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THE AMERICAN TAKE OVER OF CANADIAN SOCIOLOGY: MYTH OR REALITY

A paper presented at the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Association of Atlantic Sociologists and Anthropologists, in Halifax, March 30, 1973.

The establishment by the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada of a Commission to study and report upon the state of teaching and research in studies relating to Canada at Canadian universities reflects a growing concern with the problem of the extent to which scholarship in Canada has become so American oriented that it can no longer effectively serve the interests of the country. It can be expected that the Commission will hear a great deal from sociology. Whether what it hears will fairly represent the state of the discipline in the country one can only guess. Certainly, it seems safe to predict that in the charges and counter-charges that will be made much heat will be generated. It is to be hoped that from the representations made to the Commission will come some light as well.

It is not too difficult to understand why so much of the concern about the growing American influence in our universities should focus upon the discipline of sociology. There are three very good reasons.

The first, of course, has to do with the very rapid growth of the discipline within the past fifteen years. In 1958 there were only four or five sociology teachers in the University of Toronto, about the same number in McGill, perhaps two at the University of British Columbia, and one only at such universities as Saskatchewan, Manitoba, McMaster, Western and Dalhousie. The University of Alberta appointed its first sociology teacher in 1958, Queen's University not for many years later. By the mid-nineteen sixties Alberta had a staff of some twenty-two. The growth in the other Canadian

universities was of the same order. Dalhousie University has today about as many sociologists on its staff as there were sociology teachers in the whole of Canada some fifteen years ago.

The slow growth of sociology in Canada before 1958 is largely explained by the strong British influence in the development of the Canadian social sciences. The great growth of sociology in the United States after 1920 had little effect in Canada. For long the only Canadian department of sociology was that at McGill.

In face of the very rapid growth of the discipline after 1960, then, it was inevitable that a large portion of the required staff had to be recruited from the United States. Many sociology departments across the country by the late 1960's became almost wholly staffed by Americans. In no other important segment of the Canadian university was there, to anything like the same degree, such a heavy dependence upon recruiting staff from outside the country.

The second reason why the concern about the growing American influence in our universities has tended to focus upon sociology develops out of the very character of the discipline. Sociology cannot be taught simply in terms of abstract principles. Its teaching involves talking about society. To sensitive Canadian ears it becomes important whether the society talked about is Canadian or American. Where a course on race and ethnic relations refers only by analogy to the problem of French-English relations in Canada, in presenting by lectures and assigned readings an analysis of race and ethnic relations in the United States, some impatience on the part of the Canadian student can be expected. So as well can a note of impatience be expected when courses on the family, social stratification, urban sociology, industrial relations and such rely almost exclusively upon American literature and American examples. I shall return later to a consideration of the general problem of the extent to which a discipline like sociology should be nationally orientated. Here the interest is only in explaining why, about the discipline of sociology, there has developed such a great concern about the American take-over.

There remains to be mentioned the third reason for this concern. No discipline, not even physics, escaped the mounting attack upon the Establishment that came in our universities in the 1960's. For the physicist, however, the espousal of the cause of revolution involved his dropping out from the scientific community, on occasion to the point where, now exhausted by the struggles on the front line, refuge was taken in such a simple pursuit of nature as that of chicken farming. For the sociologist, however, the espousal

of the cause of revolution did not involve dropping out. Rather, sociology was made an instrument of revolution.

Almost from its very beginnings, there has been in the development of sociology an uncomfortable mixing of ideology with scientific principles. There were grounds, in the development of the discipline in Europe, for its confusion with socialism as there were grounds, given the strong reformist bent of some of the early American sociologists, for its confusion on this continent with social welfare. The mixing of ideological with scientific principles until recently, however, tended to be characteristic of only peripheral areas in the discipline. Such no longer is the case. Sociology as the science concerned with the very character of the society in which we live lent itself readily to its use in efforts to make over this society. The attack upon the establishment was mounted very largely in sociology.

Almost inevitably it was the United States as an imperial power which became identified as the Establishment. Just about all that was undesirable in our society could be attributed to the pervasive influence of American imperialism. Thus it can occasion no surprise that the American take-over of the Canadian universities became viewed as simply one aspect of a much more general take-over that involved the whole of Canadian society. It may appear not a little curious that the most vigorous exponents of such a view were young American radicals who became students or who joined the staffs of Canadian universities and who found nothing inconsistent in their warning of the dangers of the spreading American influence in Canadian university life. Embittered by the involvement of their country in war in Vietnam, and viewing their helplessness to secure a change of policy as a result of a combine of military and business powers in Washington, it was not unnatural for these disaffected young sociologists to seize upon the issue of the spreading American influence in Canadian universities in the effort to demonstrate the evils of American imperialism. They could not be expected perhaps to be conscious of the extent to which they themselves were agents of American influence in the Canadian universities in the critical years of the nineteen sixties.

It would be presumptuous on my part to claim to present here a fully balanced picture of the state of sociology in Canada. The most that I can do is attempt to offer some comment on the problems faced by the discipline in its development in the Canadian universities over the past thirty-five or more years. It is only within such a perspective, I feel, that some of the issues now appearing so urgent can be fully understood.

However undesirable the consequences may be, and this is a question to which we shall return, the simple fact is that in the decade 1958-68 we could not have staffed our Canadian sociology departments without recruiting heavily from outside the country. There can scarcely be any argument on that score. The question should be raised, however, whether we might have done better than we did in building up staff within the country had different circumstances obtained. In the failure to produce more Canadian teachers of sociology in the decade 1958-68 Canada Council, I feel, must accept some responsibility.

In the development of scholarly work in the social sciences in Canada we owe a great deal to Canada Council. I could say much about the wisdom of the Council's leadership, in fostering free enquiry and offering to the scholar important support for his work. In one important respect, however, I feel the Council has badly served the interests of the social sciences in Canada. When the National Research Council, as the body representing the physical sciences, instituted a programme of graduate fellowships, it made such fellowships, except under very special circumstances, tenable only at Canadian universities. It adopted this policy with the full knowledge at the time that only the universities of Toronto and McGill had science departments strong enough to offer graduate programmes. It was, however, the Council's conviction that the effect of such a fellowship policy in building up a body of able graduate students would be to foster the development of strong science departments in all Canadian universities, and events quickly proved the Council right.

Canada Council entered upon the scene at a very critical time in the development of the social sciences in Canada. It was at that time in the late 1950's when the American universities had adopted an aggressive policy of building strong graduate schools. To attract the most able students, exceedingly generous first-year graduate fellowships were offered. Canadian students coming out of strong undergraduate honour programmes were particularly favoured. Most of our really good social science students were thus attracted into American graduate schools and there committed to a programme of study leading to the Ph.D. degree. Little fellowship support, however, was offered by the American graduate school after the first year. For the American student, support for further graduate study was sought in teaching assistantships. For the Canadian student, support came from Canada Council.

Not all Canada Council doctoral fellowships, of course, went to applicants who already had embarked upon graduate study in the United States. Canada Council fellowships were competitive with those offered by the American graduate schools. Thus many Canadian students found their way to American universities with the support of Canada Council from the beginning. No Canadian university could come near, in the humanities or social sciences, offering fellowships as generous as those offered by the American graduate schools or by Canada Council. Thus with Canada Council in effect supplementing the very large first-year fellowship funds available to the American graduate schools, about the only social science graduate students the Canadian universities could attract were those who did not qualify for the fellowships available for study in the United States.

In fairness to Canada Council it should be said that it was the Canadian social scientists and humanists across the country who were largely responsible for the policy the Council adopted. When Mr. Brooke Claxton, the first chairman of the Council, called a meeting between the representatives of his council and representatives of the Canadian Social Science and Humanities Councils to consider fellowship policy, the proposal that the Council's doctoral fellowships be made tenable only at Canadian universities was strongly opposed by the social scientists and humanists particularly from Western Canada. The charge of Toronto protectionism effectively defeated the effort to bring about a change of policy.

Involved as I was in the debate I can scarcely claim lack of bias. Yet I remain convinced that it was a short-sighted view that was taken by those scholars speaking for the less highly developed universities in the country. For a time, it is probably true that universities like Toronto and McGill would have gained most by making Canada Council doctoral fellowships tenable only at Canadian universities, but, in the long run, the effect of such a policy, as in the sciences, would have been to build up strong graduate departments across the country. In the years 1958-68 we lost virtually all of our first-rate graduate students to the American universities. But the loss went much deeper than this, and particularly in sociology. We attracted back as university teachers some of the students we lost to the United States. The loss that could not be repaired resulted from the failure to attract into graduate study in sociology a larger body of able undergraduate students, and much of this failure can be accounted for by the fact that there had not developed in the country strong graduate departments in the discipline.

It could be claimed, of course, as indeed it was, that to have made Canada Council fellowships tenable only at Canadian universities would have involved a disregard of the interests of the graduate student as such. It was important that he be given the opportunity to seek the best training available, wherever that might be. The answer to such a claim is two-fold. Such an opportunity would not have been denied the Canadian student. American graduate fellowships were readily available. Canada Council fellowships did not open up to Canadian students an opportunity to study outside the country. All that they did was to make it that much easier to engage in graduate study across the border. The claim that to have made Canada Council fellowships tenable only at Canadian universities involved a disregard of the interests of the graduate student can be challenged, I feel, on a second count as well. Underlying such a claim was the implicit assumption that the Canadian student could secure a better training at the American university. Harvard did appear to have more to offer than Toronto, Berkeley than U.B.C. What here was overlooked, however, was the fact that except for those students with well established and highly specialized interests which could be met only in such universities as Harvard or London, universities in Canada had in fact more to offer the Canadian graduate student than did even the best of the American universities. What the American graduate school did was to pull the Canadian student away from the kind of problems in which he was interested, or else it left him largely without direction in the pursuit of his interests. I cannot believe that the development of the social sciences in Canada gained by encouraging students who might have had as their graduate teachers such scholars as Innis, Brady, Mackintosh, R. MacGregor Dawson, Corry, Hurd, Taylor, Knox, C. A. Dawson to seek degrees at such universities as Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, or even Yale or Princeton, where many of their teachers had only the vaguest of knowledge of things Canadian.

I have spoken of the critical years 1958-68. When we turn to the years after 1968 the problem of staffing assumes a new and very different dimension. There are now coming out of our graduate schools a very large number of students with a Ph.D. training in sociology. At the same time, everywhere across the country, enrolment at the undergraduate level is falling off and the recruiting of new staff is coming to an end. Under the most favourable of circumstances, such a situation would be bound to create strong feelings of resentment on the part of those young sociologists experiencing difficulty in securing university appointments. The years 1968-72, however, have been characterized not only by a marked change in the university market situation

but a change as well in the whole mode of appointment to university staffs. University departments have been democratized, and none more than sociology. The power of appointment has become lodged in the hands of the staff, and this at a time when in many sociology departments the overwhelming majority of the staff are Americans. It is to a staffing committee American manned that the young Canadian sociologist must turn in seeking an appointment to a Canadian university.

I would be unfair to my colleagues of American origin if I suggested that in the power struggle that has occurred they have unduly favoured their compatriots on issues relating to appointments, promotions, tenure, the choice of a chairman, and such. As a result of mounting student pressure there have been efforts to improve the image of departments by bringing more Canadians on staff. Such efforts, however, given the present market situation, are not likely to do more than just barely touch upon the real problem. The two paramount issues relating to the staffing of Canadian sociology departments today are those of tenure appointment and appointment at the senior level.

About tenure all that perhaps can be said is that, whether we like it or not, there is certain to develop resentment in a situation where American staff members are being granted tenure and young Canadians are failing to secure university appointments or, if given such appointments, find themselves among the non-tenured members of departments where most of the tenured members are non-Canadians. Cries of "American go home" and attacks upon the whole tenure system of Canadian universities can unfortunately be expected.

The issue of appointment at the senior level, in my mind, raises questions of an even more critical character. I confess to extreme impatience when I am told that on the appointment of a senior staff member or departmental chairman there was no choice but to select a non-Canadian since no Canadian had applied for the position. It takes only a rudimentary knowledge of the character of the Canadian academic community to understand why in making appointments of this sort no Canadians do apply. The American university person operates in a very large impersonal market. If he applies for an appointment at another university and is turned down, only the people in a very small circle know about it. Such is particularly the case if he is seeking an appointment outside the United States. The Canadian academic community, in contrast, is a very small community; everybody knows almost everybody else in his own field. The consequences is that no well-established

scholar at one Canadian university is going to let himself be considered for a position at another Canadian university and, with all its attendant publicity, risk the possibility of being turned down. Few of the people he has to live with for the remainder of his academic career would be unaware of his rejection. So long as the present mode of appointment in sociology departments is adhered to there will be virtually no movement of members of the staff at the senior level from one Canadian university to another. Senior appointments will continue to go to persons brought in from the outside.

Thus far what has been said would appear to imply that the major problem of sociology in Canada results from the heavy dependence upon the recruitment of staff from outside the country. The problem, however, goes much deeper than that. At a conference on Canadian studies held at Sherbrooke, in the year 1968, Professor Fortin, speaking for sociology in Canada, argued that there was no Canadian sociology outside of French Canada. Only in French Canada had sociologists concerned themselves about the fate of their society, and only with such a concern could there be a truly Canadian sociology.

If one might quarrel with the sweeping character of Professor Fortin's generalization, there nevertheless was, I feel, much truth in what he said. Sociologists in Canada have tended to take too seriously what was said in the first chapter of the introductory textbook in sociology or what they had been told by their American sociology teachers. Sociology is a science in search of universal principles of social organization and social behaviour. It knows no national boundaries. If a sociological principle has validity, it has such whether the form of social behaviour is to be found in Pakistan, in West Africa or the Arctic regions of Canada.

There can be no quarrel with such a statement of the ends of sociology. What the first chapter of the introductory textbook fails to point out, however, is the fact that in his effort to formulate general principles of social organization and social behaviour the sociologist must study society, and it is to the examination of his own society that he very largely turns. There is nothing strange nor undesirable about this. A sociology that is worth its salt is a sociology that develops out of a deep concern about the problems of society. The nearer one is to those problems the greater is the concern.

Such was the case in the development of sociology in nineteenth-century Europe, and such ultimately became the case in the development of sociology

in the United States. What the sociologists of Europe were looking for were answers to questions about their society which troubled them, how capitalist forms of social organization developed out of feudal forms, how the nation-state came into being, how revolution became legitimated when an old order gave way to a new, what were the bases and limits of individual liberty where the survival of the society called for the maintenance of a state of order.

These concerns gave to European sociology its distinctive character. When this same sociology, however, was brought to the United States and here prompted the theory speculation of such early representatives of the discipline as Giddings, Ward, Carver, Ross, Summer and Small, it was a sociology that had exceedingly little meaning within the context of the American society. It was only when American sociologists turned to a concern about the problems about them, of ethnic relations with mass immigration from Europe, of rapid and uncontrolled urban growth, of race as thousands of Blacks poured into Northern urban centres, that sociology in the United States became alive. Sociology in the United States had its real beginning with the work of Park, Thomas, and Faris.

There was in the work of these sociologists and their contemporaries very much a search for general principles of social organization and behaviour. The society they studied, however, and the society they talked about was their own society, whether it was Galpin's rural community in Wisconsin, Thomas' Polish immigrant in Chicago, Park's Black now becoming an urban man, or Burgess's spreading urban community. For good reason, they preached at the same time the doctrine of the universality of the science of sociology. It was important to encourage the student of sociology to look beyond his own society. His interest in his own society could be counted upon, fostered as it was by the courses he was taught, the books he was asked to read, the studies he was made to undertake. What was developed in the United States was an American sociology. It was this American character that gave to it its great strength.

As sociology became carried over from the United States to Canada, however, it was the universality of its ends that secured emphasis. Initially, of course, there was good reason for this. The sociologist in Canada had to teach out of American textbooks, refer his students to readings relating to American society. In thus being forced into this position, however, he sought justification for it by the vigorous assertion of the principle that sociology knew no national boundaries.

The consequence has been a studied effort on the part of many sociologists in Canada to avoid types of study that do not appear to fit into the framework of American sociology. What is studied in Canada must be on such a level as to make its results comparable to studies carried out in the United States. Thus Grace Anderson could study the types of networks by which Portuguese immigrants in Toronto secured their first and second jobs in such a fashion that the results of the study would ha.e been no different had the sample of immigrants been drawn from Albuquerque in New Mexico or Toulouse in Southern France. It was important, in maintaining the universality of the study's findings, to avoid any probing into the distinctive character of the Portuguese immigrant community in the city of Toronto.

It is perhaps unfair to pick on Dr. Anderson's excellent study to illustrate the point I wish to make. We need more such studies as hers. But still more do we need studies which probe that which is distinctive about a Canadian society. To charge that studies of such a sort involve a non-theoretical approach has as much validity as would a charge that the work of Max Weber, growing out of a concern as it did with the problems of the society of his time, involved a non-theoretical approach. Sociology cannot help but be comparative in looking at different forms of social structure and behaviour. The question at issue is simply the level at which comparative analysis is undertaken. There is much that is comparable in the structure of the societies of Canada and the United States, and of the societies of Australia, Ireland, Italy and, indeed, of Japan and East Africa, and no one can quarrel with efforts to point up these comparative features. There is much, as well, however, that is distinctive about the Canadian society, and it is the investigation of the distinctive that the Canadian sociologist has tended to shy away from.

Sociology in Canada has never had an H. A. Innis nor a Rowell-Sirois Royal Commission. There was before the 1920's no Canadian economics. In the early development of economics in Canada it was possible for a name-sake of mine to go through his whole life as a teacher of economics using the notes he had taken as a student at Edinburgh. There were in the years before the First World War distinguished economists in Canada, but the economics they taught had little relation to the real economic world about. It was with the work of H. A. Innis that economics came alive in Canada. Returning from graduate study at the University of Chicago, Innis became convinced that the economic theory that had developed out of the study of the economics of the

old world had little application to a new world economy such as that of Canada. What he set about was to develop a new economic theory, wrought out of the hard facts of Canadian economic history.

If economics came alive in Canada with the work of H. A. Innis, it gathered new and very greatly strengthened vigour with the establishment in 1937 of the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations. After seven years of depression and declining university salaries, it was not difficult for the Commission, offering an honorarium of $20.00 a day, to gather around it many of the younger economists from across the country. I shared in a small way in that exciting experience where Canadian economists were compelled to forget much that they had learnt from their economic textbooks in the effort to come to grips with some of the most basic of the problems of the Canadian economy.

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, nearly thirty years later, might have done for sociology in Canada what the Rowell-Sirois Commission had done for economics had it had comparable resources in sociological personnel to call upon and had its research programme not been so pulled in a political and constitutional direction by having both as the director and associate director of research political scientists. Of concern to the Commission were the conditions for the very survival of the Canadian society. No problem of Canadian sociology was of more urgent importance than that faced by the Commission.

In saying that, I am not for a moment suggesting that sociology should hold itself ready to rush in and go to work whenever a politician, government official, businessman, community leader or welfare worker becomes concerned about some problem they define as sociological. It is the social scientist who must determine the significance of the problem at issue. The danger clearly exists that the opportunity to earn additional income may unduly influence the social scientist in his assessment of the significance of the problem he is asked to investigate. An avoidance of being caught up in the immediate concerns of men of action does not mean, however, that the social scientist should hold himself aloof from all problems of concern in the society in which he lives. Indeed, it is this very stance of scientific aloofness which accounts in large part for the readiness of many social scientists to turn to the investigation of problems at the beck of government or other public bodies. The notion that a science must be value free can very readily be made to mean that the social scientist feels himself in no way responsible for judging the social importance of any problem. Thus can be justified any research under-

taking which appears to offer the social scientist the opportunity to test out some of the theoretical or methodological tools of his science without any great regard for who it is that pays for such an undertaking.

It is no easy course that I urge Canadian sociology to follow, where the values of the practitioner are permitted to determine what he does though not how he does it, but sociology is not an easy subject and no fact has made that more apparent than has its defencelessness in warding off the attacks made upon it by those younger members of the profession seeking its "liberation" from the grip of capitalist imperialist forces. Out of the new radical sociology is coming a horribly distorted picture of what our society is really like, what are the forces that have shaped it and determined the character of its development. Yet if sociology in Canada is to avoid becoming caught up in political ideology and being made an instrument for social action, it cannot do so by simply hiding itself behind a cloak of scientism, disclaiming any interest in the kinds of problems the radical sociologists are talking about. If we do not write the sociological history of Canada, the writing of it will be done for us, and we shall have nobody but ourselves to blame if the job is badly done.

A review of sociological work now going forward in Canada, however, offers good reason for optimism regarding the future development of the discipline. Indeed, I think it is possible to say that Canadian sociology is now on the point of coming into its own. Professor Fortin may have been right in his assessment of Canadian sociology as it had developed in the years before about 1968. The argument of this paper has been in support of his view. However, if for a long time the only Canadian sociologists concerned about the fate of their society were those of French Canada, such, I feel, is no longer the case. It is a troubled social world into which the post-war generation of Canadian sociologists has entered. If the response of the more impatient has been to engage in efforts to tear down, among the more responsible has developed the strong urge to understand. It is in their work that the hope for the future development of Canadian sociology rests.

Having said all this, we can now return to a consideration of the problem of the staffing of Canadian departments of sociology by persons brought in from outside the country, particularly from the United States. The argument advanced in this paper leads to a very clear conclusion. The claim that no regard should be paid to the national origin of the members of a sociology department on the ground that sociology knows no national boundaries must be rejected. In claiming to teach a sociology that knows no national

boundaries what really is being taught is American sociology. For many of the recruits to our sociology staffs, the pressure to maintain such a stance is very great. It is across the border in the United States that are to be found the most cherished academic rewards in the profession. It becomes important to publish in leading American sociological journals, to have one's writings referred to in the foot-notes of books written by established American scholars.

It will be objected, of course, that sociologists in Canada cannot avoid doing what American sociologists do because the problems of the two countries are the same. How teach a course, or engage in a study, on labour relations, urban development, the family, the social adjustment of immigrant populations, and find anything different in Canada than in the United States? The answer to such a question is quite simple. If one looks for nothing different, one is not likely to find anything different. Visitors to Canada, back to Goldwin Smith, with a superficial knowledge of the country's history, have seen only that about Canada which was similar to the United States. It is here that can enter an insidious influence in the teaching of the social sciences in Canada. It took an H. A. Innis to demonstrate that to understand the way in which the Canadian economy had developed involved a good deal more than simply knowing how the American economy had developed. Perhaps, in the end, what is most required on the part of the sociologist is a feel for his society. That feel can only be got by knowing its history and having a strong sense of identification with it.

To say that is not to say that sociology should espouse the cause of nationalism. One can be a good Canadian without being a Canadian nationalist, and it is good Canadians we want more of in sociology. I do not believe that a discipline like sociology can develop strength so long as the vast majority of its instructors are persons brought into the country from outside. It is a discipline that must be highly sensitive to the society it finds itself in. Such is the case of sociology in the United States, France, Germany, Sweden; indeed, in any country where it has made its mark. It would be impossible to conceive of the sociology staffs in the universities of any of these countries being made up predominantly of non-nationals. A New School of Social Research could develop in New York City because in the country at large, and in New York City itself, sociology as an American discipline was firmly based.

Regarding what should be done about the problem, allow me to say in conclusion only this, I value too highly the friendship of my colleagues of

American origin, and am too conscious of how much we owe them in meeting the problem of building sociology staffs in this country, to let myself become a party to any act of war upon them. I urge here no Uganda-type expulsion of non-Canadians from Canadian universities. What I urge is only the recognition that a problem does exist. The very recognition of the problem, I feel, will go a long way in solving it. It is thus to my colleagues of American origin that much of what I have had to say in this paper is directed. I do not think I am unfair to them in suggesting that some of them have not been as sensitive as they should to the character of the problem that develops where not one or two, or three or four, but the vast majority of the staff of a sociology department is made up of their fellow nationals. What angers Canadians, and perhaps in particular young Canadians, is to be told that any expression of concern on their part about such a situation smacks of nationalism or, still worse, racism. I have here risked facing such a charge. I can only trust that the argument of this paper is sufficiently convincing that it will not be made.