THE VIEW OF HISTORY TRANSFORMED

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History writing in the Groulx tradition became liberal nationalist (not providential nationalist) and rigorously "scientific" (rejecting mythic heroes and miraculous events). But the apparent scientific rigour often revealed (and reveals) a scholarly and concerted program of research to overthrow "Confederationist" arguments and show the validity and, indeed, the necessity of arguments that lead to conclusions supporting the active demand for an independent Québec.

[Deux idéologies s'affrontent.]

People in the Groulx tradition who shaped the development were Guy Frégault, Michel Brunet, and Maurice Séguin. They worked among historians, like **Fernand Ouellet, who actively disagreed with them**, and among historians who were scientifically driven but not visibly necessarily ideologically driven. **The liberal nationalist historians wrote brilliant, interesting, controversial histories.** One of note is the exceptional *La Guerre de la Conquête* by Guy Frégault, published in French in 1955 and in English in 1969.

> *In general the liberal nationalist/separatist historians shaped an argument that is now part of nationalist ideology in Québec, whether separatist nationalist or confederationist nationalist.*

In general, their arguments are that the inhabitants of New France enjoyed a reasonable standard of living and education. They possessed energy and entrepreneurial skill. They lived in a general era of prosperity. **1763 changed all that. The political and economic structure of New France collapsed.** Francophone social leadership was dispersed. **The fur trade fell into the hands of the English as did all significant political and industrial power.**

Québec and Constitutional Change

By Robin Mathews

Québec - A Priority

In the minds of most Canadians outside Québec that province often figures more largely than the province where they, themselves, live. At least since "the October Crisis" in 1970 when the *front de libération du Québec* activists kidnapped a Québec cabinet minister and a British diplomat, later killing the Québec cabinet minister, Québec has been at the centre of Canadian affairs. That is because many people in Québec have come to a position where they see the historic and fundamental differences between the largely francophone population of Québec and the largely anglophone population of the rest of Canada as not only irreconcilable but as a basic cause for ending the present country founded by "Confederation" in 1867. Their goal is to create a separate country in the territory presently occupied by the Province of Québec - whatever political and economic relations that country might have with "Canada" thereafter.

Large injustices - cited to support arguments for separation - have been wrought in the past. Large accommodations have been made, as well, to make the country comfortable as a primary home for francophones. Whatever the balance or imbalance of those factors, in October 1995 a second referendum (the first was held in 1980) was held in Québec to determine if the population wished to begin a move to political independence. The "no" vote won by a very narrow margin, and the premier of Québec, Jacques Parizeau, attributed the loss to money and the ethnic vote. His remarks were greeted with expressions of distaste inside and outside Québec. But he had put his finger on an important aspect of Québec reality.

The Ethnic Reality

In very large measure, the territory on which most francophones lived in 1760 (the time of the Conquest of New France by Britain) has produced - by a generally high birthrate - the overwhelming number of Québécois (called Quebecers in English Canada) who make up the present population of the province, which as of the 1995 census is approximately 7,300,000, in a country with a total population that will reach thirty million sometime this summer. Unlike English-speaking Canada, Québec - until quite recently - was not a province characterized by immigration from outside the country. Its population growth came from within. For that reason Québec has a population which is ethnically homogenous in a way not matched by the rest of Canada. For that reason, too, Québécois may be heard to speak of those who are Québécois "pur laine" which means something like "a hundred per cent pure wool" or, more loosely, "with a long, continuous family past in the province".

That phrase and some others which are similar offend those who have migrated recently to Québec. They offend long time anglophones, too, because the phrases are often taken to mean "speakers of French as first language with a long continuous family past in the province". Those who do not speak French as first language in Québec make up fifteen to twenty percent. Many `old family francophones' voted in the 1995 referendum *against* separation, no doubt. But the very small number of votes separating the "no" side and the "yes" side caused tension and frayed nerves. And so the small margin of "no" votes might easily (if falsely) be attributed to residents of recent tenure in Québec since the overwhelming majority of recent residents wanted Québec to stay a part of Canada.

A Basis In Culture

On a January 1, 1996 radio program considering the condition of Canada, Natalie Petroski, a Québécoise, remarked that the Québécois have their own television programs that are watched sometimes by as many as four million people. They have their own media stars, their own highly

regarded writers. She said US culture may wash over Québec but the people can return to their own culture, their own language, their own pride. For that reason, she argued, they are not as threatened as people in anglophone Canada, who, she argued, do not have as much to fall back upon of their own.

That claim has a very long history. It may have begun because the francophones of New France were "abandoned" by the government of France at the time of the Conquest and were forced in upon themselves. In addition, the superimposition upon their society of English rulers from a foreign culture accentuated the distinctiveness of francophone society. Then, sixteen years after the Conquest, an all English-speaking society formed - the USA - just to the south, and dissidents from that new republic made their way in large numbers northwards, many into the territory known today as Québec.

As if those factors were not enough, nineteen years after the Conquest, France underwent its transforming revolution which secularized the country and severely weakened the power of Roman Catholic institutions there. As a result, many church people left France and travelled to Canada. Though the Roman Catholic Church did not have the power it was to gain in later decades, the new arrivals after 1789 doubtless helped to provide a basis for the later power of the Church in Québec.

The Special Vocation Of Québec

Whatever bias Québec historians have had, they have claimed and recorded the uniqueness of Québec society. The major slant of historians until the middle of the twentieth century was clerical. Historians usually were priests, unusually conservative, usually of the view that the Conquest was beneficent, usually offering Québec history as the unfolding of God's Will. They saw the Québec people, usually, as especially selected to fulfil a role. The liberal nationalist historians (there were few; principally François-Xavier Garneau and Benjamin Sulte) very clearly saw the people of Québec as forming a strong culture, resisting assimilation and prevailing against great odds.

Benjamin Sulte (1841-1923), for instance, published his eight volume *Histoire des Canadiens Français 1608-1880* in Montréal between 1882 and 1884. He expresses a desire unfamiliar to most English Canadians of the time, wishing to belong neither to France nor to England. Indeed, more than a hundred years before Natalie Petroski's remarks on the CBC radio program *Morningside*, Sulte makes the same claim. Referring to the surge of consciousness in anglophone Canada since 1867 (he was writing in 1882) Sulte challenges anglophone Canadians. He begins with a quotation from M. Etienne Parent in 1850.

`Notre nationalité, c'est la maison; toute le reste n'est que l'accessoire, qui devra, nécessairement, suivre le principal. Soyons nationalement et socialement forts et puissants, et nous le serons politiquement. Au contraire, si nous négligions le soin de notre nationalité, les occasions de la réaffirmir, soyons bien surs que personne ne viendra nous tendre la main au moment de besoin ou de danger.' Ces paroles, que l'on prendrait pour un programme récemment conçu, expriment tout un mode d'action déja ancien, introduit avec nous dans cette colonie. Ce que nous avons arraché de libertés et de privilèges aux Français d'abord, aux Anglais ensuite, provient de cette manière d'agir. Cela s'appelle le patriotisme - il est contenu en quatre mots: voir à nos affaires. On s'étonne avec raison d'entendre nos compatriotes d'origine anglais invoquer (depuis quinze ans) la nécessité du sentiment national au Canada, et déplorer qu'il n'y ait jamais existé ni chez les Canadiens ni chez les Anglais; quelques uns de leurs journalistes vont jusqu'a soutenir que les Canadiens français se prêteraient volontiers à cette noble éducation si on les y appelait! Voilà deux siècles et demi que nous pratiquons la "nouvelle" école - et nous nous en trouvons bien." [Meaning in English: "'Our nationality is like a house; everything relates to that and must support it. If we are strong nationally

and socially, we will be strong politically. On the other hand, if we neglect the care of our nationality, and the opportunities to reaffirm it, we can be sure that no one is going to give us a hand when we are in need or in danger.' Those are words one might take as a recently conceived program, but they express a way of acting that is already old, that came with us to this colony. What we have wrestled of liberties and privileges from the French first and then, after, from the English was made possible by that manner of acting. It is called patriotism, and it's meaning is contained in a few words: we must look to our interests. We're rightly astonished to hear our compatriots of English origin asserting (for the last fifteen years) the need for a national spirit in Canada and lamenting that it never existed either among Canadiens or among the English; some of their journalists have gone so far as to assert that French Canadians would willingly lend themselves to this worthy education if they were called upon to do so! For goodness sakes, we have been practising this new idea for two and a half centuries - and we've proved it works for us." [Benjamin Sulte, *Histoire des Canadiens-Français 1608-1880,* Montréal, Wilson et Cie, 1882-1884. Tome lll, p. 116]

Elites And The Culture

Once again fairly distasteful comments (to anglophone Canadians, perhaps) have a serious element of truth in them. Indeed, some Canadians of both languages argue that while the ruling elites of Québec have always worked to strengthen the francophone culture as a base upon which to face the rest of the world, the elites of anglophone Canada have done the opposite. Both federally and provincially, it is sometimes argued, ruling elites (in government and big business) have eroded the cultural base upon which anglophone Canadians can face the rest of the world. They have eroded that base on behalf of US interests in culture, economics, and politics.

Indeed, René Lévesque, founding father of the modern separation movement in Québec, spoke clearly on the issue. He argued, wryly, that if the federal government in Ottawa was simply going to take orders from Washington DC, then Québec could operate more efficiently by dealing directly, independently, with Washington. Ottawa simply complicated matters for Québec by getting in the way. That might be called "a clear signal" of Lévesque's position.

But few signals from Québec remain clear for long. As a young man Lévesque did not want to wear a uniform in His Majesty's army in the Second World War. And so he worked for US. intelligence services overseas and preserved a lifelong, special fondness for US. people. In addition, in the famous 1987 election campaign dubbed "the Free Trade election", Québec voters gave the Mulroney government very strong support. Groups opposing Free Trade throughout anglophone Canada saw the FTA as robbing Canadians of sovereignty. They saw the Agreement as strongly "Americanizing", and as destructive of culture in Canada. They were both hurt and puzzled that the Québécois very largely ignored what many anglophone Canadians saw as their own as well as Québec's needs.

Québec - Formative in Canadian Identity

Those are contemporary manifestations of a history that has produced so many differences and reasons for accommodation that the character of Canada, to any present observer, is very largely formed - visibly and invisibly - by the francophone/anglophone fact of Canadian existence. So deeply has that fact carved the character of the nation, it is entirely appropriate to call this section "Québec and Constitutional Change". A very large part of constitution formation in Canada has been a product of the meeting of francophone/anglophone cultures. In his 1956 article "Act or Pact: Another Look at

Confederation", historian George F. C. Stanley makes exactly that claim. He writes:

"To my mind the principal factor - I do not suggest it as the sole factor but as one of the most important - in determining the course of Canadian constitutional development, has been the existence, within Canada, of two competing ethnic, cultural groups.... The struggle has dominated the whole story of Canadian politics.... The struggle is one which still continues, and the issues are still the same; supremacy as against survival, or to use the contemporary terms, centralization as against provincial autonomy." [F. C. Stanley, "Act or Pact: Another Look at Confederation," *Canadian Historical Association Annual Report (1956), p. 1.*]

Closing his article which was written, remember, in 1956, Stanley underscores his main theme. "If the population of Canada were one in race, language, and religion, our federation would be marked by flexibility; amendment would be a comparatively easy matter where there was agreement on fundamental issues. Since history has given us a dual culture, with its diversities of race and language, we must maintain a precarious balance between the two groups; and our constitution is rigid and inflexible." (p. 25) In changing the Constitution in 1982, and seeking to do so after, politicians have not made amendment more easy or palatable nor have they made relations between the two cultures warmer or more harmonious.

Overview

Two Sides To Ethnic Integrity

The ethnic factor in francophone/anglophone relations is difficult to characterize exactly. It is especially difficult to talk about in the contemporary world because people are deeply sensitive to claims of difference and the rights attached to those claims. On the one hand they fear that strongly defined differences may eventuate in unnecessary division, exclusion, and, ultimately, painful discrimination and oppression for smaller groups. On the other hand, they resist claims of difference that may eventuate in special claims, special treatment, special powers. Both arguments are based on a liberal philosophy: all members of the community are equal; all must have equal rights of mobility and opportunity; all must be treated the same. Admirable as the intention is, liberal philosophy is reluctant to recognize differences among communities and make allowances for those differences.

In his perennially interesting *Report* of 1839 Lord John Durham put his finger on that factor. Visiting Canada for five months after "the Rebellions" in Upper and Lower Canada (now Ontario and Québec), Durham recommended change in governmental forms, and he described the population he observed. In famous words, Durham wrote that he "expected to find a contest between a government and a people: I found two nations warring in the bosom of a single state: I found a struggle, not of principle, but of races; and I perceived it would be idle to attempt any amelioration of laws or institutions until we could first succeed in terminating the deadly animosity that now separates the inhabitants of Lower Canada....

...we discover that dissensions, which appear to have another origin, are but forms of this constant and all-pervading quarrel; and that every contest is one of French and English in the outset, or becomes so ere it has run its course."

[Lord Durham, *Lord Durham's Report,* an abridgment of *Report on the Affairs of British North America*, ed. Gerald M. Craig, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1963, pp. 22-23]

Those are extraordinarily strong words. Since the words "racialism" and "racism" had not yet entered English language dictionaries signifying their present meaning, we can be content that Lord Durham was not referring to differences in skin colour, but to differences of culture and language, and - to use a contemporary phrase - ethnic character. We must ask ourselves about those differences before turning to the conflicts and accommodations that have marked constitution building in Canada from earliest times.

Varieties Of Ethnic Response

As history moves and as the focuses in society shift, differences that divide populations express themselves in greater or lesser conflict. When Marshal Tito, for instance, governed a united Yugoslavia for more than forty years, social peace was maintained, as was a high degree of independence from the Moscow superpower. The people enjoyed the highest standard of living among the Eastern Bloc nations. After 1990 when Russian power weakened significantly, Germany and the USA quickly supported Croatian demands for independence in Yugoslavia. Unity was fractured. In a very short time civil war broke out among Serbs, Croats, and Muslims. The years that followed were marked by chaos and violence and savage inhumanity. Now the US superpower, under the NATO umbrella, is occupying the territory and will, doubtless, broker some kind of peace. That is a dramatic example of the way differences which do not go away may appear either as almost unimportant or as the basis for unremitting mayhem and savagery.

In Canada, the francophone population was defeated in 1760 and integrated into the form of rule provided by Britain. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 clearly reveals the intention of the conquerors to anglicize New France. But the restiveness of the population, the sympathy of the first English administrators, and the growing unease in England felt about the colonies to the south caused Britain to execute a significant constitutional change in Canada.

That change was intended to please the francophone population, to provide it with reasonably familiar legal and social conditions, and - perhaps above all - to bind the population in loyalty so it would not be tempted by overtures from the south - which came very soon.

The Shift From Assimilation

The Québec Act of 1774, designed to effect the change, was passed - one needs to observe - only two years before the US Declaration of Independence and only a year before the invasion of Canada by US forces. The Act appears to have secured the ends it was intended to bring about. Without question, however, it completely reversed the policy as set out in the Royal Proclamation. The Québec Act is the foundation of French survival in North America and - one may say - a significant part of the basis upon which contemporary Québec separatists call for the formation of an independent country. The Québec Act gave francophones freedom of religion, admission to government offices, maintenance of French Civil Law, and movement to popularly chosen assemblies only as the people called for them.

François-Xavier Garneau (1809-1866), first of the liberal nationalist historians, did not look upon those changes with great enthusiasm. He published his important, successful, and influential three volume *Histoire du Canada* between 1845 and 1848. He added a fourth volume in 1852. Unlike many Québec historians after him he did not see the Québec Act as the generous re-thinking of a caring conqueror. Rather, he claimed that political power remained in English hands, that all trade was dominated by the conquerors, and that the British merchants and bureaucrats worked together to

control the economy and the state. [See Serge Gagnon, *Québec and Its Historians, 1840-1920*, Montréal, Harvest House, 1982, p. 34]

Views of Québec History

Sharp differences exist and have existed in the interpretation of Québec history. The differences are, of course, strongly marked between anglophone and francophone historians. But in Québec itself two significant schools have existed, mirroring differences that have been widely held among the population. The liberal nationalist school, very broadly speaking, has held that the Conquest was a catastrophe, that the Roman Catholic Church played at best a mixed role, that the people of Québec were forced into an unnatural shape, and that the community will not be fully normal and healthy until it is independent. The conservative school (also strongly nationalist often, in a different way) has held that the Conquest was beneficent for the people, that the Roman Catholic Church was heroic and essential to the life of the people, that the Québec people have a unique role in North America, and that they can take their place as a part of the Canadian nation. The second position was supported by the Roman Catholic Church which made very clear its displeasure with ideas emanating from the other school.

Garneau was, of course, the first of "the other school". He made an argument in his *Histoire* that offended the Church and did not reappear for a long time. Both his making of it and the Church's response to it say much about the way in which Québec history was permitted to be viewed by the people of Québec.

Religion: Theories About Protestants and Catholics

Garneau pointed out that in the seventeenth century, Protestants (Huguenots) in France were given considerable freedom. But in 1685 the Edict that had provided them with freedom was revoked. From an earlier date Protestants were forbidden to settle in French America. The result was that New France was almost exclusively Roman Catholic and, from very early times, closed to Protestant immigration. Because of the difference he saw between a liberal, Protestant, secularized population and a conservative, spiritually-centred, Catholic population he believed the prohibition of Protestant immigrants to French North America was a great loss.

"How advantageous,," he writes, "would have been a massive emigration of rich, enlightened, peaceful and industrious men, such as were the Huguenots, to inhabit St. Lawrence shores and fertile plains of the West....A baneful policy brought about sacrifice of all these advantages to jealous views of a government armed, through the alliance of the spiritual and temporal powers, with authority to allow neither conscience nor intelligence to breathe. `If you and yours have not converted before such and such a day, the authority of the king will force you to convert,' Boussuet wrote to the schismatics. We repeat, without this policy, we Canadians would not be forced to defend our language, our laws and our nationality inch by inch against a rushing tide." [François-Xavier Garneau, *Histoire du Canada depuis sa découverte jusqu'a nos jours*, Québec, Napoleon Aubin, Vol. 1, 1845, p. 494, quoted in Serge Gagnon, *Québec and Its Historians 1840-1920,* (trans.) Yves Brunelle, Montréal, Harvest House, 1982, p. 24.]

Protestants were ruled out for a number of reasons. Not only did they tend to quarrel with Catholics on issues that compounded social difficulties, they were, after all, religious dissidents. And more. Bishop Laval wrote: "Everyone knows that Protestants are not so attached to His Majesty as Catholics.. To multiply the number of Protestants in Canada would be to give occasions for the outbreak of revolutions." [Bishop Laval, quoted in Sigmond Diamond, "An Experiment in

`Feudalism': French Canada in the 17th Century," in (ed.) J. Bumstead, *Canadian History Before Confederation, Essays and Interpretations*, Georgetown, Ontario, Irwin-Dorsey Ltd., 1972, p. 90.]

Protestant Superiority?

Garneau is quite clear in his own mind that Protestantism and even its more intense evangelicals were important to the growth and development of the USA. "The United States," writes Garneau, "owes part of its greatness to the privilege granted the Bible, so to speak, to fanaticize the national spirit more for things of this earth than for those of heaven. Avid readers of the old laws of the Jews, they [the people of the US] display the same enthusiasm as these in the acquisition of wealth. Must we attribute to this reading the superiority Protestant peoples generally show over Catholic nations in matters of commerce, industry and material progress?" [*Ibid.,* p. 299]

Max Weber's Thesis

Garneau's argument appears again very rarely, if at all, for a hundred years after in Québec. But as theorists of Protestantism and capitalism know the idea was in the air.

In 1904-05 Max Weber - unhappy with the Marxist idea of historical determinism - published his historical study, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. In it he developed a theory from what Garneau and others had taken as true simply from observation and "experience". Weber's work was not translated into English until 1930.

In that influential and controversial book Weber developed a cogent argument to support his claim that religious and ethical ideas have had strong social power in the West. He deals quite specifically with the substance of Garneau's claim, though he, doubtless, had never read Garneau. Indeed, the situation in Canada could have supplied Weber with precisely the examples he needed of the different effects Protestantism and Catholicism have on societies. But he does not mention Canada.

Garneau's relation to Weber, then, rests in the fact that they were both conscious of the effects of religion and ethics on the quality and behaviour of societies. The argument put forth by Weber reveals one of the deep, long-abiding differences between the cultures of francophone and anglophone Canada. In brief, Weber argues that Protestantism and capitalism have been intimately connected. He suggests that a characteristic of modern capitalism is a desire for the accumulation of wealth without the desire to use it for worldly pleasures and display. That new and somewhat strange condition arises out of the Protestant (and `puritanical') idea that the highest moral obligation of the pious person is to accept his or her calling in life and fulfil the expectations of that calling in the world.

The key to the differences between Protestant and Catholic societies lies there. For Catholicism prizes the person who transcends the world and its business. Catholicism raises up for special attention the person who leaves `the world' or turns completely away from worldly pursuits. It calls upon the members of a population to respond to the world in quite a different way than Protestantism does. A part of that fundamentally different call rests upon the ways in which the two faiths view the cycle of sin, repentance, and forgiveness. For the Catholic spiritual renewal is part of the activity of the faith. He or she can regain grace and renew his or her Christianity through what might be called the ordinary operation of the Church. Confession to a priest, genuine repentance, faithful observance of the penance called for, and then participation in Holy Communion - in which the penitent receives God's grace symbolized by the communion wafer - completes the cycle of renewal.

The condition of the puritan sects of Protestantism, especially, is much different. Especially in Calvinism and faiths growing from Calvinist development, the belief in the calling and in predestination combine. That latter belief holds that only some are chosen to be saved and the choice is predestined by God, the faithful being unable to change God's choice. There is no way provided through the operation of the faith that spiritual grace can be assured - or even confidently offered. People bound by that faith, according to Weber, suffered deeply, therefore, as one might expect. In the community of believers, people were driven to act as if they were saved, as a sign of their faith. Secondly, the signal to the world that the calling was not only fulfilled but - in a sense - approved of by God was given through the demonstration of good works.

Two results followed. The accumulation of wealth from sober, hard work in the world was a sign of moral excellence. Indeed, being unable - as the Catholic was able - to enact visibly the cycle of repentance, confession, penance, absolution, and direct communion with God, the Protestant with whom Weber was concerned was driven to demonstrate in the world both rightness of calling and, apparently, an unchanging condition of spiritual purity through an upright life and good works in the world. From those forces Weber believed "the spirit of capitalism" was born. That spirit was peculiar to Protestantism and generally alien to Catholicism.

He goes on to argue that when the spirit of capitalism has used a religious faith to gain social dominance, it will easily cast faith aside. In such a situation capitalist activities become endowed with an aura of moral sanction, but faith is not present to provide a genuine structure of morality. He argues, in addition, that the overall effect in Protestant behaviour - especially among puritan sects - was the development of what we now call "the Protestant work ethic". We mean by that the willingness of whole populations - as a sign of their virtue and worth - to discipline themselves and make capitalist economic organization effective and profitable, even though most of the people doing it do not share in the profit gained. Catholic countries, he and others claim, never submitted themselves to the capitalist discipline familiar in Protestant countries. Finally, a portion of the whole relation between the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism for Weber was the new and definitive thing about capitalism that developed. For Weber, the spirit of capitalism is marked by the continual accumulation of capital for its own sake.

As Weber writes: "Man is dominated by the making of money, by acquisition as the ultimate purpose of his life. Economic acquisition is no longer subordinated to man as the means for the satisfaction of his material needs. This reversal of what we should call the natural relationship, so irrational from a naive point of view, is evidently as definitely a leading principle of capitalism as it is foreign to all peoples not under capitalistic influence." [Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* trans, by Talcott Parsons, London, Unwin Hyman, 1989, p. 53]

We don't have to trouble ourselves with the huge literature that has grown up of attacks upon and defences of Weber. Perhaps it is enough for us not only that François-Xavier Garneau recognized a condition closely related nearly sixty years before Weber's observations, and that a deep difference has existed between the anglophone and francophone populations in Canada that relate closely to the conditions Weber describes.

A Basis Of Difference

To begin, the Conquest of 1760 was effected by an English Protestant group over a French Catholic group. With the conquest and with the creation of the USA sixteen years later, the francophone Catholics in Canada became a confirmed minority in North America. When the French Revolution with its secularizing effect began in 1789, the francophones in Canada found

themselves alienated from France and drawn closer to the centre of Catholicism in Rome. That bond, called ultrmontanism, became a significant factor in Québec Catholicism.

The British wooed francophone loyalty with the Québec Act in 1774, as we have noted. Quite reasonably, the British did not resist the conservatism of ultramontanism and Québec's rejection of the Revolution since both served British interests. Appalled at the violence and terror ignited by the Revolution, the British, for the most part, rejected it at home and rejected any sympathetic responses to it in the new world.

Step by step, the Catholic Church, strong even before the Conquest, was strengthened by major historical events in North America and outside it. After the War of 1812, the event which probably most firmly consolidated the power of the Church was the Rebellion of 1837 and its overt failure. That rebellion and its partner rebellion in Upper Canada produced Lord Durham's visit to Canada and the famous Durham Report.

Francophone Conservatism Reinforced

All of those events (even though Durham was a liberal and wrote a strongly liberal Report from many English points of view) strengthened the conservative Church in Québec. The failure of the Rebellion was a failure of the liberal forces. Not only were expressions of liberalism attacked thereafter, but the uniting of the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada and Durham's stated goal of assimilation increased the threat to francophone Catholicism and the need among francophones for solidarity and leadership.

To underscore the significance of Max Weber's theory to events and cultures in Canada, we need only observe that while most of the western world was moving in liberal directions, with both Protestantism and capitalism gaining force and power, Québec was becoming increasingly anti-Protestant, increasingly Catholic, and increasingly drawn to explanations of Québec's uniqueness based upon religion and the recognition of a spiritual mission in North America.

François-Xavier Garneau began his history before the Rebellions. It was published in three volumes between 1845 and 1848. Not only a liberal nationalist work (a work critical of British powers and actions), it was also often critical of clerical activity in Québec's history. Rumour has it that Garneau withdrew the first volume or that it was bought up and largely destroyed. After that, the volumes were privately attacked as they came out but were much ignored publicly by clerical critics. Even so, Garneau's own position seemed to change in relation to the Church, partly perhaps because of opposition, partly because he recognized the need for unity if the francophone Catholic community was to survive.

The result in terms of our discussion was that Québec developed into a very strongly Catholic community. As all students of Québec are aware, the francophones were invited to see their mission as spiritual, their work as agrarian, their lives as pious and simple. They were to find themselves realized in the combination of the faith, the language, and the land. They were invited to see their history as guided by God's hand. In 1866 Mgr. L.-F.-R. Laflèche published a work considering the relation between Québec society, religion, and the family. He writes: "The obvious intervention of Providence when it kept such careful watch over the colony's cradle; its wonderful protection in moments of dread battle; the deep peace enjoyed under the shelter of the British flag while the violent storm of the French Revolution was raging; the wisdom that inspired our fathers into declining the advances and solicitations of our powerful republican neighbour - all these facts are like so many beacons leading us on our way and like comforting testimonies of the gentle presence of Providence

constantly watching over us." [L.-F.-R. Laflèche, "The Providential Mission of the French Canadians," in (ed.) Ramsay Cook, *French-Canadian Nationalism,* Toronto, MacMillan, 1969, p. 98]

A Providential Mission

Continuing the providential claim in 1902, Mgr. L.-A. Paquet delivered an address near the Champlain monument on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society of Québec on June 23. He declared a mission for the French Canadian people, a spiritual mission. We have, he said, "the privilege of being entrusted with this social priesthood granted only to select peoples. I cannot doubt that this religious and civilizing mission is the true vocation and the special vocation of the French race in America. Yes, let us not forget, we are not only a civilized race, we are pioneers of a civilization; we are not only a religious people, we are messengers of the spirit of religion; we are not only dutiful sons of the Church, we are, or we should be, numbered among its zealots, its defenders, and its apostles. Our mission is less to handle capital than to stimulate ideas; less to light the furnaces of factories than to maintain and spread the glowing fires of religion and thought, and to help them cast their light into the distance." He goes on a little later, "God forbid that I should scorn the national benefits of Providence, my brothers, or that I should go so far as to preach a renunciation to my fellow citizens that would be fatal to the economic interests that concern them so greatly. Wealth is not forbidden to any people or race; it is indeed the reward of fruitful initiative, intelligent effort, and persevering labour.

But let us be careful; we must not turn what is only a means into the very goal of our social behaviour. Let us not step down from the pedestal, where God has placed us, to walk commonly among those generations who thirst for gold and pleasure. We must leave to other nations, less inspired with the ideal, the kind of feverish mercantilism and vulgar bestiality that rivets them to material things. Our own ambition must aim higher; our thoughts and aspirations must be loftier." [Mgr. L.-A. Paquet, "A Sermon on the Vocation of the French Race in America," in (ed.) Ramsay Cook, *French-Canadian Nationalism*,Toronto, MacMillan, 1969, pp. 154 and 158.

An Anglo-Saxon Mission?

At the same time as the special Roman Catholicism of Québec was developing and solidifying, **English Canada, child of the dominant imperial power of the day, had little reason to doubt the worth of its own culture and its own mission. At one level that mission was articulated by Lord Durham in his Report.** Durham wrote: "A plan by which it is proposed to ensure the tranquil government of Lower Canada [Québec], must include in itself the means of putting an end to the agitation of national disputes in the legislature, by settling at once and for ever, the national character of the Province. I entertain no doubts as to the national character which must be given to Lower Canada; it must be that of the British Empire; that of the majority of the population of British America; that of the great race which must, in the lapse of no long period of time, be predominant over the whole North American Continent. Without effecting the change so rapidly or so roughly as to shock the feelings and trample on the welfare of the existing generation, it must henceforth be the first and steady purpose of the British Government to establish an English population, with English laws and language, in this Province, and to trust its government to none but a decidedly English legislature." [*Lord Durham's Report, An Abridgment of Report on the Affairs of British North America*, ed. Gerald Craig, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1963, p. 146.]

Those words were written by Lord Durham, an English visitor to the Canadian colonies. His intentions were not frustrated, however, by francophones alone. In the legislature of the united Canadas, anglophones allied with francophones to forge a progressive force. In addition, anglophone

Canadians took upon themselves very often the task of obliterating the Conquest. They sought to elevate francophone heroes to the same level as anglophone heroes, insisting both Wolfe and Montcalm, for instance, were heroes of the Plains of Abraham. Without question, large numbers of anglophone Canadians believed in and worked for full and genuine equality.

But the fact remained, then as now, the cultures were significantly different. Both lived amid proud proclamations of superiority. Each - as Max Weber observes - produced people with fundamentally different perceptions of human beings and the society in which they lived. Both, because of language, custom, religion and history, tended to live without significant reference to the other. Indeed, before Confederation and after it, the education systems in each culture either ignored or - without conscious ill-will - misrepresented the people in the other culture.

A Plea For Education

One may read through Canadian commentaries and find the plea repeated for the education system to provide greater knowledge in both directions of the cultures. On the 1996 New Year's Day CBC radio program referred to near the beginning of this section, one of Peter Gzowski's guests repeated the plea. On March 13, 1939 - to pick another example at random - M. Armand Viau, Québec Secretary of the Department of Mines and Fisheries spoke to the Canadian Club of Toronto on the subject, "Understanding French Canada".

Two themes in his address are clear. The first is that the two peoples must learn respect for each other - which he implies they do not show as consistently as they might. "Looking truth in the face," M. Viau says, "can we say that clashes and the wounds of civilization do not exist among the English and French races here? They have existed before, we still have them occasionally, and if we do not prevent it, they will come tomorrow." [M. Armand Viau, "Understanding French Canada," *Proceedings of the Canadian Club, Toronto,* 1938-1939, Vol. XXXVi, Toronto, Warwick Bros. and Rutter, 1939, p. 247] He then enumerates some imbalances he sees in the treatment of Québec by both business and government.

He points out as well that most of the men of his generation "acquired by artificial stimulation grave prejudices against one race or the other, merely because of the method of teaching history that they received." (p. 248) He concludes a courteous but frank appraisal of the problem with a plea for education. "Let us teach our children a history of Canada that will be conciliatory, and, if it be possible the same all over from ocean to ocean. It may be that this national history will have to be drafted by a National Commission composed of representatives from all the provinces. This is an aim which I humbly suggest to all the organizations which work for the success of a Canadian Union." (pp. 258-9)

Such a national history has never been attempted. The education in both cultures about the other one has remained lamentable, though even goodwill in education cannot always overcome genuine cultural differences that eventuate in what either culture conceives of as injustice.

Nevertheless, some kind of assured teaching of each other's history - however `balanced', however dialectical, has not been undertaken. Serge Gagnon reveals in *Québec and Its Historians, the Twentieth Century* that in 1944 an attempt was made. "It began with a motion by Senator Athanase David recommending the adoption of a single history textbook for Canada. The senator's proposal was quickly seconded by his colleague, Senator Damien Bouchard, who on June 21, 1944, made a stinging attack on the absurdity of "racial" battles in Canada. Among the causes he invoked was the partisan teaching of national history, which had contributed to keeping anti-English hatred alive in the younger

generation. **Instead of seeing written history as a story of persecution, Bouchard proposed a version that would stimulate goodwill and acknowledge the characteristic weakness of French Canadians as a national group."**

[Serge Gagnon, *Québec and Its Historians, The Twentieth Century,* (trans) Jane Brierly, Montréal, Harvest House, 1985, pp. 6-7]

Bouchard was attacked as a "traitor". Cardinal Villeneuve condemned him. The kind of nationalist history being written by Lionel Groulx was defended. There appears to have been no serious attempt, say, by Education Departments in the provinces to work on the production of texts - perhaps giving more than one view, however unsettling - and use those texts to teach all students so that all of the population could consider the bases of difference and the arguments about them.

An exaggerated Roman Catholic culture with all the implications connected to that fact faced a forceful, confident, Protestant capitalist culture with all the implications connected to that fact. Such was the situation at least until the 1960 Quiet Revolution in Québec. That is an important way of looking at the situation between the two cultures. Anglophone Canada, however, has not, historically, been an exaggeratedly Protestant, capitalist culture. It has certainly been a culture confidently aware - until recent years - of its Anglo-Saxon character.

Canada and the United States

In the aspect of its confident Protestant capitalist culture anglophone Canada needs to be seen, however briefly, in its relation to the United States. The presence of that country creates complicated repercussions and resonances in Canada. In both francophone and anglophone Canada there have been feelings for the United States - at the same time and in turns - of affection, dislike, admiration, contempt, fear, and trust. Neither culture in Canada is wholly predictable at any given time as to the kind of response it will make to the USA.

Nonetheless, the fact that the US and anglophone Canada have shared and share the same language, some cultural roots, and the tradition of liberal Protestant capitalism has had significant implications. Put simply, many anglophone Canadians feel more at ease with the US. and with people from the US. than they do with Québec and people from Québec. Lord Durham, wrestling in his own mind with the cultural differences so apparent to him among the francophones, seems to me almost to relax into the comments he makes about Upper Canada [Ontario} and the USA. Durham points out that "it must be recollected that the natural ties of sympathy between the English population of the Canadas and the inhabitants of the frontier states of the Union are peculiarly strong. Not only do they speak the same language, live under laws having the same origin, and preserve some customs and habits, but there is a positive alternation, if I may express it, of the populations of the two countries. While large tracts of the British territory are peopled by American citizens, who still keep up a constant connection with their kindred and friends, the neighbouring states are filled with emigrants from Great Britain...." (p. 132)

The US and Francophone Canada

Before making those remarks, Durham comments that the apparent sympathy of some people in the US for the francophone rebels arose from ignorance and misunderstanding. "There is no people in the world," Durham writes, "so little likely as that of the United States to sympathize with the real feelings and policy of the French Canadians; no people so little likely to share in their anxiety to preserve

ancient and barbarous laws, and to check the industry and improvement of their country, in order to gratify some idle and narrow notion of a petty and visionary nationality." (p. 131)

Evidence might be piled high, but the very deep implications of the differences F.-X. Garneau observed in the 1840s and that Max Weber developed into a formidable thesis in the first decade of the twentieth century have affected and do affect, still, francophone\anglophone relations in Canada. I have suggested a natural `cousinship' felt by many anglophone Canadians and people in the USA. In fact both Protestant communities - though significantly different - were often marked with the same satanic brand by Québécois spokespeople in the defense of Catholic Québec.

A View of US Character

In that connection remarks made by Gregory Baum, Roman Catholic Canadian theologian and social scientist, in his book *The Church in Québec*, tend to deepen our sense of the cultural complexities involved. He is attracted to comments made by a Canadian Protestant theologian, Douglas Hall. The latter depicts the US faith in progress. "Several uniquely American experiences intensified the success-orientation of American culture. Americans saw themselves as the new world rescued from European decadence, the originating home of egalitarian democracy, the country with an open border moving west, the land of endless opportunities, the vanguard of human evolution and the model for all other societies, While there were important critical voices...the faith in social progress and personal success remained intact in American culture including the churches, and especially in the Protestant churches." [Gregory Baum, *The Church in Québec*, Ottawa, Novalis, 1991, p. 117]

The picture is of a community that has digested the differences that Weber draws, and then has intensified them as a result of the US environment and experience. If the francophones of Québec manifested, in a way, a specially intense form of Catholicism, the anglophones of the USA presented an especially intense form of Protestantism - with the anglophone Canadians somewhere in the middle providing shaky balance. Baum doesn't point out that there was tangible discrimination against Roman Catholics in US society. The election of a Roman Catholic as president of the USA in 1960 was heralded as a trail-blazing event. Nearly 200 years had to pass before the US population would accept such a person. Only 19 years after Confederation, the Canadian government was led by a francophone Catholic, Wilfred Laurier.

As the power of continentalism grows, and as Free Trade agreements draw Canada and the US closer, a concern expressed by Douglas Hall becomes significant in our discussion of Canadian francophone/anglophone tensions. Hall proposes, Gregory Baum writes, "the provocative thesis that Americanism and Protestantism have become amalgamated. The prophetic voices in the Protestant churches were never strong enough to shake the culture. The classical Reformation, including Calvin's own theology, had a lively sense of sin and hence entertained a strong suspicion toward the modern world in the making. Yet later Calvinist piety contained certain elements that made an identification with an optimistic, ambitious, upwardly mobile culture possible. There is in Hall's work an echo of Max Weber's thesis that the Protestant ethos has a certain affinity with the spirit of capitalism. In the United States and some other parts of the world, the Calvinist concept of covenant, inadequately understood, lent itself to legitimate the collective self-understanding of the newly created society as 'God's own country'. (p. 117) Briefly, then, the tensions between anglophone and francophone Canadians were expressed on a continent where another aggressive Protestant culture exacerbated the fears felt by francophones.

The Québec Case - A Summary

As a prelude to the examination of Canadian constitutional change in relation to the francophone culture, we have insisted that it is a culture in a place which cannot be considered "a province like the others". From the beginning it differed from anglophone culture in language, in faith, in ethnic origin, in its attitude to the land, and in its idea of homeland. Formed over more than two hundred years when Europe was riven with change - from the Reformation to the French Revolution - the francophone population found itself the product of powerful historical events.

Those events drove it in upon itself. They led it in conservative directions. They invited it to be a deeply Catholic society, openly and consciously living with a rhetoric of rejection of many things that defined not only foreign states emerging into the modern world but also the culture to which it became bound in Confederation. That national formation granted it increased power and self-rule. At the same time it bound it to a culture which saw itself as part of the great movement of Anglo-Saxon peoples to empire, to philosophical dominance, to economic supremacy, to the fullest development of liberal democratic capitalism.

History swung the pendulum sharply when the Québec Act (1774) replaced the Royal Proclamation of 1763. The Act was only the first of the constitutional initiatives that shaped the future direction of Canada because of the differences between francophone and anglophone cultures. From 1774 onwards constitutional change in Canada may be said either to be caused by the francophone presence or to be seriously affected by that presence.

A Gentle People Because....

That's a matter with a number of dimensions. First, if sometime before 1867 the anglophones had decided to force assimilation and erase francophone culture, Canadian history and sensibility would have changed. The brutality of the repression necessary to bring about the policy would very likely have changed the way Canadians think about themselves. Constitutional change thereafter, however, would have been very different than it has been. There is not a great deal of profit in dealing with speculations about changes in the past, usually. I do so here only to point out that one of the chief factors in history that has permitted Canadians to say they are a relatively gentle people who seek negotiated solutions to problems has been the relations established between the anglophone and francophone cultures.

Most recent history provides a remarkable example of the growth of that tradition. Even as the Québec population moved close in October 1995 to a decision to separate from the rest of Canada, anglophone Canadians - cautioned by both the Québec and the federal governments - **remained remarkably silent for people whose future was being decided by people of another culture.**

Interdependence

If we accept the argument of François Dallaire in *La République de Poutine,* admittedly a "cru et stimulant" critique, anglophone Canada's character is defined by the existence of francophone culture. Without it Canada would have disappeared into the USA. "Le Canadien anglais," he writes, "n'est pas Américan parce qu'il appartient à un pays qui pratique un bilinguisme officiel et reconnait ainsi l'importance d'une culture qui se démarque un peu plus de la culture yankee." [Meaning in English. "The English Canadian isn't an American because he belongs to a country that practices official

bilingualism and thus recognizes the importance of a culture that sets itself off a little more from the yankee culture."] (p. 32).

Presuming a situation in which separation has come about, Dallaire goes on to write that separation for "le reste du Canada, ... signifie la fin de son existence en tant qu'entité politique et économique différente des Etats-Unis d"Amérique." [Meaning in English: separation for the rest of Canada signifies the end of its existence as an political and economic entity different from the United States.] [François Dallaire, *La République de Poutine*, Québec, L'étincelle éditeur, 1992.] Dallaire's statements are crude and stimulating. They make us realize - even if they aren't true - the interdependence of the two cultures.

Reasons For Confederation

The overall structure and conduct of public affairs in Canada is markedly different than it would have been without a francophone presence. At the time of Confederation, just for instance, John A. Macdonald was strongly in favour of a legislative union rather than a federal union. He was, of course, a powerful figure in the choices made. A legislative union would have provided Canada with a single government as is possessed by the United Kingdom. We don't have to argue the merits of a single government for such a huge territory as Canada or what sub-government developments would have been found necessary to manage the country.

We need only remember the pressures that brought John A. Macdonald to agree to a federal rather than a unitary system arose mostly in Québec and the maritime colonies. If Québec had strongly supported Macdonald's view, maritime interests might have submitted, and our constitutional history would be very different than it has been. We must not think of Macdonald's idea as simply foolish and old fashioned. For in the 1990's the fact of urban organization in Canada is challenging some aspects of provincial governments as unable to deal with the needs of the population and the economy. Theorists are beginning to propose ideas that suggest a strong central government (such as Macdonald wanted) working with urban regional engines of economic vitality which have significant powers devolved upon them.

Such a picture is valuable because it confronts us with a usefully critical view of provincial structures as somewhat less than providential and eternal.

What Was...And What Is

But let us consider now what *was* and what *is*.

The shift from the Royal Proclamation of 1763 to the Québec Act of 1774 has fairly been described as one of the most important constitutional steps in Canadian history, securing important rights to the francophone population and providing its basis for survival in North America. The next piece of constitutional legislation had similar long-lasting effect. The Constitutional Act of 1791 was brought into law partly because a number of forces in the society were unhappy with the Québec Act. The English merchants and residents wanted removal of French civil law and the institution of an elected assembly. Some francophones, too, wanted an elected assembly. The arrival of the United Empire Loyalists had already brought about the creation of New Brunswick and Cape Breton in 1784 and pushed forward the idea of elected assemblies. Needless to say, the government in London heard very different arguments about the best steps to take for the future of "the Canadas".

The outcome did not please all, for it built upon the Québec Act rather than striking it down. First, it divided Upper and Lower Canada (Ontario and Québec). Assemblies were granted in both Canadas, enshrining constitutional changes intended to satisfy the Loyalist population and to provide for the development of British parliamentary institutions. French civil law remained in force in Lower Canada and the clergy there maintained the rights granted them in the Québec Act. The franchise was quite wide for the time, giving francophones a strong sense of the potential for gain in collective action. But responsible government was not granted to the assemblies. At the time the British government could not convince itself that colonies should have executive officers responsible to elected members and, through them, to the electorate. Where would be the power of the British government and the Colonial Office in that arrangement?

And so the Constitution Act bolstered the authority and prestige of the governor. It made him a direct representative of the imperial power and limited the powers of the elected colonial assemblies. The failure to invest responsibility in the population is considered one of the very important reasons for the Rebellions of 1837, the Durham Report, and the 1840 Act of Union bringing the two Canada's into legislative union.

That being said - all commentators seem agreed on that point - argument about other aspects are lively, well-argued, and vastly different. The fact may be that they all help make up a not-always immediately visible, complex tapestry of ideas, emotions, and events that shaped the visible events. Important events in history often appear to become more and more complex for later observers as the events are revisited, re-examined, and more threads of cause and effect are exposed for consideration. Since the 1950s a mood has existed in Canada critical of British imperial assumptions and sympathetic to or curious about dissident movements in our history.

In addition, since the 1950s, Québec assertions of historic legitimacy and grievance have made both francophones and anglophones more sensitive to protest actions and to heavy-handed policy statements such as Lord Durham chose to write in his Report. In addition, historians have looked more searchingly behind public statements of policy and purpose to what they believe are conditioning and motivating factors in the economy, trade patterns, and changes in the quality of ordinary lives.

Economic Problems And Polarization

On the economic side, the fur trade was diminishing and agriculture in Lower Canada fell into decline partly as the result of bad farming methods. An agricultural crisis came to ripeness around 1837; farmers saw their standards of living fall, and blame was often placed on government. A sharpening of poverty was contributed to by population growth; under the conditions of the time necessary for reasonable productivity from the land the francophone population experienced overpopulation.

The merchant group wanted infrastructure built and close cooperation of the legislatures of the two Canadas. They believed they saw a way, through improved transportation, a system of canals, a new system of tax and finance, to lift up the economies of the Canadas. The more, however, that group insisted upon the changes it wanted, the more those who mistrusted the merchant group believed the French-Canadian nation was being sacrificed to "English" wishes. As a result some professional men in Lower Canada sought pubic office to block change and foment radicalism.

The forces that polarized represented, on the one hand, the rural population led by men from the liberal professions in the *Parti Canadien*. On the other hand, a merchant's party was supported by capitalists, landed interests, the wealthy, and the English. The outstanding figure in the *Parti Canadien* was Louis Joseph Papineau. He was a moderate who became an extremist and after 1830 wanted

independence and a sovereign French-Canadian republic. Later he advocated the Québec join the USA.

The liberal view of events is put neatly by Fernand Ouellet, a major French-Canadian historian of the middle twentieth century. He perceives Durham's view as developed at the very height and intensity of differences - at an almost unnatural moment, when Durham stepped upon the scene. Ouellet writes that Durham's "*raciste* attitude was based on a distorted view of relations between the ethnic groups. Apart from the establishment of the union, necessary for other reasons, his solution was illusory. The future progress of Canada did not depend on the destruction of the French culture, but on a change in the attitude on the part of the French-Canadian population towards progress. In this sense the French-Canadians themselves held the key." [Fernand Ouellet, "The Insurrections," Chap. 19, *Canada Unity in Diversity*, eds. P.G. Cornell *et. al.*, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1967, p.228]

Ouellet's position is clear there and clearly a liberal view of events. The French-Canadians, according to him, were in a self-imposed ghetto. Donald Creighton, though a conservative historian, generally agrees with the picture that liberal historians produce. Creighton, however, tends to downplay the ethnic force of the argument. He argues that "the Reformers of both provinces, though they are usually described in terms of their racial characteristics, their religious affiliations, or their political principles, drew their main support from the countryside and took on all the characteristics of a rural protest movement." He goes on : "In time, as the political engagement became general, the attitude of the Upper Canadian radicals came to differ comparatively from that of the *Patriotes* of Montréal. It was the belief of the leaders of both parties that the institutions, projects, and expenditures desired by the commercial class would either divert attention from rural needs, or would impose intolerable burdens and inflict definite injuries upon the countryside."

The Fortunate Act of Union

Jacques Monet, francophone, conservative historian completes Creighton's argument, in a sense. Writing about the aftermath of the union of the two colonies - Upper and Lower Canada - he sees a positive outcome. The *Canadiens*, he writes, became "veritable political masters of the union." [Chap. 9, "The 1840s" *Colonists and Canadians, 1760-1867*, (ed) J. M. Careless, Toronto, MacMillan, 1971, p. 213] Referring to the genius of Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine who guided the francophone forces in the legislature and made up the resistance to the `commercial' party with Robert Baldwin, Monet argues LaFontaine knew "how responsible government could bring the *Canadiens* to overcome the past." (p. 213)

The Beneficial Conquest

What we as readers observe is that both liberal and conservative historians may be said to be filling in a story of events supporting the argument that - in the long run - the Conquest was good both for the anglophones and the francophones. Fernand Ouellet forces the issue a little by arguing that if the francophones didn't do as well as they wanted, it was by their own choice. Those historians at least imply that the results of the Conquest give no reason for questioning the remarkable accomplishment of founding and maintaining the Canadian nation.

Québec liberal nationalist historians, as we have seen, early broke from the general mould. F.-X Garneau and Benjamin Sulte both raised the ire of the powerful in Québec who accepted the conservative, religious, providential reading of Québec's story. Both may be said to be precursors of nationalist historical writing that eventuated in the plea that, ultimately, the Conquest and all events

that have followed it provide evidence and argument for the formation of an independent Québec, separate from what the world presently thinks of as Canada.

Strangely enough, one of the major contributors to that argument was a priest, a conservative, a religious historian who had enormous influence in Québec from early in the twentieth century until his death in 1967. Lionel Groulx agreed with F.-X Garneau that the Conquest was a tragedy, though, generally, he disapproved of Garneau's work. In an astonishingly large written output he helped to undermine the belief that the British presence in Québec was generally beneficial. He feared for francophone and Catholic survival in an urban, Protestant, industrial and liberal society filling the continent. He urged francophones to gain more self-respect and self-confidence, and he entertained the idea of a separate state for Québec, though he always denied he was a separatist. Whether he was or was not a separatist in contemporary terms is not important here. What is important is his declaration of the uniqueness, the heroic stature, the special vocation, and the potential of the francophone community. Upon that basis the declared separatists could make a stand.

Among the successors to Groulx, nationalist historians in Québec developed into separatist historians. The irony that Lionel Groulx welcomed the end of the Duplessis era and the beginning of the Quiet Revolution in 1960 cannot be missed. For the Quiet Revolution created the end of "Catholic Québec" in almost all the terms that Groulx would have thought of the phrase. The transformations that went on in the writing of history paralleled the transformations going on in society. Doubtless, a person as influential as Lionel Groulx would have helped to shape the thought of the era. But clearly he did not shape it precisely in the ways that he wanted; for the abandonment of the Catholic Church by huge numbers of the population was the last thing to which he would have given support. Clearly, then, major thinkers affected the movement of the society. But just as clearly the movement of the society was not wholly in the hands of the "thinkers".

The View Of History Transformed

History writing in the Groulx tradition became liberal nationalist (not providential nationalist) and rigorously "scientific" (rejecting mythic heroes and miraculous events). But the apparent scientific rigour often revealed (and reveals) a scholarly and concerted program of research to overthrow "Confederationist" arguments and show the validity and, indeed, the necessity of arguments that lead to conclusions supporting the active demand for an independent Québec.

People in the Groulx tradition who shaped the development were Guy Frégault, Michel Brunet, and Maurice Séguin. They worked among historians, like Fernand Ouellet, who actively disagreed with them, and among historians who were scientifically driven but not visibly necessarily ideologically driven. The liberal nationalist historians wrote brilliant, interesting, controversial histories. One of note is the exceptional *La Guerre de la Conquête* by Guy Frégault, published in French in 1955 and in English in 1969.

In general the liberal nationalist/separatist historians shaped an argument that is now part of nationalist ideology in Québec, whether separatist nationalist or confederationist nationalist. In general, their arguments are that the inhabitants of New France enjoyed a reasonable standard of living and education. They possessed energy and entrepreneurial skill. They lived in a general era of prosperity. 1763 changed all that. The political and economic structure of New France collapsed. Francophone social leadership was dispersed. The fur trade fell into the hands of the English as did all significant political and industrial power.

The Disaster Of The Conquest

New France suffered disaster. The society was decapitated. Where a colony had, in fact, become a whole society, even a nation, it was truncated, fragmented, atrophied by the conquest. Fundamentally, the argument is that a whole and normal society existed, economically alive. The Conquest decapitated that society, turned the people towards agriculture of necessity, robbed them of security on the land, and placed them in the severely restricted employment of foreigners when they went to the towns and cities. Of necessity, leadership fell into the hands of the clergy who provided a holding action for the survival of the francophone people. What is more, the unfolding of constitutional history only provided a mirage of amelioration and equality. Confederation itself, which gave the francophones a provincial government with significant powers, didn't really improve the situation, for the minority position of the francophone people assured them a position and a role of permanent inferiority.

We might get a sense of that very strong point of view in these words published by Maurice Séguin in 1962.

"political annexation in a modern and dynamic economy brings with it, inevitably, economic subordination, When economic is joined to political inferiority, the situation becomes more serious. Culture itself, in the larger sense of the word, intimately linked to political and economic realities, is so greatly disordered that one cannot even speak, with reference to the minority population, of a real cultural autonomy. **To the independentist school, political independence is absolutely necessary. It is to be sought as desirable in itself, and it is considered as an irreplaceable means of assuring mastery over economic and cultural life."** [Maurice Séguin, "A Disaster," trans. E. Nish, in eds. R. Douglas Francis and Donald B. Smith, *Readings in Canadian History*, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1982, pp. 334-335]

Nationalism Intensifies

In 1980 in *L'État du Québec en devenir* Louis Balthazar writes of a new nationalism appearing with the Quiet Revolution. Married to the sense of grievance felt among many liberal nationalist historians, it was a potent force. In a chapter entitled "La dynamique du nationalisme du québécois" Balthazar claims that "quelques mois à peine après l'arrivée au pouvoir des artisans de la Révolution tranquille, un nouveau nationalisme allait faire surface, plus fort, plus envahissant, plus contagieux que ne l'avait jamais été le nationalisme traditionel...."

Ce qu'on a appélé à l'époque "néo-nationalisme" pour bien le distinguer de l'idéologie de la survivance, reposait avant tout sur une nouvelle définition de l'Etat Québécois, une concéption plus dynamique de son rôle, qu'on a voulu exprimer par la substitution du mot "État " a celui de "province" pour désigner la société politique Québécoise.... Les multiples interventions de l'État dans la trame sociale durent bientôt trouver une justification grandiose dans une mission originale attribuée au seul État Francophone d'Amerique du Nord."

[Means in English: not many months after the makers of the Quiet Revolution came to power a new nationalism began to surface, stronger, more aggressive, more contagious than the traditional nationalism had ever been.... What we call the neo-nationalist era, to distinguish it from the ideology of survival, was based before all else on a new definition of the Québec state, possessing such a dynamic conception of its role that it is probably more fitting to substitute the word "State" for "province" as a way of thinking about political society in Québec.... The numerous interventions of the State in the social drama were soon to find a grandiose justification in an original mission attributed to the only francophone State in North America.".] [Louis Balthazar, "La dynamique du

nationalisme Québecois," in eds. Gérard Bergeron and Réjean Pelletier, *L'État du Québec en devenir*, Montréal, Boreal Express, 1980, pp. 37-38]

Nationalism Modernized

That new nationalism, as Balthazar points out, was characterized by a new social mobility, with "its inevitable corollary" (son inevitable corollaire) secularization, and with an intensification of communications. Indeed, he writes of "a people as an intense and frequent network of communications" (un peuple comme un réseau de communications intenses et fréquentes). Plainly the world of Québec nationalism that sprang from the traditional survivalist ideology has been made over to accord with the idea of a modern, secular, liberal, capitalist, technological, consumer society.

We have purposefully gone ahead of ourselves so that as we move from the Act of Union (1840) forward to Confederation (1867) and after, we can be aware of Confederationist and Separatist views of the events.

The Act of Union that grew from Lord Durham's Report cannot be seen as less than an effort at assimilation. It established a single parliament with equal representation of the two ethnic groups - though the francophone group was more populous. It consolidated the debts, though Lower Canada had a smaller debt. It banished the French language from government use and suspended French Canadian institutions relating to education and civil law. In the sense that it didn't have the results it intended, the Act was a failure. The Reform Party led by Louis LaFontaine and Robert Baldwin had many unjust clauses repealed. Prosperity increased and responsible government was won. The *de facto* use of French in the legislature was given legal sanction with Confederation in 1867.

For anyone looking at the Act of Union and observing the results over the next seventeen years a fundamental characteristic of Canada's development becomes very clear. To begin, the failure of the Act was the result of the fact that the francophones fought the inequities, joining forces with anglophones who wanted responsible government. A coalition of competent forces under LaFontaine and Baldwin steered the legislature away from the Act. Secondly, the united provinces were, in effect, a federation of provinces. No assimilation occurred even at the legislative level. Different laws were enacted to serve the interests of the two sections. A working arrangement assured what was called "a double majority". That meant legislation did not only receive approval by a majority of the legislature; it also had to receive a majority of the representatives of Upper or Lower Canada if the legislation affected one or other of the groups principally.

Such a balance of forces required leadership and harmony of exceptional kinds. Needless to say, time and events wore away both qualities of the first decade or so. Events outside Upper and Lower Canada as well as internal difficulties forced consideration upon all the actors of some kind of new constitutional arrangement.

One of the factors built into the Act of Union as an instrument designed to lessen francophone power rebounded on its London authors. Two negative results ensued. First, in an ethnic face-off no side could command a majority. Secondly, as the population of Upper Canada drew past that of the francophone province no change could be wrought in the balance of representation in the legislature. There was a further result, however, of a positive kind.

The Lessons Of Union

The English speakers and the French speakers in the legislature learned through practice that a measure of cooperation was essential to the success of their institution. Thus Robert Baldwin and L.H. LaFontaine achieved much for their constituents. In 1854 George Etienne Cartier and John A. Macdonald formed a Tory alliance with the same sense of the need for harmony. They were met by a Reform or Liberal party made up of the *Parti Rouge* of Canada East led by A. A. Dorion and the Reform party of Canada West led by George Brown.

The problems of the reform group were based on the rejection of radicalism in Lower Canada and the untenable suspicion of Roman Catholics among the Brown group, as well as his demand that equal representation in the legislature be broken to answer the democratic cry of "representation by population". The very "political" nature of that demand may be judged when we consider that across Canada even today, constituencies electing members of legislatures are not made up of equal bodies of voters. One constituency often has thousands more or fewer voters than another. Clearly, other factors are always at work than "representation by population" when it is called for.

Strains entered, such as have just been suggested, but as J.M.S. Careless writes in a summary statement, cooler heads worked to extend the pattern of cooperation that had developed. The prime fact that the two Canadian communities still had in common was their general, even inherent, recognition that the best chance they each had to survive and grow in North America lay in their joint political action inside the provincial union...." [J.M.S. Careless, *The Union of the Canadas 1841-1857*, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1967, pp. 208-209]

Changes In The World

That describes the internal problems. But externally forces were bearing down to make the residents of the Canadas consider their fate. Changes in shipping and railways made contact with the Canadian market easier from outside and increased competition a permanent fact. The ambitions of the USA were sharpened by the Civil War that began there in 1861 and resulted in calls to unite the whole continent. An expensive incident occurred when in 1861 a US ship *San Jacinto* boarded a British mail packet, the *Trent,* and forcibly removed two Confederate agents. A provocation that could lead to war saw Britain spend two million pounds in the next two years to send 15,000 men and maintain them in Canada. The US gave up the arrested agents, but both Britain and Canada learned a lesson about defence and its costs.

Reasons For Confederation

The invigorated US government that had removed the conservatism of the Southern States, pushed West in a way that threatened "natural" Canadian expansion. And so the need for secure markets, the need for a larger entity to support defense, the need to prevent the US from taking the `unfilled' parts of the continent, the need to forge and expand railway capabilities, and the need to end stalemate arising from the operation of political structures in the united Canadas brought the people who made up "Canadian" governments to create what we call Confederation.

Plainly, the launching of the Canadian nation as we have known it since 1867 was the result of many forces, the chief of which we have enumerated. If, however, Upper and Lower Canada had possessed government they were fully content with, the shape of the future would probably have been different. Longer delay in a move to Confederation would easily have been possible. The result of significant delay might have made considerable difference in the shape of political territories in North America.

In that sense, the ethnic stalemate and the breakdown of effective operation of the united Canadas served to propel the parties towards the larger vision while it still lay within their grasp.

If that is the case, Québec - as we think of it today - was very important in the move to Confederation. It was, too - as we might have come to suspect - central in determining what shape the agreement called Confederation would take. We don't have to describe the British North America Act (now called The Constitution Act) in detail. You can, and should examine it. We need simply say that it created a federal state in which the division of powers between the federal government (or general government as it was called) and the provincial governments was clearly set out. Those powers have been fought over from the beginning and continue to be fought over today. Famous in the continuing argument are the more than a thousand pages of the Confederation debates, the discussions preceding the final move to Confederation.

John A. Macdonald is known to have favoured a legislative union, meaning a country with a single government. But Québec and the Maritime provinces, as we have mentioned, disagreed with the idea and so a federal system was agreed upon. The gains of the Québec Act were carried into Confederation. Not only was Québec provided with - as were the other provinces - a governmental system in the province that would grow increasingly strong. It was also granted religious and linguistic rights and the continued use of French civil law. Both languages were to be used in the acts and official records of Parliament and in the legislature of Québec. Both could be used in debates and in the courts of Québec and Canada.

The Promise Of Confederation

Having created a nation - and in the next thirty-five years adding most of the remaining provinces (Alberta 1905; Manitoba, 1870; P.E.I., 1873; Saskatchewan, 1905; British Columbia, 1871; Newfoundland, 1949) - the future and potential fortunes of Canada looked bright. In Québec, however, observers could see the diminishment of the number of francophones in relation to the total nation. By reason of the way in which provincial governments were created, moreover, even those provinces with quite large francophone populations did not achieve full equality for francophones.

That must give the observer pause.

Complexities And Dual Cultures

Three facts must be faced. First, the condition of political life brought about by the Act of Union conditioned both anglophones and francophones in what are now Ontario and Québec to be sensitive to bi-cultural relations. Secondly, the sensitivity they developed could not be predicted to last or even to exist in new provinces with few or no francophones. And, thirdly, the character of the anglophone population - as we have already described it - was that of the conquering people, the blood members of the British Empire, the people to whom myths gave heroic superiority. Even those who were unaware of the formative influences upon them bore those influences unconsciously. Still, in parts of Canada today, among the untutored young and the belligerently ignorant adult population, statements about Canada - and particularly about the history of Québec in Canada - are so triumphantly foolish that one fears for the future of the country. As imperial power has shifted across the Atlantic Ocean to the United States, those among the untutored young and the belligerently ignorant adult population often ally themselves, consciously or unconsciously, with the myths of heroic superiority, the "know how", and the future of the new anglophone imperialists. They manage, by that transfer, to maintain their refusal to accept the Canada that was in formation a hundred years before Confederation.

Something Less Than Equality

The manifestations of difficulty between the francophones and the anglophones between, say, 1869 and 1945 reveal - however one may argue the good intentions of the anglophones - that Confederation did not provide equality throughout the country for Roman Catholic francophones. As early as 1869, when Manitoba was being prepared for entry into Confederation, the Roman Catholic and French speaking Metis feared the plans and directions of development about which they hadn't been consulted. With their leader, Louis Riel, they exacted reasonable consultations and goodwill from the Canadian forces. But some of the anglophones re-entered conflict and, as a result, Riel's provisional government had Thomas Scott, an Ontario orangeman, put to death by firing squad.

The outcome was probably just in the case: a general amnesty, the creation of Manitoba, and promises of land grants for the Metis and bilingual services in the province. Neither Québec nor Ontario, however, was satisfied to let sleeping dogs lie. In Ontario a $5000.00 reward was offered for "Thomas Scott's murderer". In Québec Riel was toasted as a hero.

The reader must judge for herself or himself the implications of the events that followed. In 1873-74 Riel won election to the Canadian parliament. By a motion introduced by the leader of the Ontario Orange organization, Riel was expelled. He won re-election, but did not try again to take his seat in parliament. The man who gave the order for Thomas Scott's death, Ambroise Lepine, was arrested, tried, sentenced to two years in prison and loss of political rights. In February 1875, the federal government adopted a motion that granted Riel and Lépine amnesty on condition that they be banished from the country for five years.

Riel returned in 1885 and took part in demands for fair treatment of the Metis in Saskatchewan. Probably insane, certainly marked by his previous experiences, Riel armed men and set up a provisional government, and fought against Canadian forces for two months. In 1885 he was charged with treason. Historians have argued passionately about the fairness of his trials, the surrounding possibility of his insanity, the jury's pleas for clemency, and his examinations for insanity. Riel was hanged on November 16, 1885. The reaction in Ontario and Québec did nothing good for francophone/anglophone relations, for all the questions of a dominant group and a subservient group were raised and rehearsed.

Manitoba And Language

Again in Manitoba in 1890, although the Manitoba Act (1870) established a dual system of Protestant and Roman Catholic schools, the government moved to make English the only official language in the province and to create a single public school system. Between 1870 and 1890 the proportion of Roman Catholic francophones had fallen. The long and complicated details of the drawn-out conflict need not occupy us, fascinating as those details are. But the outcome must occupy us. Whether the number of Catholic francophones had diminished or not, the decision (upheld by the Privy Council in London) signalled to francophones in the neighbouring province of Québec that they would lose their culture or have to struggle to maintain it if they moved westward into the new province.

In addition, the "compromise" effected by Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier with the premier of Manitoba in 1896 did not restore francophone Roman Catholic rights. Not until the 1970s did the Canadian courts strike down the earlier Manitoba decisions.

A Long, Painful Road

It is not enough to say that mistakes were made and that wiser heads nearly eighty years later moved to correct past mistakes and show the essential goodwill of anglophones in Canada - though those things may be true. For the pressure on the francophones in Québec to turn in upon themselves was increased by the anglophone Canadians who had made agreements only a few decades before and who had underscored those agreements in the Manitoba Act - before over-turning them. Francophones in Québec will point out, moreover, that the action taken against the stifling of French and Catholic schools only took place when the whole question of anglophone language and schooling rights was in contestation in Québec in the 1970s. The courts could hardly say that anglophones had rights in Québec that anglophone Manitobans had stolen from francophones seventy-five years earlier. The rights of francophone Catholics in Manitoba were restored to them.

These are facts Canadians have to face, as they have to face the dominant/subservient psychology which has often existed between the two cultures. In terms of the French language alone, the *Canadian Encyclopedia* (1988) records an embattled history.

"If the French language held its own until Confederation, the next 50 years of Canada's expansion and modernization took a heavy toll both of the use of French and the policies believed to support it. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, several public Acts, such as the abrogation of official bilingualism in Manitoba in 1890,...the abolition of French schools in Ontario in 1912,...and the strict limitations imposed on French-language instruction in other provinces, were deliberately aimed at repressing the use of French. Moreover, because the English language was the language of N American commerce, the attractiveness of French tended to decline as the continental economy expanded.

By 1963, when the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Bi-culturalism was created by PM Lester Pearson, the relative status of the French language had declined to an unacceptable extent." (p. 1175)

Conscription And Culture

More difficult, perhaps, to see as mere opposition to the francophone fact as part of Canadian life were the conflicts involved with the so-called conscription crises of the two world wars. Conscription was an issue that arose at profoundly emotional times for the nation. The question at such times is not, at least at first, whether mistakes are made by leaders - though the question is, finally, very important. The question is not even whether people are properly "patriotic" or not. The question comes down to a determination about the viability of the culture. It is a question that is difficult to put, for fear of it being misread. Essentially, it asks if the culture has enough solidarity to agree whether it is seriously threatened or not, whether it should face world events in a way that engages it directly or not.

The question is a powerful one, though the wording of it may not suggest that. For if a significant part of the population believes it is seriously threatened and must sacrifice to meet the threat and another significant part of the population simply does not believe that, then *the regard that they have for each other* must suffer serious damage. The central problem is not that one may be right and the other wrong. It is that by refusing to share perceptions or being unable to do so, they declare that a vast gulf exists in their sense of belonging in the society.

By 1917, in the First World War, Prime Minister Robert Borden determined from a trip to Europe that conscription or compulsory military service was necessary to maintain Canadian forces. The Military Service Act of August 29, 1917 was supported by almost all English speaking MPs. It was opposed by virtually every French speaking MP. In the election of 1917 anglophone Canada gave Conservative Robert Borden a mandate for conscription. The opposition Liberals split badly, Wilfred Laurier opposing conscription with other francophone MPs.

In the Second World War, the federal Liberals pledged consistently to avoid conscription. Emotional pressure grew, however, among members of the Conservative Party and the anglophone electorate. Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King conducted a plebiscite asking Canadians to release the government from its anti-conscription promises. The story of the First World War was repeated, and on April 27, 1942 the voters of Québec rejected conscription by a vote of 72.9 percent. In the rest of Canada conscription was supported by 80 percent.

Many causes were at the root of the differences revealed in the two cultures. To begin, francophones of Canada - as has already been stated - were thrown upon themselves by several traumas in their history. They were led to see and to declare the land of Canada their only homeland. With the Conquest they felt abandoned by France. With the French Revolution in 1789, they felt that France had not only neglected them but had become a strange if not a foreign country. In Canada they faced the publicly declared threat of assimilation with the Durham Report and the Act of Union. And then after 1867 they repeatedly felt the pressure of rejection or at best misunderstanding by the culture with which they shared the nation.

They did not share the anglophone sense of continuity with Europe or fondness for Great Britain and membership in its Empire. At the time of the Boer War (the South African War, 1899-1902) francophone and anglophone reaction provided a prelude to the attitudes in the later World Wars. The francophones led by Henri Bourassa sympathized with the Afrikaners, believing the British were wielding imperial might unjustly. Bourassa also believed an even stronger British imperialism would not benefit francophones in Canada. Anglophones, on the other hand, mostly supported the imperial policy. Wilfred Laurier's government recruited, but without enthusiasm, though no conscription ensued and forces were paid for, often, outside of government. Canadians were divided, however, and at one point the animosity created by differences between Canadians erupted in a three day riot in Montréal.

The Defence Of Traditions

Those differences arose and expressed themselves incontrovertibly during the time that the Québec ruling elites led the Québécois in a vision of a Providentially directed spiritual people uncontaminated by the modern materialistic and technological society characteristic of the West. The forces that lifted Québec from its condition as a religious, conservative, nationalist, ultramontanist, rhetorically anti-technological and anti-entrepreneurial society into its present state as a secular, liberal, nationalistic, technologically sophisticated entrepreneurial society are those which have moved a large part of its population towards a radical separatist position.

The determination of elites in Québec to maintain the population in a defensive pose confronting anglophone Protestant entrepreneurial society worked for many decades. The population, both victim of and participant in the policy, engaged in the production of large families on inadequate land. Despite government colonization schemes to open new parts of Québec, the young migrated in large numbers to northern US states to gain factory work.

The grand, colonizing, agricultural dream is presented by Antoine Gérin-Lajoie in his twin works in 1862 and 1864, *Jean Rivard: le Défricheur and Jean Rivard: l'économiste*. The plain life and the pious simplicity of the rural ideal as presented by the elites is reproduced with touching irony in Louis Hémon's 1914 novel *Maria Chapdelaine*. The often painful, alienating experience of migration to the US is brilliantly depicted in *Trente Arpents* by Ringuet (Philippe Panneton) in 1938. The anglophone, Hugh MacLennan created the liberal Athanase Tallard in *Two Solitudes* in 1945 who confronts the parish priest with the need to permit the harnessing of the local river in order to introduce industry so that the young of the region can remain at home. And as if writing with prophetic insight, Felix-Antoine Savard produced his novel *Menaud, maître draveur* in 1937 with its tragic protagonist, Menaud. Picking up haunting lines from *Maria Chapelaine*, Savard has his mad hero go looking for the strangers who are taking Québec land. Better than any sociological work of research, Savard's novel conveys the intense feeling of the Québécois for the land and the deep note of claustrophobia that has touched them because of their history of abandonment and confinement.

In 1945, too, Gabrielle Roy published her brilliant novel, *Bonheur d'occasion*, translated as *The Tin Flute* . It reveals the pain and deracination of many Québécois forced to leave the land and move to poverty and unemployment in the city. In her novel, the Second World War desolates the women of all the nations involved. But it ironically provides hope for families like the Lacasse family which discovers in the war the instrument by which it can cast off poverty and begin to move out of despair.

Myth And Reality

Despite - and perhaps because of - the very real real crisis in education rights, language rights, and those created by conscription conflicts, Québec built inwards and kept to itself well into the twentieth century. The first four decades secured the myth of francophone heroism and the spiritual vocation of francophone Roman Catholics in North America even as the liberal, secular world was infiltrating the structures of the society. **The beautiful sentences written in *Maria Chapdelaine* and picked up to be repeated like a litany** in *Menaud, maître draveur* catch both the sense of impending disruption and the strength of the Québec myth.

"Autour de nous des étrangers sont venus, qu'il nous plaît d'appéler des barbares; ils ont pris presque tout le pouvoir; ils ont acquis presque tout l'argent; mais au pays de Québec rien n'a changé. Rien ne changera, parce que nous sommes un témoinage. De nous-mêmes et de nos destinées, nous n'avons compris clairement que ce devoir-la: persister. . . nous maintenir. Et nous nous sommes maintenus, peut-être afin que dans plusiers siècles encore le monde se tourne vers nous et dise: Ces gens sont d'une race qui ne sait pas mourir. . . Nous sommes un témoinage." [Meaning in English: All around us the strangers have come, who we are pleased to call the barbarians; they have taken almost all the power; they have acquired almost all the money; but in the country of Québec nothing changes. Nothing will change because we are a testimony. Concerning ourselves and our destiny, we have understood clearly our duty: it is to persist. . . it is to endure. And we have endured, so that perhaps in several centuries the world will turn to us and say: these people are of a race which does not know how to die. . . We are a testimony." [Louis Hémon, *Maria Chapdelaine*, Toronto, MacMillan, 1943, p. 182]

In the twentieth century the strangers *were* coming. They *were* getting control of the economy, taking most of the money, getting most of the power. But, as the quotation continues, the wishful-thinking of the Church and the other elites repeated the litany that in Québec nothing changes, nothing will change....

An Explosion Into The Modern

The move from Depression to war, from war to boom and an expanding economy, to increased communication and mobility, finally pushed at the fabric of Québec society. Though there was bitterness about conscription, the war filled the movie houses and the radios of Québec. Though Pierre Elliot Trudeau and many other francophones elected to remain out of the war, René Lévesque and other francophones went overseas or travelled Canada in a way they would not otherwise have done.

The war ended in 1945. Change was inevitable. Television came to Canada in the 1950s, the decade in which the Maurice Duplessis regime and philosophy played out their last days. With the seizure of consciousness that created the Quiet Revolution in Québec - announced by the victory of the Jean Lesage Liberals - the francophone world in Canada was launched on the remarkable and aggressive movement that has carried it into the 1990s.

The movement has dimensions that are both global and peculiar to Canada as a nation - apart from purely francophone interests and experience.

The Second World war, as I have suggested, pushed against the walls of Québec. Other forces that Québec thinkers and politicians believed important - from outside - flooded over the province. In his novel, *Return of the Sphinx* (1967) Hugh MacLennan seems to suggest that separatism was caught like a contagious disease from ideas current elsewhere in the world. That is an oversimplification, no doubt. But the end of the Second World War saw the founding of the United Nations and the huge ferment of decolonization. British historian E. H. Carr called it "the colonial revolution" in 1951. Like the forces spoken of in *Maria Chapdelaine*, anti-colonial ferment began very early in the century. A good date - if one is needed - might be the date of publication of the landmark work by a British economist, J.A. Hobson, called *Imperialism* (1902) that focussed a major aspect of the twentieth century and gave the aspect a name as well: imperialism.

Decolonization

The forces of decolonization have many faces. So many, indeed, that an encyclopedia might be written to record them. We are familiar with the processes of decolonization in India, in Africa, in Southeast Asia, and, presently, in Central and South America. Decolonization has been a major aspect of twentieth century life since the Second World War. It has been and is all around us. In essence, decolonization had and has several levels. It is often a political demand for the withdrawal of external governing forces to make "self-government" possible. It is a demand, then, for political independence. But that is not all.

Decolonization is also the rejection of the fact of "advanced" and "backward" or "underdeveloped" countries and people. It is a demand for economic equality, for the right of a society to exist with a population fully able to fit into and to initiate in the modern world. It is more than that. Decolonization is also the insistence that a population has the right to choose to live as a single nation if it has shared some or most of history, religion, language, culture, and ethnic formation.

That last argument has been made in the century particularly by minority populations contained within larger populations and social structures. The minority population claims its freedom to exist naturally is prevented by the majority which superimposes behaviour upon the whole population.

Decolonization And Québec

Militants and activists outside established political organizations claimed and claim that Québec fits all three levels of colonization. But they were and are not alone. As the argument developed, mainstream politicians and establishment figures demanded and demand for Québec increasing power in order to provide a unique people with all the instruments necessary for natural, unimpeded expression. Analyses have been produced from the left, the centre, and the right. It is fair to quote from one of the first separatist books, published by **Marcel Chaput in 1961, one year after the victory of the Jean Lesage Liberals in Québec. The connection with worldwide movements is evident.**

"Depuis la fin de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, au-delà de trente pays, anciennes colonies, se sont libérés de la tutelle étrangère et on accédé à la souveraineté nationale et internationale. Au cours de 1960 seulement, dix-sept colonies d'Afrique, dont quatorze de langue français, ont de même obtenu leur indépendance. Et voilà qu'aujourd'hui, c'est le peuple canadien-français qui commence a se lever et qui, lui aussi, vient réclamer sa place au sein des nations libres. [Means in English: Since the end of the Second World War, more than thirty countries, formerly colonies, have been liberated from foreign domination and have obtained national and international sovereignty. In 1960 alone, seventeen African colonies, fourteen of which are French speaking, have obtained their independence. And now today it is the French-Canadian people who are beginning to rouse, and they, too, will claim their place among the free nations." [Marcel Chaput, *Pourquoi je suis séparatiste*, Montréal, 1961, p. 18]

A frankly Marxist analysis produced in 1970 called *petit manuel d'histoire du Québec* by Leandre Bergeron bore the warning: Ce manuel ne peut être vendu à un prix superieur à $1.00 (This manual may not be sold for more than $1.00) Said to have sold more than 100,000 copies in Québec, it was intended to be a people's history, simple and direct. It depicted the Québec people as colonized and oppressed.

At the beginning of the English translation published a little later, but not in the 1970 *petit manuel*, it provided a definition of "colonized".

"*colonized:* the condition of a people who have been conquered by a foreign power and who are maintained in a position of economic, political, and cultural inferiority. The relationship between colonized and colonizer is the same as that between slave and master. The colonizer manipulates the colonized to serve his own interests. The colonized, defeated, stripped of his human dignity, submits to slavery and searches for escape in dreams, religion, or intoxicants, until the day when he realizes that he too has a right to personal freedom, and takes the steps necessary to rid his country of the colonizer." [Leandre Bergeron, *petit manuel d'histoire du Québec,* Montréal, Editions Québécoises, 1970; translated and republished as *The History of Québec, A Patriote's Handbook*, Toronto, NC Press, 1971, p. 2]

Marcel Rioux, professor of Sociology at the University of Montréal and an establishment figure, unlike Bergeron, produced *La Question du Québec* in 1969. It was translated into English as *Québec in Question* in Toronto in 1971. The book captured serious attention and gained a wide readership. Rioux, a separatist, also takes for granted the colonial position of Québec. Three of his chapters, for instance, are entitled "The Quiet Conservatism of a Colonial People," "Towards a Free Québec?" and "The Agonizing Steps to Freedom."

To begin, Rioux writes that the Québec question "is flagrantly up to date. The questions raised by Québec belong to the main stream of problems concerning contemporary decolonization and political

confrontation. It is frequently said of French Canadians that they are the richest colonized people in the world. What is not sufficiently emphasized is that they are also, without a doubt, among the oldest colonized peoples in the world, if not *the* oldest." [Marcel Rioux, *Québec in Question*, trans. James Boake, Toronto, James, Lewis and Samuel, 1971, p.3]

The Argument Against The Separatists

I have chosen three examples from an enormous array of sources - popular, academic, political (in the sense of "party"), and governmental. Perhaps the shape of various and on-going responses to those claims can best be characterized by the response of the most spirited and best known antagonist, Pierre Elliot Trudeau. His attack on the separatist ideology came from a centre of liberal thought.

Based partly on theories of the great nineteenth century liberal Roman Catholic scholar, Lord Acton (1834-1902), Trudeau argued against nationalism and the racism he seemed to find intrinsic in the argument for separation. He seemed to believe - during his active political years - the Actonian idea that the world was moving to larger and larger organizations of population. Liberal views of human kind would create equality, and opportunity would be open for all to excel. Nationalism and claims of ethnic distinctiveness he characterized as "tribalism" and saw as holding back the good of humanity.

Trudeau writes, "I am...tempted to conclude that `good government is a damned good substitute for national self-determination', if one means by this last term the right of ethnic and linguistic groups to their own absolute sovereignty. It would seem, in fact, a matter of considerable urgency for world peace and the success of new states that the form of good government known as democratic federalism should be perfected and promoted, in the hope of solving to some extent the world-wide problems of ethnic pluralism." **[Pierre Trudeau, "New Treason of the Intellectuals," *Federalism and the French Canadians,* Toronto, MacMillan, 1968, p. 154]**

Trudeau did not deny the historically subservient position of the francophones in Canada. In fact in his book published in 1956, *La Grêve de l'aminate*, he draws a picture of the francophone not unlike those drawn by his opponents. But he rejects that as a reason for separatism. He believes the anglophones can be worked with; though he doesn't romanticize them.

"In a sense the multi-national state was dreamed about by Lafontaine, realized under Cartier, perfected by Laurier, and humanized with Bourassa. Anglo-Canadian nationalism has never enjoyed a crushing predominance and has never been in a position to refuse all compromise with the country's principal national minority; consequently, it has been unable to follow the policy perhaps most gratifying to its arrogance, and has had to resign itself to the situation as imposed by the course of events." (p. 165)

Trudeau's argument is that the Canadian community and its constitutional powers provide the possibility of providing Québécois with all that they want of justice and freedom as well as many advantages which are conferred upon them by participating in the Canadian nation. Finally, he sees separatism as a leap back, a step into dangerous territory smacking of National socialism [Nazism]. To make his point, he quotes Frantz Fanon, in *Les damnés de la terre,* the Algerian anti-colonialist who influenced many progressives in the 1960s and 1970s. The quotation, for emphasis perhaps, appears on the last two pages of *Federalism and the French Canadians.*

"A national *bourgeoisie* never ceases to demand nationalization of the economy and the commercial sectors.... For it, nationalization means very precisely the transfer to the native population of the favours inherited from the colonial period. (p. 115) It uses its class aggressiveness to corner the

positions formerly held by the foreigners.... It will fight pitilessly against those people who `insult the national dignity'.... In fact its course will become more and more coloured with racism. (p. 118) Everywhere that this national *bourgeoisie* has shown itself unable to expand its view of the world sufficiently, we witness a return toward tribal positions; we witness, with rage in our hearts, the embittered triumph of ethnics. (p. 120) Internally...the *bourgeoisie* chooses the solution that seems easiest to it, that of the single party.... The single party is the modern form of dictatorship, without mask, without disguise, without scruple, cynical. (p. 124)...All ideological activity is limited to a succession of variations on the right of peoples to dispose of themselves. (128) At the institutional level it [the national *bourgeoisie*] skips the parliamentary phase and chooses a dictatorship of the national-socialist type. (p. 129)... This tribalization of power brings with it, naturally, regionalist thinking, separatism. (p. !37) (p.211-212)

Trudeau wrote that in 1964. The Parti Québécois government of the middle 1990s has not called for nationalization of the economy. Assured that its drive towards separatism would be obstructed if it did so, the separatist element can work easily with foreign ownership and the loss of sovereignty resulting from Free Trade. The old "tribalism" so offensive to Pierre Trudeau may not have changed at heart. But it wears a different costume now to do its war dance.

Whether heavily influenced or not by events and discussions outside Canada, the separatist argument relates peculiarly to the Canadian condition, for it takes place in a country which is a federation and which has provided the provinces with considerable power. One need hardly add that Québec sits in the position that - independent - would cut Canada in two unconnected halves.

Such a dire possibility could only shape itself in the minds of Québec people whose consciousness has changed considerably between 1945 and our day. For many, it did change as references by Québécois to world movements towards decolonization make clear. It was able to change - to put it in a strange way - **partly because of the nature of Canada and Canadian federalism. Canada's federalism is unique for a number of reasons.**

Canada's Federalism

Canada is the second largest country in the world. The first is Russia with about 150 million people. Canada is the next with about 30 million people. Third largest is China with around one billion people. Those comparative figures point to the fact that Canada - even considering its huge, uninhabitable area - has a small population and an enormous territory to administer. At Confederation Canada had a population of about three and a half million. Since then, population has grown significantly, some provinces have become significantly more populous, and some have discovered a wealth of resources. In addition, they have produced people who are well educated and able. Many of the provinces are larger than European countries. British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Québec are each larger than France. Québec and Ontario are each more than twice as large as France. Vancouver Island is larger than Belgium.

Despite possessing one of the most elaborate communications systems in the world, Canadians are aware that a defining characteristic of their existence is distance - distance from other Canadian communities, from centres of government, from friends, often, and from "centres of discourse". Centres of discourse might be thought of as places where Canadians of different cultural character may meet frequently and exchange expressions of concern. That last fact was dramatically present to Canadians in the October 1995 referendum in Québec about separation from Canada. Anglophones outside Québec seemed to have little contact with francophones inside Québec. Québec spokespeople

- even ordinary Québec francophones - made very little contact with media or people in anglophone Canada. It would seem that as population and the power of provinces increase national communication is often sacrificed to communication within a province.

The kind of dissatisfactions expressed by Québec in its relation with anglophone Canada would trouble any country. **But the strains within a federal system become, by definition, more stressful than in a system with a single government.** It has been said that a definitive characteristic of federated states is tension between central government and sub-governments. Because a division of powers is fundamental to countries in a federation, claims are always possible about the rightness of divided powers and the definition of statements about the divisions, regardless of apparently fixed "constitutional" structures.

The Danger Of Sub States

Federated states are quite properly thought of as having more likelihood of secessionist problems than unitary states. **Secessionist structures are in place, by definition, in federations.** Consider: let us theorize that a secessionist party is formed and that it becomes very strong in one province. That party need only win government in one province and then it may employ the bureaucratic machinery, the legislature, and the budget of a province to wreck the federation, destroy the working constitution - and it may do those thing within the legal limits of its powers. **In the unitary state** - the legislative union John A. Macdonald wanted for Canada - a secessionist membership would sit in the only legislature to which it would have recourse. In such a situation it would be a minority that could, usually, be fairly easily negotiated with.

After 1960, led by Québec, the incidence of provinces creating federal-provincial tension increased. That was the case especially with the accession to power of the Parti Québécois, a separatist party, in 1976. Since that time, and in the years preceding it, cries were raised for constitutional change to give Québec - and then Québec and the other provinces - more power. The nature of those cries has been complex. In the case of Québec suspicion is always present, even when requests are made by federalist politicians, that they are preliminaries to separation or attempts to head off separatist forces by taking on some of their demands. In a less sharply separatist way other provinces, having learned from Québec the scope of demands which may be made, now use constitutional arguments to increase power within their sub-governments.

Without discussing the ways in which Canadians have worked through time within and outside constitutional structures to make administration of the country flexible, we can say that the question of separation by Québec has made rewriting the Canadian Constitution almost an unnatural preoccupation. Very often - in any country in the world - the opening of a reasonably operative constitution for reconsideration is very dangerous. The opportunities to profit from a change are leapt upon by many interests that do not have the good of the general population at heart.

Strains On Confederation - A Summary

In Canada, pressures upon the federal structures of the country, as already stated, lie, to begin, in the nature of federation. Powers are shared and divided; very little disruption can create calls for different kinds of sharing and different divisions. Other pressures upon federal structures are peculiar to Canada. Canada's size influences demands for change. The abiding and historic strain between francophones and anglophones increases the demands. The "bandwagon" effect of Québec's successes in forcing constitutional discussion teaches other provinces to copy and demand what

Québec demands. The success of a party calling for radical constitutional change forces other parties to adopt some of the demands to please parts of the electorate. In addition, the twentieth century cry for decolonization has fed francophone and some other demands for constitutional change. Finally, another, equally large force has been at work.

The Role Of Individualism And Regionalism

That force arises from theories in the Western World, especially, which elevate the values of individualism and regionalism.

Neither individualism nor regionalism in itself is bad or a negative force. We all are persons living in and relating to the communities to which we belong. Our local communities and regions, moreover, are physically close to us in their relation to the more distant parts of the nation and to our national neighbours. But both individualism and regionalism (which is, in a sense, a geographical expression of individualism) have been highly politicized, charged with moral righteousness, and forced into discussion as definitive aspects of human definition that must be given priority. Claims for them, especially for individualism, are based upon the argument that all social values have fallen away leaving the individual as centre of meaning. Human beings in society, it is claimed, have no fixed values, no anchors of belief, no centres of moral reference but the self. Within the self, the argument assumes, there is a core of legitimacy to which the person may appeal. If not utterly preposterous, the claim is very, very dubious. But here, to provide only one instance of the argument, is one expression of it by Arthur Adamson in a publication devoted to regionalism in Canada.

"Today man seeks the solution to this dilemma [of identity] no longer from a ready-made code of values derived from the past, no longer from the structure of religion, philosophy, or political or scientific frames of reference or ideologies, simply because this approach has broken down; it is no longer viable. We seek meaning not from without, but from within; the quest is existential, not ideological. The theme of the novel itself, as a genre, comes from the confrontation of the individual with a conformist society that would alienate man from himself." [Arthur Adamson, "Identity Through Metaphor: An Approach to the Question of Regionalism in Canadian Literature, *Studies in Canadian Literature*, Spring 1980, p. 90]

Region As Centre

It is very doubtful whether Adamson's remarks possess any firm basis in reality. But the argument serves very strong political interests. In Québec the movement from a traditional, religious, providential, conservative sense of society to a liberal, technological, materialist one is supported by arguments of individualism and regionalism. Québec, a region with individualistic legitimacy, can look into the core of its being for its values and destiny. To the extent - as separatist theorists have insisted - that Québec's recognizable legitimacy *has been stifled*, the argument is very strong.

In addition, liberal arguments are always based on the rights of the individual, and so the new liberalism in Québec is a manifestation of the population's move to individualism. The wonder expressed about Québec's zero or less population growth from its resident population is without foundation. The answer is simple. Children interfere with the freedom of parents to do what they please. The Québecois - now among the most individualistic and liberal people in Canada - don't want their freedom interfered with by children.

On a much broader level individualism and regionalism serve forces more powerful than Québec or Canada. We will touch upon them only so they will not be ignored and the discussion incomplete. We will refer to them in the succeeding part, but to discuss their implications fully would take several volumes.

Individualism and regionalism are aspects of liberalism, the political ideology that claims all theories of society must begin with the individual not the community. Taken to an extreme, liberalism, as Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor has said, becomes atomism. By that, he means each person in society becomes an independent atom, moving as an essentially unrelated entity among the other atoms making up society. Any contacts made are artificial and contractual; fundamental interdependencies are not natural.

Individualism, Capitalism, Imperialism

That condition is especially beneficial to corporations and imperial powers. First, corporations can claim to be unaccountable to the community. Designated in our system as "individuals", corporations can fight all legislation to make them responsible to the population. Secondly, corporations can more easily advertise to, and break down the sales resistance of people who are atoms, who have no traditional values, who can't easily join with others to resist or to find cultural reservoirs of resistance. The ideal society for the free enterprise corporation is a society of atoms.<

Imperial powers, on the same basis, can divide and rule through claims of the moral supremacy of liberalism, individualism, and regionalism. It is not wholly accident that major theories emanating from the United States in the last half century have claimed that values have disintegrated in the West, that ideology no longer has meaning, that legitimacy lies in the individual and the region. At the same time, the world really faces a USA that is monolithic in ideology, aggressive in defense of "American values", uniform in its public pursuit of power - conducting wars - approved of by nearly all US people, in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Iraq, Panama, and even against a tiny island in the Caribbean.

Québec Transformed

All that having been said, we come back to the fact that the Quiet Revolution in Québec in 1960 transformed the province - and transformed Canada in the process. By 1963 militant activism and positions like that taken by Marcel Chaput in *Pourquoi je suis séparatiste* (1961) moved the federal Liberal government of L. B. Pearson to create a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism to research and address the problems faced by the two cultures in their relations with one another.

That Commission report (1963-1969) resulted in the federal Official Languages Act of 1969, and the creation of a Commissioner of Official languages. The Commission had a very large effect in sensitising all Canadians to the place and role of the francophone culture in Canada. Outwards from the Royal Commission changes were made in government bilingualism and in the treatment of French elsewhere in Canada.

The 1985 *Canadian Encyclopedia* is succinct. "The inquiry ... revealed that francophones did not occupy in the economy, nor in the decision-making ranks of government, the place their numbers warranted.; that educational opportunities for the francophone minorities were not commensurate with those provided for the anglophone minority in Québec; and that French-speaking Canadians could neither find employment nor be served adequately in their language in federal government agencies." (p. 172)

The Commission discovered that the group receiving highest salaries in Québec were unilingual anglophones. Very near the bottom on the salary scale were unilingual francophones. In 1974 Québec declared French to be its sole official language.

Core supporters of independence were not shifted by the Commission and its results. Many thought the whole activity was a smokescreen to avoid the central issues. When the Trudeau government created a multicultural ministry in 1972 (partly as an outcome of the Commission) the loudest and sharpest criticism came from Québec whose critics accused "Liberal" Trudeau of trying to level francophonie in Canada to the status of one in a number of minorities in the multiculture.

The Parti Québécois

The movement for separatism, for independence, and/or a severely reconstructed constitutional relation between francophone Canada and anglophone Canada may be summed up by an examination of the creation and growth of the Parti québécois. It was founded in 1968 to establish what it termed sovereignty-association, associate status in Canada on an equal basis with the Canadian government, Led by René Lévesque, a former Liberal cabinet minister and a former popular television personality, it gained seven seats in 1970, six seats (and 30.8% of the vote) in 1973, and, in 1976, won government, 71 seats, and 41% of the vote.

Providing good government, the PQ proved it could administer and serve the needs of the electorate, legislating a number of popular new programs. In 1980 it conducted the first "separatist" referendum in which the Québec government asked for a mandate to negotiate sovereignty-association with the federal government. The referendum was defeated by 60% to 40%, though the PQ won government again in 1981 with 82 seats.

The Constitution Reshaped

During the referendum campaign, Pierre Trudeau promised the Québec people that if they would refuse the mandate asked for by the Québec government, Québec demands would be addressed by a move to renew the Constitution. From the date of the referendum (May 1980) for eighteen months argument raged at every level of life in Canada about constitutional change. Constitutional talks with the provinces had been held in 1978 and 1979, and had failed. An attempt had also been made in 1971 - called the Victoria Conference - which Québec alone had refused. The premiers met again with Prime Minister Trudeau and found themselves unable to agree.

Deciding he would make constitutional change without the provinces, Trudeau announced he would make a unilateral request to the British parliament. As a result polarization was increased, conflict heightened, and 8 provinces mounted three court challenges. Such was the intensity and seriousness of the debate that Trudeau agreed to have the federal position reviewed by the Supreme Court of Canada. It found that the federal government could act unilaterally, in a 7-2 vote. It found also that to do so would offend "conventions" (unwritten practices) of Canadian constitutional procedure, in a vote of 6-3.

As a result, Trudeau agreed to one final conference, convoked on November 2, 1981. In the process of forming opposition, premier Lévesque had joined with seven other premiers and they had determined to create an "accord" of their own. In that April, 1981 accord, Lévesque had approved an amending formula that did not give Québec a veto. Québec's right to a veto on constitutional change had, until that time, been a strong assumption in constitutional discussions.

The final conference was rocky, but some premiers, with Jean Chretien, a federal minister, hammered out a compromise that would weaken the absolute power of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and would readjust the amending formula. All the other participants were informed of the changes made, except the premier of Manitoba who had returned to his province for an election campaign and René Lévesque who was available in the capital area. The next morning Trudeau and Lévesque were presented with the compromise which Trudeau accepted.

Lévesque felt betrayed because he had worked with the group of eight and they had not consulted him during the crucial night. He had given up claim to a Québec veto on the understanding that the group would work together, he argued. When he left the meeting the day before, the principal subject of discussion was a referendum should agreement be reached - which he and Trudeau supported. He returned the next day to find an agreement had been reached, without his knowledge or consultation, between the other provinces and the federal government. He refused to sign the accord, which Québec has never signed, and he left declaring that Québec had been betrayed.

From that day, as we know, Canada has had a "patriated" constitution to which is appended a Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. But it has not been agreed to by Québec. In addition, although an appeal was made to both the Québec Court of Appeal and then to the Supreme Court of Canada to assert that Québec had a right to a constitutional veto according to Canadian laws and conventions - nonetheless, the Canadian government invited the Queen, and she accepted the invitation to come to Ottawa and formally sign the reformed Constitution into being. Both courts denied the claim of Québec to a constitutional veto. The point is that the Trudeau government moved ahead to formalize the reconstructed Constitution without a Québec signature and without respect for the appeals being conducted by the Québec government.

When the Liberal government was replaced with a Progressive Conservative government between 1984 and 1993, two major attempts were made to re-address the question of the Constitution. The Mulroney government declared it would heal the wounds opened by the failure of René Lévesque to accept the compromise that made patriation of the Constitution possible and the creation of a Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Personality As History

Brian Mulroney's tactics were different than Trudeau's, as were his fundamental beliefs. Trudeau was a person of very strong ideas and convictions. He had developed them and, indeed, solidified them as an intellectual who believed in the power of reason, especially his own. As a constitutional lawyer he had enormous confidence in the efficacy of social modification by means of legal enactments. He was often more convinced of the philosophical rightness of what he was doing and more intellectually able than people with whom he was working. As a result he developed a charisma both among the people with whom he negotiated and among the Canadian people. Many among the latter would often say things like "you may not like Pierre Trudeau, but the son-of-a-bitch is smart. And he knows what he wants."

Brian Mulroney was without particular intellectual merit. In addition, he was a horse trader whose motivations were often not clear and whose rhetoric (in which he engaged fulsomely) was often contradictory and so uncontrolled that he came to be known as Lyin' Brian. He also showed himself to be reverently concerned to show US interests his sympathy and his determination to satisfy their wants in Canada. As a result, though he won three elections, his popularity with the Canadian people diminished to the point that he had the lowest acceptance rating over the longest period of any Prime Minister in polling history. Political scientists and other commentators very often fail to take that fact

into account when weighing the reasons for the defeat of the Charlottetown Accord referendum. Many Canadians would not have given *that Prime Minister* an approved constitution if it had been delivered to them by a host of holy angels.

In 1987 Prime Minister Mulroney called a federal/provincial conference which unanimously endorsed a package of constitutional changes, including the designation of Québec as a distinct society. It was a questionable agreement because it permitted rather large latitude in the interpretation of key language. But Mulroney, unlike Trudeau, was willing to diminish federal power and increase provincial power quite significantly. Areas for contestation over language, therefore, did not concern him as much as they would Trudeau. In addition, the accord was to stand in a superior position to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Whatever the strengths and weaknesses of the accord, it was defeated by Newfoundland and Manitoba legislatures, almost by default.

Mulroney decided to try again. He repeated that he believed the 1982 patriation had excluded Québec from the Constitution, thereby providing much fuel for the separatist fires. At the same time, the Liberal Party of Québec led by Robert Bourassa accepted many of the separatist complaints against Canada after the failure of the Meech Lake Accord to receive ratification in the legislatures of the country. As I remarked earlier, one of the aspects of constitutional instability in a federation is that parties opposed to constitutional change adopt some of the demands of those wishing change simply in order to maintain electoral support and to appear to be "with the times". Bourassa did it in Québec. Mulroney, famous for imprudent comments, did it in Ottawa. Both provided strength to the separatist argument.

Accused of having made the Meech Lake Accord behind closed doors without significant contribution by the population, Mulroney agreed that the Charlottetown Accord, a watered down Meech Lake Accord that still increased provincial powers, would go to referendum in 1992. It did, and was defeated in both francophone and anglophone Canada. The reasons are many. Quebecers wanted more for their province. Many anglophone Canadians rejected increased provincial power and the diminishment of federal power. Many had come to dislike Mulroney so much they refused to vote in favour of the Accord. Many more reasons existed.

Since that time, the PQ won government again in Québec, led by the militant separatist Jacques Parizeau who was a separatist probably as early as René Lévesque. In the anger, frustration, and ferment after the Charlottetown Accord referendum, Lucien Bouchard, a recent Progressive Conservative, defected and began the Bloc Québécois. A separatist bloc in the House of Commons, it won enough seats to be named Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the 1993 election.

The Second Referendum

Those events set the stage for the second referendum on independence for Québec, the referendum of October, 1995. The campaign was strongly conducted by the combination of Jacques Parizeau and Lucien Bouchard. The federal forces led by Liberal Prime Minister Jean Chretien used a low profile strategy. During the debate, the sovereigntists had to couple the issue of independence with a proposal for a new Québec-Canada economic and political union of some sort. The issues became somewhat clouded and uncertain. Very close to the referendum date, polls showed that more than 25% of Québécois believed the referendum could be won for independence and they could still vote in Canadian federal elections.

Whatever the level of preparation of the voters, the vote that defeated the separatist position was ahead by a very narrow margin. Papers the next day, October 31, trumpeted from their front pages the headlines "Non 50.6%, Oui 49.4%".

As he had announced earlier, premier Jacques Parizeau named his retirement date to be a few months after the results. In his place Lucien Bouchard took the leadership of the Parti Québécois. He resigned his seat in the House of Commons and returned to Québec. Beloved in Québec, he announced he would hold another referendum before long and lead Québec out of Confederation.

An Insoluble Problem?

The difficulty that remains and seems insoluble in the Canadian Confederation lies, fundamentally, with the nature of the division of powers between the federal and provincial governments and the balance of powers granted to Québec. From early in Canadian history the Québec of the francophones was an unique society. In 1774 the uniqueness was confirmed. In legal terms the French language and the Roman Catholic religion were recognized and French civil law was allowed to the francophones. As time passed an uneasy partnership developed, though again and again the anglophones exerted the power of their majority to impose policies suitable to their view of the country. Sometimes that meant denying francophone rights, as in the limitation upon francophones in Manitoba in 1890, an injustice that was only put right in the 1970s.

The increase of liberalism and the individualist claims that go with liberalism, ironically, complicate Québec's claims to individual needs and rights. The possibility of granting Québec further special powers within Confederation become less likely in a liberal society than in one that is more conservative. To give Québec powers related to its claims of uniqueness - and not to give the same powers to all the other provinces - is termed "asymmetrical federalism", which Canada has had, in fact, since the Québec Act of 1774. But some contemporary provincial premiers and their advisers refuse to think in such terms. Anything given to Québec they say, must be given to all the provinces. They fear that if a clause is included in the Constitution stating that Québec is a distinct society, the clause may be empowered in court arguments, by the decision of judges, to grant Québec an extraordinary place in Confederation to the detriment of other provinces and to the danger of the union.

The impasse reached threatens the continuity and survival of the country. The reason is simple. Québec has been demanding, and continues to demand, powers that it alleges it must have or it will break from Confederation to get them. **Opponents say** that if the powers are granted to Québec and to all the other provinces as well, the central government will be seriously imperilled as a uniting force with enough authority to weld the country together. **In addition, nothing provides assurance that even in such a condition Québec would not, at some point, decide for independence for other reasons.**

The powerful push made by Pierre Trudeau in 1982 to effect change in the Constitution and bring the power to amend it into Canadian hands may have been a positive action. **But the treatment of René Lévesque and Québec in the process permitted separatists to claim that nothing has changed in the long history of the relation between the powerful anglophone majority culture and the misunderstood francophone minority culture.**

The Errors Of Liberalism

If Trudeau, indeed, did make a mistake, he probably made two more as well. A liberal in the Actonian tradition, as we have said**, Trudeau believed sincerely in the rights of the individual as measured against the state's powerful authority.** That was the basis upon which the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was constructed. Though he was addressing contemporary reality in part, his experience prevented him from seeing that large corporations and transnational enterprises are as likely to tread on human rights as governments are. **To create a Charter of Rights and Freedoms that only addresses the individual in relation to government in our day is to produce a document almost suitable, in fact, for a previous century.**

Nothing gave the Québec people a sense that the Charter was a truly fresh, Canadian document. The rights of workers to organize and unions to represent their needs in a world where corporate decisions are often made outside the country is nowhere mentioned in the Charter, for instance.

Secondly, the levelling effect of a liberal document erases or refuses to recognize the cultural differences characteristic of some communities. When, in defense of the French language, the legislature of Québec declared that all signs in Québec shops had to be in French, the matter was taken to court and the Supreme Court of Canada found the legislation was an offence to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Robert Bourassa, premier of Québec, invoked the "notwithstanding" clause of the Charter to defeat the court's intention, though he made minor adjustments to the law.

To some anglophone Canadians, the events proved the necessity of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. To many francophones in Québec the argument was simple. If, say, a unilingual anglophone takes up residence in Québec and opens a shop, whose rights should come first? Should the rights of the new resident, ignorant of Québec's language problems come first? Or should the rights of a whole community, attempting to protect an endangered language come first?

When the Supreme Court of Canada's decision had to be blocked by the "notwithstanding" clause of the Charter, it was proof to many Québecois that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is a levelling document whose effect over the years will be to assault the viability and integrity of the francophone community in Québec.

Whose Dream Of The Future? The Years To come

Whether Québécois of voting age can be convinced in the years to come that they will have a better future in Canada than in a country newly minted to fulfil their aspirations only those "years to come" will tell.

Notice biographique

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Historica Canada. http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/robin-mathews/#related-articles
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Collaboration

Allen SEAGER, Leonard EVENDEN, Rowland LORIMER and **Robin MATHEWS**, éds, *Alternative Frontiers: Voices from the Mountain West Canadian Studies Conference*. Conference, held at Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre, Vancouver, British Columbia, February 17-20, 1994. Éditeur : Montréal, Association for Canadian Studies /Association d'études canadiennes, 1997 ([Louiseville] : Impr. Gagné). vi, 185 p. Ill., portr., 23 cm Consultation : Montréal, Grande Bibliothèque - Collection nationale - Livres 971 M9287a 1997 - Consultation sur place.

(*) L'auteur de cette étude est un nationaliste *canadian* qui promeut la création de l'identité canadienne sous une forme unique dans une fédération. Son point de vue est inspiré par l'idée multiculturaliste. Il est un observateur perspicace qui tente de comprendre les rapports entre les «deux peuples fondateurs» du Canada moderne et contemporain. Malgré tout, il martèle avec brio sa conception de la fédération canadienne. C'est l'optique fédéraliste à son meilleure avec en arrière-plan les arguments de l'optique impérialiste (de façon subliminale).