

# Towards a History of Canadians: Transcultural Human Agency as Seen Through Economic Behaviour, Community Formation, and Societal Institutions

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*Social history approaches to Canadian history have expanded the master narrative to encompass a comprehensive story. Within social history, a perspective taken from common people's life-writing changes interpretation in similar ways as community and life-course approaches have done. People's own life projects were at first based on economic mutualism in the local community, which, over time, gave way to a slowly imposed capitalist economy. However, the mail-order business and its relation to the earlier local economy, based on trust rather than an abstract market, constituted an important factor in the emergence of Canadian society. Nineteenth-century immigrants, like their predecessors from the dynastic states of France and the United Kingdom, came from pre-national, many-cultured societies and found a feeling of belonging in their participation in institution-building in a decentralized civic society. The historic dynastic states, comprised of many peoples, provide historical and conceptual antecedents that can help us understand the state and society of Canada.*

*Les approches sociales à l'histoire canadienne ont réorienté le discours maître pour en faire une histoire globale. Au sein de l'histoire sociale, la perspective fondée sur les écrits de vie des gens ordinaires modifie l'interprétation des choses, un peu comme l'ont fait les approches fondées sur la communauté et le parcours de vie. Les projets de vie des gens se s'appuyaient initialement sur le mutualisme économique communautaire, qui fit place à une économie capitaliste lentement imposée. Mais la vente par correspondance et sa relation avec l'économie locale antérieure, fondée sur la confiance plutôt que sur un marché abstrait, s'est révélée un facteur important de l'émergence de la société canadienne. Tout comme leurs prédécesseurs des États dynastiques de la France et du Royaume-Uni, les immigrants du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle venaient de sociétés pré-nationales multiculturelles et développèrent un sentiment d'apparte-*

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*nance du fait de participer à l'édification des institutions d'une société civile décentralisée. Les États dynastiques historiques, formés de nombreux peuples, offrent des antécédents historiques et conceptuels susceptibles de nous aider à comprendre l'État et la société au Canada.*

SINCE THE 1960s and 1970s, Western collective memories, as maintained by academics and other opinion leaders, have incorporated the social history approach to the lives of working men and women, in industry or on farms, to the experiences of immigrants and long-term residents, and to the perspectives of families and communities. Two and a half decades of research and specialized studies were needed to fill the many gaps left in the interpretations proposed by earlier, tradition-bound historians. These scholars placed political emphasis on nation-building by white, Ottawa-based “great chieftains” or focused their economic interpretations on the railway magnates’ financial and routing decisions, destined to connect the many parts of Canada-to-be. Political economists, following Harold Innis, had foregrounded economic developments, the staple-based integration into world markets. But they limited themselves to a product-centred perspective rather than giving centre stage to producers or (re-)producing families. With the decolonization of Canadian society in the 1960s from both anglophone British and francophone Roman Catholic hegemonies, and with the decolonization of social groups, whether women or “ethnics” or First Peoples, mental spaces became available in received narratives that could accommodate all Canadians.<sup>1</sup>

In this essay, I reconceptualize three elements of the study of Canada. Similarly to recent studies on agrarian families and the urban labouring classes, I first argue that the material side of people’s lives provides the basis for their life-projects as well as for the resulting societies and state structures. Despite the state-wide capitalist mode of production and parallel to the succession of staple-based economies, the data indicate that families strove for basic economic survival and developed a mutualist economic interaction, which could involve markets, in their local space and region. But market integration was no teleological road to modernity: it posed risks and could even entail eco-

1 J. M. Bumsted, *The Peoples of Canada: A Post-Confederation History* (Toronto: Oxford Canada, 1992); Margaret Conrad, Alvin Finkel, and Cornelius Jaenen, *History of the Canadian Peoples*, 2 vols. (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1993). The television series and book, Don Gillmor and Pierre Turgeon with Mark Starowicz, *Canada: A People's History*, 2 vols. (Toronto: CBC, 2000), unfortunately lacks depth and accuracy. Dirk Hoerder’s *Creating Societies: Immigrant Lives in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999) attempts a history of Canada viewed through the life writings of common people; Gerald Friesen, *Citizens and Nation: An Essay on History, Communication, and Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), uses six personal narratives and “the media in which they were communicated” to discuss “the structure of human history” and “the character of Canada” (p. 3). For francophone Canada, see Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, and François Ricard, *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, 2 vols. (Montreal: Boréal, 1979; 1991), *Quebec: A History, 1867–1929* and *Quebec Since 1930*, trans. Robert Chodos (Toronto: Lorimer, 1983; 1999).

conomic retrogression.<sup>2</sup> Parallel to the nationalization of capitalist development through railroads, grain distributors, and other large companies, producing families experienced a democratization and nationalization of consumption — within a framework of national and global markets.<sup>3</sup> Such analysis needs to be sensitive to space, whether it be small industrial towns in the St. Lawrence valley, small farms in the Prairies, fishing communities on the Pacific coast, or big cities across the country.

Secondly, I turn to people's social life. Nineteenth-century immigrants, like their predecessors from the dynastic states of France and the United Kingdom, came from pre-national, culturally diverse societies. Their feeling of belonging to a "Canada" emerged from the practicability of participating in institution-building, whether in communities or cultural groups, and from transcultural interaction in regionally specific settings in the context of a civil society with few centralizing tendencies.

Thirdly, I discuss the statewide political framework and contrast its simplifying discourses with the complexity of the constituent groups of Canada's peoples and their identifications. Government and cultural institutions and structures need to be analysed sociologically in terms of groups of actors, those who "inhabit" the structure, whether they are thoughtful administrators, gatekeepers, leaders with a vision, or bureaucrats. Through their positions these actors hold the power to shape discourse, the power to define. They establish who is included and who is excluded from property ownership, political participation, and collective memory. Such institutions and their personnel, "Ottawa" in short, remained distant from people's lives in Canada at the same time as London or Paris probably interfered more in the lives of people in Great Britain or France. This critique of the traditional "master narrative" emphasizes its dominance over collective memory and challenges the role of historians as gatekeepers. The master narrative was an incomplete version, a part-isan or a *pars pro toto* version of what happened. Its power over the minds of Canadians made segments of society invisible, symbolically annihilated them, or even killed their history.<sup>4</sup>

2 For similar positions, see Kenneth M. Sylvester, *The Limits of Rural Capitalism: Family, Culture, and Markets in Montcalm, Manitoba, 1870–1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), especially the summary of research, pp. 5–11; Gordon Darroch and Lee Soltow, *Property and Inequality in Victorian Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); Gérard Bouchard, *Quelques arpents d'Amérique. Population, économie, famille au Saguenay 1838–1971* (Montreal: Boréal, 1996).

3 Studies of consumption have appeared only recently. While for the United States some studies included the late nineteenth century, Canadian research concentrates on the period after World War II. See, for example, Joy Parr, *Domestic Goods: The Material, the Moral, and the Economics in the Postwar Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

4 See Luise Pusch, *Das Deutsche als Männersprache. Aufsätze und Glossen zur feministischen Linguistik* (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1984; 1996), p. 11, on symbolic annihilation; Mauricio Mazon, *The Zoot-Suit Riots: The Psychology of Symbolic Annihilation* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984); Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (New York: Random House, 1952). J. L. Granatstein's polemical attack on comprehensive social-cultural history approaches in his *Who Killed Canadian History?* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1998) needs to be turned around. Too many Canadians could not find their story in the previous, narrow, political-institutional approaches.

Further research can determine whether the starting point for this argument — the 1830s — may be projected even further back, though corporatist concepts of community cohesion, a spatialization specific to the pre-1830s patterns of settlement, and sparse population density indicate that such extension may be problematic.<sup>5</sup> I emphasize the role of “immigrants” or, better, “newcomers” because the dichotomy of the “founding nations” versus “other ethnics” is an interest-laden mental construct that emerged late in Canadian history, and the “two solitudes” adage has little analytical value.<sup>6</sup> Early newcomers, whether English- or French-speakers and from many different regional and ethnic cultures in the polities called Bourbon France or Hanoverian Britain, established institutions and patterns of language usage to which later newcomers had to adjust. The common designations, “British” or “French” Canada, suggest two internally homogeneous hegemonies that should not be uncritically accepted by social science discourse.<sup>7</sup>

In the first place, questions of terminology and sources need to be addressed; concepts and perspectives need to be clarified. The sources for an inclusive historical memory, both large-scale data and the life-writings of individual Canadians, tell powerful stories of life-projects and lives lived. Intrinsicly, it is impossible to justify ranking the stories of an “Ottawa man” and a Vancouver-based “John Chinaman” one over the other. Both had lives to live in the contexts of kin and community. Only the sum of all these data, including the failures, shortcomings, and conflicts recorded, form the histories of Canada’s peoples. The change of focus to common people’s everyday lives indicates another implicit hierarchization. The view from the larger unit — the state or the staples economy — has been perceived as “top down”, while the view from individual men and women, from children and the elderly, is from the “bottom up”. For individuals, their personal lives and the life-projects of their families and children rank topmost rather than being merely a residual category at the bottom. Only in militarist versions of the nation-state do individual lives count for little. When powerful men decided to wage war on other nation-states in the name of economic dominance, racial superiority, or some fundamental principle, individuals had to “sacrifice their lives” to perish for a construct called the “nation”.

In fact, the language of nationhood, an amalgam of state, culture, and eco-

5 Allan Greer, in *The Patriots and the People: The Rebellion of 1837 in Rural Lower Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), studies peasant families and family decisions. Under the burdens imposed by seigneurial structures, market integration could result in additional insecurities rather than in options and was thus not a road to progress.

6 Contrary to the divisiveness implied in the image, in Hugh MacLennan’s *Two Solitudes* (Toronto: Collins, 1945), an all-Canadian boy of English and French background and an American girl marry and thus not only resolve the national dualism but also the South-North cleavage.

7 For a detailed discussion, see Dirk Hoerder, “Pluralist Founding Nations in Anglo- and Franco-Canada: Multiple Migrations, Influences, Reconceptualizations”, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, vol. 24, no. 6 (2003), pp. 525–539.

nomic domination, despite its emphasis on large structures, actually uses body and sexualized imagery. Historians have discussed how explorers from one body politic penetrated other spaces, or Others' spaces, in the case of Canada, the continent through the St. Lawrence River. Literary images depicted primeval forests swallowing up pioneer men into their all-encompassing dark density, yet suppleness. Some men succumbed, while others used an axe to clear an embedded space for a cottage and a new family. Still others used guns to clear a space for an allegedly superior civilization. Such mythological White Canadian texts have never been compared to Raven's creation stories in Native Canadian historico-spiritual texts. Since George Mosse's *Nationalism and Sexuality* (1985), the relationship between the human body and the body politic has been a matter of debate. While historians in European societies' discourses had developed strategies of "Othering" to exclude newcomers (East European Jews in London, Polish workers in German agriculture, or Italian road-building crews in southern France), Canadian discourse early had a term for cultural exchange. From the "many tender ties" between individual men and women of the fur trading cultures, Métis cultures emerged.<sup>8</sup> Historical development and strategies involve sensual and spiritual bodily aspects. However, traditional historians rendered the process invisible, never seizing the experience and the terminology available.

The conceptual combination of a powerful cultural group called the "nation" and post-Enlightenment, democratic states postulating equality before the law into the term "nation-state" has skewed analyses of the past. The neutral term "polity", denoting the institutional framework of society, avoids nation-minority-ethnic-immigrant hierarchizations based on cultures, numbers, or access to societal resources, including the collective memory. While Canadian history is the example selected here, the people's history approach is increasingly applied in many societies, whether independent or colonized. However, societies built by immigrant men, women, and children provide more options for shaping individual lives and local, regional, and state-wide structures than do established, hierarchized tradition-bound societies, whether in Europe or in Asia. Thus the discourses about state and nation are different. After all, institution-building in a settler society, wherever it occurred, involved a marginalization or destruction of previously resident peoples and their cultures.

### **Economics: From Survival to Mutualism to Consumption and to World Markets**

To build a community or a whole society requires an economic base. However, the once burgeoning field of economic history — as evidenced by the

8 Sylvia Van Kirk, *"Many Tender Ties": Women in Fur Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670–1870* (Winnipeg: Watson, 1980).

*Cambridge Economic History of Europe*<sup>9</sup> and names like Alexander Gerschenkron, Wolfram Fischer, J. R. T. Hughes, Fernand Braudel, John Habakkuk, Eileen Power, Michael M. Postan, and others — has been pushed to the margins of historiography, perhaps under the impact of the Cold War. In this respect, Canadian historiography is distinct. Political economy, through the work of Harold Innis of the University of Toronto and, less well known, Édouard Montpetit of the Université de Montréal, remained part of Canadian academia.<sup>10</sup> Of course, common people, resident or migrant, men or women, could never afford to ignore the economic aspects of their lives, and the Canadian historiographical emphasis on political economy retained the potential to recognize this fact.

Individuals and families live in, or as migrants depart from, families and meso-level regional communities, according to their interests and support systems, but also because of constraints and conflicts. Given that all of Euro-Canadian history is a history of migrants, I discuss economic developments in terms of family economies, mobility, and markets combined with life-projects based on particular values. As has been argued for decisions to migrate or to stay put, life-course strategies involve concepts of economic and personal or familial independence.<sup>11</sup> The economic and social structures that limit options “at home” (the sphere and space of childhood socialization) induce families to search for options and create homes elsewhere or to chart the best course for survival or improvement locally. In family economies a balancing of interests of all members occurs within a gendered (and historically changing) division of labour and power hierarchies patterned on society’s norms for gender and age. The intra-familial negotiations, whether consensual or authoritarian, combine material and emotional well-being. For

9 J. H. Clapham and Eileen Power, eds., *Cambridge Economic History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1st ed. 1941–1969; 2nd ed. since 1966).

10 François-Albert Angers, “Naissance de la pensée économique au Canada français”, *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française*, vol. 15, no. 2 (1961), pp. 204–220; E. T. Easterbrook and M. H. Watkins, eds., *Approaches to Canadian Economic History: A Selection of Essays* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1967); Gérard Dion, “La recherche en relations industrielles dans les universités du Québec”, in Louis Baudouin, ed., *La recherche au Canada français* (Montreal: Presse de l’Université de Montréal, 1968), pp. 71–86; Daniel Drache, “Rediscovering Canadian Political Economy”, *Journal of Canadian Studies*, vol. 11, no. 3 (1976), pp. 3–18; Patricia Marchak, “Canadian Political Economy”, *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 22 (1985), pp. 673–709; Daniel Drache, ed., *Staples, Markets and Cultural Change: Selected Essays by Harold Innis* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1995), especially “Introduction”, pp. xiii–lix.

11 Louise Tilly and Joan Scott, *Women, Work and Family* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978); Dirk Hoerder, “From Migrants to Ethnic: Acculturation in a Societal Framework”, in Hoerder and Leslie P. Moch, eds., *European Migrants: Global and Local Perspectives* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996), pp. 211–262, especially 220–222, and “Labour Markets – Community – Family: A Gendered Analysis of the Process of Insertion and Acculturation”, in Wsevolod Isajiw, ed., *Multiculturalism in North America and Europe: Comparative Perspectives on Interethnic Relations and Social Incorporation* (Toronto: Canadian Scholar’s Press, 1997), pp. 155–183; Sylvester, *The Limits of Rural Capitalism*, p. 9.

example, a family making a living from a subsistence farm or from pooled wage labour may opt for the temporary out-migration of some members, choosing a short-term loss in labour and emotional interaction to gain wage remittances from afar and thus long-term material security and emotional stability. As an analytical tool, the concept of family economies (along with their emotional aspects) needs to emphasize the power relationships between the usually male “head of the family” and his wife and, inter-generationally, between parents and their children. Adults in families seek “independence” from uncontrollable market forces or the imposition of taxes or authority, while adolescent sons and daughters seek “independence” from control by parents, grandparents, and other kin. The negotiated “balancing” of all interests and aspirations involved would, ideally, ensure maximum emotional satisfaction and material security.<sup>12</sup>

This perspective on human agency challenges the concepts of market integration and the increasing capitalization of farms and businesses as the straight road to “modernity”. Several studies of communities or small regions have recognized this. Kenneth Sylvester criticizes the interpretation of Prairie farming that emphasized the commercialization of agriculture. Gordon Darroch and Lee Soltow argue that mass emigration from Ontario’s rural regions did not depend on changes in farming and urban job accessibility. Gérard Bouchard finds farming families in the Saguenay region responsive to both self-interest and ideology. Rather than following one-way economic trends or family strategies, people on the land and in urban neighbourhoods pursued multiple paths to achieve acceptable incomes and, at the same time, emotional and spiritual satisfaction — *pluriactivité* in the terms of Bouchard. Such regional styles of action or *habitus*, to use Bourdieu’s term, permit flexible responses to supra-regional and even global economic developments. Anticipating T. H. Marshall’s theorization of citizenship as including social security in crisis situations and not merely political rights, small producers and consumers pursued strategies that provided safety and calculability rather than high yields, developing multiple economic bases to be insured against income decline in one segment. Rather than being subsumed under, oppressed by, modified through, or ruled by larger trends, household economies were co-integrated. They were not self-sufficient, self-centred, or self-contained units; nor were they mere cogs in the wheels of market forces near and distant. Farming and working-class families made decisions to accept or reject facets of capitalist or traditional economies, hierarchies, and clergy-imposed norms, and to choose which aspects of mar-

12 The “family economy” approach may construct a Weberian ideal-type, just as the 1970s and 1980s approaches to everyday life through police records sometimes became “deviancy” studies. Immigrant life-writings often indicate intra-familial tensions; see, for instance, Hoerder, *Creating Societies*, pp. 131–132, 169–170, 174. Cf. also Hoerder, “Reconstructing Life Courses: A Historical Perspective on Migrant Experiences”, in Victor W. Marshall, Walter R. Heinz, Helga Krueger, and Anil Verma, eds., *Restructuring Work and the Life Course* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp. 525–539.

ket forces, wage labour, and consumption options to integrate into their lives.<sup>13</sup>

### *Economies of Survival*

People with few means, for instance newly arriving migrants in the Red River communities of the 1890s or the urban resident poor of Montreal in the 1920s, needed to secure their precarious material basis to ensure mere physical survival. With regard to mobility, whether internally from rural to urban, from east to west, or vice versa, or transoceanic, the (self-)selection of who leaves, who follows in sequential migration, and who stays put is determined by earning capacities and the norms of gender roles rather than by ties of affection. In processes that continue to this day, women in domestic service invited other women to come, and men brought in other strong and healthy men.<sup>14</sup> Both helped new arrivals to find jobs in the particular labour market segment to which they, as “old-timers”, had access. In international mobility, the funds of newly arriving Irish labourers in Quebec’s cities or those of Poles in the Prairies usually lasted for a few days only, and 94 per cent of this money went to kin and friends — rather than to unlimited opportunities or a more modern economy.<sup>15</sup> Because of the immediate need to earn a living, labour market segments, regionally or internationally accessible through communication, transoceanic community-based information networks, and transportation functioned most effectively in integrating short- and long-distance migrants into receiving communities.

Only after individuals had achieved a minimal economic security could they consider starting to form families, or, in the case of migrants, could they send for their wives or children. The allocation of tasks depended on resources. For labour considered to be women’s work, men paid women as boarding-house keepers so that one woman could do the reproductive work for several men. A one-to-one relationship of productive to reproductive work was viable neither among adolescents just departed from the parental home nor in immigrant communities. Nor was it acceptable to capitalist employers unwilling to pay “family wages”. People migrated “to bread”, according to a Polish saying, or, in Italian, “in search of labour”. So did French-Canadian families moving to the New England textile mills with nothing but their skills and networks, or individuals and families from the Maritimes and Ontario moving west. Work, income, and, as a non-economic factor, independence

13 Sylvester, *The Limits of Rural Capitalism*; Paul Voisey, *Vulcan [Alberta]: The Making of a Prairie Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988); Darroch and Soltow, *Property and Inequality in Victorian Ontario*; Bouchard, *Quelques arpents d’Amérique*; T. H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development* (1949; Westport, CT.: Greenwood, 1976).

14 Family strategies still influence migration decisions and patterns in the present.

15 In the United States, around 1900, migrants arrived with an average “starting capital” ranging from \$12 (Russian Jews) to \$41 (Germans). Dillingham Commission [United States Senate, Immigration Commission], *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, 41 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1911–1912), vol. 3, pp. 349–354.



from parents' families were the primary factors in the decision to leave. Economic survival was also the goal of non-migrating families, from which some members "out-migrated" or were sent to waged labour afar.<sup>16</sup> As Louise Dechêne and Kathryn A. Young have shown, multiple strategies of family welfare and risk diversification were also common among St. Lawrence valley merchants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>17</sup>

***Mutualist Everyday Lives and Non-accumulating Small Entrepreneurs***

Men and women in cities, towns, and rural regions from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts took private property for granted, but, in contrast to later liberal notions, their concept of property ownership carried community obligations. Following an ethos of a "moral economy" of mutualism, everyone helped neighbours and travelling strangers. Canada was a "land of open doors", as a British observer commented. The concept of "mutualism" has been developed by the Russian anarchist thinker (from *an archos*, without rule) Peter Kropotkin. In Canada, class hierarchies were comparatively fluid, and political, policing, and social security institutions were not highly developed. Consequently, Montreal Mile End Italians and Prairie homesteading families attempted to improve their lives and conduct their community affairs collectively, without considering themselves incipient capitalists, as theorists of capital accumulation or individualism would have it. In fact, Adam Smith's *Inquiry into the Wealth of Nations* (1776), later considered the founding text of unregulated capitalist economic life, was first read as just such a moral philosophy. His arena of empirical observation of small entrepreneurs and workers was his native Glasgow, where he found a commonwealth of economic actors who based their decisions about wages, production methods, and marketing strategies on easy and uninhibited access to the relevant information. They were constrained neither by powerful business combinations or communication monopolies, nor, in Smith's view, by a particular class and its institutions, the gentry-controlled state.<sup>18</sup>

16 Migrants writing to kin and friends in their respective societies of origin provide testimony for such economic-emotional relationships. People staying put often do not write, and historians thus face more challenges in tracing their thoughts. Two model publications of immigrant letters to the United States are William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, 5 vols. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1920); and Walter D. Kamphoefner, Wolfgang Helbich, and Ulrike Sommer, eds., *News from the Land of Freedom: German Immigrants Write Home* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

17 Louise Dechêne, *Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris and Montreal: Plon, 1974; English edition, Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); Kathryn A. Young, "'... sauf les perils et fortunes de la mer': Merchant Women in New France and the French Transatlantic Trade, 1713–1746", *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 77, no. 3 (September 1996), pp. 388–407.

18 Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution* (London: Heinemann, 1902), and *The Conquest of Bread* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1906); Adam Smith, *The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, 6 vols., vol. 2: R. H. Campbell, A. S. Skinner, and W. B. Todd, eds., *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 330–331.

Many common people in nineteenth-century Canada shared this moral philosophy. They wanted an administrative and legal framework to pursue their family goals, economic and other. To build a small house on the fringes of town or raise a barn, to break prairie sod or construct urban villages, to travel with little cost and less infrastructure — all these goals relied on an exchange of labour, mutual aid, and free accommodation. Help was given in return for help. Men and women took any job available: Quebec and Ontario farming men took grading and fencing contracts for railway construction; women supplied construction crews with food, knitted mittens, or other products. Both selectively chose to be involved in the market and to accept remunerated labour and contracts.<sup>19</sup> However, newcomers, marginal farming families, and urban workers could be vulnerable. Negotiation, compromise, and mutual help might be precluded by factors such as emotional tensions from economic strain (or, on the frontier, loneliness), exploitative *padrones* or bosses, or competition in particular segments of the labour market. Such hierarchical, conflicting relationships and structural frameworks have been analysed elsewhere.<sup>20</sup> Mutualist interaction — which required shared interests and norms of behaviour — is emphasized in this analysis.

In the eighteenth century, transatlantic merchants pursued their own family economies. In contrast, by the late nineteenth century, capital-intensive large companies, especially the railroads, developed a symbiotic relationship with surplus labourers and community-based entrepreneurs. Farming families who earned supplementary cash by taking small railway contracts contributed to state-wide economic growth because companies needed to invest less capital in heavy equipment and incurred smaller administrative overheads. Likewise, farm women's willingness to provide the necessities for men in temporary work camps helped cut costs and eased the logistics of long supply lines for working crews. Local people could flexibly insert themselves into the cash economy and indeed had to do so, and local contractors managed equipment and recruited workers. Such contractors emphasized activity and achievements rather than profits, expansion, or capital accumulation. Employing dozens or even more than a hundred men in railway work in summer or in logging in winter, they themselves had to scrape by with odd jobs during the off-seasons. For entrepreneurs like the Briton

19 Hoerder, *Creating Societies*, provides examples extending from Ontario through the Prairies to British Columbia.

20 From the extensive literature, only a few examples can be listed: Gregory S. Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867–1892* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980); Donald H. Avery, *Reluctant Host: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896–1994* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1995); John E. Zucchi, *The Little Slaves of the Harp: Italian Child Street Musicians in Nineteenth-Century Paris, London, and New York* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); Peter S. Li, ed., *Race and Ethnic Relations in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990); Marlene Epp, Franca Iacovetta, and Frances Swyripa, eds., *Sisters or Strangers? Immigrant, Ethnic, and Racialized Women in Canadian History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

Richard Hemsley in and around Montreal, the Italian Giovanni Veltri along the railway lines, the Icelander Helgi Einarsson and the Ukrainian Gus Romaniuk in Manitoba, and the Swede Edwin Alm as well as the Chinese W. M. Hong in British Columbia, neither mentality nor profits permitted secure and relaxed lives. But in charting their life-courses they had more options than in their societies of origin, where rigid structures, social hierarchies, traditions, and customs reduced the possibilities for independent decision-making. In expanding urban and rural frontier regions, people were able to become entrepreneurs of their own lives. The concept of “modernity” has been often related to cash-mediated market economies. However, we might distinguish between a “modernity I” of security through mutual aid, with some market relationships but without wholesale adoption of the larger economic formation, and a post-1930s-Depression “modernity II”, in which market relations increased but the state began to provide a safety net, as first postulated for Canada by the Marsh Report and theorized internationally by T. H. Marshall.<sup>21</sup>

Men — and a very few women — with few means but with strategic competence shifted from working for their own subsistence to acting as local and regional entrepreneurs. In bad times, they returned to subsistence work; in good times, their businesses could range over several provinces and into the United States. They used their reputations as collateral for credit and relied on trust regarding sums owed them or for assurances of the quality of produce. Mobile entrepreneurs and inter-regional merchants were the mainstay of the Prairie economy in the 1890s, as they had been in Ontario and Quebec earlier. Intermediaries rather than businessmen, they provided services to producers unable to reach markets directly, or to large companies in Montreal unable to expand their hierarchical structures across long distances. They needed neither venture capital nor large-scale organization. Instead, they relied on their human capital, the ability to identify and seize opportunities.<sup>22</sup> Their social capital consisted of their relations with customers and suppliers and permitted them to absorb losses by negotiating compromises among sellers, middlemen, and buyers. This economy of non-accumulating

21 Canada, Advisory Committee on Reconstruction, *Report on Social Security for Canada* (Marsh Report), prepared by Leonard C. Marsh (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1943).

22 Richard Hemsley, *Looking Back* (Montreal: The Author, 1930), pp. 9–94; Giovanni Veltri, *The Memoirs of Giovanni Veltri*, John Potestio, ed. (Toronto: MHSO, 1987); Edwin A. Alm, *I Never Wondered* (Vancouver: Evergreen, 1971); Helgi Einarsson, *A Manitoba Fisherman* (Winnipeg: Queenston, 1982), pp. 91–103, 106–108, 142–143; Gus Romaniuk, *Taking Root in Canada: An Autobiography* (Winnipeg: Columbia, 1954), pp. 149–217, 276–277; W. M. Hong, *And so... That's how it Happened: Recollections of Stanley-Barkerville, 1900–1975*, Gary Seale, Eileen Seale, and J. R. Hambly, eds. (Wells, BC: Private, 1978); Fredelle Bruser Maynard, *Raisins and Almonds* (1964; Markham, ON: PaperJacks, 1973), pp. 93–98; Robert Collins, *Butter Down the Well: Reflections of a Canadian Childhood* (Saskatoon: Western Producer, 1980), pp. 86–89; J. Brian Dawson, “The Chinese Experience in Frontier Calgary, 1885–1910”, in A. W. Rasporich and H. C. Klassen, eds., *Frontier Calgary: Town, City and Region, 1875–1914* (Calgary: McClelland & Stewart West, 1975), pp. 124–141.

small entrepreneurs was essential to the many different scales of economies, from local family to international staples. For this reason, political economists must also take social factors into account.

### *New Patterns of Consumption*

For the cash-strapped urban poor and homesteader families far from supply centres, pedlars' wares appeared as "democratic" choices and as visions of what might be bought.<sup>23</sup> This democratic consumption was reinforced by Eaton's mail-order company, which carried the world of consumer goods into urban as well as isolated rural homes. According to the reminiscences of settlers, especially in the West, Eaton's became an institution vastly more important than the Ottawa government. The catalogues' illustrations overcame linguistic and cultural barriers and were as educational as an encyclopaedia, but far more practical in everyday life. If a family had no money to spend, the catalogue and the dreams of what might be, perhaps next year, did not cost a cent. In the worlds from which immigrants came, much of Eaton's merchandise would never have even been visible to small farmers, landless labourers, or urban workers. It would have been displayed only in stores catering to people of particular social strata or those working in special trades.<sup>24</sup>

The Company — personalized in the minds of customers as Timothy Eaton's — carefully blended its sales policy with principles of honesty and trust in the settler families' moral economy. Prices were low; equipment like sewing machines permitted savings within the family economy; the return of unsatisfactory wares was easy. The firm was involved in public pageantry as well as events as private as childbirth. Dispatch of the delivery wagons was orchestrated "with all the showmanship of ... the trooping of the colour" at Buckingham Palace in London. While delivery boys were normally expected to use back doors, Eaton's drivers stepped up to the front door. In Saskatchewan in the 1920s, a Jewish Galician immigrant "leafing through the Eaton's catalogue" decided "to look more like a Canadian" and ordered "western style garments". Boys remembered "sex education" from the catalogue's corset section, and, in their camps, lumberjacks selected a "bride" from among the catalogue's models. Parents, unwilling to explain the relations between sex and birth, told their children that babies "came from Eaton's catalogue" and that the delivery girl, the midwife, was an Eaton's employee. Contemporaries called the catalogue "the Prairie Bible", and, among democratic-minded and hard-working farming and working families

23 Laura Goodman Salverson, *Confessions of an Immigrant's Daughter* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1939; 1981), pp. 44–47.

24 Joy L. Santink, *Timothy Eaton and the Rise of his Department Store* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); Willem DeGelder, *A Dutch Homesteader on the Prairies: The Letters of Willem de Gelder 1920–13*, trans. and ed. Herman Ganzevoort (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 22; Collins, *Butter Down the Well*, pp. 15–16; Maynard, *Raisins and Almonds*, p. 42.

of many cultural backgrounds, a democratic Eaton's mythology replaced the more genteel ones of British origin, which involved the (largely Scottish) Hudson's Bay Company factors and the Mounties. Consumption options and decisions involved women and were part of developing a supra-regional Canadian belonging.<sup>25</sup>

### ***Labour Relations and Capitalist Markets***

On the production side, hidden behind factory walls, economic conditions were certainly neither democratic nor trust-based, at least in the larger companies. Like many companies, Eaton's discriminated against workers by race and violently opposed working-class organization. During the Winnipeg workers' General Strike of 1919, Eaton's — along with local business elites and city officials — switched from public ritual to public oppression.<sup>26</sup>

Economic forces linked local concerns with global processes. In agriculture and the resource industries, farming families and lumber workers, though local in mentality, produced staple goods for world markets. The fur economy competed with Siberia, the lumber economy with Scandinavia, and the wheat economy with grain from the South Russian plains and Argentina. Rising prices because of war — a continent away, but involving the British Empire, whether in the Crimea, South Africa, or Europe — permitted farm families to buy more food or invest in machinery to increase productivity in Canada's West.

This globalized capitalism inserted itself into mutualist economic relations in everyday lives. During the economic crisis of 1907, for example, prices declined in the supra-regional markets about which Manitoba fishermen — and local producers elsewhere — knew little. Credit-supported production and economic relations based on trust were at the brink of collapse. The sudden, non-negotiable impact of depressed world market prices could mean ruin to local producers, traders, and creditors, while powerful wholesalers, who themselves were shifting from the world of negotiated interests

25 Joseph E. Wilder, *Read All About It: Reminiscences of an Immigrant Newsboy*, Fred C. Dawkins and Micheline C. Brodeur, eds. (Winnipeg: Peguis, 1978), pp. 77–78; James H. Gray, *The Boy from Winnipeg* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 4, 65–66, 112; Vera Lysenko, *Westerly Wild* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1956), pp. 86, 115, 189; Bickersteth, *Land of Open Doors*, pp. 16, 47, 84; Aili Grönlund Schneider, *The Finnish Baker's Daughters* (Toronto: MHSO, 1986), pp. 48, 103; Collins, *Butter Down the Well*, pp. 129–133; Harry Henig, *Orphan of the Storm*, Lawrence F. Jones, ed. (Toronto: Pitt, 1974), p. 96; Joanna Matejko, ed., *Polish Settlers in Alberta: Reminiscences and Biographies* (Toronto: Polish Alliance Press, 1979), p. 116; Maynard, *Raisins and Almonds*, pp. 41ff; James M. Minifie, *Homesteader: A Prairie Boyhood Recalled* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1972), p. 53.

26 Alice A. Chown, *The Stairway* (1921; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), pp. 115–122; Thomas C. Douglas, *The Making of a Socialist: The Recollections of T. C. Douglas*, Lewis H. Thomas, ed. (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1982), pp. 31–32; Harry Gairey, *A Black Man's Toronto, 1914–1980: The Reminiscences of Harry Gairey*, Donna Hill, ed. (Toronto: MHSO, 1981), p. 9. See Avery, *Reluctant Host*.

to the single issue of finance and profit, could survive. During the subsequent economic downswing only six years later, big business attempted to establish monopolies — a development not foreseen by Adam Smith. The concept of community responsibility for property was abandoned not only by large capitalists, but also by officials who were publicly elected but favoured private interests and supported the large companies in the name of a “national economy”.<sup>27</sup>

While the early staples, fur and lumber, had been transported by Native people and small Euro-Canadian entrepreneurs, wheat required new intermediaries: the railway and grain elevator companies. Such large-scale enterprises were both profit-oriented and distant from communities. One observer commented that the Dominion government was of little concern because the CPR “was then popularly defined as being ‘the Government’ ”.<sup>28</sup> In Canada’s political economy, the threat to small producers came from private corporations, which, like Adam Smith’s unproductive nobility and gentry, used the state to impose their particular interests. In the early 1890s, the many wheat shipments from farming families filled up some 20,000 railway cars leaving eastbound from Winnipeg. To oppose the companies’ exorbitant storage and shipping rates, local communities turned from direct action and toward national courts and political action. Mutualist practices evolved into organized farming families’ cooperatives and political parties, then into the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, first based in the Prairies, and by the 1930s nation-wide. Most of the men and women who left life-writings did not separate the several spheres. Local politics invoked the larger political economy, and political economy drew in society and social relations. Individuals could hardly keep capitalist economic forces in check.<sup>29</sup>

### **Societies: Community-building, Group Constructions, and Transcultural Interactions**

From the early 1600s, immigrants — coming, at the time, from the many regional cultures of dynastic France and Britain — carried their own stories, their societal narratives and histories, with them. The regional variants of Canadian history emerged from their experiences of adapting their cultural frames of reference and ways of reacting to their respective local circumstances. Indigenous people’s collective memory, their oral archives, were included only during the emotional and economic exchanges of the fur trade period. Subsequently, cultural identities derived from successive immigrant streams coming first from Europe, later from Asia, and, in the present, from almost all societies of the globe. A Canada-centred historiography is thus concerned with the physical and social space of the society as well as the

27 See Hoerder, *Creating Societies*, pp. 171, 185–189, 202.

28 Frank G. Roe, *Getting the Know-How: Homesteading and Railroading in Early Alberta*, J. P. Regan, ed. (Edmonton: NeWest, 1982), p. 58.

29 Einarsson, *A Manitoba Fisherman*, pp. 143–145; *Historical Atlas of Canada*, 3 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987–1993), vol. 2, p. 42.

cultural patterns of the many societies of origin of the Canadian people. It is an international, many-cultured, and multicultural narrative that extends beyond political borders and across oceans.

The early newcomers, speaking French or English in numerous variants according to their regions of origin, built neither nations nor states, but distinct polities, from Port Royal, Halifax, and Lunenburg, to Quebec City and Montreal, to York and *Détroit*. Concepts of nations were not yet developed. On the British Isles, the constitutional union between England and Scotland in 1707, under the name of the United Kingdom, was a century younger than the first settlements of *Acadie* and *Nouvelle-France*. In the United Kingdom, Scots maintained their own law codes and legal administration, just as the French of the St. Lawrence valley were permitted to do six decades later. The French state attempted to replicate France in *Nouvelle-France*, and the Hudson's Bay Company brought into the north men used to the bracing climates of the Scottish Highlands and Islands and the Orkneys. For these French-, English-, and Gaelic-speaking Euro-Canadian men and the Native women with whom they formed families, *métissage* was the experience. Those staying in the St. Lawrence valley community became *creoles*: they changed practices learned in their culture of origin to fit the new circumstances, but continued to consider themselves part of the society of origin. In Europe, the homogenization of regional cultures into nations began only in the nineteenth century and had not been completed at the time of departure of migrants leaving before 1914. Men and women left as subjects of dynasties, not as citizens of self-constructed nations. Most came from empires of many peoples into a new society of many cultures.<sup>30</sup>

In the late nineteenth century, newcomers were just as heterogeneous. The label "Galicians" included Poles, Ukrainians, and Jews, many of whom spoke more than one language. This multilingualism of the — often — illiterate stood in stark contrast to the monolingualism of the educated but linguistically challenged elites.<sup>31</sup> Monolingualism restricts options and reduces the capacity to build complex inter-cultural relationships.<sup>32</sup> Newcomers formed

30 Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Gérard Noiriel, *Le creuset français. Histoire de l'immigration, XIX<sup>e</sup>–XX<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris: Seuil, 1988), English translation by Geoffroy de Laforcade, *The French Melting Pot: Immigration, Citizenship, and National Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962).

31 Dirk Hoerder and Armin Hetzer, "Linguistic Fragmentation or Multilingualism among Labor Migrants in North America", in Hoerder and Christiane Harzig, eds., *The Immigrant Labor Press in North America, 1840s–1970s: An Annotated Bibliography*, 3 vols. (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1987), vol. 2, pp. 29–52; Tova Yedlin, ed., *Germans from Russia in Alberta: Reminiscences* (Edmonton: Central and East European Studies Society, 1984), pp. 2–7, 10, 127.

32 Similarly, the monolingualism of many nation-state-centred historians severely restricts their capability to be inclusive in their research.

mixed settlements on the urban fringes of the eastern cities and in the Prairies. On the Pacific coast, the colony's first governor was of Caribbean mixed background, his wife a British Columbia Métis. Two different *métissages* formed a new whole. The governor invited knowledgeable First Peoples to sketch routes for future roads. The building contractor, favouring "white men" as workers, saw himself "obliged" to subcontract one stretch of the road "to a body of Chinese".

In historical terms, white Euro-Canadian societies were late constructs; they obliterated the memory of the multicultural and multiracial origins of their communities.<sup>33</sup> With the exception of Mennonite and other ethno-religious communities, even bloc settlements were not homogeneous. Smaller cultural groups adopted the language of the largest group. Multilingual immigrant cultural brokers, often Jewish storekeepers, served as intermediaries; railway crews spoke many languages; others changed to pidgin English or, in logging camps, to a French *patois*. Lunenburg's "Foreign Protestants", Montreal's "Italians" with their many regional dialects, or the Vancouver "Chinese" from culturally distinct southern provinces of the Central Kingdom, came by many routes to the new society and pursued many different agendas within it. Racialized thought and the resulting ascription divided even European-origin immigrants into groups defined by colour. Southern and Eastern European immigrants as well as Jews were non-white people: "olive" or "dark".<sup>34</sup> The life-writings of common people reflect hierarchies of colour and power, but they frequently mention cooperation and mutual support across cultural boundaries and colour lines. Racial differences did not necessarily imply racist exclusion and discrimination.

Individual men and women, as well as children in school, and cultural groups as a whole negotiated and decided on how best to present themselves to others and to the "Others". In the process, they reacted to bias and discrimination. Members of three ethno-cultural groups of European background faced or provoked particularly strong reactions: Englishmen with all

33 Sir James Douglas (1803–1877) was born at Demerara, British Guiana, as a "Scotch West Indian", that is, the son of a "free coloured woman" and a Scottish merchant. He married Amelia, the "part-Indian" daughter of HBC Chief Factor William Connolly and his Native wife, "after the custom of the country" in 1828 and confirmed the marriage according to colonial law in 1837. In view of the composition of the population, the region called "British Columbia" was a Haida, Salish Coast, or Métis world — to give only a few alternatives to the designation imposed by those with the power to name and define. See Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849–1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Hoerder, *Creating Societies*, pp. 218–238, quotations on p. 223.

34 Donna Gabaccia, "The 'Yellow Peril' and the 'Chinese of Europe': Global Perspectives on Race and Labor, 1815–1930", in Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen, eds., *Migrations, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives* (Bern: Lang, 1996), pp. 177–196. Colour-coding was obvious when two Englishmen, who worked for "a full-blooded negro", respectfully called him "one of the 'whitest' men" they had ever known.



their social peculiarities,<sup>35</sup> Ukrainians by their outward appearance,<sup>36</sup> and white Americans often associated with illegal activities.<sup>37</sup> Three other groups, whose skin colour differentiated them from the many shades of white, were discriminated against by structural hierarchies and gatekeeper pronouncements: African-Canadians, usually called “Negro” or “Coloured”; Asian-origin immigrants, often reduced to one single male, “the Chinaman”; and the Métis and Amerindians. Nonetheless, according to the memories captured in life-writings by both whites and other-coloured, these people were frequently judged on merit by their neighbours. Complexity was part of the memory of everyman and everywoman, but in contrast gatekeeper narratives were formalized, bound by rules of genre, and made permanent through print.

Since nation-building was in its incipient stage in nineteenth-century Europe, immigrant women and men from its many vibrant regional cultures had to overcome differences to construct themselves as one “ethnic group” after migration. The Old World groups that seemed so clearly delimited to historians writing before the 1960s created themselves, or were labelled from the outside, in processes internal to Canadian society. First, groups had to be sufficiently large and concentrated to support their own institutions and a social layer of intellectuals. Among lumbering crews in Quebec, nineteenth-century settlers in Ontario, and part-time proletarians in the Prairies — as in the large cities of the present — inter-ethnic contacts were the rule. Farm labourers hired on with whoever would offer a job. Railway gangs and lumber camps brought together cash-strapped homesteaders and itinerant labourers regardless of ethnicity. So did threshing crews. The “international homesteaders of the world” resembled the Industrial Workers of the World in the United States or the One Big Union in Canada more than the ethnic clusters described in ethno-centric research. Settlement patterns, market participation, and work-force composition influenced the direction of acculturation. An Irish immigrant in Ontario in the 1840s remembered contacts with self-liberated (“runaway”) slaves from the United States, French-Canadian raftsmen, and men and women from many other groups. A “Polish colony”

35 “Remittance men”, the emigrant non-inheriting sons of the gentry, appeared as arrogant and unable to manage their own lives; visitors from the imperial centre looked down on colony- or Dominion-born English; trade unionists, proud of their achievements, refused to adapt to flexible — or exploitative — demands for their labour. Such images appear in many life-writings. See Hoerder, “Pluralist Founding Nations”.

36 Ukrainians’ practices of tanning and preparing their sheepskin coats made them “smelly” in the opinion of neighbours; Orthodox believers, afraid of losing their faith, continued to wear old-country clothes and long hair. See Harry Piniuta, ed. and trans., *Land of Pain, Land of Promise: First Person Accounts by Ukrainian Pioneers, 1891–1914* (Saskatoon: Western Producer, 1978), pp. 27–48, 87, 97, 131.

37 A considerable number of lawbreakers, especially whisky smugglers and cattle rustlers, crossed the border. No other cultural group was mentioned as often in connection with criminal behaviour as were Americans.

in the Prairies was mixed with Swedes, Germans, Scots, and Norwegians. When in war-time Canada after 1914 some immigrants were labelled “enemy aliens”, they chose another ethnic identity. Many Germans adopted the category “Dutch”, and the Ukrainians organized to regain the power to define themselves.<sup>38</sup>

To local immigrant societies, whether urban or rural, the national polity, policies, and politicking, as well as the urban elites, remained distant. In the nineteenth century, their experience with the state concerned its local aspects — and, since they could engage in transnational comparison, they knew they were better off than before migration. They welcomed the local low-cost service offerings of the “state”: responsive immigration officials, the postal service, which permitted contacts with kin and friends who had stayed in the homeland, schools and teachers for their children, and low taxes. The possibility of working in exchange for taxes in times of scarce cash and the small number of salaried officials compared favourably with conditions in the societies of Europe, China, and Japan. The Ottawa government provided a framework that permitted immigration and facilitated homesteading — but specific mention of this was made only in the term “government brick” as a material for sod-houses. New arrivals before the 1920s remembered the helpful and well-informed officials at Montreal’s immigrant facilities and Winnipeg’s immigrant sheds. One link to worlds afar, the pomp and circumstance of the British Empire, remained marginal to immigrants’ interests and perceptions, unless of course they themselves had come from the imperial core.

“Nationalization” came through mail-order patterns of consumption and the access to distant markets through the railroad companies. Only in the aftermath of World War I and during the Great Depression did the Canadian state impose itself or did immigrants attempt to influence it. When immigration policies became more restrictive and people requiring relief who were not citizens could be and were deported, a new negative image of threatening power structures emerged. On the positive side, labourers and farmers organized to gain access to the state’s institutions rather than leave them in the hands of those whose access was based on social class and education. The men and women who had built their own communities did not care for a rhetoric of nationhood or demands for military service. They organized their family lives on the concept of socio-economic security, a concept introduced across society and the state only in the 1940s and institutionalized in the 1950s.<sup>39</sup>

38 Matejko, *Polish Settlers*, pp. 29, 44, 152, passim; Yedlin, *Germans from Russia*, pp. 41, 59, 103, passim; Joanna Matejko and Tova Yedlin, eds., *Alberta’s Pioneers from Eastern Europe: Reminiscences* (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 1977), p. 44.

39 Marsh, *Report on Social Security*; Dennis Guest, *The Emergence of Social Security in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980); Jane Jenson, “Social Citizenship in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Challenges and Options” (The Timlin Lecture, University of Saskatchewan, February 2001).

The Canadianization of immigrants came as a slowly emerging attachment to the societies and society they helped to build. Only a few applied formally for citizenship. Even fewer realized that the British-minded elite had established a state without a citizenship of its own. They and their Canadian-born children would have been surprised to learn that before 1948 they were British rather than Canadian citizens. In the early 1910s, a British observer succinctly contrasted the continuing dual loyalty of most British-Canadians with the sinking of roots by non-British newcomers: Among “this cosmopolitan collection”, “one sentiment is noticeable ... after they have been living a few years in the country, and that is loyalty to Canada”.<sup>40</sup>

### **Polity: From Gatekeeper Definitions of State and Nation to Complex Identities**

When in 1867 the several colonies with their many local societies merged or were merged into the federation, the new state was a hybrid. The arrangement that Canada remained part of the British Empire, and thus held limited sovereignty, was specific to Canada and the other “white” dominions. The inconsistency and historicity of political theory and definitions of state were specific to all the states of the Atlantic world. First, Canada became part of the so-called dynastic Westphalian state system established at the end of the Thirty Years’ War by the peace treaty of Westphalia of 1648. This treaty posited that dynastic governments exerted sovereign rule over their respective territories as well as the inhabitants (“subjects”) therein. Secondly, in the Age of Enlightenment and the Age of Revolution, the concept of “sovereignty” was amended to make “the people” sovereign without, however, removing the concept of the territorially delimited sovereignty of states. In Canadian terms, the Red River Métis were to become victims of this type of imposition of territorial but not popular rule — the one “conquest” in the history of Canada’s expansion. Thirdly, new polities, from the United States (1776), to Canada (1867), to those of the decolonizing world (since 1947), became part of nation-state conceptualizations based on historic developments that were, in fact, specific to Britain and, differently, to France. The term “nation-state” contains a contradiction, since in states — political units — citizens were to be equal before the law, but in nations — cultural units — non-hegemonic peoples were deemed unequal as “minorities”. The specific cases on which the nation-state theorem was based did not support generalization to a theory of states in Europe and subsequently North America as a whole. Two particular circumstances, the early ascendancy of the commercial groups in England and the early administrative centralization in France, were conflated and inflated into generic properties of “nationhood”. Great Britain and France were the most powerful states in Europe, and their

40 Bickersteth, *Land of Open Doors*, p. 86; Romaniuk, *Taking Root*, p. 36; Walter F. Chuchla, “Personal Experiences from 1904 till 1978”, in Matejko, *Polish Settlers*, pp. 49–79, 265–269.

intellectual elites determined political discourse and spoke the two most influential European languages: English as the imperial language and French as the language of the enlightened trans-European elites. As a consequence, this history of the two countries became the master narrative of political history and political science in and for the Western World.<sup>41</sup>

In regard to cultural diversity, dynastic rule was more flexible than the nation-state. Sovereigns could and did admit immigrants to their realm, and they provided them with a special status. The admission of Huguenots from France into many European states and the British North American colonies is the best example. The Canadian state, after Confederation, flexibly used this non-national principle to admit some groups with special privileges: Mennonites, Doukhobors, and Icelanders. Concepts of many-cultured and flexible polities provide a better starting point for understanding modern multicultural societies than mono-cultural frames of reference or storylines. Perhaps the dualism of Canadian society and the ambivalent position of the two first-comer groups between France and Britain on the one side and Canada (or Canadian regions) on the other prevented a European- or American-style nationalism from emerging.

The concept of Founding Peoples, a Canadian variant of “nation” or “hegemonic people”, is a *post-hoc* construction originating in the 1940s. It was used to buttress these two ethno-national positions in the debates about the report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in the 1960s. The claim derived from early arrival and the resulting shaping role in institution-building. In other words, it asserts special recognition and access to power. The historic-cultural argument cannot be reconciled with the political theory of equality for all citizens. In this sense, Ukrainian-Canadians might be called a third founding nation, since they assimilated other Eastern European groups into their community and in the early 1960s had reached the organizational strength to demand that those labelled “other ethnics” or “allophones” enjoy equal status in the polity and society.<sup>42</sup>

The vested interest involved in the image of two founding peoples merits critical analysis. Its discursive strategy of simplification demands the reinsertion of complexity. In what was becoming Canada, French-speaking peoples were many: the Acadians, the St. Lawrence valley French, Ontario’s French, the French-Métis nucleus in the Red River Valley, as well as French, French-Belgian, or French-Swiss settlers in the Prairies. A French *patois* was the *lingua franca* in many northern lumbering camps across the continent. Internal

41 David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995). On modern human rights debates, see Heiner Bielefeldt, *Philosophie der Menschenrechte: Grundlagen eines weltweiten Freiheitsethos* (Darmstadt: Primus, 1998), pp. 1–41, 80–111.

42 First Peoples were excluded from this construction of nationhood. See Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, *Report*, 4 vols. (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1967–1970), book 4, *The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups* (1970).

migration and intermarriage contributed to heterogeneity, a shared Catholic faith to cooperate with culturally different co-religionists. Only a particular constellation of ideas, the clergy's and politicians' power to define Quebec as separate from the "Rest of Canada", the rest of Canadian francophones, and the "rest of francophone North America", reduced this complexity to a *vieille souche* or *pure laine* ideology. Due to this *repli sur soi-même* or *enclavement*, historiography has dealt with Quebec as an island in an anglophone North America rather than examining the impact of French-speakers on the development of North American or Canadian society as a whole.<sup>43</sup> Quebec's culture is, of course, as specific as that of any other North American regional society; it is one of many regional societies, distinguished, however, by language and legal system and by powerful discourses separating it from the rest of North America.<sup>44</sup>

Quebec's society of reference, expressed as "France", historically was anything but homogeneous. Southern *langue d'oc* speakers and Albigensian believers had been subdued in the thirteenth century; Bretons and Basques were incorporated later. France's territory expanded and contracted — *un effet d'accordéon* — and included regions of a London-based dynasty, French-German inter-cultural borderlands, and Spanish Roussillon.<sup>45</sup> The expulsion of the Huguenots reduced religious diversity within France while expanding the impact of French-speakers across Europe. The French imperial government prohibited Huguenots from settling in its colonies, thus depriving the St. Lawrence valley society of urban talent, skills, and capital which it needed. From the point of view of Quebec, the relationship to its society of reference is complex. France disavowed Quebec in 1763 when — after its defeat in imperial warfare — it ceded the continental possessions in the Americas to the British Empire to keep the profitable sugar plantation islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe. For the French government, profitability was more important than cultural affinity. A century later, in the 1870s, Quebec's intellectual and clerical elites rejected France as an industrialized, urbanized, and modernized society. Their "theory of two Frances" juxtaposed metropolitan France in Europe to a purer, pious one in Canada, immune to innovation. In the pre-World-War-I Prairies, in contrast, immi-

43 Michelle Beauclair, ed., *The Francophone World: Cultural Issues and Perspectives* (New York: Lang, 2003).

44 Ronald Rudin, *Making History in Twentieth-Century Quebec* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), outlines the development from clerical to scholarly historiography in Quebec. For a discussion of different interpretations of Quebec discourses, see Fernand Dumont, *Genèse de la société québécoise* (Montreal: Boréal, 1993; 1996).

45 Yves Lequin, ed., *La mosaïque France : histoire des étrangers et de l'immigration* (Paris: Larousse, 1988), revised under the title *Histoire des étrangers et de l'immigration en France* (Paris: Larousse, 1992); Noiriél, *Le creuset français*; Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*. Quotation from Marc Augé, *Un ethnologue dans le métro* (Paris: Hachette, 1986), p. 18.

grant French kept their ties to France or to French Belgium. French Canadians were a mosaic of peoples with many interests.<sup>46</sup>

The eighteenth-century “British” had no common identity. Those migrating to the North American colonies were ethno-culturally diverse, socially stratified, gendered, and politically divided. Each new generation of immigrants from Old World, multi-ethnic Britain was different from the previous one. Highland Scots, Irish, Welsh, and Cornish spoke the same language as the English unless they retained their respective Gaelic tongues. The English language was itself a mix of Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, Norman-French, and French dialects and words. The “Loyalist” refugees of the 1770s and 1780s (“counter-revolutionaries” to their former neighbours) constructed themselves as quintessentially British or, more precisely, an ethno-political interest group, the United Empire Loyalists, despite their varied English, Scottish, Dutch, German, and Afro-American backgrounds. Homogenization into a British-Canadian group was a Canadian development — as it was for all other immigrant groups. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, however, one political group, the imperialists, attempted to manipulate Canadianization by emphasizing imperial belonging. This ideologically influential rhetoric alienated other Canadians, whether of French or other languages, even further. As early as 1701, Daniel Defoe had commented, “A true-born Englishman’s a contradiction,/ In speech an irony, in fact a fiction.”<sup>47</sup>

Once the diversity of British and French Canadians has been reinserted into the historical narrative skewed by “founding nation” imagery, the contested ground of developing Canadianness may be illustrated by the struggles about the language to be used in the schools where each new generation of Canadians was to be educated. From the 1880s, provincial English-Canadian leaderships first dealt a blow to the equality of cultures by abolishing French as an official language. Then, the cultural-educational conflict lines were drawn between hegemonic English-speaking administrators and immigrant peoples. During a controversy in Alberta in 1913, the Ukrainian newspaper *Novyny* angrily — but correctly — commented: “The minister of education lies when he says that Alberta is an English province. Alberta is a Canadian province, where everyone has equal rights, including the Ukrainians.”<sup>48</sup>

46 Marcel Durieux, *Ordinary Heroes: The Journal of a French Pioneer in Alberta*, Roger Motut and Maurice Legris, trans. and eds. (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1980), French ed.: *Un héros malgré lui* (St. Boniface: Éditions des Plaines, 1986), pp. 77–79; Maurice Destrubé, *Pioneering in Alberta: Maurice Destrubé’s Story*, James E. Hendrickson, ed. (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta, 1981); Gaston Giscard, *On the Canadian Prairie (Dans la Prairie canadienne)* bilingual ed., trans. Lloyd Person, ed. George E. Durocher (Regina: University of Regina, 1982), pp. xi–xv.

47 Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*; Colin Holmes, *John Bull’s Island: Immigration and British Society, 1871–1971* (London: Macmillan, 1988); Daniel Statt, *Foreigners and Englishmen: The Controversy over Immigration and Population, 1660–1760* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995); James T. Boulton, ed., *Selected Writings of Daniel Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 51–81.

48 William A. Czumer, *Recollections about the Life of the First Ukrainian Settlers in Canada*, trans. Louis T. Laychuck (Ukrainian ed. 1942; Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1981), pp. 104–112, 118–119.

In this contest over recognition and access to societal resources, hegemonic intelligentsias, spokespersons for ethnic groups, and business and labour leaders acted out claims for influence over cultural institutions, especially the schools. To gain influence in politics, they needed a solid voting bloc behind them, and they had to attempt to keep their groups separate from others and from inter-ethnic mixing. At the same time, they had to work out compromises with other groups and hegemonic institutions. They were gatekeepers as well as brokers. Often such cultural leaders and producers of knowledge — teachers, the clergy, and journalists — emphasized their distinctiveness, since compromise would undercut their own position and their incomes. The cohesion of cultural groups and gatekeepers' incomes are as intricately linked in ethnic and national groups as are emotions and material well-being in family economies. Thus gatekeepers drew boundaries between themselves and other groups — they closed gates — and they advocated an unwavering adherence to what, in their memory, had been the lifestyle of their particular Old World.

The spokespersons of the two composite early groups, the self-styled founding nations, pursued diametrically opposed strategies of discourse and historical memory. The Catholic-Quebec emphasis on *enclavement* lessened the impact of French-Canadian culture outside the borders of Quebec, while the multi-religious British-Canadian positions involved an expansive discourse of Britishness. The past-centred discourse on cultural survival, *la survivance*, was as historically misleading as the British-imperial stance. The memory-discourse of the slogan *Je me souviens* falsifies the original meaning of the text, which referred to cultural interaction: “Je me souviens / Que né sous le lys / J’ai fleuri sous la rose.”<sup>49</sup> The expansiveness of British-Canadian imperial discourse, centred on white Britons, did not cross colour lines. While in the Empire, all people were subjects, the government of Canada, by the administrative subterfuge of demanding continuous passage from Asia, excluded Sikh men who, as subjects of the British Crown, had the right to move freely in the Empire and through their service in imperial military units had shown their loyalty. Where is “British law and fair-play”?, queried a British visitor observing the practice of discrimination. A constructed whiteness was part of the practices establishing a British-Canadian identity.<sup>50</sup>

49 Text in Harold Kalman, *A History of Canadian Architecture*, 2 vols. (Toronto and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), vol. 2, p. 550. When in 2000 I attempted to research the origin of the shortened version, the *Canadian Encyclopedia* did not provide an answer, and none of the francophone Canadian academics I approached knew the full text. Recent research by Gaston Deschênes has been summarized by Ingo Kolboom, “L’invention de la nation canadienne-française”, in Kolboom and Sabine A. Grzonka, eds., *Gedächtnisorte im anderen Amerika. Tradition und Moderne in Québec* (Heidelberg: Synchron, 2002), pp. 55–81, especially 71–72.

50 Christian F. J. Galloway, *The Call of the West: Letters from British Columbia* (London: Adelphi, 1916), pp. 256–258, 276; Martin A. Grainger, *Woodsmen of the West* (1908; Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1964), pp. 32, 79; Basil Stewart, *The Land of the Maple Leaf: Or, Canada As I Saw It* (London: Routledge; Toronto: Musson, 1908), pp. 128–135.

Just as *Je me souviens* did not reflect historical reality, neither did an equivalent, “my [British] home is my castle”. When, in keeping with the belated introduction of a distinct Canadian citizenship in 1948, the census categories of belonging had to be changed in 1951, the bureaucrats remained obstinately British-minded: “Canadian” became but a write-in option, and census-takers were instructed to accept it only if people insisted. Finally, another three decades later in 1981, the multiple-origin category, which reflected intermarriage and acculturation patterns of almost four centuries since 1604, was introduced. A single decade later, it was selected by 29 per cent of the respondents. A tentative census questionnaire tested by Statistics Canada in 1988 produced a response of 35.9 per cent for “Canadian ethnic origin” and ascription of 53 per cent to “Canadian ethnic identity”. Common Canadians were agents of their lives and identities in many-cultured or multicultural contexts long before institutions and their political personnel were ready to accept diversity.<sup>51</sup>

### Conclusion

The concept of writing a people’s history rather than a state-wide one emerged — after sporadic attempts from the 1880s onward to write broadly conceived cultural histories of European states or societies — from civil rights and colonial liberation struggles of the 1960s and their concomitant intellectual innovation, and — in Canada — from the self-celebration, reflection, and assertion of the Centennial decade. The “one society, two peoples, many cultures” poster view of the country, upon critical analysis, turned out to be a “vertical mosaic”.<sup>52</sup> Common people — whether the underclass, proletariat, or ethnic groups — were excluded from equal participation as postulated in natural rights theory regarding equality before the law and the state and from hegemonic, middle-class culture and its historical memory. What started as a New Left class analysis (E. P. Thompson) and economic-political history of societies (E. J. Hobsbawm), sometimes on a worldwide scale (E. Wolf and the *Annales* school), soon expanded to gender analysis and the addition of a “mistress” side to the “master” narrative.<sup>53</sup> While Marxist or *marxisant* approaches

51 *Ethnic Origins* [1991 Census] (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1993). Ethnic gatekeepers and the political establishment rejected inclusion of these options into the 1991 census. Monica Boyd, “Measuring Ethnicity: The Roles of People, Policies and Politics and Social Science Research” (Lectures and Papers in Ethnicity No. 11, University of Toronto, Department of Sociology, February 1994); Gordon E. Priest, *Ethnicity in the Canadian Census* (Toronto: University of Toronto, Department of Sociology, 1990); Richard Y. Bourhis, “Measuring Ethnocultural Diversity Using the Census”, *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, vol. 35, no. 1 (2003), pp. 9–32.

52 John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965); A. Gordon Darroch, “Another Look at Ethnicity, Stratification and Social Mobility in Canada”, *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, vol. 4 (1979), pp. 1–25.

53 Innovative scholars often remained partially ensconced in older constraints: E. J. Hobsbawm’s penetrating history of *Industry and Empire* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968) has no indication that women are part of history. Eric R. Wolf called his fascinating study of global economies under



emphasized common people in general and workers in particular as exploited, many social historians of the 1970s discussed women, immigrants, and ethnics, as well as wage workers, as victims or marginals. Such readings of the experience of everyman and everywoman capture structural aspects but cannot capture the subjective life-worlds of those with but limited options to determine at least some features of their life courses. Nonetheless, such men and women still shape the trajectory of societies.

The study of Canada's polity and cultures, a process sometimes labelled "nationalist" in the context of global decolonization, accepted the framework provided by the nation-state-driven West European paradigm, mainly centred on France and Britain. More suitable for an analysis of Canada's many cultures would be the example provided by the Habsburg dynasty's "state of many peoples" (*Vielvölkerstaat*) or the Ottoman Empire's structural accommodation of cultural groups of many religions and patterns of everyday life (*millet* and *malhülle* systems of self-administration). These Central European, Balkan, and Eastern Mediterranean cultures and polities have been "symbolically annihilated" in the Atlantic World's discourse and political theory.<sup>54</sup> Such global contextualizing — internationalizing or de-provincializing — of nation-state history has recently been advocated for American historiography<sup>55</sup> and is the aim of the International Council for Canadian

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imperialism *Europe and the People Without History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), though he wrote about "Europe and the People Whose History Europeans Never Cared to Comprehend". E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Gollancz, 1963).

54 Bernard Chevalier, "France from Charles VII to Henry IV", in Thomas A. Brady, Jr., Heiko A. Oberman, and James D. Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1994), vol. 1, pp. 371, 385; Halil Berktaş and Suraiya Faroqhi, eds., *New Approaches to State and Peasants in Ottoman History* (London: Cass, 1991); Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Fikret Adanir, "Religious Communities and Ethnic Groups under Imperial Sway: Ottoman and Habsburg Lands in Comparison", and Michael John, "National Movements and Imperial Ethnic Hegemonies in Austria, 1867–1918", in Dirk Hoerder, Christiane Harzig, and Adrian Shubert, eds., *Diversity in History: Transcultural Interactions from the Early Modern Mediterranean World to the 20th-Century Postcolonial World* (New York: Berghahn, 2003), pp. 54–86, 87–105.

55 Thomas Bender, dir., *The LaPietra Report: Project on Internationalizing the Study of American History* (New York: Organization of American Historians and New York University, 2000); David Thelen, "Of Audiences, Borderlands, and Comparisons: Toward the Internationalization of American History", *Journal of American History*, vol. 79 (1992), pp. 432–462; Thomas Bender, "Wholes and Parts: The Need for a Synthesis in American History", *Journal of American History*, vol. 73 (1986), pp. 120–136; Paul Giles, "Reconstructing American Studies: Transnational Paradoxes, Comparative Perspectives", *Journal of American Studies*, vol. 28 (1994), pp. 335–358; Lora Romero, "Nationalism and Internationalism: Domestic Differences in a Postcolonial World", *American Literature*, vol. 67 (1995), pp. 793–800; Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies", *Journal of American History*, vol. 88 (2001), pp. 829–865. For a recent transnational approach to European history, see Hagen Schulze, *Staat und Nation in der europäischen Geschichte* (Munich: Beck, 1999).

Studies.<sup>56</sup> Would not the history of South Asian Canadians, for example, begin both in South Asia and in Canada? The depiction of Canadian society as a “family tree” with many branches misconstrues history. In the biologist-naturalist imagery, only the trunk is rooted; in many-cultured societies each and every “branch” is connected to the “trunk” and has its own “roots”. Differentiated historical knowledge is a resource to comprehend, develop, and govern complex societies.<sup>57</sup>

Canadian society’s duality, often discussed as an internal weakness, prevented the emergence of a single master narrative. But the focus on the contested ground between the two early arriving, internally heterogeneous groups that came to style themselves founding nations rendered other experiences invisible. As early as the 1940s, Everett and Helen Hughes in Montreal and Fernando Ortiz in Cuba realized the opportunities provided by the absence of a single national master narrative and discussed the meeting and fusion of cultures.<sup>58</sup> Writing from the periphery of the dominant United States, United Kingdom, French, and German scholarly discourses, they received no attention. Within Canada, the emerging societies of the West — also internally diverse — added a third element. After regionalism, new concepts of pluralities of cultural groups, multicultural societies, cultural borderlands, and *métissage* emerged. Post-colonial analyses came to understand and deconstruct the imposition of colonizer narratives on subalternized and externalized “Others” as well as on internally subalternized classes, women, and other groups. The agency of such people is part of a history of society, of transcultural societal studies.<sup>59</sup>

Through their own upbringing, historians and social scientists are socialized in and into the mental frameworks of their respective societies. As adult scholars, in the tension between societal *mentalité* and empirical data, they develop interpretations. In contrast, fiction authors and scholars in the humanities explore alternative forms of memory, experiment with multiple truths,

56 The ICCS-CIEC project on “Transculturalisms” involved scholars from many cultures and disciplines and placed socio-cultural *métissage* in an internationally comparative perspective.

57 Laurence Cros, *La Représentation du Canada dans les écrits des historiens anglophones canadiens* (Paris: Université de Paris 3, [2000]); Christiane Harzig, *Einwanderung und Politik. Historische Erinnerung und Politische Kultur als Gestaltungsressourcen in den Niederlanden, Schweden und Kanada* (Immigration and Policy-Making: Historical Memory and Political Culture as Creative Strategic Resource in the Netherlands, Sweden, and Canada) (Transkulturelle Perspektiven 1 – Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2004).

58 Everett C. Hughes, “The Study of Ethnic Relations”, *Dalhousie Review*, vol. 27 (1948), pp. 477–482; E. C. Hughes and Helen MacGill Hughes, *Where Peoples Meet: Racial and Ethnic Frontiers* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1964); Fernando Ortiz, “Del fenómeno de la transculturación y su importancia en Cuba” (1940; reprinted in *El contrapunteo cubano del azúcar y del tabaco*, Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1983).

59 Dirk Hoerder, “Transcultural Societal Studies: Canadian Studies as a Model”, in Hoerder and Konrad Groß, eds., *25 Years Gesellschaft für Kanada-Studien: Achievements and Perspectives* (Augsburg: Wißner, 2004), pp. 202–217, and “‘To Know Our Many Selves Changing Across Time and Space’: From the Study of Canada to Canadian Studies” (manuscript in preparation).

and play with parts of the mosaic of memory. Common people, engaged in the personal historiography of writing a life-story or autobiography, also play with memory. So do clerks in institutions, who ask particular questions of interest to them and enter particular data into their files. Without an awareness of multiple meanings of words and “received” data, knowledge of cultural origins recedes beyond memory to misty times immemorial: incorporation beyond recognition rather than acceptance of many-cultured origins and transcultural co-existence. Almost half a century ago the visionary C. Wright Mills called for a “sociological imagination”; a quarter century ago William Kilbourn, criticizing the empty spaces in Canadian historiography, complained about “too much accurate Canadian history and too little accurate Canadian imagination”.<sup>60</sup> An imaginative integration of the societal structures and transcultural agency of John and Jane Everyperson is a prerequisite for a history of society.

60 C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1958); William Kilbourn in Kilbourn and Henry B. Mayo, “Canadian History and Social Sciences (1920–1960)”, in Carl F. Klinck *et al.*, *Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English*, 4 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976; 1990), vol. 2, pp. 22–52, quotation on p. 22.