorate and on new knowledge provided by science.<sup>365</sup> This flexibility demonstrates a degree of opportunism. In reference to the language of moderation, however, it also demonstrates a commitment to making rational choices based on the strength of arguments. In a liberal society, politics and party commitments must change, adapt and find new solutions to the social problems. François Evanturel, a conservative Member of Parliament from Quebec, underscored this political flexibility

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<sup>362</sup> Mill, *Utilitarianism and On Liberty*, 131-132. Similarly, Burchell, again drawing from Hume and Foucault, writes that “enthusiasm and faction are the enemies of conversability,” Burchell, 129.

<sup>363</sup> Knopff, 159.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.* The “will of the electorate is a debated idea. As we have seen, who votes and how much votes should control politics were being heavily debated questions.

during the Confederation debates. Regarding his support for Confederation he stated that “everything then depends on the conditions of the contract.”<sup>366</sup> If, however, the scheme were altered, so to disrespect the rights of any of the provinces, he would change his position.

A perceived lack of moderation could be quickly used as a weapon to criticize an opponent. *La Minerve* used the language of moderation in 1864, for instance, to criticize the Macdonald-Sicotte government. The newspaper claimed that J.S. Macdonald had distanced his cabinet from “tous les hommes modérés pour les remplacer par des adeptes de l’école démocratique la plus radicale.”<sup>367</sup> These radical politicians, the paper argued, would alienate themselves from Upper Canadian politicians. The Bleus and their policies of moderation, therefore, allowed them to be the party of conciliation, cooperation and progress. Radical stances lead to strong reactions, and made cooperation impossible.

The conservatives also criticized ideologues and theories for being impractical. *La Minerve* praised political pragmatism, writing “il y a toujours des hommes qui se complaisent dans des théories impossibles, qui ne se nourrissent que d’utopies, et qui considèreraient comme indignes d’eux de s’occuper quelque peu des faits.”<sup>368</sup> This disdain for impractical theories is similar to Cartier’s flippant dismissal of the study of political theories, discussed earlier: “Un homme peut dévorer vingt bibliothèques sans être plus apte à la législation.”<sup>369</sup> This reflects the Bleus’ concern with the practical, but it also fits with the ideas of moderation and reason. *La Minerve* suggests politicians should act according to facts and not theories. As the details and the circumstances of a policy

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<sup>366</sup> *Confederation Debates*, 711.

<sup>367</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, April 5 1864.

<sup>368</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, August 2 1864.

<sup>369</sup> Cartier, 41 quoted in Jean-Charles Bonenfant, “Les idées politiques de George-Étienne Cartier,” in Marcel Hamelin, ed., *The Political Ideas of the Prime Ministers of Canada* (Ottawa, 1968), 32.

were unveiled, they suggested, it might become necessary to change one's opinions. Decisions and policies should be based on reason and not "leurs théories imaginaires."<sup>370</sup>

Quebec's conservatives repeatedly criticized the Rouges' unwillingness to compromise, because of their commitment to radical democratic ideas. The Rouges used the criticism of a lack of moderation in the other direction, but they attributed it to arrogance, not a commitment to political theory. The paper claimed that "tant que les conservateurs du Bas-Canada on été solidement assis sur les hauteurs de pouvoir, ils ont repoussé toute idée de compromis avec une insolente obstination."<sup>371</sup> Cartier, in their eyes, had been particularly unwilling to compromise with the liberals. *Le Pays* claimed that Cartier "avec le tact et la politesse qui le distinguent, ne se gênait pas pour dire, en pleine chambre, que les grits ne valaient pas plus qu'un nombre égal de morues du Golfe."<sup>372</sup> Whether inflexibility was the result of pride, determination or theoretical beliefs, both conservatives and liberal suggested it reflected an illiberal state of mind. The solution, according to *Le Pays*, was for individuals to use "un mot de sagesse et de conciliation," which "peut aujourd'hui faire un bien immense, comme une phrase irréfléchie peut aussi produire un mal incalculable."<sup>373</sup> The faculties of reason and thoughtfulness were central to creating policies of compromise. Once the different sectors of Quebec's political elite began to work together, based on their rational interests, they could better preserve French Canadian interests.

When *Le Pays* described people who were willing to compromise, they highlighted their thoughtful moderation. Regarding the necessity for conciliatory policies,

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<sup>370</sup> *La Minerve*, p. 2, June 6, 1868.

<sup>371</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, August 6 1864.

<sup>372</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, August 6 1864.

<sup>373</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, December 3 1867.

they stated “nous savons que cela est compris par beaucoup de prêtres modérés et réfléchis : puisse la chose être comprise aussi par les chefs du clergé.”<sup>374</sup> This is interesting, as they imply that the top church officials lack rationality. A similar technique was used by the Rouge newspaper when referring to Confederation, which was a product of partisanship and “horreur pour tout ce qui est libéral et honnête en politique.”<sup>375</sup> The mention of partisanship suggests that in the eyes of their critics, Confederation’s supporters placed party interests over those of the people. As was noted, who constituted “the people” was a debated topic. The Rouge criticism of Bleu partisanship highlights the different conceptions of who should be given the right to vote. The Rouges had a broader conception of political participation and liberty than the Bleus.

Despite their different conceptions of politics, all claimed to be on the side of moderation. Cartier’s description of Confederation’s supporters used virtually the same language as *Le Pays*’ description of the plan’s liberal critics. This is not surprising given the other parallels in language previously studied, concerning nationalism, expansion and property. Cartier used appeals to ideas of moderation and reason to describe Confederation’s supporters. “Le projet est approuvé par tous les gens modérés,” he claimed in 1864. “Les hommes des partis extrêmes, les socialistes, les démocrates et les annexionnistes sont seuls à le combattre.”<sup>376</sup> He specified that the members of Montreal’s Institut canadien were unreasonable in their opposition, as it was based on preserving religion, of which they were normally critical. In the same speech he went on to expressly associate supporting Confederation with respectability. He stated

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<sup>374</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>375</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>376</sup> Cartier, 424.

nous avons pour nous les hommes modérés, les hommes respectables et intelligents. Je ne veux pas sûrement dire que nous n'avons pas d'adversaires respectables; mais je prétends que la nouvelle constitution a l'approbation à peu près générale des hommes sages, honorables et intelligents.<sup>377</sup>

Individuals who were intelligent and reasonable, for the most part, supported the plan. This is an interesting approach as he suggests that those who opposed Confederation are doing so because they are either incapable of identifying the best option or unwilling to cooperate to find the best option.

### Conclusion

A reliance on rational thought featured prominently in mid-nineteenth-century Quebec' discourse. Literary and social groups, as well as politicians and journalists, promoted the civilizing virtues of education. A better-educated society would be more egalitarian, more successful, and more self-regulating. Reason as a tool of self-regulation also applied to the governing classes. Once in positions of power, politicians needed to govern according to reason, to ensure equality and liberty. *Le Pays* wrote that the main goal of government was to provide order for "le gouvernement, la propriété, la religion, la vie et l'opinion individuelle."<sup>378</sup> The two parties, at times, differed on how these goals should be achieved, but agreed that the goals were important.

Their different positions were based on different understandings of the same issues, such as American politics, the scope of ecclesiastical authority, and the abilities of the population. Their stances also interacted with social changes and were informed by dynamic interactions with English Canada and the Catholic Church. In spite of their different positions, both relied heavily on language of reason and progress. Reason could

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<sup>377</sup> *Ibid.*, 425.

<sup>378</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, June 2 1871.

be developed through education, and was necessary to let people actively participate in politics. Ever the pragmatist, he opposed individual liberties and widespread political participation when it stood in the way of efficient government action. Although Cartier spoke more passionately about the restriction of liberties, he highlighted the economic and self-governing aspects of reason. This fits with nineteenth-century conceptions of liberalism. According to such thought, a society of rational individuals will be better run and more prosperous.<sup>379</sup> Also in a rational society that encouraged commerce, people will be more tolerant and cooperative. Liberal citizens will be freed from their prejudices and more accepting of new ideas and options.

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<sup>379</sup> Vachet, 7.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

Politicians and journalists in mid-nineteenth-century Quebec frequently stressed the role of the individual in discussions of nationalism, property and progress. George-Étienne Cartier is a key example of someone who suggested that individual efforts to acquire property could conserve culture, religion and language. This conservation could be achieved through commercial development, he argued, because commerce fostered a progressive, rational and tolerant society. Cartier used liberal ideas, especially the individual pursuit of property, to govern others. These were also key influences on his own behaviour. The initiatives that Cartier supported, as Brian Young has shown, served his and his class's interests. That Cartier acted out of self-interest, however, should not be taken as proof that his politics were devoid of ideas and of references to contemporary debates. He suggested, in a liberal manner, that others should follow material interests. If people entered communities to better their individual conditions, it followed that these isolated communities should enter larger associations to serve the community and the individuals within that community. Cartier's style of government, whether consciously or not, paralleled Mill's description of liberal government in a liberal society. The development of reason and the pursuit of property are important features in such a society. These traits, while first focused on the individual, are also useful pursuits for the security and development of the community, both local and distant.

The suggestion that, throughout the 1860s, liberal and conservative politicians shared a liberal approach to government is significant because it helps link the radicalism of the Rebellions of 1837-1838 to the commercialism of the business class at the

century's end.<sup>1</sup> Typically the Rouges, who ceased to exist by the early 1870s, are seen as continuing the liberal, Patriot tradition. The Bleus, on the other hand, are presented as conservative and monarchal. Regarding the three main themes explored in this thesis, however, the two parties shared a language that elevated the role of the individual. Furthermore, within this context, Cartier's personal interests can be understood as an example of the importance of the individual in collective issues.

Attempting to isolate these themes for the sake of this analysis has created certain problems. The overlap in chapters two and three is one such difficulty. The Confederation plan and its expansionist outcomes dealt extensively with both property and nationalism. Because of the importance of these two themes in Cartier's politics, they deserve their own analysis, but they address common events and institutions. Similarly, Cartier's discussion of progress and freedom was tied to his interest in development and commerce. He did not eloquently promote the improvement of the working class or the expansion of liberties; rather, he suggested that progress and education were important tools to help individuals and the nation become prosperous. As more French Canadians were successful they could better preserve their culture and traditions. How the combination of modern and traditional ideas modified and affected each other is an important area in Quebec and Canadian history. A central figure in mid-nineteenth-century Canadian and Quebec politics, Cartier played an important role in these interactions.

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<sup>1</sup> The Rebellions are explored in detail by Allan Greer, *The Patriots and the People: The Rebellion of 1837 in Rural Lower Canada* (Toronto, 1993). Greer states that rather than desiring an agrarian economy, the Patriot press promoted liberal economics. (128) As we have seen, an important discussion of Montreal's business class at the end of the century is Fernande Roy, *Progrès, harmonie, liberté: le libéralisme des milieux d'affaires francophones à Montréal au tournant du siècle* (Montreal, 1988).

The development and intersection of these themes raise further questions that still need to be explored more systematically. One such question is that of class. Throughout this thesis, we have seen how mid-nineteenth-century elites attempted to instill their interests to all citizens. By tying the questions of railways to land expansion, of expansion to national survival, and of individual interests to nationality, elites found effective cultural and universal questions in which to base their interests. Similarly, the political events Cartier supported, notably Confederation, expansion and a trans-Canadian railway line, were related to his interests as a railway developer and landowner. He suggested, however, that these interests were useful for all levels of society. These politicians made links between the liberal ideas and institutions they supported and issues important to other classes. Once these institutions were established, however, they created new realities that affected the popular classes.

The links between elite projects and popular cultural institutions is a technique of governance. Colin Gordon writes that “Police government, finally, is in Foucault’s terms a form of pastoral power, a government which defines itself as being ‘of all and of each’: a universal assignation of subjects to an economically useful life.”<sup>381</sup> For liberal projects to succeed, the population must come to identify the project’s aims as their own, and simultaneously, work towards to accomplish those aims. As the project is justified in popular institutions, control mechanisms are established in day-to-day activities; “surveillance passer from the sovereign to the entrepreneur.”<sup>382</sup> Individual decisions and social relations then shape conduct.

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<sup>381</sup> Colin Gordon, “Governmental Rationality: an Introduction” in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago, 1991), 12.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

By disseminating liberal ideas, and by combining of elite projects and popular institutions, Cartier and his peers helped to establish new social roles and expectations. As Cartier and his contemporaries encouraged every citizen to have economic and nationalist goals similar to their own, they also imposed expectations about social behaviour and relations. How these expectations altered the daily lives of those outside the privileged and dominant class, like workers, farmers, and women is an area that merits further examination.<sup>383</sup> The language used by these politicians and journalists also reflected their attitudes towards these groups. Although this was not stressed in this thesis, these attitudes offer valuable questions for further research.

Questions related to how the liberalism of Cartier and his colleagues shaped issues of class, gender, and race opens their stances to criticisms. Their politics, based on the unfettered pursuit of self-interest, technology, science and progress, were most often only practical to upper and middle-class males. This work opened with Cartier's farewell address to the citizens of Montreal-East. During this speech he noted that there are parts of his career that left him open for criticisms.<sup>384</sup> This same idea was politely noted on a commemorative plaque in his honour, which stated "his political methods were perhaps

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<sup>383</sup> There is already a large body of work on how gender roles changed with the development of liberal institutions. One such example is Brian Young's *The Politics of Codification: The Lower Canadian Civil Code of 1866* (Montreal, 1994). Young suggests that "this coexistence of patriarchy and liberalism within the code mirrored the period's social conservatism and helps explain the subordination of married women over the following century in a society undergoing rapid capitalist development." (165) Bettina Bradbury and Lori Chambers write on similar themes of gender inequality, marriage, property and legal reform in Quebec and Ontario, respectively. Bettina Bradbury, "Debating Dower: Patriarchy, Capitalism and Widows' Rights in Lower Canada," in Tamara Myers, Kate Boyer, Mary Anne Poutanen and Steven Watt, eds., *Power, Place and Identity: Historical Studies of Social and Legal Regulation in Quebec* (Montreal, 1998); Lori Chambers, *Married Women and Property Laws in Victorian Ontario* (Toronto, 1997). Nancy Christie, in her introduction to *Households of Faith: Family, Gender and Community in Canada, 1760-1969* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), is critical of historians who portray the mid-nineteenth century as the expansion of separate spheres. She suggests that market place and politics were "the primary site where gender hierarchies were negotiated and reaffirmed," and not "fulcrums of gender inequality." This invites even more questions of the interaction between the liberalism of Cartier and his colleagues and women.

<sup>384</sup> Cartier, 758.

not always above reproach; but his services in connection with Confederation outweighed any shortcomings he may have had.”<sup>385</sup>

One of Cartier’s significant shortcomings, in the writings of most historians, is that he elevated railways to too glorious a position. He was guilty of what A.A. den Otter labels “technological nationalism, which ascribes nation building powers to a physical object and ‘commodified’ Canada’s cultural identity, making it liable to obsolescence.”<sup>386</sup> Cartier built his platform in large part on railroads because of his business ties, and thus left a fragile legacy. This legacy has been further weakened by his lack of rhetorical flair. Jean-Charles Bonenfant stated that Cartier “n’était pas un chef à panache,”<sup>387</sup> Wilfrid Laurier noted that “however high and brave the conclusion he comes to, the grandeur of the subject never draws any inspiration from him. He always remains exclusively a man of action and a business man, without any bright thoughts or clever sentences.”<sup>388</sup> Cartier repeatedly encouraged hard work and persistence. This applied to French Canada’s national survival and to ambitious citizens. He applied this same ethic to his politics strategies, which effectively and mechanically furthered his personal interests.

Another serious condemnation of Cartier political actions, this time made by contemporaries, was that he was too self-centred in his decision-making process. After entering the pro-Confederation coalition with George Brown, in 1864, he told people “[e]n faisant alliance avec M. Brown, je n’ai pris avis ni de mes compatriotes ni de mes

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<sup>385</sup> McCord, vol.6, *Sir George Etienne Cartier: Statesmen*.

<sup>386</sup> A.A. den Otter, *The Philosophy of Railways: The Transcontinental Railway Idea in British North America* (Toronto, 1997), 11.

<sup>387</sup> Jean-Charles Bonenfant, “Les idées politiques de George-Étienne Cartier,” Marcel Hamelin, ed., *Les idées politiques des premiers ministres du Canada* (Ottawa, 1969), 49.

<sup>388</sup> Arthur Clément Dansereau, Benjamin Sulte, Elzéar Gérin, Mgr Antoine Racine *George Etienne Cartier: Etudes* (Montreal, 1914), 116. Laurier finishes this thought with a rather backhanded, but ultimately significant compliment: “It is impossible to read his speeches, with their dullness of expression without arriving at the conclusion that they come from a person whose political intelligence is of the highest order.”

amis politiques. Je dois avouer ici que dans tous les actes importants dans ma vie politique, je n'ai jamais consulté personne."<sup>389</sup> This aggressive and authoritative behaviour was motivated by his keen opportunism, which could not pass up business chance, and partly by his arrogance, which convinced him that he knew best. He explained that

sous l'empire du système britannique, je sais bien qu'un homme d'Etat doit se laisser guider surtout par l'opinion publique. . . ; mais, je pense en même temps qu'un homme dans cette position ne doit pas avoir uniquement à cœur de refléter des préjugés vulgaires, il doit tâcher de diriger lui-même l'opinion.<sup>390</sup>

The reference to 'préjugés vulgaires' is considerable, as it implies that public opinion was not based on rational thought, and consequently not worth considering.

A third serious criticism of Cartier's political life was that he became accustomed to power; in the words of *Le Pays*, Cartier suffered from "L'ivresse du pouvoir."<sup>391</sup> Early in Cartier's legal career Édouard-Étienne Rodier advised him that "pour se faire respecter des tyrans, il faut les mépriser et jamais plier."<sup>392</sup> By the end of his career, however, Cartier, and his supporters, demonstrated a moral looseness during campaigns. During an 1868 rally, a group of his supporters threw red paint on his adversary's door. *Le Pays* wrote "cet acte, fort insensé et tout à fait insignifiant en lui-même, montre cependant l'esprit de tolérance du parti clérical."<sup>393</sup> This is an example of the manipulation of prejudices, as the paint literally identified Cartier's opponent as Rouge, and implicitly anti-clerical. During an 1870 debate, on electoral reform, A.A. Dorion chided Cartier's campaigning practices. When Cartier stated that he "begins to understand that the ballot

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<sup>389</sup> Cartier, 402.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid.

<sup>391</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, September 2 1865.

<sup>392</sup> Libraries and Archives Canada (George-Etienne Cartier fonds), MG27 ID4, vol.1, p.2, E.E. Rodier to Cartier, December 11 1832.

<sup>393</sup> *Le Pays*, p. 2, January 4 1868.

in the United States means bribery and corruption,” Dorion replied “the Minister of Militia meant that he was afraid if the ballot was adopted he might not be sure of getting the votes after having purchased them.”<sup>394</sup>

The reaction to his loss in 1872 also demonstrated Bleus’ sense of entitlement towards power. Cartier received many letters of condolences and statements of continued support. One such letter attributed his loss to “l’ingratitude de vos compatriotes de Montréal-est. Il n’y a qu’un conard de réprobation par tout le pays pour flétrir cette conduite.”<sup>395</sup> The loss was not attributed to matters of policy or of campaigning, but it was blamed on the citizens. This implicitly echoes Cartier’s distrust of public opinion. Not only did the electorate fail to recognize its true interests, they were ungrateful to the politician who had defended those interests. Cartier’s role in the Pacific Scandal was also tied to this sense of political entitlement. Desperate to keep power—and true his railway-centric career—he accepted campaign contributions from Hugh Allan in exchange for the contract to build the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Regardless of the nature of his motivations, Cartier’s influence on Canadian history is undeniable, and his conception of society and government should be understood. It is impossible to study Cartier without taking his own, at times, selfish interests into account. At the same time, it is a disservice to Cartier’s role in Canadian development to ignore the ideas and influences behind his actions. These two identities—the nationalist and the petty landowner—can be reconciled when Cartier is examined through the lens of liberalism. The individual and free pursuit of property was an important aspect of his political life. He applied this belief to his government by

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<sup>394</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates* 1<sup>st</sup> parliament, 3<sup>rd</sup> session, 1870 (Ottawa, 1975), 356.

<sup>395</sup> McCord, vol.3, Gédéon Ouimet à G-E Cartier, 30 août 1872.

advocating that all people, of all backgrounds, could coexist, cooperate and prosper if they were free to acquire and expand their property. The suggestion of cooperation based on commercial interests was important given the negotiations between French and English Canada in the 1860s. The development of rational thinking was central to the population being able to successfully exist in a political nation, based on common, commercial interests.

The intersection of ideas, economics, and politics provides rich insights into political culture and history. Informed by a variety of approaches from social history, philosophy and discourse analysis, histories of political figures and events can be studied without creating myths and grand narratives of national development. Recent studies of Quebec history have come to innovative conclusions about the institutions and discourses in the province. These histories, however, tend to minimize the realm of traditional politics. In light of recent questions on identity and the nature of government, this is missing a valuable source of information. Cartier's language, ideas and politics, although successful, were not particularly innovative. They were, however, reflective of his class and his period's political discourse. The combination of individual and national interests, self and community initiatives, and modernizing and conservationist stances, were the dominant tensions and ideas that existed in mid-nineteenth-century Quebec.

In 1871, Cartier proudly declared

Il appartenait, selon moi, à la vieille province de Québec de donner bon exemple aux autres; et je pense que ses chefs l'en ont convaincue; car l'on discute moins dans le Bas-Canada que partout ailleurs les irritantes questions de race et de religion. Si je n'ai pu accomplir de grandes choses pour mon pays; j'espère, du moins qu'une politique constamment libérale envers tout le monde, sans distinction aucune, aura rendu notre pays plus heureux, plus prospère, et que ce

fruit de mon administration servira d'encouragement à qui voudra marcher dans la voie déjà faite.<sup>396</sup>

Cartier's understanding of government, although elitist, paralleled significantly with that of his liberal critics. Both sides of the debate promoted the settlement of land, tied individual prosperity to the strengthening of French Canada's culture, ethnic cooperation and technology to facilitate progress. The likeness between these conceptions suggests a "langage universel de référence, une sorte de sens commun."<sup>397</sup> Whether Rouges or Bleus, the leading politicians in mid-nineteenth-century Quebec made similar arguments and used similar, liberal reference points of progress, prosperity and identity.

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<sup>396</sup> Cartier, *Discours*, 718.

<sup>397</sup> Jean-Marie Fecteau, *La Liberté du pauvre : crime et pauvreté aux XIXe siècle québécois* (Montréal, 2004), 332.

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