

Surviving the Americanizing New Right*

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Benjamin Barber établit un lien entre la mondialisation des entreprises et la résurgence des nationalismes ethnoculturels. Selon lui, ces deux phénomènes affaiblissent la démocratie. Barber ne parle pas des effets de la mondialisation sur l'autre aspect du nationalisme – le nationalisme civique, étatisé, qui prédomine dans les démocraties comme le Canada. Cet article étudie les liens qui unissent *ethos*, traditions et État au Canada, et qui en font un pays différent des États-Unis. L'auteur se demande si le nouveau libéralisme de droite des années 1980 et 1990 n'a pas remis en question le caractère distinct du Canada. L'article présente aussi les tendances qui s'opposent à la nouvelle droite libérale au Canada.

Benjamin Barber draws a connection between corporate globalization and the resurgence of ethno-cultural nationalisms. Both weaken democracy, he contends. Barber does not discuss the effects of globalization on the other variety of nationalism—the civic, state-based kind that predominates in highly diverse, democratic countries such as Canada. This paper examines the state-based ethos and traditions that have kept Canada distinct from the United States and explores whether the new right liberalism of the 1980s and 1990s has eroded Canada's *raison d'être* as a separate country. Counter trends to new right liberalism in Canada are also discussed.

WE LIVE IN A PARADOXICAL WORLD. As economic control shifts from democratic governments to global corporations, ethno-cultural nationalisms enjoy a resurgence. For Benjamin Barber (1995), the world is coming together and falling apart at the same time. He calls this paradox "Jihad vs. McWorld" and outlines how both trends weaken substantive democracy in the sense of citizens over rulers.

Globalization is the first side of the paradox. "Globalization" is the deepening and further penetration of capitalism (Meiksons Wood, 1996). It is a short form for a cluster of related economic, cultural and technological

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changes that express the triumphalism of Western capitalism. It is as much ideological spin about the historical inevitability of neo-liberalism as it is about genuine change. Much of it is not new. I have discussed these issues elsewhere (Laxer, 1995).

The market fundamentalist attack on activist governments involves the erosion of citizens' rights to public services and the abandonment of full employment policies. There is little room for the collective rights of citizens and wage earners in democratic communities. In the new Right ideal of pure market capitalism, people have legitimate roles only as individual consumers, partners, investors and stakeholders. Margaret Thatcher's quip, "there is no such thing as society,"¹ perfectly captures this ideal. If consumerism is people's main role and source of identity, what holds a country together? What do consumers in the same country have in common that they do not share with consumers half way round the world? The market individualizes; it rarely builds communities.

Eroding ties-that-bind leads to the second side of Barber's paradox: the rise of ethno-cultural nationalisms. In reaction to market individualism, people yearn for "blood brotherhood" to recapture a sense of belonging, argues Barber (155). He is right that global capitalism impels people to seek sustenance in community. But why do they seek it in narrow, rather than inclusive nationalisms?

The rise of ethno-cultural nationalisms, I argue, is caused not only by market individualism, but also by globalization's erosion of democracy and the shared citizenship of democratic communities. As the glue binding heterogeneous countries and those self-defined as immigrant societies loosen, many turn to exclusive ethnic, regional or cultural nationalisms. New Right fundamentalism poses much less of a threat to relatively homogeneous nations or to nations defined by entrenched ethno-cultural majorities. Neither depend strongly for their continued existence on a broad public life and activist governments. Japan is an example of a homogeneous nation with very small minorities. Until 1998, Germany defined itself in blood and cultural terms even though its immigration rates (in West Germany) were much higher than in the U.S. from 1945 to 1989 (Faist, 1994). Kurdish nationalism is vibrant despite, or perhaps because, it never had a state.

There are heterogeneous countries that cannot, even mythically, pretend all citizens are kith and kin. Anthony Smith calls these "state-nations" (1983: 189) to distinguish them from "nation-states" and from stateless nations such as the Kurds. State-nations have more than one sizeable ethno-cultural "nation," race, religious or ethnic community that the state never succeeded in melting into the majority culture. These countries predominate in the Western Hemisphere, Africa and South Asia, regions fashioned by colonialism and/or immigration. Canada is such a country.

1. Cited in J. Laxer (1993: 172).

No country is pure state-nation or nation-state. A continuum runs from the granting of citizenship to all long-term residents on the one hand, to strict national membership based on inheritance regardless of place of birth on the other. Countries are not fixed for all time as predominantly nation-states or the reverse (Laxer, 1999). This paper outlines the historical transitions in Canada from nation-state conceptions towards state-nation conceptions.

Democracies high in state-nation-ness receive their main reason-for-being from the public space of citizenship. The sense of belonging comes from sharing universal public services, public cultural institutions and state-supported unity policies stressing things that diverse citizens share. The constricted role of the state and public life under new Right fundamentalism threatens the very existence of such countries.

How has the weakening of state-nationalisms affected Canada? In 1965, George Grant argued that Canada had lost its *raison d'être*. Both English and French Canada began as traditional conservative societies where social order, mutual obligation and a larger role for governments restrained the greed and extreme individualism of free-wheeling capitalism. But modern technologies and the liberal ethos of the free market dissolved Canada's distinctive culture. Grant predicted Canada's demise in the long run because it had adopted American values.

Grant got to the heart of the national issue in English-speaking Canada, but his lament was premature. Gad Horowitz (1966) argued that socialism found more fertile ground in Canada than in the U.S. because of the corporate-organic-collectivist ideas of traditional conservatism. Social democracy and traditional conservatism were sufficiently non-"liberal" to distinguish Canada from the U.S.²

Ironically, Grant's pessimistic book appeared as Canada entered its period of greatest self-confidence. There was life for Canada after the death of traditional conservatism. Canadian nationality was enlivened through state support for Canadian culture and the pursuit of a more "caring, sharing" society, by embedding medicare and other public services into what it meant to be Canadian. Since the mid-1980s however, Canadian distinctiveness weakened under the new Right assault of Free Trade Agreements (FTA) and Republican-Party platforms in the Reform Party and in the Klein and Harris regimes in Alberta and Ontario. Was Grant prescient about Canada's future? Can Canada survive market fundamentalism?

Propositions

I make the following arguments: 1) globalization threatens the existence of countries high on state-nationness, such as Canada; 2) to remain independent in the long run, Canada must have a distinctive ethos; 3) the

2. I use "liberal" in Grant's sense of *laissez-faire*. Others call it "neo-conservative."

touchstones of that ethos are governments and public life of greater scope than in the U.S.—traditional conservatism and social democracy (or social liberalism) characterize that ethos; 4) new Right liberalism undermines English-speaking Canada's reason for being and is therefore Americanizing; 5) Quebec is closer to the nation-state ideal, and has a sufficiently distinctive culture and language with which to resist American cultural and political absorption; 6) the upsurge of ethno-cultural/regional nationalisms within Canada and the absorption of all or parts of Canada into the U.S. are likely long-term consequences of the complete triumph of new Right liberalism within Canada; and 7) success for the above tendencies is not inevitable.

To substantiate these propositions, I review current theories of nationalism and find them biased toward ethno-cultural interpretations and thus unable to shed light on the effects of corporate globalization on civic nationalisms. I then examine how the Canadian state historically maintained sovereignty and nurtured what it conceived as Canadian nationalism, which was little more than that of English-speaking, non-native Canada. Finally I look at current trends and counter trends.

Ethno-cultural Biases of Current Theories of Nationalism

A widely-accepted classification distinguishes "Western" from "Eastern" or "non-Western" nationalisms. When examined, these types are not "Western" or "Eastern" in global terms, but primarily based on distinctions made in Western and Eastern Europe. These dominant theories of nationalism do not even accurately depict the heterogeneous reality of contemporary Europe, let alone the complexity of global cultures.

A "Western" school of thought dominated the older literature, portraying Western nationalism as good, embodying modern civil society, democratic citizenship and as an altruistic friend of liberty and mankind. In the West, Hans Kohn contends "the rise of nationalism was a primarily political occurrence; it was preceded by the formation of the future national state, or as in the case of the United States, coincided with it" (Kohn, 1958: 329). In contrast, "Eastern" nationalism was seen as backward, "based upon irrational and pre-Enlightenment concepts and tending toward exclusiveness" and found in areas where borders of existing states and rising nationalities rarely coincided (456–57).

Most recent English-language literature is a successor to the Western school and still retains assumptions of a natural evolution towards the Western model (Hobsbawm, 1991: 9–10; Laxer, 1999). The neo-Western tradition depicts nationalisms as human constructs involving the spread of ideas and "the invention of tradition"³ (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983). The nation-as-invention is certainly an advance over earlier Western assump-

3. Anderson (1991) stresses breakthroughs in communications technologies like print capitalism, not the free ideas of intellectuals, in the reconceptualizations of community boundaries.

tions of natural progression from local to national to cosmopolitan consciousness, but the role of intellectuals is often belaboured in this literature, perhaps because current intellectuals exaggerate the importance of earlier ones. This school does not explain why some nationalist intellectual projects gained mass followings, while others died obscure deaths. Ornerly publics did not always accept national "inventions" (Himka, 1996).

An "Eastern" school vigorously challenges the neo-Western one, stressing ethno-cultural features and rejecting assumptions of Western superiority.⁴ This approach focusses on historical studies of particular nations. Miroslav Hroch (1993) contends that in Central and Eastern Europe an "exogenous ruling class" dominated majority ethnic groups and its control was removed only after national majorities discovered their linguistic, cultural and social attributes, engaged in patriotic agitation, finally found mass audiences and then political power (6–7). Symmons-Symonolewicz' (1964–65) writes that the liberationist "nationalism of subject peoples"⁵ often burns brightest in stateless ethno-cultural nations seeking their own state.

Neither school questions the congruence of nation and state. It is how the two came together that are portrayed differently. The neo-Western school stresses how states imposed cultural uniformity and universal citizenship on heterogeneous populations. Eugen Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen* (1976) outlines the French state's contrived obliteration of local identities and languages, contemptuously called "patois." In contrast, the Eastern school emphasizes nationalist movements growing out of civil society before capturing state power and often rejects the Western school's thesis that all nations have modern origins.

Both schools have great insights about particular cases. The danger is in overgeneralizing. It is not that national homogeneity is the rule in Europe, nor that Western and Eastern theories do not apply outside Europe. Japan is a good but exceptional case where ethnic and cultural homogeneity was maintained over many centuries by excluding foreigners and their influences. China imposed cultural uniformity over diverse peoples through the elite mandarinat (McNeill, 1986: 17–20). Neither school can explain overarching nationalisms of countries near the state-nation end of the continuum. Nor can they adequately explain contemporary nationalisms of the heterogeneous societies that European countries have become (Therborn, 1995: 40).

Democratic, heterogeneous states, where citizenship and consent provide the common bond, are threatened by a neo-liberal state and the narrowing of public life.⁶ To survive intact, democratic state-nations must take civic traditions much further toward "positive" nationalisms.

4. Anthony Smith and Walker Connor are leading theorists of the ethno-cultural basis of nationalism and are more nomothetic than Hroch.

5. He contrasts this with the nationalism of "majorities," not in the numerical sense but as those who hold political power.

6. Market fundamentalism may not immediately threaten heterogeneous countries held together by ruthless force. But structural adjustment programs undermine the long-term legitimacy of Third World states.

Positive Nationalisms

In another paper (1999), I outline positive nationalisms as ideal-types. No nationalism meets all criteria. Each is unique and continually evolving. I suggest five points are critical to this ideal type. First, positive nationalisms are broadly inclusive. There is a built-in contradiction between current inhabitants (all long-term residents), and would-be inhabitants (all those desiring to live there).⁷ All states restrict who can enter and who has full socioeconomic and political rights (Brubaker, 1992). Nations without states impose powerful informal rules about who belongs. How open are nations to in-migration and how colour blind are they? Do nations allow all long-term residents to attain full membership rights? Second, how much respect is there in law and practice for "deep diversity" (Taylor, 1991: 75)? Are unity and conformity compulsory? Are they nation-states or multi-nation states? If the latter, what kinds of collective rights and recognition do minority nations have? Do they have the right to secede? Third, how substantively democratic are nations? Fourth, to what extent do they respect the self-determination of other countries and nations? Are they aggressively expansionist, struggling for sovereignty or neither? Fifth, are they inward-looking or more internationalist?

I view as positive those nationalisms that come closest to inclusiveness, to embracing deep diversity and internationalism, to being substantively democratic, to refraining from expansionism. Negative nationalisms are closer to the opposite on these dimensions.

Neither ethno-cultural nor civic nationalisms match these ideals, although the latter were generally closer. The American and French Revolutions founded civic nationalism and were more inclusive of newcomers than ethno-cultural nationalisms such as the German (Brubaker, 1992). However both insisted on uniformity, "a nation one and indivisible" and trampled on the sovereignty of other nations.

Canada has variations of ethno-cultural nationalisms in Quebec and amongst native peoples. These are constituent "nations" with histories as subject peoples within Canada. Gaining an activist state of their own is less important to their survival as peoples than is true for Canada as a whole.⁸

In this paper I explore what is conceived as "Canadian" nationalism, but has, since the 1920s, been mostly the nationalism of heterogeneous, English-speaking Canada.⁹ An activist role for public institutions has been the heart of this nationalism, binding together Canada's diverse peoples. In the next section I explore how Canada was held together in the past and maintained a *raison d'être* as a separate country.

7. I am indebted to Josée Johnston for making this point.

8. I am not suggesting that independent statehood is an illegitimate goal for Quebecers or native peoples, only that their national identities are less fragile than that of English-speaking Canada.

9. Henri Bourassa was a French Canadian and a pan-Canadian nationalist. He advocated a Canadian nationalism in the early 1900s that was not subservient to Britain. Few English speaking Canadians were ready then to make such a radical break from the British tie.

Canada as a State-Nation

Are countries high in state-nationness failed nation-states, unable to impose cultural uniformity? This seems to be Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard's view of Canada as not a "real" nation. Although perceived as failures in the 1990s (Hobsbawm, 1991: 163), state-nations may be signposts to the future because of ways they accommodate difference. William McNeill (1986: 6) argues that the Canadian experience of poly-ethnicity and ambivalence towards a richer, more powerful neighbour is shared by most of the world throughout recorded history. Migrations from the South and within the South, are making for more heterogeneous populations in many lands (Castles and Miller, 1993: 271).

Much of Canada's political history documents division, especially between French and English Canadians. In contrast, Canada's economic history was guided by a strong state. This was a way to unite the country, at least as viewed from the perspective of central Canada. The core of nation-state nationalisms is often built around war against a common enemy, possessing a common culture, language, education and religion. In polynational Canada, these kinds of issues divided, as shown by reactions to the Riel rebellions, separate schools, conscription, the flag, the national anthem and the constitution.

If cultural-symbolic issues usually fractured Canada, could a less evocative state nationalism unite? Federal leaders often avoided symbolic issues and tried to unite Canadians around economic nationalism and public support for the arts, in both languages of course. The National Policy, building the CPR, opposition to reciprocity, the CBC, John Diefenbaker's "Vision of the North," Canadian content regulations and the economic nationalism of the Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA), PetroCanada and the National Energy Program (NEP), were attempts, in part, at unity across language divisions. These attempts were hotly contested. Some provoked deep regional animosities and class and occupational divisions, but tended not to set Quebecers against the rest.

An activist state fit well with the traditional conservatism of English and French Canadian elites in the 1800s. With their hierarchical senses of ordered societies and reaction to the democratic and rational "excesses" of the American and French Revolutions, there was less suspicion of government and more suspicion of Jefferson's "wisdom of the common people." From the 1930s to the 1960s, there was a consensus in English Canadian historiography, that the state played a central role in building conservative, British Canada. Hugh Aitken (1967) outlined the state's defensive steps to contain American expansionism. "On any reading of the historical record, government policies and decisions stand out as the key factors. The creation of a national economy in Canada and, even more clearly, of a transcontinental economy was as much a political as an economic achievement" (184).

Building a transcontinental railway to “open the West” was a crucial *dirigiste* state activity in nation-building. In 1867, the owners of the Grand Trunk, Canada’s main rail company wanted to build a line to the Canadian West through Chicago rather than over the barrens of northern Ontario. But the state resisted Canada’s moneyed elite and insisted on an all-Canadian line. Conservative, state nationalism with strong ties to Britain became the dominant political and moral force in Canada until the Second World War and was led by the Conservative Party. “Until recently, Canadians have been much more willing than the Americans to use governmental control over economic life to protect the public good against private freedom . . . Ontario Hydro, the CNR, and the CBC were all established by Conservative Governments” (Grant, 1965: 71). For Grant, the British connection provided a religious, educational, political and social underpinning to conservative state nationalism and gave Canada “certain forms of existence that distinguish us from the United States” (72).

With Britain’s eclipse after 1945, conservative Canadian nationalism quickly declined and loyalties easily switched from the British to the American Empire. Outside the left, it was no longer acceptable to express anti-Americanism. In the Cold War there was a higher loyalty to U.S.-led anti-communism than to country. “Canada’s national interest sometimes had to be sacrificed,” as Lester Pearson put it (Marchak, 1988: 165). This political climate encouraged U.S. corporations to further take over Canada’s economy. Diefenbaker’s nostalgic revival of Conservative anti-Americanism was vainglorious but ineffectual, the last hurrah for Conservative Canadian nationalism.¹⁰ The economic elite, the “dinosaurs of Bay Street” as Diefenbaker called them, no longer wanted a border restricting their aspirations. They had their man two decades later in Brian Mulroney who abandoned Conservative state-nationalism by promoting the FTA (1989) and NAFTA (1994).

Conservative state nationalism left important legacies. The sense of public order derives in part from the continuity of ties to Britain. Although opposition to gun control exists, Canada does not have militia movements, nor the “citizen’s right to bear arms,” traditions originating in the American revolutionary break from Britain. As well, the transplantation of British political institutions spawned a political culture that was very distinct from the American.

Social Democratic State-Nationalism

As support for state nationalism and anti-Americanism waned on the right in the 1960s and 1970s, it waxed on the left and coincided with the anti-Americanism of the American left (Gitlin, 1996: 68). The Liberals, in office

10. The eclipse of Conservative economic nationalism was evident in the regime of Joe Clark (1979–80), the next Tory prime minister after Diefenbaker. Clark intended to privatize PetroCanada. Stanfield was a transitional figure. He was not an economic nationalist but opposed neo-conservatism.

most of these years, were a centre party, pushed to the centre-left by the New Democrats. Social activists, trade unionists and prairie populists had pressed for universal social programs for decades. Much of their work came to fruition under the minority governments of Pearson, from 1963 to 1968. Ottawa funded medicare, higher education and welfare on a fifty-fifty cost-shared basis with the provinces. To receive federal funds, provinces had to meet "national standards," enabling Canadians in "have" and "have-not" provinces to receive an equal level of public services. The 1966 Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) removed the old distinction between "deserving" and "non-deserving" poor. All persons in need would get social assistance (Moscovitch, 1997: 107). Before introducing the CAP, Pearson said:

We are well beyond the point where it is even a matter of debate whether governments should assume any responsibility . . . for social adjustment, for individual welfare and the basic nature of our society . . . I don't intend to let the New Democrats steal the popular ground of the left (Barlow and Campbell, 1995: 31).

By the early 1980s, Canada's social programs were more "advanced" and there was more public and elite backing for state support than in the U.S. (Kudrle and Marmor, 1981: 110). Pride of place went to Canada's medicare system. Although such programs were the rule in Western countries, Canadians quickly identified medicare as a national characteristic, because it was so different from the American model.

Canada's public services had not always been more advanced. Franklin Roosevelt's regime (1933–1945) was a pioneer of public services and full employment policies (Skocpol, 1980). Canadian conservatism held back Keynesianism and universal public services in the 1930s and this backwardness distinguished Canada from the U.S. But leader and laggard roles reversed in the 1960s and 1970s. Conservative statism legitimated a large public sphere in Canada (Horowitz, 1966) and laid the groundwork for social liberal and social democratic governments to implement programs whereby all citizens had the right to high quality health care, education and welfare. Unemployment insurance and public pensions were so comprehensive as to be almost universal, and governments were expected to create full employment and reduce income gaps. In contrast, in the United States, legal, constitutional and political impediments made state-supported initiatives difficult.¹¹

Canadians were eager to find positive features to distinguish themselves from the United States. This was not hard in the 1960s and 1970s when the U.S. was torn apart by racism, ghetto riots, violent crime, external aggression in Vietnam, political assassinations and a president caught lying. Canadians became proud of Canada's public services that evoked a more "caring, sharing" philosophy. A moderate social democracy

11. For an alternative class power and electoral system explanation of Canada's more advanced welfare state see Olsen and Brym (1966).

had replaced traditional conservatism as Canada's distinguishing ethos. It was still state-centred and less individualist than that prevailing in the U.S.

Economic and Cultural Nationalism

Popular support for economic and cultural nationalism coincided with the development of Canada's public services. From the mid-1950s to the 1988 free trade election, foreign, mainly American, ownership of the Canadian economy was widely seen as a threat to Canadian sovereignty, industrial capacity and distinctive way of life. A movement for domestic control began in the mid-1950s. By 1970, a majority of Canadians who had an opinion, supported Canada buying "back majority control, say 51% of U.S. companies in Canada *even though it might mean a big reduction in our standard of living*" (emphasis added) (Gallup, 1970). In 1981, 84%, including a majority of Albertans, supported the Canadianization goals of the NEP (Crane, 1982: 19).

For a time, economic nationalism became part of what it meant to be Canadian. But the issue was always anathema to most domestic and foreign corporations and federal political leaders paid lip service to the ideal. They made some attempts with FIRA (1974), PetroCanada (1975) and the Canadian ownership aspects of the NEP (1980). Saskatchewan took over half the U.S.-owned potash industry in the province (Richards and Pratt, 1979: 257).

Quebec governments saw "foreign" ownership as Anglophone rather than American control and were instrumental in setting up a dynamic Francophone big business class (Fournier, 1991: 105). Success came at the cost of massive corporate emigration.

Although 52% of Canadians (55% outside Quebec) voted against the FTA in 1988, the agreement passed because opposition was split between the Liberals and New Democrats (Johnston et al, 1991). The Conservatives won the election with just 43% of the vote. Economic nationalist policies died during the negotiations of the FTA. That was the intent: to restrict Canadian governments to the prevailing anti-statist standard of the U.S. (Barlow, 1990: 132).

If economic nationalism became moribund in the 1990s, cultural nationalism, which gathered force in the late 1960s, partly as an offshoot of economic nationalism, was more enduring. But it has come under increasing threat as corporate pressures for hyper neo-liberalism continue. As in Renaissance Florence, the arts need patrons. In Canada this has been mainly the state. Canadian cultural production has done well where there was state support and protection for writers, artists, cultural institutions and businesses. It has done badly where American monopoly positions were allowed to continue. It was always thus. In 1932, Graham Spry, an advocate for creating the CBC, put Canada's cultural choices well: "the question is, the State or the United States" (Peers, 1969: 91).

Before the 1971 Canadian content-regulations, requiring that 30% of radio airplay be “Canadian,” there was no Canadian music industry. Now Canadian-content recordings account for about 13% of the \$1 billion annual domestic market. Some groups like The Tragically Hip have achieved success without pandering to the U.S. market (*The Globe and Mail*, July 1, 1997: 4). Magazines were a similar story. In 1976, federal legislation ended “split-runs,” whereby U.S. magazines put out “Canadian editions” by adding a few pages to editorial copy already paid for by U.S. advertisers. These “Canadian” editions resold their advertising in Canada, reaping a huge share of Canadian advertising funds, and crowding out the rise of a Canadian industry. With the end of split-runs, Canadian magazines flowered. Circulation grew from 34 million in 1969 to almost 500 million today. However some of these gains will likely erode. In May 1999, Canada caved in to U.S. strong-arm tactics and allowed split-runs to gain access to Canadian advertising under restricted conditions.

In the early 1970s, foreign ownership regulations were extended to book publishing. Public financial support continues. Canadian publishers now have 30% of the hard cover market, up from 5% 25 years ago. In mass-market paperbacks on the other hand, where the state failed to intervene, Canadian authors make up only 7% of sales.

Film and television drama are overwhelmingly American. Several federal ministers of culture tried but failed to break Hollywood’s vertically integrated monopoly over film distribution in Canada. The Hollywood lobby was powerful in Washington, which in turn threatened dire retribution if Canadian cinemas were opened to even a small percentage of Canadian films (Magder, 1995: 166). Canadians’ tastes, sensibilities and knowledge have been shaped by these American-dominated media.

At the turn of the millenium, culture was one of the few areas where foreign ownership restrictions still applied. About 80% of Canadians strongly support domestic control of cultural industries (Lorimer, 1995: 209), but U.S. cultural corporations may succeed in using international investment agreements and U.S. government threats to erode state support for Canadian culture.

The French Fact and English Canada’s Identity

Not all of Canada’s distinctiveness is directly related to state-centred traditions. Important aspects of English-speaking Canada’s identity grew out of the French fact. But even here, government policies were crucial in changing English-Canada’s self-identity (Laxer, 1992).

Kenneth McRoberts (1997: 184) outlines the ironic consequences of Trudeau’s attempts to defeat separatism by changing Quebecers sense of nationality. His efforts had little effect on support for Quebec sovereignty, but found success in an unexpected quarter. His national vision “took” on the wrong nation—English Canada. Official bilingualism was based on the

personality principle that language was an individual right and rejected the reality of territorially-based language predominance. The attempt to get Francophone Quebecers to identify with Francophones outside Quebec and develop a wider loyalty to Canada failed, but sparked enthusiasm for French immersion for Anglophone children outside Quebec. Although it also provoked broad opposition in English Canada, bilingualism became widely viewed, positively or negatively, as a defining characteristic of Canada.

Multiculturalism grew out of the bilingual and bicultural debates of the 1960s. Trudeau rejected biculturalism as giving credence to the idea that Canada was a compact between two nations and substituted multiculturalism because "a policy of cultural pluralism would help undermine a notion that was seen as dangerously consistent with the Quebec independence movement" (Breton, 1986: 47). Multiculturalism was embraced by Trudeau and English speaking Canada as a moral vision transcending conventional nationalism (McRoberts, 1997: 69).

Canadian literature and art evoke powerful images of Canada's pristine northern character, untouched by sordid industrialism, commercial interests and settlement. These romantic notions took deep root, as the popularity of wilderness experiences attests. The realities are different. These were never empty lands. Denuded forests, polluted northern habitats and legitimate native land claims belie these romantic notions. Still the myths live on as spiritual roots of national pride, evoked in the motto "from sea to shining sea," in contrast to the human centred "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Attachment to Canada's vast expanses make the map a patriotic symbol (Rotstein, 1978). "Mapism" may be overused as a symbol, but it includes everyone already in the country, and avoids divisive cultural issues. Geographic attachments fit well with state-centred nationalisms. It is because of the power of the sea-to-sea-to-sea symbol that Quebec's separation poses such a threat to English Canada's sense of national viability and is a basis for counter threats to partition Quebec.

Canada's middle-power role in initiating land mine bans, a world court and peace-keeping operations are important to national identity. I do not discuss these themes here.

From Ethnic to Civic Nationalism

The history of English-speaking Canada was not conducive to developing inclusive ideas of belonging. Yet it has moved strongly towards civic nationalism (Breton, 1988), surpassing the founding civic nationalisms of this hemisphere. A century ago, few would have predicted that sleepy, conservative Canada, still tied semi-colonially to Britain, and espousing a state-sanctioned identification with the British race and culture, would develop a more social-democratic sensibility than the U.S., focussing on universal, public health care—an attribute of civic, not ethnic nationalism.

The history of dominant nationalisms in this hemisphere is not that of aboriginals against the invaders, but rather the history of "Creole" settler breaks from Europe.¹² Creole nationalisms emerged in the era of the French and American revolutions and were fashioned around their models of civic nationalism. Modern ethno-cultural nationalisms emerged as rival models several decades later (Anderson, 1991: 67). As reactions against aristocratic Europe, Creole nationalisms used the language of the "citizen-people," symbolically uniting diverse peoples. In practice, Creole nationalisms limited citizenship along gender, class and racial lines. Especially in Latin America and the U.S. south, they were as much about white settlers maintaining property rights and power over conquered and enslaved peoples, as about independence from Europe (Knight, 1994).

Canada was different. It is the only major country in this hemisphere to not make a revolutionary break from Europe. Continued ties with the imperial country ensured that Canada remained outside the American Union, and that the future state encompassed more than one sociological nation. Having no revolutionary break meant no powerful founding myths of English and French working together for Canadian independence.¹³ Quebec has its own founding myths, with pre-Conquest heroes and those who, like the Patriotes in 1837, fought against British rule. Heroic myths have been constructed for English Canada too,¹⁴ but it is hard to romanticize counter revolutionaries fleeing into exile or manoeuvres to maintain subordinate ties to Britain.

Most English-speaking Canadians had a predominantly ethno-cultural sense of belonging, not narrowly to Canada, but to the white, protestant, British Empire. The myth of British Loyalists as founders of Canada reached its height in the 1880s. James Coyne ignored the social modesty and ethnic diversity of most Loyalists (Wise, 1984: xii–xiii) when he declared that they were:

the very cream of the population of the Thirteen Colonies. They represented . . . the learning, the piety, the gentle birth, the wealth and good citizenship of the British races in America.¹⁵

Loyalism served to counter calls for independence and to maintain a hierarchy tied to the British connection (Cheal, 1981). It denigrated Francophones, Métis and minorities (Granatstein, 1996: 38). But celebrating Loyalism failed as a national myth even for Anglo-Celtic Canadians. Contemporary critics charged Loyalist descendants with creating an aristocracy of loyalty,¹⁶ excluding the majority.

12. Creoles are persons of presumed pure European ancestry, born in the New World.

13. The 1837 rebellions and the Baldwin-LaFontaine alliance for responsible government were common struggles against colonial rule. But these events are not widely known nation-building myths.

14. Pierre Berton wrote very popular books about the War of 1812, building the CPR and the Klondike gold rush.

15. Coyne wrote this in 1898. Berger (1970: 99).

16. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

If Loyalist origin was too narrow a claim, being of British origin set one apart as somehow a better Canadian well into the 1900s. Theoretically, British subjects included all those in the Empire. But in practice, a line was drawn between white subjects and others, as the infamous Komagata Maru¹⁷ incident showed (Stewart, 1976: 43). Incoming British subjects lost their privileges only in the 1970s.

From 1896 to 1914, large-scale immigration from “non-preferred” sources led to diversity. The capitalist imperative for cheap labour and economic benefits from western settlement won out over Imperial Federationists like George Denison who wanted an “armed emigration” of Anglo-Saxons to stamp their character on the Canadian West.

From 1900 to the 1960s, the state’s response to threats to Anglo dominance was cultural conformity, to be achieved by separating language from ethnicity through linguistic assimilation in schools, punishing students who spoke their native tongue and banning French instruction for Francophones outside Quebec. “Non-white races” were considered inferior and assimilation futile. The way to maintain the dominance of Anglo culture and free way of life, was by restricting admissions of Chinese, Japanese, East-Indians and blacks and excluding their wives (Palmer, 1982).

Quebec also moved towards positive nationalism since the 1950s. Basing “national” inclusion on Quebec residence rather than by birth into French Canadian ethnicity, is conceptually, a move towards diverse membership, based on territory. However, Quebec nationalism is still a relatively thin civic veneer overlaying a deeply-rooted ethno-cultural nationalism. Comments by sovereignist leaders during and after the 1995 sovereignty referendum made this clear (McRoberts, 1997: 255).

The 1960s and 1970s saw the conception of Canadian citizenship expand to encompass every citizen, each of whom was entitled to quality public services. Multiculturalism became state policy and “visible” minorities made up the majority of immigrants. Although by no means free of racism, majority attitudes and behaviour became more inclusive (Dreidger, 1989: 360–61). English-speaking Canada has a way to go, but is now closer to positive nationalism than to ethno-cultural nationalism.

17. The Komagatu Maru, a Japanese-owned ship, sailed into Canadian waters on May 21, 1914, carrying 376 Sikhs from India. They wanted to immigrate to Canada, and as British subjects, there was no law to prevent them from doing so. The problem was they were the wrong colour, as politicians from British Columbia, made very clear. A cunning regulation had been devised to prevent their entry. It said all immigrants to Canada must arrive “by continuous journey and on through tickets” from their homeland. Since there was no direct passenger ship service from India, the regulation effectively barred entry from India without saying “only white British subjects” could enter Canada. The ship sat in Victoria harbour for two months, with food and water growing scarce, before the ship was forced to return to Hong Kong (Stewart, 1976: 43–46).

The Privatization of Public Life

The new Right alternative to the post-war Keynesian compromise began in Augusto Pinochet's Chile, the U.S.-engineered dictatorship. Lack of democracy enabled the Chilean "Chicago boys" to rapidly put in place the market ideal of minimal government (Edwards and Edwards, 1987: 93) without facing voters attached to public services and citizen-rights. Despite its debut in Chile, new Right liberalism achieved the aura of historical inevitability with the regimes of Thatcher (1979) and Ronald Reagan (1980). The ideologies of Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman had found homes in state power. Government was no longer the organizer of solutions to society's problems. Taxing, bureaucratic governments were killing growth and stifling individual freedom. The market always does things better than governments, or so the doctrine says (Pirie, 1988).

English-speaking societies took to the classical liberal formulations the most keenly. Returning to their glory days of laissez-faire was not surprising for Britain and the U.S. but was a major break for the former British Dominions with their more statist traditions. Roger Douglas led New Zealand into an experiment in drastic welfare state reversal (Kelsey, 1993). Canada was the last, mainly English-speaking country to succumb. Through the 1980s, Canadians retained a strong attachment to public services (Conway, 1994). Whereas Thatcher boldly promised to get rid of "the nanny state" and "kick the props" from under British industry, Mulroney felt he had to declare that "social services are a sacred trust." He lowered corporate taxes and reduced funding for public services by stealth, but did not oversee a wholesale dismantling (Barlow and Campbell, 1995: 150).

Canada's greater resistance to the new Right was related to national identification with public services. In Britain and the U.S., the right laid claim to national symbols much better than the left. It is doubtful Thatcher would have been re-elected in 1983 if not for the Falklands War (Whitaker, 1987: 5). Similarly Reagan's claim to make Americans proud again after the "defeatism" of the "Vietnam syndrome" and the divisiveness of cultural wars was popular (Gitlin, 1996). Market ideology was an important part of the American dream. In contrast, the Canadian Right could not use English-Canadian nationalism to legitimize dismantling public services. Consequently, the new Right used subterfuge, the argument that Canadians had little alternative but to support the FTA (Crispo, 1988: 191), to cede government powers to the U.S. and to corporations (Clark, 1993: 1).

A majority in English Canada opposed the FTA, uneasy about "selling out the country," as Liberal leader John Turner put it. But the Conservatives mobilized Quebec and Alberta regional "nationalisms" to win a majority in the 1988 FTA election. Quebec nationalists supported the FTA in part to weaken economic ties in Canada and thereby reduce economic blackmail potential during sovereignty referenda. Secure in a distinctive culture, continental integration elicited little fear in Francophone

Quebeckers. As the home of the foreign-owned oil industry, and with a long history of grievance over resource control, many Albertans endorsed the FTA to prevent another NEP (Barlow, 1990: 132). The Conservatives won 87 of 101 seats in Quebec and Alberta, but a minority elsewhere.

Canada partly resisted the first wave of the new Right and elected three New Democrat provincial governments in the early 1990s. But a number of shocks led to a sea change in political culture in the mid-1990s. NAFTA (1994), the severe recession of the early 1990s, popular anger against the GST and the government debt scare, seemed to indicate that governments had to follow the new Right agenda.

With the second wave of the new Right, Canada went from laggard to leader. As home to the Reform Party and Ralph Klein's Conservatives, Alberta was first to attack the premises of citizenship built around quality public services for all. Except for corporations, organized groups were labelled "special interests," parasites living off self-reliant folk. Public programs that defined what it meant to be Canadian were slashed or privatized. With every cut, Klein's popularity rose and gave heart to politicians elsewhere who were intent on cutting Canada's cherished public services.

The idea that the private sector always does things better than the public is a return to the "stakeholder" society of the early 1800s when the West was liberal capitalist but not democratic. There was no social or economic citizenship. Voting was only for white, male property-holders. Hayek's new Right ideology (1960: 105) revived the idea of a stakeholder society through 1) turning many public services over to the private sector where the principles of "look-out-for-yourself" replaced equality and mutual support and 2) by substituting the sovereignty of countries with the sovereignty of the global market and supranational institutions like NAFTA and the EU. Democracy predominates in many lands but is usually weaker than the market and supranational institutions.

Rise of Ethno-cultural "Sub" Nationalisms in Canada

Is it a coincidence that ethno-cultural and conformist nationalisms rose in tandem with the new Right? Or that both won greatest support in the provinces that supported the FTA? In 1993, the second wave of the new Right swept Canada, and regional parties prevailed in Quebec and the West. Reform and the Bloc Québécois brought more exclusivist ideas about Canadian nationality and almost wiped out the Tories and New Democrats, parties more flexible about Quebec's place in Canada.

Reform is a far cry from France's explicitly-racist National Front. But it is a partial throwback to the Anglo-conformity and anti-Quebec axioms predominant before the 1960s when *The Maple Leaf Forever* rivalled *O Canada* as English Canada's informal national anthem and celebrated conquering Quebec as the heroic founding event. Canada consisted of the

"thistle, shamrock, rose entwined," Scotland, Ireland and England. In Reform's updated version, the exclusiveness of the "British races" broadened to include the white "ethnics." There is a struggle within Reform to embrace "visible" minorities, but frequent lapses to the whites-only concept shows support in the ranks for a more racially pure Canada (Nieguth, 1997: 88). In the 1997 federal election, Reform resurrected the conqueror attitude: partition upon separation and no substantive recognition of Quebec's distinctiveness.

Quebec nationalism is a contested concept within Quebec (Balthazar, 1994). Recently, the pendulum has partially returned to the ethno-cultural, exclusivist nationalism of early separatism. Insisting that you judge a people by how it treats its minorities, Lévesque had moved Quebec nationalism a fair way towards a civic notion in which all residents were Quebecers. Language, not birth was to be the basis for inclusion. Quebec's state led in many aspects of social, economic and cultural life. Quebec adopted its charter of rights (1975) before Canada's charter (1982), endorsed a social democratic vision of citizenship and insisted upon "association" with the rest of Canada (McRoberts, 1988: 267, 305, 356). Today however, many Parti Québécois leaders have reverted to the narrow ethnic nationalism of the early 1960s.

Counter Trends and Conclusion

At the start of this paper, I argued that new Right globalization threatens state-nations and that to remain independent in the long-run, Canada must have a distinct identity. We have shown that Canada's distinctiveness has been built around a broader public life and a more activist state than its powerful neighbour. Such a poly-national and regional country has been held together in recent decades through a positive nationalism of civic inclusion, built around universal, high quality public services. These traditions have been under attack by elite and popular forces, internal and external, calling into question the bases for Canadian sovereignty and unity. We must ask whether these forces will inevitably triumph. Let's look at a few counter trends.

For healthcare and education to become two-tiered, many upper income Canadians must be driven from the public systems, fearing that current underfunding will not soon be fixed. This has not yet happened on a major scale. Although many Canadians strongly endorsed the new Right's war on government deficits and debts (Conway, 1994: 78), a majority has resisted the siren song of tax cuts. A substantial drop in revenues is needed to make the recent cuts to public services permanent, the apparent reason that Mike Harris in Ontario gave priority to tax cuts over deficit elimination. His re-election in 1999 strengthened the pressure throughout Canada for tax cuts.

The Klein government has tried in vain to convince Albertans to support tax cuts since the first budget surpluses of 1994–95.¹⁸ Even Alberta Conservatives remained unconvinced (*Edmonton Journal*, Oct. 27, 1997: A1). Reformers and Conservatives got little mileage from tax cut promises in the 1997 federal election. The majority of Canadians viewed deficits as temporary problems requiring temporary sacrifices and have not accepted the dominant American ethos of “lower taxes, smaller government.” Many Canadians have fought to retain single-tier services and for greater funding. In 1999, Ottawa, Ontario and Alberta responded to these pressures by raising health care funding in real terms, after years of cuts. These battles are not over and threats of privatization remain (Fuller, 1998). Yet health care and education are still mainly public and may stay that way given the success of the deficit wars. A current issue is the extent to which surpluses should lead to tax breaks to match U.S. levels or to rebuilding public services. Underfunding is not the only threat to public services. The Americanization of health care, aided by corporate rights under NAFTA, remain a serious threat (Fuller, 1998; Clark, 1999).

Ironically, American nationalism aids Canadian sovereignty. The FTA and NAFTA led many Canadians to think they are living in a post-national era where sovereignty is increasingly irrelevant. Not so the Americans. Because of their “strong belief in the importance of national superiority” (Adams, 1997: 170), NAFTA has not led the U.S. to embrace a post-national spirit along EU lines. The U.S. refuses free entry to Canadian and Mexican goods and services or to allow continental tribunals to override domestic laws. U.S. penalties against investing in Cuba, over fishing rights, in exporting steel and lumber, renewed federal state power in Canada.¹⁹ Americans are unlikely to agree to continental laws overriding their constitution, the way EU laws supersede member nations’ constitutions (Clarkson, 1994). The American refusal is a protection for Canadian sovereignty.

Unlike the EU, NAFTA does not envision monetary union.²⁰ The fall of the Canadian dollar in relation to the U.S. dollar since the mid 1970s redraws the border, making Canadian visits to the U.S. more costly and reducing the attractiveness of Canada for American immigration.

Prospects for the revival of positive nationalisms are tied with the defeat of the new Right in Canada and abroad. Like Grant, I believe Canada cannot remain independent in the long run if it does not have a distinct ethos and identity. In contrast to Quebec, English-speaking Canada has no distinct language, and whatever distinct culture it has, cannot be easily maintained if thrown open to the continental corporate media. English-speaking Canada’s *raison d’être* derives from a wider concept of the public sphere in which the state takes a leading role. If it succumbs to the extreme

18. Alberta Conservatives promised tax cuts and a modified flat tax anyway in their 1999 budget.

19. I am grateful to Stephen Clarkson for making this point.

20. The Canadian Senate began hearings on monetary union in 1999.

American individualist notion that profit and consumption are the main purposes of public life, Canada cannot maintain independence for long.

To give Quebecers a reason to stay, its nationality must be affirmed and governments must stress the positive value of belonging to Canada by reinvigorating medicare and public services for all. The majority of Quebecers want to keep their nation (Quebec) and their country (Canada).

The second wave of the new Right is receding. Right-wing regimes fell in Europe. Canada still has a quality of life worth building upon. There is a flowering as never before of English Canadian literature and popular music. Canadians are strongly attached to their country and exhibit a deep fund of support for Canada's generous civic spirit and state-based nationalism. The outcome has not been decided. The struggle for Canada's survival and distinctive way of life continues.

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