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Nationalist Movements and the State in Canada and France
Ethno-territorial Protest Movements in Québec and Corsica, 1960 to 1995[1]

Zusammenfassung

Ethno-territoriale Protestbewegungen in Kanada und Frankreich bedrohen seit den 1960er Jahren die Muster der politischen Integration in den beiden politischen Systemen. Anhand der Untersuchung der nationalen Bewegungen in Québec und Korsika soll die Frage nach den Ursachen für die unterschiedlichen Entwicklungswege dieser regionalen Protestbewegungen untersucht werden. Im Fall Korsikas kann von einer klaren Radikalisierung der Bewegungen gesprochen werden, die z.T im Untergrund gewaltsam für ein unabhängiges Korsika kämpft. In Québec hingegen konnte sich die nationale Bewegung frühzeitig ins politische System der Provinz integrieren, um von dieser Basis aus den Zusammenhalt der kanadischen Föderation zu bedrohen. In vergleichender Perspektive wird dabei die Interaktion der Bewegung mit der Staatsmacht als zentrale Erklärungsvariable eingeführt.

Résumé

Mouvements de protestation territoriuax au Canada et en France menacent les modèles de l'intégration politique dans le deux sytèmes politiques depuis les annèe 1960. L'exploration des mouvements nationaux au Québec et en Corse, doit Itre éxaminée les causes pour les développements différentes des ces deux mouvements. Dans la Corse, on peut parler d'un radicalisation du mouvement nationale qui combat en partie puissament dans le sous-sol pour une Corse indépendante. En Québec cependant, le mouvement national pouvait s'intégrer toutefois dans le systèms politique de la province, pour menace de cette base la cohésion de la fédération canadienne. L'interaction du mouvement avec le pouvoir d'ètat est introduit comme variable d'explication de cet évolution.

Introduction

Since the early 1960s ethno-territorial movements have increasingly challenged established patterns of political integration in western democracies. The purpose of this paper is to compare the formation and different paths of development of such *nationalist movements* in Quebec (Canada) and Corsica (France). The paper presents a brief outline of an argument more fully developed in a study on the two cases. After a short introduction I will first discuss theoretical aspects of minority nationalism. Secondly, I will try to give an overview over major findings and conclusions of my study.

Quebec and Corsica present starkly dissimilar cases of conflict evolution. In the case of the Corsican nationalist movement we can clearly speak of a progressive radicalisation of nationalist activities and fragmentation of "the" nationalist

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[1] This article is based on a presentation given at the third Contemporary Canadian Issues Conference at the Mount Allison University (Sackville, N.B.) entitled „Nationalism, Citizenship, National Identity" in November 1999.

movement. Presently some parts of the nationalist movement are fighting for independence outside the legal bounds of the political system. In contrast the nationalist movement in Quebec has become highly integrated into the political system of the francophone province, threatening the cohesion of the Canadian Federation from inside the constitutional framework. Current theoretical models, focussing for the most part on the *minority* status of *regional* protest movements within modern nation states, generally fail to account for divergent experiences as these.

Until the mid-1960's ethno-nationalism and ethno-nationalist movements were largely ignored in the social sciences. Modernization theories treated ethnicity as a somewhat archaic phenomena, which was alleged to disappear in the process modernization.[2] The political, social and economic conditions of modernization, it was assumed, required increasing standardization and homogeneity. The main agents for change were to be the educational system, the media as well as the army. Additionally, national elites were to transform the culturally different parts of the population into one *national community*, sharing common historical symbols, descent and national interests, regardless of social inequalities and class differences.[3]

With the benefit of hindsight it is safe to conclude that modernization did not work as smoothly or uniformly as theoretical models suggested. The persistence of ethno territorial protest-movements posed a challenge that could hardly be ignored. At first, attempts to cope with these perplexing anomalies tried to incorporate regional protest into the framework of modernization theory. Arend Lijphart, in particular, approached the problem as a problem of the nation-building process itself: if the latter is advancing too fast, the danger of a defective form of integration or assimilation of some groups arises. Lijphart still presupposed the integrative effects of modernization, but now saw a disturbed transaction-integration balance as a base for ethnic conflict.[4]

A second type of approaches focuses on the relationship between national minority movements and the process of socioeconomic modernization. Two different paths of research may be distinguished in this regard: One path depicts ethnic identities in opposition to the inescapable processes of modernization, as a *revolt against modernity*.[5] In this context, ethnic identity is seen as a given, 'primordialist' concept and defined as a counterweight to societal modernization. Ethnicity, in effect, is

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[2] See for this Deutsch, 1966. The study of Weber, 1977 seems empirically to confirm Deutschs theory.

[3] See Andersen, 1983, p. 80-125; Hobsbawn, 1990.

[4] Arend Lijphart: *Political theories and the explanation of ethnic conflict in the Western World*, in: Esman, ed., 1977, p. 46-64.

[5] Seymour Lipset: *The revolt against modernity*, in: Torsvik, ed., 1981, p. 451-500; See also: Walker Connor: *Ethnonationalism in the first world*, in: Esman, ed., 1877, p. 19-45.

defined as a basic principle of social reality that sleeps under the surface of modernity and that is awakened if modernization fails.[6]

A third type of approaches assumes a closer connection between the process of modernization and the emergence of ethno-territorial protest-movements. Studies from this perspective focus mainly on the connection between the historical roots of identities and their current forms of identity articulation. The objective is to better understand the conditions or, more precisely, the mix of conditions that will lead to a politisation of ethnic groups. As in primordialist approaches, ethnic identities are conceptualized as a given factor. But in contrast to the former the emphasis is on causal factors that breed dissatisfaction and ultimately result in a rejection of established schemes of political integration. The conditions seen as the driving forces vary substantially in different models: in some cases uneven economic development is viewed as the main cause of mobilization[7] or, more generally, simply the perception that a group or territory suffers from an unequal distribution of resources.[8] Michael Hechter, for example, speaks of the cultural division of labor as the main source of ethnic conflict[9], whereas other authors explain regional protest with reference to sectoral differences in the process of modernization.[10] All approaches share the assumption that the key factors lie in the socioeconomic situation of the analyzed group or territory as compared to the dominant society or core region of the state. Differences in economic growth rates and in the pattern of political integration result in a perception of inequality that can be interpreted in a cultural, political or economic sense.[11]

At first glance Quebec and Corsica seem to fit this model rather well: In both cases ethno-territorial movements developed at a time of rapid socioeconomic change and modernization. In both cases there is strong evidence of territorial divergent effects of modernization. Furthermore in both the regional protest movements can credibly refer to a common culture, history and language. But taking a closer look at the development, the issues as well as the movement leadership and supportive groups some aspects seem to raise new questions. From a comparative perspective the main problem is the divergent development of the nationalists in Corsica and Quebec. Despite similar socioeconomic environments the pattern of conflict evolution differs markedly in these two cases. This, I would argue, can neither be

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[6] See for this in the context of African Case Studies Kreile, 1997, p. 12-18.

[7] See Nairn, 1977.

[8] See Beer, 1980.

[9] Hechter, 1975.

[10] See for expample Gourevitch, 1979, p. 303-322.

[11] These approaches follow Stein Rokkan and DerekUrwins concept of opportunity structures. See Rokkan and Urwin, 1987; see also Rokkan and Urwin, eds., 1982.

explained in reference to factors relating to the movements themselves nor with reference to differences in the center-periphery structure. We need to reach beyond the factors discussed above and, in particular, introduce a temporal dimension into the comparative framework.

The approach of my study is designed to take into consideration the interests, goals, organization and priorities of nationalist movements as well as the response of central state powers from this perspective. It attempts to link different approaches and to focus on the often neglected interaction of the policies of ethno-territorial movements and central governments as they unfold over recurring feedback cycles.

The guiding hypothesis is that the formation and development of ethno-territorial movements cannot be explained solely with reference to some form of *ethnic substance* of a certain population, culture or territory. Instead the most important factors are to be sought in the respective patterns of political responses to regionalist demands and the evolving interaction between the protest movement and the central state powers. A comparison of Quebec and Corsica is particularly interesting in this regard. The cases allow for analyzing national movements on two distinct levels:
1. on the level of the initial response of central governments to those movements and the subsequent interaction of movements and states (behavioral dimensions)

2. on the level of institutional or structural opportunities for nationalist strategies provided by the political system (structural dimension)

More specifically, the comparison of the Closed-Corporatist French System and the Open-Federal System in Canada can help to demonstrate the impact of the different political environments in which nationalist movements form. This, in turn, is helpful in differentiating between confining conditions (institutional, socioeconomic, cultural) that define the parameters for political action and other factors that are related to the strategies and interests of political actors.

This kind of approach requires an explicit distinction between the relevant factors for the formation and development of the national movements. More precisely, I will distinguish four types of factors:

1. it is necessary to distinguish between **internal** and **external** factors.
 2. internal and external factors can be divided further into **starting conditions** set prior to the inception of movement mobilization (ex ante factors) and **process related aspects** (ex post factors).

External starting conditions determine the opportunities of newly formed movements to participate in the political-administrative process. In this respect it is important to take a closer look at institutional arrangements, political actors and established patterns of conflict resolution. The main focus, though, is on the process related factors. This includes political responses to nationalist movements by the central

government and the patterns of interaction between key actors.

With regard to internal factors, recent studies have generally overemphasized the consistency and cohesion of national movements. Even a cursory glance at the movements in Quebec and Corsica raises serious doubts about this assumption. Especially the nationalist movement in Quebec is characterized by a fundamental reorientation of its goals and strategies during the so called *Quiet Revolution* (1960 to 1970). The formerly rural, more exclusive, and clerically oriented nationalism has been transformed into a more progressive and inclusive ideology. In the case of Corsica we must also take certain peculiarities into account. On the Mediterranean island the national movement confronts a historically grown clan-structure that creates a political environment different form the French mainland. Further we have to account for the discrepant characteristics of the nationalist ideologies and rhetoric. Finally, on the level of internal factors we have to distinguish between starting conditions and process-related aspects.

The former constitute the *ethnic legacy* that allows for a mobilisation strategy based on culture and language. The latter refers to conflicts and divisions within the developing movement.

The main challenge is to demonstrate and evaluate the importance of these factors for the formation and evolution of nationalist movements. This in turn requires to distinguish three separate stages of the development of national movement. In contrast to Hroch`s theory of the development of national movements[12] the approach employed here emphasizes the differences between the formative phase and subsequent phases of political interaction between state and movement. The revised model proposes to distinguish the following three phases that I have labeled:

1. **Formative Phase**
2. **Breakthrough Phase**
3. **Entrenchment Phase**

Each phase is characterized by a set of conditions and corresponding variations in the relevance of external and internal factors.

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[12] See Hroch, 1985 and 1976.

Tab. 1: Relevant factors for the development of nationalist movements

	Internal	External
Given	- ethnic core - language - history - common myth - concepts of nationhood/nation	- political institutions - center-periphery structure (system of elite accommodation) - political opportunity structure - process of socioeconomic modernization - cultural division of labor
process related	- ideological spectrum - leadership - fragmentation - cohesion / internal solidarity - social spectrum - mobilisation	- process of interaction - public policy - institutional reforms

I. **Formative Phase**: The formative phase starts with the first articulation of regionally based protest. In this phase regional interests and grievances are defined that may later build the base for nationalist movements.

Two questions are of particular importance at this stage: What causes the protest and in which way is the protest articulated? First, we need a more detailed picture of the process of social and economic modernization of the 1950s and '60s that triggered a wave of political reforms as well as regional protest in western industrialized countries. It may be seen as the leading cause that spawned the regionalist conflicts. It may also be noteworthy that regional protest in Quebec as well as in Corsica has been expressed initially in socio-economic terms, not along cultural fault lines. Secondly, we have to take a closer look at the main agents of the protest movements, how the protest is articulated, and how the political system responds to the regional stress signals. Furthermore it seems interesting to compare the 'new' forms of protest with older forms of cultural agitation

As I will discuss in more detail later, what matters most in this period are the given factors, on the external as well as the internal level.

II. **Breakthrough Phase**: The beginning of the second period marks an important turning point in the development of the national movement. From this point on the variables that I have called process related factors gain a higher significance: the internal divisions of the movement and the interaction of the movement and the state. In this phase protest-articulation is becoming more cultural, and to an increasing extent concepts of autonomy are discussed by the movements. The relative influence of given and process related factors requires careful analysis to determine more precisely the shift from the first to the second phase. This is a major

challenge as none of the factors becomes completely irrelevant at any of the three stages of development. Thus it may be more apt to talk of a slow and gradual transition from one phase to the next rather than a clear-cut turning point. But a central proposition of the study is that, because of the growing prominence of process related factors, the conflict is shaped by a different dynamic that progressively diminishes the influence of the initial 'confining conditions'.

The conflict dynamic under the influence of process related factors may be explained in the following way: the nationalist movements are trying to change the socioeconomic context and the patterns of institutional integration via their political activities. Meanwhile the state is reacting to the new challenge through changed public policies. It is this interaction and pattern of behavior that can help to further our understanding of the evolution of the conflict. The flexibility can be defined a result of the cumulative effects of political acts and policies, that bilt a contextual legacy in which the following actors have to act.[13] So the frame of activity is transformed and that leads to the above mentioned process related dynamic.

III. **Entrenchment Phase**: The term entrenchment is not meant to imply a calming down of regional protest. Rather it implies that the nationalist movement has become a relevant actor in the regional or national arena. This may be either as a political party or a underground movement. The central criterion is: the movement is an actor that the national government has to deal with, one way or the other. Most movements do not reach this stage and, thus, it is seen here as a key indicator for a successful nationalist movement.

This phase of political interaction has to be analyzed in a country specific contexts: in the French case this context is defined by the conflict and politics of decentralization and devolution that dominates the discourse of political reform since World War Two. The effects of the various concepts of political and economic reform have to be analyzed comparatively in their effect on the nationalist movement in Corsica. In this regard, the main question is how the politics of devolution has affected regional protest, and reversal, how the articulation of regional protest has shaped the central government's response. Similarly, in the Canadian case the conflicts over constitutional reform of the federal system sets the critical parameters of the political context of the movement in Quebec. As in the French case the reciprocal relationship between the Canadian federal government and the nationalist movement will be a major concern.

Following the three stage-model as outlined I will now give an overview over the evolution of the ethno-territorial protest movements in Corsica and Quebec from the 1950`s on.

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[13] See Rudolph and Thompson, eds., 1985.

Corsica: radicalisation and fragmentation of the nationalist movement

First I will discuss the Corsican nationalist movement, proposing the following classification of the three step-development: The first phase, which I will refer to as the phase of economic regionalism (formative phase), lasts from 1957 to 1970. The second phase, from 1970 to 1975, will be labeled *autonomistic regionalism* (breakthrough phase) and the last and third, from 1975 to present, may be termed *nationalistic regionalism* (entrenchment phase) with separationist claims. In general, two questions or sets of questions will guide my analysis: First what causes the protest and second how can we explain its progressive radicalization? As a preview of the core argument the three main propositions are: First: the formation of the nationalist movement in Corsica is closely linked to French regional planning policies in the Post-World War II era. Second: The movement that formed in this period must be clearly distinguished from older nationalistic movements in Corsica. Third: the radicalization of the movement can be explained mainly be the rejection of the French government to cooperate with moderate forces in Corsica

The first protest groups in Corsica were organized in the late 1950s as a direct response to the *regional action program* of the French government initiated in 1957. The program's goal was to alleviate the consequences of socioeconomic modernization in Corsica. The main group was named *Centre d`études régionales Corse.* It was a primarily economically oriented group and its leadership followed a cooperative strategy towards the French government that was designed to help the French government in the implementation of the *regional action program.*[14] This type of groups still constitutes one major strand of the nationalist movement. Nearly at the same time Corsican students on the French mainland were beginning to organize in student groups (Union Corse, Union national d`éstudiante corse), the core organizations of the second strand of Corsican nationalism. These groups were strongly influenced by socialist ideologies and the process of decolonisation.[15] In 1966 the biggest two student organizations combined into the *Front Régionaliste Corse* (FRC). From the perspective of this more radical and culturally oriented strand of the nascent nationalist movement the situation of Corsica was interpreted as a part of the general decolonisation process.

In the mid 1960`s the so called **forces vives** in Corsica - vendors and petty bourgoesie – were organizing the *Comité d`études et de defense des interets de la Corse (*CEDIC).[16] As in the case of the aforementioned Corsican Center for Regional Studies, the CEDIC represents the cooperative strand, whose primary function is to articulate economic interests. 1967 the FRC and the CEDIC merged into the *Action Régionaliste Corse* (ARC). But because of different interpretations of the causes of

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[14] Kofman, 1982, p.300-312.
[15] See Peter Savigear: *Corsica and the French State*, in: Foster, ed., 1980, p.116-135; Dressler-Holohan, 1987, p. 301-336.
[16] Vanina, 1983, p. 53ff.

the Corsican problems the movement split only one year later again into ARC and FRC. Here the ARC represents the moderate wing with, again, a primarily economic outlook. In the 1970s, though, the moderates added a new element to their program: the concept of autonomy. The concept of internal autonomy had been discussed in the 1960`s as well, but had not been a key element of the movements explanation of the political priorities of economic modernization and the displacement of the indigenous Corsican economy as an objective and consequence of the French politics of decolonialisation.[17]

With the adoption of 'internal autonomy' as a key political demand, the second phase of the evolution of the ethno-territorial movement begins: Corsican autonomism (period of establishing). In spite of the generally rising tensions, different degrees of radicalization still characterize the various parts of the movement at this stage, with the radical and socialistic strand represented in the FRC and a moderate and pragmatic strand represented by the ARC. But a second 'regional action plan' proposed by the French government clearly strengthened the radical wing. The new plan followed a narrow logic of economic efficiency and envisioned an enlargement of the tourism and agricultural sector on the island. Critical reports predicted a one-sided and, in the long run, catastrophic development of the Corsican economy as the likely consequence of the regional plan's implementation. The French governments indifference towards the Corsica's main economic problems seemed to validate the radical view and helped to further the radicalization of nationalist rhetoric as well as group activities.

In the mid 1970s the French government began to react to the ethno-territorial movement in Corsica by banning the ARC. The event that provoked the French governments drastic reaction was the so called *Aleria affaire*. In 1975 the ARC seized a vineyard in Aleria to demonstrate against a wine scandal. The French state interpreted this public relations stunt as an immediate threat to French national unity and ended the occupation with massive military and police forces. The ban of the ARC and the generally more repressive posture of the French government again lead to a further radicalization and drove parts of the movement underground.

From this perspective the *Aleria affaire* can be seen as a turning point that demarcates the beginning of the third and final stage in the Corsican movement's development: the phase of separatism (entrenchment phase). To name just two of the more prominent organizations of the nationalist movement after 1975: The *Fronte de la Liberation Nationale de la Corse* (FLNC) is an example of the illegal groups, later breaking up into several new groups, among them the canal historique and the canal habituell. The succesor of the forbidden ARC, the *Union di u Populu Corsu* (UPC), presents an example of a legal group, working within the Corsican political system and regularly winning about 8 to 10% in regional elections.

Whether analyzing the general trend or individual incidents, the historical sketch of the conflict between the nationalist movement and the French government since the

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[17] Chatelain and Tafani, 1976, p. 78ff.

late 1950s suggests a clearly defined pattern of continuous escalation. First the French government ignores the grievances and demands articulated by the Corsican movement, then reacts to the resulting radicalization in a way that deepens the rift between the government and the groups. Viewed from a slightly different angle, this spiral of escalation, based on the particular mode of interaction between the two sides, drives and explains the progressive radicalization in Corsica.

While the strategy and policy on the part of the French government are a vital factor, two other aspects need to be taken into consideration. Both work to limit the ability of the Corsican movement to mobilize support: on the one hand the peculiarities of the Corsican political system, on the other the French socialist party's reform program.

With respect to the power structure of Mediterranean island the clan system is a key element, whose importance can hardly be overstated. For generations a few families have controlled the island. The French state has become dependent on this local elite, bringing it into the role of an intermediator or a broker between the state and the Corsican community. The clan system has proved to be extremely adaptive in the process of socioeconomic modernization and political reforms implemented as part of the French policies of decentralization and regionalisation. The 'devolution French style' has stabilized the power position of the clans and prevented the the new 'forces vives' from fully participating in the political process.

Secondly, the socialist policy of decentralization brought Corsica a 'statute particular ' (1982) with special rights and powers. The reform has sharply curtailed the political potential for nationalist mobilization on the island. The 'statute particular' offers the Mediterranean island special treatment well beyond the concessions associated with the politics decentralization. For example, Corsica is the first French region that has been reorganized as a regional corporation, not merely an administrative unit, but a political entity with certain independent functions and powers. The electoral system has been reorganized to strengthen the smaller parties. The regional council of Corsica has been renamed 'national assembly' and, going further than institutional reforms in other French regions, a council for culture, education and quality of life has been instituted.

Measured against its objectives the 'statute particular' has failed. On reason was that it was not implemented in a dialogue with Corsican political elites. Thus it was rejected by autonomists as well as separatists. The clans also rejected the proposed reforms, but have been able to take advantage of the reform, again strengthening their power position. As a consequence, the intended integration of the ethno-territorial protest movement, or at least major parts of it, has not been achieved. As earlier reform programs the 'statute particular' fell short of the expectations of the nationalist movement. In the following decade the French socialists gave up on the policy of dialogue with the movement, returning to a tougher, less cooperative approach.

Since the mid 1980s the pattern of interaction between the French state and the Corsican movement has remained unchanged. The situation has been complicated considerably by the underground groups' cooperation with organized crime. This cooperation is rejected by a vast majority the Corsican population and has discredited the whole national movement.

Québec: waves of nationalist mobilisation

Whereas regional protest in Corsica was first articulated by newly formed groups, protest in Quebec found expression within the established political system from the outset, the main and most important agent being the Liberal Party of Québec (PLQ).[18] Thus 1960, the year the Liberals took power from the Union Nationale, seems to be the obvious date to set as the beginning of the first phase. 1960 is also a year discussed in the literature as the starting point of the Quiet Revolution. The programmatic transformation of the Liberal Party comes into sharper focus when viewed against the background of its traditional anti-nationalistic outlook. Until the 1950s the PLQ had been nothing more than a regional chapter of Liberal Party of Canada. The PLQ had been concerned mostly with policies on the federal level and the party had tried to articulate francophone interests as a part of this strategy. But tensions rose between the growing party bureaucracies at the provincial and the federal level. In combination with the increasing importance of provincial institutions – resulting from the buildup of the Canadian welfare state - these tensions lead to a growing independence of the Liberal Party chapter in Quebec. The process of socioeconomic modernization in Canada resulted also in a fragmentation of the political system and the party system, primarily between the federal and provincial level. The centrifugal tendencies were particularly strong in the case of the francophone province that enjoyed a special status guaranteed by the Québec Act of 1774. Until the 1960s the established model of elite accommodation between the federal state and the francophone province had worked well. But this system of power sharing in Quebec was not adequate to the need of the modern welfare state. A new middle class found its way into the Liberal Party of Québec, using it as the main vehicle for its integration into the political system.[19]

The growing significance of provincial institutions and their power in the Canadian federation lead to rising tensions in the PLQ. As a consequence René Lévesque left the party in 1968 and founded the *Movement Association Souverainité* and, later, the *Parti Québécois* (PQ). With the founding of the PQ the breakthrough phase begins. The PQ gained 23.1% of the votes in elections of 1971, won the provincial election of 1976, and was thus able to establish itself as a relevant actor and with this electoral victory starts the entrenchment phase.

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[18] Thomson, 1986; Lemieux, 1993.
[19] See for a detailed discussion on the middle class approach: McRoberts, 1993 and Coleman, 1984.

Since the 1970s the PQ has been a constant and strong factor in provincial and national politics.[20] In the early phase we can distinguish two wings of the PQ: a radical wing that opted for immediate separation of the province from Canada, and a moderate wing that demanded a referendum on the question of separation to be held before deciding on the future of the province. The latter gained control over the party and the election of 1976 was won with other issues than separation. Until the 1980s the concept of separation did not figure prominently in the program of the PQ. It is hard to take the first referendum in 1980 as a clear indicator for wider support for independence. The referendum question was phrased in a way that implied no real independence from the Canadian federation, but a complex arrangement of souverainité association: a kind of part-time separation, with many responsibilities left to be shared with the Canadian federation.[21] A closer look at public opinion surveys indicates no support for separation beyond the proposed 'soft solution'. A clear cut secession from the Canadian federation was rejected by most of Quebec's voters.[22] Thus after the failure of the referendum in 1980 the question of separation was pushed off the PQ's political agenda. Only under the new leadership of Lucien Bouchard, in 1989, the PQ reoriented its programmatic course to separation. Interestingly this move was not followed by an increased support among voters. In the mid 1990s separation was again on the agenda of Quebec politics. In the second referendum on separation in 1995 a razor-thin majority of 50.5% voted against separation. But as in the referendum 1980 the watered-down wording of the referendum question makes it hard to speak of a separation referendum. In case of adoption, the referendum would have given the Quebec government nothing more but a mandate to negotiate a reform of the Canadian federation with the federal government. The legal process of separation was in no way discussed.

Thus the presence and strength of the PQ in the provincial political system cannot be taken as an indicator for the support for independence in Quebec. The party has presented itself as a political alternative to separation. With a partly social democratic and partly conservative program the PQ has tried to distinguish itself from the PLQ. So how can we measure support for independence in Quebec other than using PQ vote shares? A look at voter surveys can help us in this regard. On the basis of survey data we can outline waves of nationalistic mobilization in Quebec: an increase toward the end of the 1970s, peaking at the time of the referendum in 1980. After the repatriation of the Canadian constitution in 1982 a steep decline until the early 1990s, then again an increase leading up to the second referendum in 1995. Since the second referendum the support for independence fell off again.[23]

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[20] See for an overview Fitzmaurice, 1995.

[21] See Lévesque, 1968.

[22] See for the data: Maurice Pinard: *Le quatre phases du mouvement indépendantistes québécois*, in: Pinard, Bernier and Lemieux, eds., 1970, p. 29-50.

[23] See Pinard: *Le quatre phases*, p.49f.

Conclusions: a comparative perspective

A first conclusion concerns an important difference between Corsica and Quebec: Whereas the Corsican protest movement arose outside the spectrum of established groups and parties, regional protest in Quebec found immediate expression within the established political system. This difference reflects varying opportunities for participation that the French and the Canadian system offer. France in the 1950s and early 1960s is characterized as a *société bloquée*.[24] The traditional political elites from the third and fourth republic dominated the administrative system. Thus there was little chance for the new 'forces vives' - especially in Corsica - to gain access to the political system. In the case of Corsica the clan system worked as an additional barrier preventing new actors from participating in the political process. The clans in Corsica adjusted very well to the process of socioeconomic modernization in France and were able to use new political opportunities opened by the French politics of regionalisation to consolidate their power position.

In contrast the Canadian political system of Canada is more open to new political forces, particularly at the provincial level. The general trend toward realignments of the provincial party systems seems to be a good indicator of this political openness. Furthermore the traditional elites of Quebec society proved to be less successful in adapting to the requirements of a modern welfare state. Quebec had passed early through the process of industrialization and urbanization. But the traditional elites - represented politically in the Union Nationale - had been able to defend their power position until the Second World War. The Anglophone part of the Quebec society was the agent of industrialization in the francophone province and the francophone elite dominated the cultural sector and the educational system.[25] As a result of the economically dominant position of the Anglophones, the francophone population developed a culturally oriented ideology of 'survivance'. This ideology lacked economic as well as political substance, relying instead to a large degree on Catholicism as a basis for its worldview. The traditional francophone nationalism was also inwardly directed and closed to newcomers.

The old style nationalism increasingly came under attack in the 1950s. As a result of socioeconomic modernization a new dynamic political elite formed in Quebec that departed from the traditional francophone nationalism, taking two different directions: one strand rejected any form of nationalism in the name of liberalism. A prominent figur of this strand is Pierre Trudeau, the later premier of Canada. This strand was acting mainly on the federal level to improve the conditions of the francophones in Canada. The politics of bilingualism and multiculturalism are examples of this perspective. A new form of francophone nationalism was developed by the second strand, more politically and territorially oriented than its predecessor. This new

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[24] Crozier, 1973.
[25] See for the cultural division of labour in Quebec: McRoberts, 1993, p.61ff.

nationalism can be distinguished by its understanding of the concept of a nation and the national subject: the francophones were replaced by the Québécois.

The different opportunities for access to the political system in Canada and France also determine the ability to push for the accommodation of interests and demands within the system. I will call this integration- and legitimation advantage. In this regard the position of the PQ is decidedly stronger than that of the nationalist parties in Corsica. As a party in government the PQ can feed much of its program into the political process. On the one hand this has worked to in favor of the nationalist party in Quebec. On the other hand, though, it decreased the perceived need of separation as seen by Quebec voters. The introduction of different language legislations in Quebec, seems a good example for this ambiguous effect. After the enactment of these language bills support for independence in Quebec declined markedly.[26]

The nationalists in Corsica have not been equally successful in bringing their ideas and demands into the political process. The French state opposed most of the nationalist demands. A few regionalist ideas were considered and adopted, but mainly through established political forces as the Socialist party of France. This often resulted in a decline of support for the nationalists and a radicalization of some parts of the nationalist movement. In this respect, too, the spiral of escalation has had the consequences for the cohesion and consistency outlined above. The weakness of the Corsican movement in bringing their goals and interests into the political process can be explained partly by the antagonistic posture of the French state, and partly by the selective adoption of regionalist concepts by the French Socialist Party in the 1970s that lead to the policies of decentralization and regionalisation. In this way regional protest articulation was channeled into established institutions of conflict resolution. With the exception of the little Mediterranean island, regional protest in France subsided in most parts of the country. But the traditional pattern of party politics in Corsica with its strong ties between parties and family clans weakened the effects of decentralization and regionalisation. The established forms of accommodation of local elites continued to work and the programs and institutions created under the policy of decentralization quickly came under the control of the clan parties. This peculiar structure, that frustrates the national movement in pursuing its goals, distinguishes Corsica from the French mainland. From this perspective the radicalization and fragmentation of the Corsican nationalist movement can largely be attributed to three external and process related factors: 1. the traditional political forces in Corsica, 2. central state antagonism toward the nationalists, and 3. adoption of regionalist demands into the Socialist Party's program.

Quebec offers a completely different picture. The historically rooted pattern of Canadian federalism provides considerable leeway to the provincial political systems. This latitude gives new forces ample opportunity to participate effectively in

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[26] See Reginald Whitaker: *The Quebec Cauldron. A recent account*, in: Gagnon, ed., 1984, p.70-91, esp. p. 81f.

the political process. In combination with the weakness of traditional actors - the Union National and the Catholic church - and their inability or refusal to adapt to the realities of the modern welfare state, this situation created an opening for the nationalists. On one hand, the strong representation of francophone interests at the national level (factor Trudeau) facilitated the acceptance of the nationalist movement in Quebec. On the other hand, it weakened the support for the nationalist drive for separation. Thus nationalist mobilization has only been successful in periods of federal antagonism. This pattern explains the waves of national mobilization in Quebec. Only in times of conflict as in the early 1980s and the patriation of the constitution or the debate about Meech Lake and the Charlettetown Agreement, the nationalists were able to mobilize for separation. After the reforms were implemented or failed, the support for the concept of separation dropped again. Another factor that weakens the nationalist movement is the PQ itself. With its successes as the governing party in Quebec - as illustrated by the example of the language bill - the PQ helped Canadian federalism to work effectively. Political success in Quebec is interpreted by the electorate - as polling results show - not as an argument for separation, but for the effectiveness of federalism. For the PQ this poses a serious dilemma: Successful governance stabilizes the Canadian federation, failure as a governing party strengthens the opposition in Quebec - the PLQ and its concept of autonomy.

Thus the comparison of the two nationalist movements allows for the following conclusions with regard to the different sets of factors outlined above:

a) Internal and given factors: Both movements were formed in times of rapid socioeconomic change and in reaction to state policies that tried to accommodate the processes of modernization. Both movements were able to build on a set of internal and given factors (common language, history, myths etc.). But in both cases the appeal to ethnicity as an instrument of mobilization was used only at a later stage in the interaction between the protest movement and the state. The first protest articulation was primarily economic. Thus in both cases internal/given factors played an important role: a language different from the core society, a shared history and myth as well as a fully developed concept of nationhood based on historical experience. But the fact that this fits both regions and that in both cases the appeal to ethnicity as an instrument for mobilization was used only at a later stage in the process of interaction makes it hard to see these factors as sufficient to explain the different paths of evolution of the movements.

b) External and given factors: The established political and economic institutions in France and Quebec determined the opportunities for access of new forces to the system. The established center-periphery structure in France with its informal channels of information and accommodation insured an effective but, viewed from the perspective of democratic norms, somewhat problematic representation of regional interests in state institutions. The Corsican clans were able to maintain their position as a broker between the population of Corsica and the French state. As a result the center-periphery structure in France, particularly with respect to Corsica,

was able to adapt to the process of modernization. This was not the case in Quebec. Traditional elites and established structures of accommodation proved unable to adapt to the realities of a modern welfare state. Because of the weakness of the traditional elites and the relative openness of the provincial political systems in Canada, the new forces in Quebec were able to participate in the political process. The openness also weakened the radical elements of the movement in Quebec and prevented a radicalization of the movement as in the Corsican case. Aside from the lesser degree of radicalization the nationalist movement in Quebec was able to establish itself as an important political actor in the province as well as on the federal level. The patterns of Canadian federalism facilitated this development. Thus, in this regard we have clearly different situation: the relatively open and accessible Canadian federal system, and the closed unitary French system. we can further differentiate between the flexible system of elite accommodation in Corsica and the failed elite accommodation between the province and the federal government in Quebec. The differences in the political opportunity structures in Quebec and Corsica are key factors for the differing paths of development the nationalist movements have taken.

c) Process-related-internal factors: Clear distinctions also emerge comparing the nationalist movement in Quebec with the Corsican movement with respect to internal and process related factors. The movement in Quebec shows a strong cohesion as well as a strong internal solidarity and leadership, but hardly any sign of fragmentation. This can be explained mainly by the success of the movement on the provincial level and partly by the integrative strategy of the federal government. In contrast, the Corsican movement is highly fragmented, with weak cohesion and little internal solidarity, a consequence of the strategy of confrontation of the French state and the persisting ideological rifts within the movement. Further we can distinguish different strategies of mobilization. Since the early 1950s the movement in Quebec has focused mainly on party politics and has sought to establish itself as a regular political party. In Corsica we see a more diverse spectrum of mobilization strategies: in the early phase ad-hoc mobilization with congresses and demonstrations. Only in the late 1970s parts of the nationalist movements in Corsica began to organize as political parties, but ad-hoc mobilization and terrorism were - and are to this day – still pursued as instruments of nationalist mobilization.

d) Process-related-external factors: This forth set of factors is partly dependent on the other three sets of factors, in particular the given external factors that determine the chances of political and institutional reform and interaction between the nationalist movement and the state. Thus we can clearly distinguish between the French and the Canadian case concerning reform projects and patterns of interaction. The politics of confrontation of the French state has lead to a spiral of escalation as the dominant pattern of interaction between the ethno territorial movement in Corsica and the French state. The decentralization project of the Socialist Party in 1982 did not fulfill the expectations of the Corsican protest movement. The development of the movement in Corsica can mainly be explained by this process of interaction and the French policies toward Corsica. In Canada on the other hand the more integrative pattern of Canadian federalism facilitated the

integration of the Québec nationalist demands into the established patterns of interest accommodation. The integrative strategy has decreased the mobilization potential of the nationalist movement in Quebec and only in times of constitutional reform nationalist mobilization seems a viable strategy. The Parti Québécois as the main force of the nationalist movement established itself as a *acteur normale* in the Canadian federal system and, with its success, diminished the chances for an independent Quebec, but remains in a position to strengthen the status of Quebec within the Canadian federation.

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