

**Fact Sheet:**

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

April 25, 2014

McGill University, Montréal

**Organized by:**

Susan J. Palmer (Dawson College and Concordia University) and Solange Lefebvre (University of Montréal).

**Participants:**

Peter Beyer, University of Ottawa

Lorne Dawson, University of Waterloo

Loraine Derocher, Université de Sherbrooke

Susan Palmer, Dawson College and Concordia University

Martin Geoffroy, Cégep Édouard-Montpetit à Longueuil au Québec

Michael Kropveld, Info-Cult/Info-Secte

Guy-Robert St-Arnaud, Université de Montréal

**Student Participation:**

Paul Gareau, University of Ottawa

Andrew Lairenge was hired as the technical assistant.

**Event Description:**

This conference was funded by the Social Sciences and the Humanities Research Council and the *Religion and Diversity* project had, as part of its mission, the goal of mapping the contours of religious diversity in Canada. The purpose of the one-day workshop on Quebec's new religious movements was to bring together scholars and researchers who have studied the phenomenon of alternative religions in Quebec since the "Quiet Revolution". These movements include the Catholic *integristes*, or conservative schismatic movements within Quebec's ultramontane type of Catholicism, as well as indigenous, imported and international NRMs or "sects". Controversial "*sectes*" like the Solar Temple and criminal "cult leaders" like Roche Moses Theriault have been highlighted in the media, but there are to date surprisingly few in-depth ethnographical studies of these groups. The objective of the workshop was to showcase on-going research on Quebecois alternative religions, to share theories and observed patterns on Quebec history and culture, and to focus on Quebec as a favorable "ecological niche" for new spiritual movements and radical social experiments and alternative worldviews. An additional objective of the workshop was to build scholarly networks across Quebec between French and English universities and their faculty and students, thanks to the funding and the attendees, this networking was highly successful.