



Adrien Arcand, 1899-1967

Soldier of Christ

At His Own Risk and Peril

"Soldat du Christ, à ses risques et périls"

by Jean Côté

For the first time, in English

Adrien Arcand Books - Free Edition

Soldier
of Christ

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JEAN CÔTÉ

SOLDIER OF CHRIST At His Own Risk and Peril

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Dedication

For Adrien Arcand and his companions in the Canadian concentration camps in WWII. Every one of them a hero, a patriot and thoroughly innocent.

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The personality of Adrien Arcand, his political ideas, his pan-Canadian action, his fervor for the safeguarding of Christian values in the Western world, his ardent proselytizing for the white man and his fierce battles against Judeo-communism made him an exceptional being and probably the toughest opponent of the Jews in Canada.

If he felt a certain attraction for European fascism in using a myriad of imported symbols — the Swastika, insignias, blue shirts, Iron Guard — to identify and promote his movement, which gave itself a paramilitary appearance in its feverish period, the leader of the Catholic and traditionalist National Social Christian Party was at opposite poles from Judeo-communist ideology.

However, his sweeping statements, his vigorous and documented dialectic, and his constant defence of the White race, for him the great “progressivist of humanity,” served his adversaries who tirelessly denigrated a great Christian

coupled with a great patriot.

In all his philosophical writings the name of God, like a leitmotif, constantly returns to his lips. His last disciples, still alive, the Lemieux's, the Lanctôt's, the Laberge's, the Bleau's and a few others, testify that all the political thought of their leader was nourished by his studies in Catholic establishments (the colleges of *Montréal* and *Sainte-Marie*) and by his reading on religious subjects.

Adrien Arcand denied that he was a fascist in the style of Hitler.

His knowledge of theology was so advanced, says Gérard Lemieux, that he could match many a theologian. Had he wanted to, he could have been at ease in the skin of a canon so far had he progressed in his science of the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

More than fifty years after the 1939-45 war, it would be difficult and reckless for a man today to try to understand the mysticism of earlier generations and their deep attachment to the values of the time: God, homeland, family, truth, authority, discipline, work, honor, sacrifice, dignity, altruism, tradition: words empty of meaning today.

Bruno Lagrange, philosopher, theologian, author of several books, and television presenter, said of the current society:

“What is collapsing... it is not the structures that are dying, it is us in this society who are dying to a world of false understanding.”

These words would not have detonated in the mouth of Adrien Arcand, so much do the fragments of his correspondence that we have studied and read with interest give abundant room to his spiritual dimension; for him, without Christ, the sacred, Grandeur, there is no desirable life. The Cross is the symbol of life, but in a depraved society it is the opposite of what it represents.

Exploring the avenues of fascism, the writer François Mora asserts that, in his case, “fascism is exaltation and madness because it retains its human roots in good and evil, while Communism — the scourge of Arcand — is a form of absolute barbarism.”

Pierre Trépanier made a short but interesting study ¹ of the thought of Adrien Arcand.

“The reader of Arcand’s pamphlets,” he writes, “will be astonished by his insistence on promoting religion and spiritual values that have nothing to do with politics.”

Having analyzed “*Mon Livre d’Heures*,” published in 1936, Pierre Trépanier came to the following conclusion:

“In total, prayer and apologetics account for 56 per cent of the contents of the booklet, compared to 44 per cent for politics. A book of hours being a collection of devotions containing the canonical hours, Arcand had every reason to so title his mini-opus, broadly speaking, where in spite

¹ Côté is referring to Trépanier, P. (1991). La religion dans la pensée d’Adrien Arcand. Les Cahiers des dix, (46), 207-247, translation: “Religion in the Thought of Adrien Arcand”, <https://doi.org/10.7202/1015587ar>

of confusion and errors, the very breath of Faith is drawn throughout. If this Faith was allied to racism, anti-Semitism,² it was neither inevitable nor automatic. It stands on its own quite well without the racism. It finds not its fulfillment, but rather a serious difficulty that must be overcome.³ As for his racism, it is also self-sustaining insofar as it stems from a political reading of history. But if, in this racism, we consider anti-Semitism, it becomes obvious that it is also based on a religious vision of the World and Time, and that it keeps alive the legacy of anti-Judaism, almost as old as Christianity itself. Arcand's thought feeds on Catholic tradition and a biblical culture born of a long practice of the Holy Books. Its historical memory plunges far enough into the past to embrace the Jewish experience in its most remote antiquity."

After his release from the internment camp, Arcand and his followers clamored for a public trial. Their request was denied.

² In an editorial, "Why Semitism is a Danger", Adrien Arcand defines the meaning of "Semitism" in the *Goglu* of May 23rd, 1930. He thus made clear what he meant by *Anti-Semitism*. His error as a journalist and political figure, in my view, was to have used a word that already had a negative denotation, because that denotation does not correspond with what he described as his own use of the word in his Editorial. His *Anti-Semitism*, in my view also cannot be reduced to "racism". Jewishness is not reducible to a mere question of "race". Arcand was moreover quite favorable toward many Jews who became Catholic priests and scholars; Arcand quotes them in his own work.

³ I think that Côté accidentally skipped this line, I've reintroduced it: "*Elle n'y trouve pas son accomplissement, mais plutôt une difficulté sérieuse, qu'il s'agit de surmonter.*"

“The State never dared to send him to his trial,”⁴ writes Trépanier, “from which he would have emerged cleared. Arcand had no blood on his hands.”

A mystic? A modern preacher? A slayer of atheists? A hard-core adversary of Judeo-communism? An enemy of liberalism? A social agitator on the model of Jesus? An acute doctrinarian⁵ demanding the adoption of corporatism? Adrien Arcand was all of these at once. A visionary in his own way, he guessed that Quebec would change profoundly and would not remain aloof from the changes that would sweep away the “beautiful certainties” that Quebec was immutable in its form, its spirit and its religious beliefs.

⁴ I don't think it's a question of Arcand and his men being denied a trial because they would have been cleared. In my view, they were framed deliberately by the Liberal State with phony charges for which there was no evidence, and for the sole purpose of taking them into custody to intern them. The State knew the charges were false, there was no intent to go to trial, which is why their preliminary hearing was abandoned, and there also was no trial after the war. False charges were laid as part of a broader, sinister agenda which I will explain in a post at Down With Hate!, as I've just received a bundle of documents from the Ottawa Archives which I'm percolating together with Arcand's 1957 Memorandum and Request for compensation.

⁵ Doctrinarian means “Stubbornly insistent on theory without regard for practicality or suitability” or “A stubborn person of arbitrary or arrogant opinions”. I don't think Arcand was arbitrary on the issue of his unitary parliament at the heart of his corporatism. In fact, he refers to the original English Parliament that was unitary before the emergence of parties. He views that emergence as a harmful aberration and he prefers the original Parliament for reasons that he gives, and we can find substantiation in the materials he liked to distribute. There are, in fact, indications that political parties – which first emerged in England to then spread far and wide are not constitutional, and have never been recognized in England or UK as a part of the British Constitution. I'll talk about that another day.

Was Adrien Arcand a fanatic? At any rate, not in the sense that Quebecers, long-standing xenophobes, perceive fascism.

“French-Canadians of yesterday,” Gérard Lemieux would say, “felt more fear than contempt of foreigners”.

Judging from all his writings, Adrien Arcand — at the head of a political organization of 100,000 members — was more of a missionary who had strayed into politics, a soldier of Christ, because he thought that God was the supreme Legislator and that no one could substitute his own will for Divine Will. He had the feeling and the certitude that through his speeches he was transmitting authentic and indestructible values.

Nietzsche argued “that the highest values depreciate but that values remain more fundamental than certainties”.

Adrien Arcand did not travel in the same direction as life, with its changes, its surprises, its imponderables, its incongruities; he blindly opted for things spiritually acquired, viscerally refusing the illusions of progress that he doomed to Gehenna: prostration before the golden calf (materialism), the alienation of the soul in a deceitful, foolish and unbalanced world. As if obsessed, he advocated unity in continuity. At all times, with lovely transparency — even in his virulent moments — he rejected compromise.

— The lie makes me dizzy, he said. I love Truth as another myself. But when we tell the Truth, we become contagious.

Born at the beginning of the century, at a time when the Arch-bishop of Montreal, Edouard-Charles Fabre, forbade

his priests from “attending theatre or the opera,” Adrien Arcand was the product of a generation deeply penetrated by certainties.

There were some dissenters here and there, but they quickly returned to the ranks.

Very few oracles at the beginning of the century foresaw the enormous upheavals that would rock the physical and mental structures of Western Christian civilization.

Canon Georges Panneton was a man of great intellectual rigor, with whom the leader of the NSCP kept up a long correspondence.

Of Arcand, he would say:

— I corresponded with him for four years. I consider him a genius of his kind, a brave apostle who sacrificed everything for the service of the Church and to establish the reign of Christ. He has my complete admiration.

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The internment of Adrien Arcand
and his men in WWII

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