

The Catholic Church and the Formation of Metis Identity

Jacinthe Duval

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21971/P70P4Q>

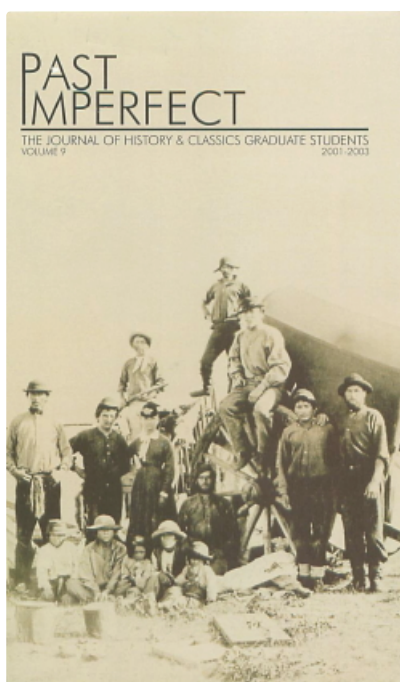
ABSTRACT This essay explores the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the Metis in the Red River colony in the

nineteenth century. It demonstrates how missionaries, via their intellectual artifacts, have been responsible for shaping popular contemporary images of Metis culture. In analyzing the writings of missionaries, this paper also notes the ambiguity with which these individuals viewed Metis society. Priests steeped in European ecclesiastical and national values who hoped the Metis might form the basis of a new Francophone prairie society viewed some mixed-blood cultural practices as inimical to this end. From the perspective of the missionaries, the tantalizing familiarity of the French, Catholic aspect of the Metis contrasted jarringly with their 'alien' indigenous cultural and economic traits. As such, the Metis represented both a promise and a threat to the nation-building project. Although Metis identity has been stamped with the official seal of the church, the contradictions missionaries saw in this culture offer a promising avenue for the exploration of the complex processes of identity formation.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Jacinthe Duval

Jacinthe Duval is presently finishing a Master of Arts degree in History, specializing in Archival Studies at the University of Manitoba. She also works as an archivist at the Centre du Patrimoine for the Societe historique de St. Boniface in Manitoba, where she has developed an interest in the history of Francophone communities in the province. She is currently writing a thesis on the history of the formation of the Grey Nuns archives in St. Boniface.



PDF

PUBLISHED

ISSUE

[Vol. 9 \(2001\)](#)

SECTION

Articles

ABOUT *PAST IMPERFECT*

Past Imperfect is a peer-reviewed graduate student journal based out of the Department of History & Classics at the University of Alberta. We are currently welcoming submissions, in French or in English, from graduate students in all areas of History and Classics for publication in its twenty-first annual edition. This open access journal provides an opportunity for developing scholars to gain experience with peer-reviewed academic publishing.

Past Imperfect welcomes original research articles and book reviews covering a broad range of both time and geography. The journal especially encourages the submission of revised term papers, conference presentations, or thesis chapters. Articles that appear in Past Imperfect are abstracted in “America: History and Life” and “Historical Abstracts.”

**SUBMIT A
MANUSCRIPT**



**SIGN UP
FOR E-ALERTS**



