

Il aurait été souhaitable que les deux auteurs attachent davantage d'importance aux politiques économiques et sociales, même déficientes, du gouvernement provisoire : celles-ci ne peuvent se résumer à l'image un peu caricaturale qu'ils dessinent de Skobelev, ministre du Travail, qui, tel un pompier en état de désarroi, se promène aux quatre coins de la Russie afin d'étouffer des incendies qui risquent, autrement, de prendre les proportions d'une véritable catastrophe ! Dans la même veine, si toutes les récriminations de la bourgeoisie d'affaires ne sont pas justifiables, il reste que l'agitation ouvrière, et plus particulièrement la grève, contribuent, en 1917, à réduire à la fois la production et la productivité et à accroître l'inflation.

La thèse de ce livre — la grève en tant que matrice et accélérateur du processus révolutionnaire — est intéressante, mais elle reste, toutefois, discutable : l'arbre tend à cacher la forêt ! La poursuite de la guerre mondiale, l'état lamentable de l'économie (inflation, crise des transports, insuffisance des approvisionnements en vivres, en matières premières et en combustibles), les initiatives peu fructueuses du gouvernement provisoire en vue de solutionner ces problèmes majeurs ainsi que le rôle joué par les différents partis politiques, les soviets, les comités d'usine, les milices ouvrières et les syndicats ont certainement contribué autant, sinon davantage que la grève, à mobiliser la classe ouvrière et à développer, chez elle comme chez les « méchants bourgeois », une conscience de classe.

Finalement, l'histoire quantitative a ses adeptes (et ce livre, farci de tableaux et de graphiques, en est un exemple éloquent), mais elle a aussi ses limites : l'approche statistique, l'analyse très sophistiquée des données écartent un peu trop du devant de la scène le gréviste lui-même. Comment a-t-il vécu la grève ? Les quelques rares exemples de grèves relatés par Koenker et Rosenberg ne répondent pas adéquatement à cette question. La chose est d'autant plus surprenante que toute l'étude s'inscrit ouvertement dans la tendance historiographique actuelle la plus intéressante : celle qui consiste à voir la révolution de 1917 comme un vaste mouvement de protestation sociale et politique de la part de la base (paysans, ouvriers, soldats et nationalistes non russes).

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Seymour Martin Lipset — *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*, foreword by Robert G. Nichols and Adam H. Zimmerman, co-chairmen, Canadian-American Committee. Toronto and Washington: C.D. Howe Institute (Canada) and National Planning Association (USA), 1989. Pp. xviii, 326.

Both the author and his argument are well-known to students of Canadian society. The American Revolution, Lipset believes, created a permanent ideological division between the United States and Canada. While American Whigs set up a liberal republic rooted in anti-statist, Lockean ideology, fleeing Loyalists established a more conservative state in Canada based on an organic, monarchical tradition. Succeeding generations in both nations have inherited the relatively unmodified ideological consequences of the Revolution.

Articulated during the 1950s and 1960s by scholars on both sides of the border, including Louis Hartz, Daniel Bell, Frank Underhill, S.D. Clark, and Lipset himself, this interpretation reflects the convergence of several Cold War-inspired intellectual trends. They include the idea of national character, the belief in American exceptionalism, and the practice of equilibrium social analysis. As a youth educated at New York's City College, then a hotbed of radicalism, Lipset had originally set out to explain why socialism had succeeded in Saskatchewan in order to understand better why it had failed in the United States. The implicit cross-border contrasts of *Agrarian Socialism* (1950) led to explicit comparisons of the U.S., U.K. and Canada in *The First New Nation* (1963) that proved America's classless exceptionalism to the author's satisfaction.

Nearly three decades later, extending this delineation of the similarities and differences between Canada and the United States, Lipset's book may go down in North American historiography as one of the last testaments to the Cold War-inspired creed.

The author asserts that the values and culture of Canada and the United States "vary in *consistent ways* across a broad spectrum of role behavior, institutions, and values" (xiv [emphasis in original]). He presents two kinds of evidence: quotations from literary, historical, and social scientist "authorities", and various public opinion polls conducted since World War II. The first three chapters, based largely on the authorities, examine the impact of the clash between Whigs and Tories during the 18th century on the formation afterward of two distinct national characters. Although Lipset draws upon the observations of such 19th-century writers as Engels and Bryce, most of his authorities date from the post-World War II years. He quotes extensively from a good many of their works, including his own, all compiled at the end of the book in a bibliography of more than five hundred items covering over thirty pages. The remaining eight chapters, drawn largely from contemporary poll data, explore the consequences of the American Revolution by comparing attitudes on Canadian and American law, literature, religion, politics, economy, and society. For the most part, the book is an elaboration rather than a revision of the author's previous studies.

According to Lipset, the American Revolution established a series of ideological dichotomies in North America, each measurable on a continuum by which the researcher can locate and compare American and Canadian national values. Americans, he says, are basically egalitarian; Canadian more hierarchical. American populism contrasts with Canadian elitism; American individualism stands out against a greater Canadian stress on community values. Americans engage in private enterprise; Canadians rely more heavily upon government-owned public corporations. For recent in-migrants, the American melting pot contrasts with the Canadian mosaic. While Lipset takes pains to point out the shifts occurring with these categories during the past few years, he periodically emphasizes (but fails to examine) the overall structural similarities between the two peoples. Although polls reveal only a 5-10 percent difference between the two populations across a wide range of the values, the U.S., he maintains, is still basically Whig, and Canada remains a Tory nation despite evidence that some national differences may be shrinking.

Lipset's argument is riddled with difficulties. If, as he concedes, structural features shared by Canada and the United States delineate fundamental similarities, to what extent does the book represent "the narcissism of small differences"? Or take the poll data: if 48 percent of Canadians say that they think of themselves as "belonging

to a particular social class", but only 42 percent of Americans say so, is this satisfactory *proof* of the greater class-consciousness of Canadians? The author puts more ideological weight on his data than it can support, especially after conceding that some evidence is not reliable or definitive. In a few cases, he explains away polls that contradict his thesis.

As for the "authorities", some are obviously well-informed, but many assessments are diluted by their off-hand or anecdotal quality. For instance, an (unnamed) American auto executive is quoted observing that Canadian advertising was different because "the Canadian buyer is much more cost conscious ... than the American" (127). Occasionally, Lipset cites authors whose conclusions parrot his previous publications. A few like Gad Horowitz and Martin Robin are misidentified as historians.

So broad and all-encompassing an argument that relies so heavily upon one key historical event (the American Revolution) ought not to be marred by ignorance of recent historiographical revision. Actually, Lipset's view of the American Revolution, popular three decades ago, has been under siege for some time. We now know that most Loyalists never left the United States. Scholars such as Jane Errington have seriously undermined the notion of a post-Revolutionary ideological barrier separating the Whigs who stayed in the United States from the Tories who left for Canada.

While the author's explanation of the origins of value differences relies upon the outcome of the Revolutionary War, most of his evidence is ahistorically derived from the postwar era. As a result, what emerges is an essentially static picture of both national identities until World War II at least, with only slight variations detected since then. The French "fact" is barely acknowledged. There is no recognition, let alone any assessment, of the impact of such discrete events as the Civil War, the execution of Louis Riel, or the wartime conscription crises on the evolution of either the American or Canadian "national" identities. The consequences of this deficiency became glaringly apparent at the end of the book when the author asks whether cross-border differences are a cause or a consequence of the greater political regionalism in Canada. Because he lacks an adequate historical perspective, Lipset finds the question "almost impossible to answer, except by saying that the factors were interdependent" (208). Only within the greatly foreshortened postwar framework can Lipset persuasively delineate the recent convergence of some Canadian and American values on gender and ethnic issues.

In short, this book presents a smoothly written, up-to-date version of an argument whose time may have past. No doubt, a few scholars will still find the approach useful. But its method of explanation is open to question, and its dated intellectual assumptions are no longer embraced by a good many historians or social scientists.

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