



The Struggle for Self-Determination:  
A Comparative Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism  
Among the Québécois and the Afrikaners

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## ***Declaration***

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I, the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.

## ***Abstract***

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This thesis examines the structural factors that precipitate the emergence of ethnicity and nationalism, with a special emphasis on ethno-linguistic identity. Nationalist momentum leading to self-determination is also addressed. A historical comparative study of the Québécois of Canada and the Afrikaners of South Africa is presented. The ancestors of both the Québécois and the Afrikaners left Europe (France and the Netherlands, respectively) to establish a new colony. Having disassociated themselves from their European homeland, they each developed a new, more relevant identity for themselves, one which was also vis-à-vis the indigenous population. Both cultures were marked by a rural agrarian existence, a high degree of religiosity, and a high level of Church involvement in the state. Then both were conquered by the British and expected to conform to the English-speaking order. This double-layer of colonialism proved to be a significant contributing factor to the ethnic identity and consciousness of the Québécois and the Afrikaners, as they perceived a threat to their language and their cultural institutions. Nationalist movements provided a forum for the expression of their ethnic identity and demands for autonomy. However, as the Afrikaners' political realm encompassed all of South Africa, and the Québécois' was limited to the province of Québec, their strategies for self-preservation deviated upon assuming political power. Presently, Afrikaner nationalism is reduced to a small fragment aspiring to separatism in the form of a *volkstaat*. Québécois nationalism, though, is still very strong with a separatist party still in power.

## *Opsomming*

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Hierdie tesis ondersoek die strukturele faktore wat die ontwikkeling van etnisiteit en nasionalisme presipiteer, met spesiale verwysing na etno – linguistiese identiteit. Nasionalistiese momentum wat lei tot self-determinasie word ook aangespreek. 'n Histories vergelykende studie tussen die Québécois van Kanada en die Afrikaners van Suid Afrika word voorgehou. Die afstammeling van beide die Québécois en die Afrikaners het Europa verlaat (Frankryk en Nederland onderskeidelik) om 'n nuwe kolonie te vestig. Nadat hulle hulself van hul Europese tuisland gedistansieer het, het hulle beide 'n nuwe en meer relevante identiteit vir hulself geskep wat ook meer vergeleke was met die inheemse bevolking. Beide kulture was gekenmerk deur 'n landelike bestaan, sterk religieuse oortuigings en 'n hoë mate van kerklike invloed in die staat. Vervolgens is beide deur Brittanje verower en is verwag dat gekonformeer word aan die Engelssprekende orde. Hierdie dubbel-laag van kolonialisme het geblyk 'n bepalende bydrae te lewer tot etniese identiteit en bewuswording van beide die Québécois en die Afrikaners as gevolg van die waargenome bedreiging van hulle taal en kulturele instellings. Deur middel van nasionalistiese bewegings kon hulle uiting gee aan hul etniese identiteit en die strewe na outonomie. Die Afrikaner se politieke terrein het egter die hele Suid Afrika ingesluit terwyl die Québécois se politieke relasie beperk was tot die provinsie Québec. Gevolglik het hul strategieë vir self-beskikking verskil met betrekking tot verkryging van politieke mag. Vandag is Afrikaner nasionalisme gereduseer tot 'n klein minderheid wat 'n aparte bestaan voorstaan in die vorm van 'n volkstaat. Québécois nasionalisme is egter nog baie sterk met 'n seperatistiese party steeds aan bewind.

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“Human beings are identity-seeking animals,  
both as individuals and as collectivities.”  
(Oommen, 1997: 35)



“Under the French regime, New France was already known as  
Canada, the inhabitants as Canadian. That was the only name  
for Québécois’ ancestors until the Union of 1840.  
The others called themselves ‘the British’.”  
(Dufour, 1992: 27)



“The history of South Africa is really the history of the origin of a  
new nation — of how, from different European nations, groups,  
and individuals it was separated, cut off, differentiated and specialized  
to form a new *volksgroep*, with its own calling and destiny,  
with its own tradition, with its own soul and with its own body.”  
(J. Albert Coetzee in Thompson, 1985: 43)

## **1. Introduction**

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As the twentieth century and the second millennium draw to a close, the world faces both more integration and more fractures than ever. Global economic and commercial factors, media, information and technology, and migration all contribute to extensive cross-border interaction.<sup>1</sup> Exposure to, and accessibility of information about these global forces allow for world-wide participation in them, be it vicarious or actual. This kind of global, cross-boundary interchange renders true the 'global village' principle.

Paradoxically, though, the world is also experiencing a massive resurgence of ethnic conflicts and nationalist movements. The disruption, both domestic and international, has been monumental, and has taken place in both more and less developed countries. The salience of ethnicity and ethnic identity in these conflicts is unqualified, and conflicts generally arise when one ethnic group seeks to alter its status or gain autonomy when it has been marginalized by another. The ethnic conflict is then manifested in the struggle for self-determination.

The dissolution of colonial control has been a significant factor in the resurgence of ethnicity and nationalism. It has also precipitated events leading to the redefinition of territorial boundaries. European colonizers paid little, if any, attention to ethno-linguistic units while carving out colonies and adding to their empires. The result was a proliferation of colonies encompassing a number of different ethnic and linguistic groups, artificially melded together under a new, foreign, national banner.<sup>2</sup> The deconstruction of colonial empires has given way to ethnic groups revisiting their



identity, which shifts the internal balance of power and creates friction between different co-existent groups. As conflicts build, the cleavages between the groups are intensified, and eventually one group strives for autonomy from the other. The main thrusts behind ethnic conflict in a decolonization context are the control of a state, and the exemption from control by others.<sup>3</sup>

The internationally accepted implicit right to self-determination focuses on self-government with freedom from foreign powers. Self-determination is pursued when the interests and rights of a subordinate ethnic group are not satisfactorily accommodated within the nation-state. Self-determination does not necessarily imply independence, or secession, although many groups opt to follow that path.

Accommodations within the existing state can be made: special Constitutional status, official language status, regional autonomy, and the like. These are contingent upon the nature and extent of subjugation that the ethnic group perceives.

It is true that in some circumstances, minority ethnic groups promote their own cultural interests within a larger state.<sup>4</sup> It is also true that outright independence should not be necessary to guarantee human rights and freedoms, and the protection of a group's culture, language, and traditions.<sup>5</sup> However, as more often happens, groups residing in the same territory have irreconcilable interests, and as ethnicity is a fundamental, non-negotiable feature of those groups, hostility is virtually inevitable.

In divided societies, ethnic conflict is at the center of politics. Ethnic divisions pose challenges to the cohesion of states and sometimes to peaceful relations among states. Ethnic conflict strains the bonds that sustain civility and is often at the root of violence that results in looting, death, homelessness, and the flight of large numbers of people. In divided societies, ethnic affiliations are powerful, permeative, passionate, and pervasive.<sup>6</sup>

Ethnicity, and its progression to nationalism, have achieved prominence in the modern world. Often, though, the modern manifestation of ethnicity is rooted in the historical conditions of the group, and very typically, related to a past conquest and subjugation. Two such examples are the Québécois of Canada, and the Afrikaners of South Africa, which contain many interesting parallels. Some of the essential elements of Canadian and South African history are similar. “The histories of both countries are concerned with two successive fragments of European societies, and the relations between them.”<sup>7</sup> In Canada, the French arrived to settle the Québec region in 1608, and the British conquest of Québec took place in 1759. South Africa was first governed by the Dutch, beginning in 1652, and then the British after 1806.

Both of these settlements, so far apart from each other, were typified initially by a rural, agrarian existence. As they were minority ethnic groups within the larger nation, they vigilantly protected their own customs, heritage, and especially language. “They felt colonized and developed a strong national identity in response to subjugation and pressure for Anglicization.”<sup>8</sup> Each of the Québécois and Afrikaners felt marginalized as they had less access to education, employment, and government. This was due in part to their rural lifestyle which kept them removed from the urban centers, and in part to the dominant British segments’ practice of exclusion.

That each of the Québécois and the Afrikaners had a distinct language was a defining feature of their ethnic group. Language is a factor — one of the most notable factors — of ethnic identity and ethnic group consciousness. In terms of group interaction, it is one of the features that makes insiders and outsiders most recognizable. The self-determination struggles of the Québécois and the Afrikaners

have focused primarily on language issues, as that seems to unite members within these two ethnic groups like no other issue, particularly when its survival is threatened.

The subordinate position of both the Québécois and the Afrikaners resulted in a growing awareness of their subjection. Therefore, efforts to mobilize their numbers and redress the situation occurred. Each of them achieved, through various means, an improved status. The Afrikaners, by way of the National Party election in 1948, gained exclusive state power and governed all of South Africa according to the doctrine of apartheid, separating all races and language groups. Again in 1961, they achieved Republic status, severing ties with the Commonwealth. In Québec, the Parti Québécois came to provincial power in 1976 and launched its agenda of independence from the rest of Canada, believing that its culture and language were at risk by staying in Confederation. With the passage of time, however, there has been a marked divergence between these two cultures. The Afrikaners, currently, are no longer a mainstream political party and their nationalist drives have lost virtually all of their force. In Québec, the separatists are still in power and are biding their time for the optimal conditions to hold another independence referendum. This thesis will show that while the historical conditions of oppression or exploitation are necessary for understanding the pattern of group relations, it is in fact the modern domestic socio-political milieu on which the success of Québécois and Afrikaner self-determination is predicated.

This thesis examines in detail the historical development of both the Québécois and the Afrikaner. Their settlement, conquest, domination, and political participation all

impacted on their ethnic identity and how that identity manifested itself in nationalist and self-determinist movements. An examination of ethnicity and nationalist principles is applied to each of the nations, highlighting the watershed events in each of their histories. Their struggles for self-determination — territorial independence — are discussed in a historical comparative context, as well as the manner in which they now so drastically differ.

Chapter 2 contains an overview of Québécois history. It addresses the original French settlement in Canada, the conquest by and cession to the British, and how these events influenced the development of their distinctive ethnic identity. As well, their mid-20<sup>th</sup> century entrance into the modern world with growing nationalist sentiment and aspirations towards self-determination.

Chapter 3 surveys South African history, beginning with the arrival of the Dutch at the Cape at Good Hope, the assumption of power by the British, and subsequent events which moulded the unique Afrikaner identity. The landmark Anglo-Boer War and its impact on Afrikaner nationalism is discussed, in addition to their emergence on the political front. The link between political power, apartheid, and self-determination is also discussed.

Chapter 4 focuses on ethnicity and nationalism. It begins with a theoretical analysis of each of these principles, tracing the manner in which ethnicity and consciousness of ethnic identity can develop into nationalism. The principles of ethnicity and nationalism are then applied to both the Québécois and the Afrikaners, addressing their salience, and their influence on self-determination. Language, as a significant

distinguishing characteristic of ethnic groups, in particular the Québécois and the Afrikaners, is featured.

Chapter 5 reviews the principle of self-determination, from its 17<sup>th</sup> century origins to its modern acceptance as a universal right. Different forms of self-determination are discussed, as well as strategies for achieving self-determination. The self-determinist goals of each of the Québécois and the Afrikaner are examined, as well as their outcomes. This examination draws a parallel to their history, and to the fact that their outcomes, and the current status of their self-determinist drives are so divergent.

Chapter 6 reviews and summarizes the impact of ethnicity and nationalism on self-determination, as well as the salience of self-determination in positive ethnic group identity. It establishes that regardless of the historical events that mould ethnic identity and nationalist sentiment, it is the modern domestic socio-political order which impacts self-determination.

## Introduction Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Craig Calhoun, "Nationalism and the Contradictions of Modernity", *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 42(1997-98), 28.

<sup>2</sup> W.J. Breytenbach, *Self-Determination in African Politics: The Problems of Ethno-Linguistic and Territorial Self-Determination* (Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa, 1978), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 4-5.

<sup>4</sup> Hurst Hannum, "The Specter of Secession: Responding to claims for Ethnic Self-Determination", *Foreign Affairs*, 77,2(1998), 13.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Horowitz, 12.

<sup>7</sup> Leonard Thompson, "The South African Dilemma" in Louis Hartz (ed.). *The Founding of New Societies* (New York: Harcourt, Brand and World, Inc., 1964), 178.

<sup>8</sup> Heribert Adam, Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, and Kogila Moodley, *Comrades in Business: Post-Liberation Politics in South Africa* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1997), 56.

## 2. *Québécois History*

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### ***Québec: Colony, Conquest and Confederation (1608-1867)***

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The early 17<sup>th</sup> century in France gave rise to an expansionist movement and dreams of newfound wealth amongst the French authorities. There was a push to extend the wealth and power of the French nation, and in particular, to keep up with other European nations which were becoming more advanced. It was deemed that the way to accomplish this was to gain a major share of the maritime and colonial trade.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the shores of North America beckoned, as “the search for a North-west passage to the riches of the Indies; the lure of the flourishing fisheries of the Newfoundland and Nova Scotian banks; the hope that mines rivalling those of Spain might be discovered; the call of a continental treasure-house of furs — such were the motives which first brought the French to Canada”.<sup>2</sup>

It was in this spirit that, in 1608, approximately 30 French people settled along the shores of the St. Lawrence River, in what was then known as New France. Initially, the settlement was sustained by their efforts at agriculture, and the offerings of the fisheries and the fur trade. Gradually, more and more immigrants were brought to Québec, as was obliged by an agreement made by Cardinal Richelieu, the first minister of King Louis XIII. This agreement, made under the auspices of Richelieu’s ‘Company of One Hundred Associates’, granted the company all rights to the land from Florida to the Arctic Circle, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes, in return for providing settlers for the new colony.<sup>3</sup> Gradually, the success of the Company of One Hundred Associates ran its course and it became insolvent. At this

time, the Roman Catholic Church became the new agent of colonization, bringing to the colony a very strong missionary influence. However, the Roman Catholic Church did not confine itself to the spiritual realm but also assumed political leadership in Québec. Thus began a long history of church and religious domination of all spheres of life in Québec, a prevalence which exists to this day.

One mandate of the Roman Catholic Church was to christianize the Native Canadians already inhabiting the territory. When Europeans first arrived in Canada, there were 55 individual nations of Native peoples in the country.<sup>4</sup> Although each group had its own identity and its own social and political structure, the Europeans did not differentiate, seeing each and every one as 'Indian'. Initially they had a reciprocal relationship, as the French relied on the Natives for furs, trapping, exploration, and trade; the Natives relied on the French for iron tools, utensils, and firearms. However, as the French settlement became more permanent and their agricultural efforts expanded, the Natives withdrew, retaining what they could of their traditional hunting and fishing economy.<sup>5</sup> They resisted absorption into the new society, but even so, their own social structure eroded as they became dominated, marginalized, and their participation in society restricted.<sup>6</sup> "With their superior technology and sheer numbers, white people used either brute force, or the threat of brute force, to remove Native people from the path of European settlement."<sup>7</sup> In time, due to epidemics, poor health, and warfare, the roughly 250,000 Native Canadian population from the 1600s was reduced to 102,000 in 1867, at the time of Confederation.<sup>8</sup>



During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the French settlement became increasingly permanent and populous. It remained comfortably under French control, with French laws, French customs, French religion, and the French language. Within the settlement, there was a striking degree of social homogeneity and solidarity.<sup>9</sup> To some extent, this was simply the nature of the settlement and the way in which it developed, but in other ways, the homogeneity was engineered by the French authorities. This was made very clear by the decision not to admit the French Protestant Huguenots as they were being exiled from their homeland.

By the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the population having grown to an estimated 55,000 - 60,000 people,<sup>10</sup> there had developed a distinction between the urban and the rural elements of Québec. The urban 'elite' consisted of the French nobility, the clergy, the land-owners, wealthy merchants, and the influential seigniors. The 'seigniorial' class, which was in the minority, maintained a greater affiliation with France than those in the rural areas, and in fact, many chose to return to France rather than to stay in Québec.<sup>11</sup> The rural majority of the population, the peasantry, was the group which was to truly establish itself in Québec and to eventually become Canadians, rather than French living in Canada. These people were known as the 'habitants' and were largely responsible for the solid foundation of the rural community which revolved around the Roman Catholic Church, and the family. This rural parish community is a phenomenon that has endured throughout the history of Québec as it met all the needs of its members. Its focus centred upon agrarianism and Catholicism, providing "small-scale total societies"<sup>12</sup> and in so doing, it created a sense of isolation. When all their spiritual, economic, political and family needs could

be fulfilled within their own community, the habitants spurned unnecessary contact with the outside world.

The latter years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century brought a tremendous amount of change and conflict to Québec. The British conquest of 1759, and subsequent ceding of Canada by the French king to the British in 1763, created greater divisions than the urban-rural cleavages that had previously existed. With the added dimension of the British presence, there was distinct polarization along demographic, socio-economic, and political lines, which "formed the basis for the emergent patterns of Canadian dualism during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century".<sup>13</sup> The arrival of the British caused the departure of a large number of the French elite. Those who remained, mainly the habitants, were pressured by the growing British population out of their traditional economic pursuits and began to experience a sustained period of anglicization. The result of this second wave of European colonizers was that the established French community, already residing in a state of semi-isolation, turned further inward in an effort to protect itself and its culture, language, and traditions. They would have no help in this endeavour, being detached from France. "The New France which had been so utterly dependent upon the mother country throughout its existence was now separated and isolated from the France which had supplied its rulers, its educators, and its apostles. If the French Canadians were to remain French, they had to do so on the strength of their own resources, under the aegis of a foreign power whose religion, language, laws, and customs were very different from their own."<sup>14</sup>

The arrival of the British, and their attempt to replace French legal and political customs with British traditions, was probably the greatest thrust to the strengthening

of the French culture within Québec. The French realized that in order to maintain their language, customs, and identity as French people, they must mobilize their efforts from within their own numbers. Otherwise, they would have experienced complete assimilation into the ranks of the British. The *Proclamation of 1763*, at the time of cession from France, advocated many changes to the political structure of the colony. In due course, the *Québec Act* of 1774 was enacted which repealed many of the provisions of the *Proclamation of 1763* and attempted to reinstate French customs. Thus, not even ten years after their conquest, the British were becoming aware that the French in their midst would demand due consideration and not allow complete British domination.

Shortly thereafter, however, came another added pressure to the survival of the French. In 1776, the American Revolution began, and although Canada was not involved, it was to feel the effects of the immigration of a large number of United Empire Loyalists. This had a major demographic impact on Canada, as the proportion of English speaking people grew from approximately 3% of the total population in 1775, to approximately 15% of the total population by 1790.<sup>15</sup> In 1791, the linguistic demography was such that the English-speaking population was sufficient to sustain its own province. As such, the *Constitution Act* was legislated which gave Lower Canada (Québec) to the French, and Upper Canada (Ontario) to the English.<sup>16</sup> This move effectively entrenched linguistic and cultural regionalism which set the stage for continued and long-lived polarity between these two provinces.

With the 19<sup>th</sup> century appeared a new class of educated professionals in Québec which sought to challenge the growing Anglo-domination. What emerged was known as *le parti patriote* making demands for responsible government and majority rule, which would then allow the French-Canadians to control the government of Québec rather than the English-controlled appointed legislature. The *patriote* power struggle was rooted in a growing sense of French-Canadian nationalism, "which sprang from the common origins of the educated professionals among the rural habitants and reflected their nativistic reactions against Anglo domination".<sup>17</sup> As this issue became more disputed, the English population became more resistant to the change and eventually the two factions became so polarized that Québec was no longer satisfied with demanding responsible government, and went on to demand complete independence and the creation of a separate French-Canadian republic.<sup>18</sup> This struggle resulted in the Rebellion of 1837-1838 which saw the defeat of the *patriotes*, and the disheartening of French Canadians. Their nationalist sentiment, however, was strengthened by events subsequent to the rebellion.

Arising from the Rebellion of 1837 was the famous 'Durham Report', commissioned by the British government to look into the causes of the struggle. Lord Durham's analysis revealed that the Rebellion had two fronts: "the conflict for political supremacy being waged between the elitist executive and the popularly elected legislature, and in the ubiquitous ethnic conflict between French and English which pervaded all aspects of Canadian life".<sup>19</sup> In resolution, Lord Durham recommended that French Canadians be subjected to the Anglo-Saxon majority, with hopes for their assimilation. As the Durham Report gave the French no autonomy, the factor which

allowed for the continuation of their distinctive culture was their existence in relative isolation.<sup>20</sup>

The next major milestone in Canadian history greatly affected both the English and the French populations, and the relations between them. The *Union Act* of 1840 united the separate entities of Lower Canada and Upper Canada into the 'Province of Canada'. In the provisions of the Act, the existing laws of both provinces were retained, but English became the official language of all of Canada, and each Lower and Upper Canada were granted an equal number of representatives in the elected assembly, despite the fact that Upper Canada had only approximately 70% of the population of Lower Canada.<sup>21</sup> As well, Upper Canada was bankrupt owing to its construction of canals on the St. Lawrence River, so Lower Canada had to assume that debtload. Clearly what angered the French in Lower Canada most was the imposition of English as the official language, which was deeply resented. "It was the first official measure directed against an essential element of their survival, and the first step in Durham's proposed program of anglicization."<sup>22</sup> In the spirit, perhaps, of Durham's plan for assimilation of both cultures, the speech given by the governor-general of the day to officially announce the establishment of the union, opened with the rather naïve statement: "Inhabitants of the Province of Canada: Henceforth may you be united in sentiment as you are from this day in name!"<sup>23</sup> And after nearly a decade of struggle, the 1849 opening of the session of parliament was in both French and English, and the "French Canadians rejoiced at this official recognition of their cherished tongue".<sup>24</sup>

In the years following, the *Union Act* was clearly an insufficient piece of legislation to meet the needs of all the constituents. Increased immigration greatly inflated the English population in Upper Canada, who then came to demand representation by population; the French in Lower Canada were demanding equality in hopes of avoiding English domination.<sup>25</sup> The eventual outcome of this disunity was the *British North America Act* of 1867 (*B.N.A. Act*) which gave a federal constitution to Canada, now consisting of Ontario, Québec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. This new legislation, which Québécois approached with much unease and little enthusiasm, provided for a highly centralized federal government but did allow for certain measures of provincial autonomy. In particular, it guaranteed the equality of the French and English languages in the federal parliament, the Québec legislature, and in the federal and Québec courts. It also retained French civil law in Québec.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, this agreement provided more autonomy than previous agreements, yet nonetheless, "the question of survival for the French Canadians was brought more to the fore by Confederation than at any time since the (British) conquest".<sup>27</sup> Clearly, Québec saw the eventual deterioration of English-French relations now that it was just one French province united with three English provinces, soon to become six, in Confederation. The result of Confederation was that the *B.N.A. Act* "crystallized, in constitutional form, the existing plural segmented character of Canadian society and preserved this plural structure for future generations".<sup>28</sup>

### ***Québec: From Confederation to Separation? (1867-1999)***

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French-English relations in Canada had never been harmonious, and Confederation did little to alleviate the discord. However, greater infighting was to occur as "the

[Anglo-]Boer war split open the cleft between French and English Canadians which had been developing since 1867, and created a deep division between them which has lasted until the present day".<sup>29</sup> The war in South Africa saw English Canadians aligned with British imperialists, and the French Canadians in the nationalist camp. The French were decidedly unwilling to participate in the Anglo-Boer War, as they were called to do on behalf of the British army. It was deemed that if the British were intent on crushing one cultural minority within its Empire, then it was altogether feasible that the French Canadians would suffer the same fate.<sup>30</sup>

In fact, it was the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), an event which was really quite beyond the realm of Canadian politics, which sparked the evolution of French-Canadian nationalism. This movement found its promising leader in Henri Bourassa, a member of parliament and protégé of then prime minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier. As a reaction against Canadian involvement in the South African War and the issue of conscription, Bourassa resigned from parliament, broke with Laurier, and began to more fervently appeal to his fellow French-Canadian nationalists, effectively altering the course of Canadian politics.<sup>31</sup>

And so the 20<sup>th</sup> century began much as the 18<sup>th</sup> century ended: the French-Canadians launched in a struggle to be heard and to be recognized as a distinct group within Canada. In both cases, the thrust behind the struggle was in opposition to a foreign power — British colonialism and imperialism. The actions of the nationalist leader in challenging participation in the Anglo-Boer War were seen to have personified French-Canadian reaction to the imperialist movement.<sup>32</sup>

In the ever changing landscape of Québec, immigration was to have a great impact on the socio-economic structure of the province. As discussed previously, the majority of residents in Québec maintained a rural, agrarian lifestyle which afforded them a certain amount of isolation, privacy and independence. Communities revolved around the Roman Catholic Church and the family as a social and economic unit, as "homogenous, egalitarian rural enclaves existing in semi-isolation from the turbulent and cultural activities of the larger cities".<sup>33</sup> There existed a level of social completeness by living and working in a rural parish which deemed interaction with, or interference from others, unwelcome. However, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century this would all change. Throughout the century, over one million British immigrants had settled in Ontario which brought drastic social, economic and political changes. The advent of manufacturing and industrialization to support the greater population in Ontario impacted on Québec as it too experienced this movement to industrialization. Also in Québec, which had always sustained a high birth rate, the rural system was no longer able to support itself because of the demographic ratio of population to land.<sup>34</sup> What ensued was a massive out-migration from the rural areas; people who found themselves unable to secure employment in the rural areas moved to the metropolitan centres for work in the manufacturing sector. In this manner, industrialization and urbanization increased codependently.

The effect of the industrialization and urbanization trend was to disrupt the social institutions of the rural parish community of Québec. No longer were Québécois afforded the security and solidarity provided by their home community as they moved to the urban centres for work. Additionally, most industries and factories were English-owned which forced a new medium of communication onto the French



Canadians. The experience of industrialization was one which impacted the values of a generation of French-Canadians:

Becoming an industrial worker meant, for the French-Canadian, not learning new skills but entering the highly competitive struggle of a new impersonal work world for which his traditional education had not equipped him. It meant coming into a status of occupational subordination to a culturally alien employer, whether anonymous or individualized. He was used to social relationships of a highly personal and emotional character and felt like a stranger in the bureaucratic hierarchical social universe of the factory or the plant where most English and Protestant managers put a premium on technical efficiency and communicated with him in a language he did not master. New values as well as new goals of life ambition were imposed on him. The almost inevitable result was frustration, loss of self-confidence and a growing consciousness of alienation.<sup>35</sup>

The changes that took place in Canada and had such a profound impact on Québec were met with a series of internal 'Québécois' movements, a mobilization of sorts to deal with the growing displacement of the Québécois people and the increasing threat to their solidarity and valued institutions. The first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was devoted to creating programs or institutions which would promote the cause of the Québécois, and insulate them in a more exclusively French and Catholic environment. The term "*maîtres chez nous*"<sup>36</sup> expressed their desire for autonomy, and thus they took a more active role in ensuring that autonomy. A number of organizations emerged, many of them from within the Church hierarchy: L'Action Catholique; The Confederation of Catholic Trade Unions; Caisse Populaires; L'Action Catholique Jeune Canadiens; Jeunesse Ouvriere; Scouts Catholiques; as well as other credit unions and farming and fishing cooperatives.<sup>37</sup> In time, there were also a number of French business associations that adopted the slogan *achetez chez nous*, encouraging their communities to patronize businesses which were French owned

and operated. The pervasiveness and inter-connectedness of these organizations gave the Québécois more of a sense of belonging, even if they were without the 'social completeness' of living within their own family unit in their own community.

The nationalist movement in Québec in the late 1920's gave rise to a secret society, founded in nationalism and anti-semitism: the Ordre de Jacques Cartier. The Ordre de Jacques Cartier was established with the blessing of the Catholic and French clergy, despite the Church's ban on secret societies.<sup>38</sup> The establishment of secret societies is a trend which typically arises in opposition to foreign rule by conquest.<sup>39</sup> The goals of the Ordre de Jacques Cartier, which infiltrated as many as possible of the major institutional spheres of French-Canadian life, were an independent French and Catholic state, to fight anglicization and minimize contacts between French and English, and to strengthen the position of the French language within Québec.<sup>40</sup> The success of the Ordre de Jacques Cartier was partly due to the fact that it recruited only prominent men in positions of influence so that links could be established with the professional and clerical elites. The Ordre de Jacques Cartier, fostering a revolutionary, secessionist movement, helped to buttress political parties with which it was aligned, firstly L'Union Nationale, and then the Bloc Populaire.

The emergence of these political parties in Québec helped to mobilize the nationalist campaign in the political arena. In doing so, the "Québécois now sought to challenge the English establishment, to remove the barriers that restricted their own opportunities, and to create a new structure of society using the apparatus of the provincial state in which their control was clear".<sup>41</sup> This period of the 1960s, the so-called 'Quiet Revolution' was engineered with a very clear goal. Initially, the thrust

was that of *rattrapage*, or 'catching up', in order to "bring Québec into the stream of modern Western economic development".<sup>42</sup> Some specific ways in which this was achieved were introducing new and better technological and industrial skills, increased university enrolment, and providing financial aid for francophone industries. There developed a 'self-improvement' program for the Québécois which would allow the better educated Québécois community more equal competition with English Canada and the United States.

The motivation behind the Quiet Revolution was to correct the unbalance resulting from the earlier processes of urbanization and industrialization. Two effects of this, contributing to greater cleavages between the French and English, were the growth of a class of industrial workers who became critical of anglophone capitalist exploitation, and the rise of a new middle class of white collar workers, mainly in the public sector, who considered their ambitions for upward mobility blocked by anglophone dominance and control.<sup>43</sup> The Quiet Revolution, so called because its tactics denied the use of violence, used various means, including legislation and education to strengthen the position of the Québécois in its relations with English Canada. The movement, in favour of a sovereign, independent Québec, was concerned with steering Québec into a more prosperous future, whilst maintaining its language and religious traditions from the past.

The structures of the Quiet Revolution had a significant impact on the domain of the provincial government. As powers were increasingly devolving from the federal to the provincial government, Québec gained much more control over its own affairs. In fact, it has been said that "the province of Québec is the most powerful subnational

government in all of the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] countries in terms of its share of resources and its scope of intervention".<sup>44</sup> The success of these efforts, then, gradually evolved into a movement for independence.

In 1976, the nationalist Parti Québécois was elected to govern the province. This was seen as a mandate to explore the possibility of separation from the rest of Canada, evoking a nation-wide unity crisis. During the decade of the 1970s, though, Québec was experiencing a population shift as the birth rate greatly decreased and the numbers of immigrants rose. Although the Québec government recognized that they needed to sustain their population, they also recognized that immigration was accompanied by ethnic pluralism. Most immigrants chose to receive English education, thereby threatening the distinctiveness and pervasiveness of the French culture. In reaction to this, some very specific and restrictive language laws were instituted, notably the 'Charter of the French Language in Québec', Bill 101 in 1977. Under the terms of this law, French was to be used by management in all communications in the public and private sectors; businesses were required to obtain a 'francization certificate' as evidence of their compliance; immigrant children had to be educated in French; and French was made the only official language of Québec.<sup>45</sup> "The French language, then, became the mechanism for integrating the people of Québec, regardless of background, and reinforced the boundaries of Québec."<sup>46</sup>

The language laws, and Québec's more pro-active approach satisfied nationalists for a time and the issue of separation diminished, but didn't disappear altogether.

Meanwhile, the whole of Canada was seeking more autonomy from Britain, a matter

of 'breaking away' from the figurehead of the country. The Canadian Constitution was repatriated in 1982, for "the *British North American Act* of 1867, as an act of the British Parliament and Canada's Constitution for many years, only served as a reminder that Canadian society had never created a charter for its own existence".<sup>47</sup> Having the Constitution resting in a foreign country was also a constant reminder to Québec of British dominance within the country. However, the Québec government refused to ratify the new Constitution as they felt it did not go far enough to protect their language and their distinct heritage. Since that time, constitutional amendments to win Québec's approval have proven to be fruitless. The two primary agreements — the Meech Lake Accord and the Charlottetown Agreement — were voted down by other provincial legislators as giving too much authority to Québec, and the controversy over the term 'distinct society'. This is the recognition that Québec expected from the rest of Canada — that of distinct society status — but it was not granted. Arguably, there exists within Canada's mandate of multiculturalism, as opposed to assimilation, several 'distinct societies' worthy of endorsement and protection. However, the Québécois "founded their nationalism on a dualistic vision of history in which they are one of two founding nations living in Canada and clearly differentiated by culture. Therefore, they seek to be recognized as distinct, with state power to realize that distinctiveness, within the territory of Québec."<sup>48</sup>

Currently, however, the two-nations history has been discarded in favour of a three-nations approach. The 'First Nations' people are comprised of the Indians, Métis, and Inuit. Although they are only approximately 3% of the Canadian population, they are a group which has been garnering more support and attention from the federal

government. In fact, in 1999, the Inuit obtained self-government in their own territory, but remain within the larger structures of Canada.<sup>49</sup>

The Québec government has held referendums regarding its own autonomy, in 1980 and 1995. In each, the issue of separation was voted against, albeit with a progressively narrowing margin. As hard-line separatists have assumed government control, it has impacted on the demographics of Québec. As separation, or sovereignty has become a possibility, there has been an increase in outmigration from Québec. Both the English-speaking population, as well as French who are committed to staying in Canada, are choosing to leave Québec and live in one of the other provinces. In fact, "over 250,000 Anglophones have left Québec since the 1970s".<sup>50</sup> The impact of this movement, "with the demographic strength of the Anglophones reduced after two decades of outmigration, the ability of Québec Anglophones to function as a counterweight to separatism is much more limited".<sup>51</sup> As the concentration of francophone voters increases, the eventuality of a 'yes' vote in also increasing.

The Parti Québécois is still in power in Québec, and in the most recent election in November, 1998, they were allotted 76 seats as opposed to the 48 seats for the federalist Liberal Party. However, in terms of the popular vote, the Parti Québécois received 43%, compared to the Liberals at 44%.<sup>52</sup> Clearly, then, there is support for an independent Québec, but when the time comes to decide to actually separate, the outcome is impossible to predict. Accommodations are made by the federal government, which has a commitment to seeing Canadian unity, including the province of Québec in their vision. However, of particular note, is the interest that the

current government of France has shown Québec. The French president, Jacques Chirac, has acknowledged Québec's right to self-determination, offering solidarity and support in their cause.<sup>53</sup> This can only come as a boost to Québec's identity and campaign for recognition, as so much of it historically has been based on English domination and French defeat.

## **Québécois History Endnotes**

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<sup>1</sup> Yves Zoltvany (ed.), *The French Tradition in America* (New York: Harper, 1969), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Mason Wade, *The French Canadians, Volumes I and II* (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1968), 4.

<sup>3</sup> Zoltvany, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Harry Hiller, *Canadian Society: A Macro Analysis* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Canada Inc., 1996), 233.

<sup>5</sup> Kenneth McRae, "The Structure of Canadian History" in Louis Hartz (ed), *The Founding of New Societies* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1964), 263.

<sup>6</sup> Hiller, 234.

<sup>7</sup> Hiller, 233.

<sup>8</sup> Currently, there are approximately 783,980 Native Canadians living across Canada. See Hiller, 233-237.

<sup>9</sup> Joel Novek, *Cooperation and Conflict in Dual Societies: A Comparison of French Canadian and Afrikaner Nationalism* (Quebec: International Centre for Research on Bilingualism, 1970), 28.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 28-29.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 50.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 29.

<sup>14</sup> Wade, 48.

<sup>15</sup> Novek, 31.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 36.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 37.



<sup>21</sup> Wade, 224.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 226.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 267.

<sup>25</sup> McRae, 252.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 253.

<sup>27</sup> Wade, 331.

<sup>28</sup> Novek, 38.

<sup>29</sup> Wade, 447.

<sup>30</sup> Marc T. Boucher, "The Struggle to Save Canada: A Quebec Perspective", *Orbis*, 41,3(1997), 452.

<sup>31</sup> Wade, 497.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 495.

<sup>33</sup> Novek, 50.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 55.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 29.

<sup>36</sup> *maîtres chez nous* = masters in our own house.

<sup>37</sup> Novek, 79.

<sup>38</sup> Wade, 998.

<sup>39</sup> Novek, 82.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 82.

<sup>41</sup> Hiller, 216.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 214.

<sup>44</sup> Stéphane Dion, "Explaining Quebec Nationalism" in R. Kent Weaver (ed.), *The Collapse of Canada?* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1992), 78.

<sup>45</sup> Hiller, 217.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 309.

<sup>48</sup> Jane Jenson, "Naming Names: Making Nationalist Claims in Canadian Public Discourse", *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 30,3(1993), 340.

<sup>49</sup> Julian Borger, "Inuits get their Promised Land", *Mail and Guardian*, March 26 – April 2, 1999, 19. The term 'Métis' initially referred to children of French and Indian parentage. It is now commonly used to mean any person with partial Indian ancestry. See: Hiller, 236.

<sup>50</sup> Marc V. Levine, "Canada and the Challenge of the Quebec Independence Movement" in Winston Van Horne (ed.). *Global Convulsions: Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism and the End of the Twentieth Century*. (Albany: New York State University Press, 1997), 328.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 328-329.

<sup>52</sup> Robert McKenzie, "France will Support Quebec's Decision on its Future", *The Toronto Star*, September 3, 1999.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

### 3. South African History

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#### **South Africa: Colonization and Recolonization (1652-1899)**

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Sea routes to the lucrative spice trade in the East Indies took Portuguese explorers to the water in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. One such explorer, Bartholomeu Dias, rounded the southern tip of the African continent in 1487 naming it 'Capo da Boa Esperanca' (Cape of Good Hope). However, as the Portuguese had no interest in settling the Cape area, the seafarers continued on to the Indies. By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, British and Dutch traders were beginning to challenge the Portuguese, thus with increased marine traffic, the Cape became a regular stopover for boats en route to the Indies. In time, the Dutch decided to establish a settlement to serve as a 'refreshment station' where ships could shelter, and stock up on fresh meat, fruits, vegetables and water. At this point, however, the Dutch had no intentions of colonizing the area.

Although the Dutch perceived the Cape area to be, in effect, *terra nullius*, there were in fact groups of indigenous people living in the area. Two main groups inhabited the Cape and its environs, the San and the Khoikhoi, whose ancestors are traced back to the Middle and Late Stone Age periods, up to 40,000 years ago. The San were highly mobile and widely dispersed people who relied primarily on the abundance of game. Their political organization, and the authority of their chiefs was rudimentary.<sup>1</sup> The Khoikhoi were much more populous, numbering almost 100,000 when the Dutch came to the Cape. They had a more developed social system, were known as herders

possessing sheep and cattle, and engaged in trade with neighbouring Black groups.<sup>2</sup>

The term 'Khoisan' evolved within European circles as an amalgam of both the Khoikhoi and the San, as the two groups are difficult to distinguish.<sup>3</sup>

In 1652, Jan van Riebeeck, arrived in Cape Town as an agent of the Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.: *Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie*). The instructions of the V.O.C. were to establish a base with food supplies and a hospital, as so many of their sailors were succumbing to disease. Five years later, the V.O.C. effectively set in motion the beginning of a permanent colony as nine company servants were given permission to settle on private farms on the slopes of Table Mountain.<sup>4</sup> In 1679, another 20 settlers were allowed to establish farms further inland from Cape Town, in the Stellenbosch district. As these farmers became more secure and more settled, it appeared that the Dutch would, after all, have a colony in South Africa. Therefore, a campaign to encourage European immigrants was introduced in an effort to further populate the area.

The Khoikhoi had traded with European shipping crews as they stopped at the Cape, typically trading their beef and mutton for tobacco, copper and iron. However, with the Dutch settlement, the Khoikhoi lost their traditional pasturelands, and came to realize that the Europeans were then permanent residents. Initially, the implications of this were territorial, but gradually the situation degenerated. The Khoikhoi were twice defeated in battle with the Dutch during the 17th century. The freed farmers were contracted to sell provisions to the V.O.C., thus reducing their reliance on trade with the Khoikhoi. The

V.O.C. began to adjudicate disputes between Khoikhoi clans, which became increasingly fragmented, dependent, subordinated and assimilated. In addition, the population was decimated by a smallpox epidemic, and it is estimated that barely one in ten Khoikhoi in the south-western Cape survived the spread of the disease.<sup>5</sup>

Although the Dutch authorities of the V.O.C. decreed that the Khoikhoi were a free people, "thus they were to be neither conquered nor enslaved but were to be treated with respect and consideration",<sup>6</sup> the experience with the Europeans did not act in their interests. "The advance of the white frontier destroyed some Khoisan groups, absorbed others, and drove yet others deep into the interior."<sup>7</sup> Eventually, their distinct identity was lost as they were intermarried with slaves and other groups, forming what became known as the Cape Coloured people.

The Dutch colony, in attempting to fully establish their presence at the Cape, encouraged European immigrants to populate the area. One wave of immigration which was to have a great influence on the welfare of the South African colony was the arrival of approximately 200 French Huguenots in 1688. The staunchly Protestant Huguenots were forced by religious persecution to leave their native France. Many found themselves in the Netherlands, then eventually in South Africa. The arrival of the Huguenots represented a significant increase in the white settler community, as they accounted for roughly one-sixth of the population. They also represented a goldmine of skills and experience for the previous settlers, as they "were characterized by their knowledge of viticulture, by their industriousness and high capacity for organization, by a stern Calvinist fanaticism, and by a rejection of Europe and all her ways. The latter

two traits at least were to become part of the Boer ethos".<sup>8</sup> The authorities, exerting pressure towards cultural and linguistic uniformity, opted to intersperse the French-speaking Huguenots amongst the Dutch farmers to facilitate their assimilation. The French language gradually died out as the Huguenots were integrated into the existing social structure which required them to study, worship, and communicate with the authorities in Dutch. The government was resolute in regards to this aspect, as they ruled that they "wanted no Quebec in the Cape".<sup>9</sup> Gradually, the Huguenots came to see the Cape as their permanent home, intermarried with other farming families, and were integrated by shared interests and grievances held by the Cape farming community against the authorities.<sup>10</sup>

The next number of years saw little agreement between the V.O.C. administrators and the newly settled farmers. The V.O.C was inclined to monopolize trade and production, fix prices, and thereby limit any material accumulation. In response to this antagonism, the V.O.C decided to halt its immigration recruitment scheme. It was not until the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that immigration was again encouraged but without impressive results.

The Dutch experience in the East Indies, prior to their settlement in South Africa, meant that they had already participated in a slave-owning society. Accustomed to this type of divided society, the "introduction of slavery to the new colony came as a virtually fore-ordained, although incidental, consequence of its settlement".<sup>11</sup> As slavery was an accepted part of society, the importation of slaves grew to provide all-important labour for the farming districts in the Cape Colony. In fact, slaves accounted for a significant part

of the population. The first significant shipments of slaves arrived at the Cape in 1658-1659, after which was a steady importation.<sup>12</sup> By 1798, the white population was 21,746, and the slave population had risen to 25,754. The population was not self-reproducing, however, as mostly males were recruited, and there was a high mortality rate mostly due to disease. This led to even greater numbers being imported to satisfy market demands. In 1807, the British Parliament made the slave trade illegal in the British Empire. As Britain had just taken control of the Cape Colony the year previously, this law applied. Initially, this meant a labour shortage, and the price of slaves doubled. In 1833, slaves throughout the British Empire were emancipated. However, in the Cape, the situation continued much as always for the next few years, as there was a time allowance of four years for domestic slaves, and six years for plantation slaves, before service was terminated.<sup>13</sup>

By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there was division between the urban and rural elements of South African society. The residents of the metropolitan areas were the only ones who retained any contact with Europe, they were a 'middle class' of professionals and merchants. In distinction to the metropolitan life was that of the 'trekboer', essentially semi-nomadic farmers moving their herds in search of grazing land. These subsistence-level farmers lived in partial-isolation, although they did maintain supply and trading links. Their communities on the frontier were socially homogeneous and were characterized by a high regard for the Old Testament fundamentalism of the Dutch Reformed Church. The frontier 'boers' typically were cautious, if not disdainful, of any authority which might encroach on their freedoms and preferred to live beyond the reach of colonial administration. In particular were their divergent principles on the use and maintenance of slave labour. In shedding the unnecessary vestiges of their

European background, the people on the frontier adapted the Dutch language to their needs and developed a dialect known as Afrikaans.<sup>14</sup>

By 1795, the V.O.C. faced financial ruin, and Cape Town became occupied by the British, albeit for a short time. Continued European political manoeuvres returned the Cape Colony to the Batavian Republic (as the Netherlands became known) in 1803.<sup>15</sup> Again, this domination was short-lived, as when hostilities were renewed in Europe, British troops once again arrived in Cape Town in 1806, this time to stay. The first few years of British control did little to change life for the inhabitants, but presently they began a program of anglicization. This included education, the courts, the legislature, and the church. The encroachment of the British led the Afrikaner community to strengthen their domain from within their own numbers and to develop cognizance of their own cultural identity. "The British occupation of the Cape, coupled with the cultural isolation of the Boers, accentuated sentiments of nativism among the Boers who warmly embraced all indigenous traditions and cast a cold on all things British or foreign."<sup>16</sup>

As a result of the Afrikaner reaction against British control in South Africa, there was further polarization between the urban and rural segments. The urban areas became more English, and more prosperous as Cape Town flourished when the British allowed the free trade denied by the V.O.C. A number of British merchants had arrived in Cape Town, concentrating the material wealth. The rural areas, however, remained 'boer', Afrikaans-speaking, and relatively poor. Therefore, the urban/rural cleavage became



increasingly entrenched, and emerged as an economic, an ethnic, a demographic, and a political cleavage as well.

The heightened polarity between the Afrikaner and the British led to a greater sense of isolation on the part of the Afrikaner who came to increasingly dislike and distrust the British. The Afrikaners did not adapt well to British control, nor were they satisfied with the actions of the government. In particular, Ordinance Fifty (which gave legal equality and protection to all persons, and repealed previous pass laws), and the abolition of slavery,<sup>17</sup> proved to be very problematic for the Afrikaners who believed in their own Biblically-ordained supremacy. Rather than staging a rebellion in the Cape, the outcome of which being uncertain, the Afrikaners staged a retreat. There was an ensuing exodus whereby farms and property were abandoned and the Afrikaners whom later became mythologized as *Voortrekkers* began the 'Great Trek' in 1835. Unable to remain within the confines of British control, they began "a mass trek to a land of their own where they might be left to themselves, to live in quiet, free and exempt from taxation".<sup>18</sup> This unprecedented outpouring of nationalist spirit, and protection of their way of life and their language, took approximately 10,000 - 12,000<sup>19</sup> of the Afrikaners from the Cape area and spread them across the far reaches of South Africa, beyond the command of the British. Eventually, two independent Boer republics were founded: the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

The Great Trek, as a "major historical event in the crystallization of Afrikaner nationalism",<sup>20</sup> was a significant assertion of political autonomy. It also had the effect of

spreading the Afrikaners all over South Africa, no longer containing them to a certain region. This rendered impossible the segregation of races, as the Afrikaners spread into land occupied by Black Africans. It also placed race relations at the fore in social, political, and economic movements in South Africa. The experience of the Great Trek:

meant that white society would be bifurcated, for a considerable time period, into two incompatible plural segments. One was Afrikaans-speaking, rural, poor and hostile towards non-whites. The other was English-speaking, urban, affluent and paternalistic towards non-whites. Furthermore, the success of the Great Trek coupled with the failure of the British immigration policy ensured that in South Africa, ...the first of the two European-origin sectors would ultimately prevail numerically and politically.<sup>21</sup>

As a result of the Great Trek, many Afrikaners came to inhabit the region known as Natal. Natal became an independent republic, and for some time, was the main Afrikaner base in the period following the Trek. Natal's government, based on adult white male enfranchisement, was organized as a representative democracy.<sup>22</sup> This took place between 1838-1843, at which point, Natal was annexed by the British government. Following the annexation, many of the 'trekkers' once again uprooted and headed further away from British domination, into what would become known as the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Britain recognized the independence of the Transvaal in 1852, and of the Orange Free State in 1854. "South Africa was thus partitioned between Britain and the *Voortrekkers*."<sup>23</sup>

Life in the Afrikaner republics was much as it was on the frontiers previously. It consisted of "an undifferentiated community of pastoral farmers, with scarcely any

distinctions of wealth, occupation, or class".<sup>24</sup> These people were fiercely loyal to their families, communities, and to their religion. Their goal, in setting up their own republics, was to live according to their own terms, loyal to that which they chose to be, and with as little intervention as possible from beyond their borders. The two republics developed somewhat differently though, with the more politically-moderate remaining in the Orange Free State where they assimilated with other Afrikaners who settled there prior to the Great Trek, and with the amalgam of African and British peoples who were also in residence. The remainder, who carried on further to settle in the less populous Transvaal, were more independent, more determined in their quest for isolation and united primarily on a mutual animosity towards the British and their policies.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, unity was not always present within the Afrikaner nation, for the two republics were loosely based on different motives and goals, and attempts to unite them failed. It must also be noted that a large part of the Afrikaner population remained in the Cape Colony, opting not to participate in the Great Trek, rather forming the majority of the white population in the Cape.<sup>26</sup>

The final three decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought tremendous change to all of South Africa. Most significantly, in the republics, was the discovery of diamonds near Kimberley in 1867, and gold at Witwatersrand in 1886. With the prospect of terrific wealth, these areas were flooded with newcomers. Afrikaners who fled civilization to live unhindered found themselves with some of the world's richest mineral deposits, which led to major repercussions for them, and the entire country. Firstly, the Cape Colony had been experiencing economic depression owing in part to the opening of the Suez

Canal and thus a reduction of shipping and trading traffic, leading a large number of people to the republics in search of wealth.<sup>27</sup> The republics experienced great demographic changes as there was a rush of prospectors, miners, merchants and the like. As the mining industries were developed, they effected a mini-industrial revolution with the introduction of telegraph lines, rail lines, more roads, bridges, and harbours.<sup>28</sup> This would forever change the landscape of the rural, agrarian republics.

The British perceived the Orange Free State to be very loosely governed. They also felt it would be to their advantage to preside over the wealth generated by the diamond industry, and that the moderately lax regime would be surmountable. Therefore, in 1871, the British annexed the diamond fields from the Orange Free State, generating much hostility and resentment. The British also, then, annexed the Transvaal in 1877, which was not enthusiastically met by the Afrikaner living in the Transvaal. Within a few years, the British were defeated by the Afrikaners in what is known as the First Boer War, or the War of Liberation. In 1881, the Transvaal was recognized as independent and became known as the South African Republic.

Meanwhile, the Afrikaners who remained in the Cape Colony were also experiencing an upheaval of sorts, but a cultural and intellectual one. The 1870s brought a rebirth of Afrikaner nationalism to the Cape Colony.<sup>29</sup> Part of this revival was expressed through the introduction of a number of organizations and societies, which originated as a reaction against the threatened continuation of their culture and language. The first organization was the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* (Society of True Afrikaners),

founded by a group of intellectuals in the Paarl region who were able to disseminate their views through their own newly introduced Afrikaans-language newspapers. The central theme of this organization, and others to follow was that "the Afrikaners were a distinct people or nation, occupying a distinct fatherland, South Africa, speaking a God-given language, Afrikaans, and endowed by God with the destiny to rule South Africa and civilize its heathen peoples".<sup>30</sup>

In an attempt to create economic solidarity amongst the Cape Afrikaners, and to promote cultural and linguistic issues, the *Boeren Beschermings Vereeniging* (Farmers' Protection Agency) was created in 1878. The Afrikaner Bond was also established in 1880 as a political organization to promote the cultural, economic and political interests of the Afrikaners. Although these two groups had different methods and different agendas, they had the same interests — the welfare of the Afrikaners — and were amalgamated in 1883.<sup>31</sup>

### ***South Africa: Anglo-Boer War, Apartheid, and Democracy (1899-1999)***

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The end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw new heights of both Afrikaner nationalism and British imperialism, and the two were fated to clash. The Afrikaner republics were singularly unwilling to give all the gathered foreigners citizenship,<sup>32</sup> as to allow them the franchise would amount to giving up the Transvaal.<sup>33</sup> The British not only took to heart the grievances of the foreigners in the Transvaal, but also realized the extent of wealth to be had in gold and diamonds and wanted to avail themselves of it, "by hurrying South

Africa, by force and stratagem if need be, into a single political dominion".<sup>34</sup> This was to be the culmination of the British government's quest for a united South Africa, and an expression of their paramountcy.

This irreconcilable conflict between the Afrikaner and the British resulted in the 1899-1902 Anglo-Boer War. From the outset, the war was uneven as the British troops outnumbered the Afrikaners nearly five to one. However the resilient, intrepid Afrikaners with their superior knowledge of the landscape, were able to put forth a determined effort. The Anglo-Boer War saw the uniting of the Orange Free State and South African Republic against the British presence, a union that had not been possible in the past. After a three-year battle, peace was declared through the Treaty of Vereeniging and although the war was over there remained a legacy of resentment between the two factions. The significant reasons for the lingering hostility were the scorched earth policy of the British, and the concentration camps during the war. The British, unprepared for the battle waged by the Afrikaners, resorted to a 'scorched earth policy', whereby they burned buildings and crops. In all, approximately 30,000 farmsteads and 20 villages are thought to have been destroyed. As well, large numbers of women and children were moved to concentration camps where more than 26,000 died, mainly due to disease. Separate camps for Black South Africans were arranged, and 14,154 are recorded as having died.<sup>35</sup>

A consequence of the Anglo-Boer War was that South Africa became unified under the British crown. This unification meant that the more moderate Afrikaners of the Cape

Province would come under the influence of the more extreme Transvaal Afrikaners (which by this time was also more populous and more prosperous).<sup>36</sup> Therefore, the Afrikaners were not 'denationalized' as had been the British agenda, although they were disheartened.

Though they were defeated and impoverished, the Transvaal and Free State Afrikaners retained an indelible conviction that their cause had been just. Moreover, the majority of the colonial Afrikaners had identified themselves with the republican cause and over 10,000 of them had risked the penalties for treason by joining or assisting the commandos. Consequently, the Afrikaner people emerged from the war proud of the republics' resistance to overwhelming odds and more determined than ever to retain their corporate identity. Far from destroying Afrikaner nationalism, [High Commissioner] Milner and [Secretary of State] Chamberlain were the greatest recruiting agents it ever had.<sup>37</sup>

The time after the Anglo-Boer War featured a new Afrikaner cultural revival in which "the desire to establish and develop their own language was a vital aspect of the Afrikaners' struggle to maintain their identity".<sup>38</sup> In 1903, the *Taalbond* was established in the Cape province by members of the Afrikaner Bond. This spurred a second language movement in which newspapers, books and poetry were popularly produced in Afrikaans. Their language had moved to the realm of a literary language, and as it became more acknowledged and more mainstream, it acted to intensify Afrikaner national consciousness.<sup>39</sup>

Following, emerged a political revival in the form of *Het Volk* (The People). *Het Volk*, established in 1905, was initially developed under the guise of farmers' associations, but in fact its agenda was to promote self-government in the Transvaal. There was a similar

organization, the *Orangie Unie* in the Orange Free State. Both of these organizations formed the government in their respective territories in 1907, as the British were bound by the Treaty of Vereeniging to allow responsible government in the former republics. The electorate in these two colonies was exclusively white. The British government, aware that Black and Coloured South Africans in the colonies were non-franchised, rather addressed situation of the Afrikaner in the aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War, perhaps in an attempt at reparation.<sup>40</sup>

The next milestone in South African history was the *Act of Union* of 1910. This Act oversaw the union of the Cape Colony, Natal, the Transvaal, and the Orange Free State, four self-governing colonies, under the British crown. Negotiating the terms of the agreement required some reconciliation between the Afrikaners and the British, as cooperation was seen to be in the best interests of Afrikanerdom, and of South Africa as a whole.<sup>41</sup> This was not, however, the prevailing opinion of all Afrikaners. The *Act of Union* gave equal legal status to both Dutch and English, and guaranteed rights and welfare of the white population.

A significant issue, in consolidating the details of Union, was that of the electorate. The four newly joined provinces had differing criteria for offering the franchise to their constituents. The Cape province had enfranchised Black and Coloured voters, while the other three provinces maintained a strict colour bar. In addressing this issue in the Constitution, it was decided to allow each province to decide their own electorate, but also to protect the Blacks and Coloureds of the Cape province from disenfranchisement.



This resolution was denounced in South Africa by all Protestant churches, excepting the Dutch Reformed Church. A contingent went to Britain, on behalf of the rights of Black and Coloured groups, to appeal for the right to vote. The authorities in Britain opted for non-interference on the issue of the political colour bar, having decided that white South Africans could be trusted to promote the interests of their fellow South Africans.<sup>42</sup>

The nature and lifestyle of Afrikaners differed according to their region, from the urban elite, to the Cape province's landowners and intellectuals, to the Transvaal and Orange Free State rural 'boers'. The social structure of life for the rural Afrikaners during the time leading up to and including Union, was represented by a homogeneous, economically egalitarian and patriarchal society, centering on their farms or villages and the Dutch Reformed Church. The importance of the family unit was a persistent feature. The focus of Afrikaner life being the village or rural countryside was sufficient to meet all of their social needs, as it "provided a total institutional environment in which the Boer way of life could be isolated and protected against the powerful urban and English-speaking world of the Cape and Johannesburg".<sup>43</sup>

The integration of the Afrikaner vocation of agriculture, their strict religious views, and the importance of family life were vital to sustaining their culture and their way of life. In particular, religion played a central role to Afrikaners who saw themselves as a chosen people. Clergy in the Dutch Reformed Church was often from within the ranks of South African society, although the influence of European schooled religious leaders, in particular Scottish, was not insignificant.<sup>44</sup> In addition to their spiritual needs, the clergy

was often also responsible for the educational needs of the Afrikaner families. The Dutch Reformed Church, which had always been the glue that held together families and communities, and played such a significant role in defining the Afrikaner and their goals, was inextricably "linked with agrarianism and the survival of the Boer people in Afrikaner nationalist thought".<sup>45</sup> Religious expression was both an intimate family affair, as well as the great community gathering for *Nagmaal*, and it was equally important to nurture and sustain both.

However, this seemingly idyllic, pastoral lifestyle of the rural Afrikaner was about to change, for a combination of reasons. The Anglo-Boer War and the *South Africa Act* of 1910 set the boundaries of the republic, creating what would have seemed impossible to the generation of voortrekkers, a shortage of available land.

This scarcity of land, combined with a high birth rate, produced rural overcrowding and cramped, unsanitary conditions on the Boer farms. The situation was worsened by the continued functioning of the Roman-Dutch law of inheritance which...compelled the division of a father's property among all of his children. With new farm land scarce or non-existent, such a law led to an irrational subdivision of already strained resources. Rural overcrowding soon produced a large landless white proletariat known as *bywoners*, squatters or poor whites. The formerly equalitarian rural white society was now sharply bifurcated into a class of landowners and a class of impoverished *bywoners*.<sup>46</sup>

This position of people in limbo was augmented by the landowners turning to the black population for cheaper agricultural labour. The impoverished *bywoners* became increasingly marginalized and thus a trend of rural to urban migration began to emerge. The urban areas of South Africa were experiencing a rapid growth of industrialization

during the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, drawing the poor and landless seeking prosperity.

Once the world's attention was on the vast mineral potential of South Africa, industrialization took place at a very rapid rate. International capital, primarily British, was readily available, as was the cheap labour force. The first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw an incredible rate of growth of these industries, as well as the manufacturing sector. Experiencing a similar level of growth was the trend towards urbanization. The migration from rural to urban areas was significant; in 1911, 29% of all Afrikaners lived in urban areas, and by 1960, 77% of all Afrikaners were city-dwellers. The urbanization of the Afrikaner population accounted for "the destruction of the rural social system which had formerly guaranteed the isolation on which the cultural survival of the Afrikaner *volk* had been based".<sup>47</sup>

The new demographic structure of South Africa threatened the solidarity of the Afrikaners. The population was now much more spread out, and less concentrated in the rural areas. While in the cities, they were educated in English, by the English. They were also employed in English factories and organizations, as it was the English who developed a metropolitan majority whilst the Afrikaners were residing in the more remote rural areas. This disadvantaged the Afrikaans-speaking worker<sup>48</sup> who was already competing for jobs with the impoverished Blacks migrating to the cities, as they were equivalent in their lack of skills, education and training.<sup>49</sup> The heightened fear that

were equivalent in their lack of skills, education and training.<sup>49</sup> The heightened fear that urbanization, as it also represented Anglicization, would result "in Afrikaner society losing its former institutional completeness in the world of work"<sup>50</sup> was manifested.

The early 20<sup>th</sup> century urbanization of a large sector of the Afrikaner population was accompanied by an Afrikaner movement to achieve more prominence in the domains of politics and economics, both of which had been English-dominated. Thus, "Afrikaner political action would serve the dual function of extending Afrikaner influence over the English-dominated economy while at the same time attempting to redress the political balance upset by defeat in the Boer War".<sup>51</sup> Nationalism had launched an agenda to strengthen group unity, and protect the urban Afrikaner from outside influences. A number of inter-connected nationalist organizations emerged to effect this Afrikaner enclosure. These ranged from banks, insurance companies, and community self-help societies to the secret society of the Afrikaner Broederbond, which was established in 1918. Under the auspices of the Broederbond came the F.A.K. (*Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings*) in 1929, and by 1937, the F.A.K. oversaw a network of over 300 related associations, "ranging from language and cultural societies to women's and student groups. The goal was to ensure maximum social separation by providing nationalist-minded voluntary associations for Afrikaners in all walks of life".<sup>52</sup> The vast number of organizations and agencies which emerged in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century prevented the spread of British influence at the expense of Afrikaner customs and traditions. The institutional network that emerged allowed an Afrikaner to go "from cradle to grave within the framework of Afrikaner organizations".<sup>53</sup>

The mobilization efforts put forth by the now extensive Afrikaner groups and organizations achieved some very extreme results. The mandate of these groups became not merely protecting the language and culture of the Afrikaner, but also greater integration into the political and economic spheres. White poverty became an issue of consequence and policies such as the labour colour bar were implemented to protect white workers.<sup>54</sup> As well, their efforts evolved into political domination at the expense of the rights of others. Armed with political power in 1948, the Afrikaner Nationalists worked towards stringent enforcement of laws which were increasingly self-protectionist, in turn intensifying the existing racial hierarchy. Enfranchisement criteria made the electoral process somewhat self-fulfilling by excluding a large portion of the population. There were laws enacted for dealing with political agitators with a view to protecting the status quo and ensuring as much as possible that political reform would not take place.

The 1948 accession to power by the National Party was unexpected by most people. But, with the apparatus of the state behind them, in addition to the vast number of influential organizations, power became concentrated in Afrikaner hands.<sup>55</sup> This represented, for many, a culmination of the goal of Afrikaner nationalism, turning the entire South African state into an agent of that nationalism. Their victory "erased the stigma of defeat in the Boer War and was the most significant breakthrough of Afrikaner nationalism in its drive for ethnic enclosure and political domination".<sup>56</sup> With authority over the entire country, the government was able to implement national policies which reflected their own beliefs regarding ethnic enclosure. The Afrikaner nationalist

philosophy of isolationism and self-determination were thus applied on a scale to include all South Africans. This resulted in a series of homelands which placed every ethnic group in a particular area and kept them there, unless they possessed a pass to allow them to travel elsewhere for employment. The aim of this policy was to allow every ethnic group in South Africa to "exercise and enjoy the inalienable and fundamental right to ethnic self-determination, each in his own homeland with his own culture, heritage, language, and concept of nationhood".<sup>57</sup> This situation, which suited the Afrikaner, was unworkable for the majority of the population who found themselves displaced, poverty-stricken, and without rights. Other legislation governed where different races must live, who they may work for and where, and with whom they were allowed to associate, marry, and do business. Racial segregation, having much to do with controlling the movement of labour to urban areas as well as regulating labour supply, became government legitimized and mandated apartheid.

Apartheid, as a paramount expression of protectionism, "was aimed at enhancing Afrikaner nationalism by entrenching white political control in South Africa. Through apartheid, Afrikaners governed not only themselves, but also all other groups in the society".<sup>58</sup> One of the results of this domination was a further increase in the gap between white and black South Africans, as colour-bar policies and civilized labour policies asserting white supremacy, helped the class of poor whites and led to the poor blacks falling even further behind.

In 1961, the South African government withdrew from the British Commonwealth, thereby achieving one of the long-term goals of Afrikaner nationalism. Their goal of a republic was motivated by four factors: the thrust of Afrikaner nationalism to gain control of all of South Africa; residual anti-British hostilities; a desire to impose apartheid policies without external interference; and an attempt to unite the white population by removing Britain as an influence.<sup>59</sup>

At this time, Afrikaner-English relations were improving, but ironically, at the same time, Black-White conflicts were increasing and moving to prominence in South African social issues. One incident, the infamous 1960 'Sharpeville massacre' started as a demonstration in the Transvaal against government pass laws, and ended with a number of Blacks killed and many more wounded. Next was a peaceful 'stay-at-home' movement by African workers to emphasize their opposition to pass requirements. Then a state of emergency was declared in almost half of the country's magisterial districts giving the authorities power to take certain measures to maintain public order. In the midst of this chaos, the African National Congress and the Pan African Congress were banned as illegal organizations, which was to have a significant impact on the rights of Black South Africans.<sup>60</sup>

The decade of the 1970s was marked by civil unrest: strikes, boycotts, uprisings, and in particular, the 1976 Soweto student uprising. Additionally, there was increasing international pressure to bring an end to the rampant discord and the structures of

apartheid. Gradually a reformist trend became clear. In 1990, the government lifted the ban on the A.N.C. and released South Africa's most famous prisoner, Nelson Mandela, who had been incarcerated since 1963 for his political actions. It appeared that a transition from an apartheid state to a democratically governed one was afoot. In 1994, the country's first democratic elections were held, with an inclusive electorate and full parliamentary representation.

Since the democratic election and the ascendance of a non-racial government headed by Mandela, the voice of Afrikaner nationalist has diminished. The Afrikaner identity, once distinctly molded by cultural traditions and icons, by race, and by state influence, has become fluid. There persists, although to a lesser degree, a crusade for Afrikaners, as an ethnic group, to have their own homeland, a *volkstaat*. However, there is currently great dissension within the ranks of Afrikanerdom regarding the Afrikaner identity, regarding their role in the political sphere, and regarding the viability of self-government in the form of a *volkstaat*.



## South African History Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> T.R.H. Davenport, *South Africa: A Modern History* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (Johannesburg: MacMillan, 1987), 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Elphick, "The Khoisan to 1770", in Richard Elphick and Hermann Giliomee (eds.), *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1820* (Cape Town: Longman, 1979), 4.

<sup>4</sup> Davenport, 1987, 22.

<sup>5</sup> See: Davenport, 1987, 6; Elphick, 10-12.

<sup>6</sup> Elphick, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Davenport, 1987, 33.

<sup>8</sup> Sheila Patterson, *The Greak Trek: A Study of The Boer People and the Afrikaner Nation* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1957), 4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> See: Davenport, 1987, 23; Patterson, 4, and C.W. DeKiewiet, *A History of South Africa: Social and Economic* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), 6-7.

<sup>11</sup> James C. Armstrong, "The Slaves, 1652-1795" in Richard Elphick and Hermann Giliomee (eds.), *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1820* (Cape Town: Longman, 1979), 76.

<sup>12</sup> Davenport, 1987, 26.

<sup>13</sup> See Davenport, 1987, 46; J. Armstrong, 88-90.

<sup>14</sup> Joel Novek, *Cooperation and Conflict in Dual Societies: A Comparison of French Canadian and Afrikaner Nationalism* (Quebec: International Center for Research on Bilingualism, 1970), 38-40.

<sup>15</sup> Davenport, 1987, 41.

<sup>16</sup> Novek, 7.

<sup>17</sup> T.R.H. Davenport, "The Consolidation of a New Society: The Cape Colony" in Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson (eds.), *A History of South Africa to 1870* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1982), 305.

<sup>18</sup> Patterson, 21.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Novek, 43.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 43-44.

<sup>22</sup> Davenport, 1987, 79.

<sup>23</sup> Leonard Thompson, "The South African Dilemma" in Louis Hartz (ed.). *The Founding of New Societies* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1964), 196.

<sup>24</sup> Leonard Thompson, "Cooperation and Conflict: The High Veld" in Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson (eds.). *A History of South Africa to 1870* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1982), 426.

<sup>25</sup> Patterson, 23.

<sup>26</sup> Thompson, 1964, 196.

<sup>27</sup> M.C. Van Zyl, "State and Colonies in South Africa, 1854-1902" in C.F.J. Muller (ed.) *Five Hundred Years: A History of South Africa* (Pretoria: Academica, 1981), 304.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 305.

<sup>29</sup> Patterson, 51-52.

<sup>30</sup> Leonard Thompson, "Great Britain and the Afrikaner Republics, 1870-1899" in Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson (eds.) *The Oxford History of South Africa, Volume II: 1870-1966* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 301-302.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 302-303.

<sup>32</sup> By 1895, there were 7 *uitlanders* (foreigners) for every 3 boers in the Transvaal; See DeKiewiet, 132.

<sup>33</sup> DeKiewiet, 132.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 131.

<sup>35</sup> Davenport, 1987, 214-217.

<sup>36</sup> Novek, 27.

<sup>37</sup> Leonard Thompson, "The Compromise of Union", in Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson (eds.) *The Oxford History of South Africa, Volume II: 1870-1966* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 333.

<sup>38</sup> S.B. Spies, "Reconstruction and Unification" in C.F.J. Muller (ed.) *Five Hundred Years: A History of South Africa* (Pretoria: Academica, 1981), 367.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Novek, 45.

<sup>42</sup> Thompson, 1971, 356-357.

<sup>43</sup> Novek, 62.

<sup>44</sup> Davenport, 1982, 286.

<sup>45</sup> Novek, 61.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 63.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 65.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>49</sup> De Kiewiet, p. 166-167.

<sup>50</sup> Novek, p. 67.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 104.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 106.

<sup>53</sup> F. Van Zyl Slabbert, "Afrikaner Nationalism, White Politics, and Political Change in South Africa" in Leonard Thompson and Jeffrey Butler (eds.) *Change in Contemporary South Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 9.

<sup>54</sup> Hermann Giliomee, "Constructing Afrikaner Nationalism", *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 18,1-2(1983), 88.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 87.

<sup>56</sup> Novek, 113.

<sup>57</sup> William Munro, "Revisiting Tradition, Reconstructing Identity? Afrikaner Nationalism and Political Transition in South Africa", *Politikon*, 22,2(1995), 9.

<sup>58</sup> Hermann Giliomee and Lawrence Schlemmer, *From Apartheid to Nation-Building* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1989), 41.

<sup>59</sup> Novek, 122.

<sup>60</sup> Davenport, 1987, 395-397.

## ***4. Ethnicity and Nationalism: A Division that Makes a Difference***

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### ***An Examination of Ethnicity***

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Ethnicity is an emergent sense of ethnic identity, centered around any number of antecedent criteria. Ethnic identity, a significant factor in group identity, and group relations, is accompanied by a measure of constant awareness, but becomes more salient at times of social or political unrest. The cognizance of ethnic identity occurring during periods of upheaval results from the threatened disappearance of cultural traditions and acts as a group assertion of distinctiveness and autonomy.<sup>1</sup> As such, ethnicity acts as a binding force within a group engendering a sense of belonging, as well as providing more or less rigid boundaries to those outside the group fostering exclusivity and solidarity.

An ethnic group consists of people who share a number of common characteristics. These may be any, or all of, a belief in: common descent and shared history; common language, religion, race, customs and cultural traditions; an association with a particular region or geographic location; a sense of solidarity; and an awareness of the group's distinctiveness. Ethnicity may or may not be concrete; it may be the 'perception' of commonality that binds the group together.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, certain practices, values, or traditions become symbolic markers for the ethnic group, enhancing its members' recognition of the group identity and affiliation with other group members.<sup>3</sup> This not only reinforces commonality within the group, but also distinguishes them from other groups.

Intrinsic to fully understanding the concept of ethnicity, is understanding its fluidity. The nature of a group's ethnicity, as well as the criteria on which the group is based, is situational, and contingent.<sup>4</sup> As ethnicity is manifested in contemporary social or political conditions, its variability and salience are situationally dependent on those conditions. This allows ethnicity to respond to the changing external conditions and the social or political movements which affect it. However, despite the fact that ethnicity is fluid, there is also a measure of consistency. "The recognition that ethnicity is neither static nor monolithic should not be taken to mean that it is definitively and perpetually in a state of flux."<sup>5</sup> Although the phenomenon of ethnicity becomes more and less prominent depending on events taking place which impact the ethnic group, there is a degree of constant group cohesion which is based on ethnic affiliation.

An ethnic group, as any other collectivity, relies on a sense of boundaries to give itself structural definition. Boundaries, in turn, act to give the group a dimension of both exclusivity and inclusivity. As the domain and the membership of an ethnic group become defined and therefore more widely recognized, interaction with other groups becomes significant in group identification. Therefore the group's symbols and traditions are reinforced so as to "increasingly stress the ways in which the members of the group are similar to each other and collectively different from others."<sup>6</sup> This acts, then, for internal cohesion, homogeneity, and protection from external threats. This also gives rise to ethnic groups being increasingly established and defined with reference to other co-existent groups. Indeed, as the ethnic group struggles to define and distinguish itself, it is in distinction from other groups, in order for its own identity to be meaningful.<sup>7</sup>

Language is one critical element of group distinction and group identity. It is, of course, a means of communication within a group, but also acts as an immediately recognizable feature of group membership. Social interaction depends on language both within and between groups. As language ably distinguishes insiders from outsiders, it is the "most obvious barrier to communication, and therefore the most obvious definer of the lines which separate groups".<sup>8</sup>

Language is the principle vehicle of a group's communication system and part and parcel of its culture, contributing to its values, patterns of conduct and achievements. It also establishes effective boundaries between different language groups.<sup>9</sup>

The salient role that language plays in intra-group communication signifies its importance in ethnic solidarity.<sup>10</sup> As a potent indicator of group-belongingness, language is a symbol which embodies ethnic identity. "It is used for reminding the group about its cultural heritage, for transmitting group feelings, and for excluding members of the out-group from its internal transactions."<sup>11</sup> Not only is language inherent to a group's identity, but it is also the means through which that identity is articulated and then transmitted, in the form of rituals, traditions and history. Its value to the group is then buttressed both by communicating about the language, and using the language to communicate.

The significance of an ethnic group must be understood in relation to other ethnic groups with which it interacts, be they minority or majority. As ethnic groups define their members' common interests in reference to their distinction from others, then not addressing the 'other' renders the study of an ethnic group meaningless. Group interaction and identification is, necessarily, dually referential; it consists of 'members'

and 'others', 'insiders' and outsiders', 'us' and 'them'. For group sustainability, "there must be some outgroup against which the unity and homogeneity of the ingroup is tested".<sup>12</sup> Therefore, "it is meaningful to talk of ethnicity only where groups of different ethnic origin have been brought into interaction within some common social context".<sup>13</sup>

Ethnicity typically becomes salient at times of social or political upheaval, at times when cultural erosion is threatened or socio-economic insecurities are perceived, and the ethnic group must mobilize itself to protect against marginalization. There may be a perception by the ethnic group that the 'others' "pose a threat to the existence of the nation",<sup>14</sup> or that the 'others' "may also be a group that threatens to blur the distinctiveness of the group".<sup>15</sup> The real or perceived conflict between the two groups propels a sense of ethnicity to the fore, fostering an enclosure with the ethnic group. The leaders of the group reinforce the group identity, the commonality within the group and the distinction from other groups. The rights of the ethnic group are then addressed, be they territorial, political, linguistic, economic or social, as they express their right to autonomy, or not to be dominated.

### ***Nationalism: Bound by History, Culture, Common Ancestry***

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Ethnicity within a group, that is their cognizance of shared characteristics, their sense of belongingness, and their knowledge of distinctness, may be utilized in the political arena if the ethnic group is being marginalized or discriminated against by the more dominant group(s). As such, demands may be made for special status, educational or employment equality, language rights, etc., to promote the interests of the group



and its members. In some cases, their needs are met and the ethnic group is satisfied with the concessions or accommodations made by the dominant group.

However, some ethnic groups in other contexts go further and demand that corporate rights be conceded to the group as a whole, that they be given not just individual educational opportunities on the same basis as others, but that they be given control over the public system of education in their areas of concentration so that they can teach the history, language, and culture of their group to their own children. They demand a major say for the group in the political system as a whole or control over a piece of territory within the country, or they demand a country of their own with full sovereignty. In the latter case, the ethnic group aspires to national status and recognition.<sup>16</sup>

Nationalism, then, is a situationally contingent movement to politicize ethnicity that sees "nationalities striving to acquire, maintain, or enhance their position in the world vis-à-vis other nationalities".<sup>17</sup> As ethnic groups become more politically aware and more politically viable, they may also become more assertive in their quest for rights, equality, or autonomy, whatever the level of recognition they are seeking from the wider state. If these assertions are suppressed, there can be greater mobilization efforts. Through these efforts, then, nationalism arises, "in response to objective exploitation of an indigenous group by an alien group, or of one social class by another".<sup>18</sup>

The exploitation or suppression of one group by another creates an occasion for nationalism to manifest itself within a specific paradigm, consisting of three fundamental elements:

First, the world is divided into nations. Each nation has its own culture, history and destiny that make it unique among other nations. Second, each individual belongs to a nation. Allegiance to the nation overrides all other loyalties. Moreover, individuals who are nationless cannot fully realize themselves and, furthermore, in the world of

nations they are social and political outcasts. Third, nations must be united, autonomous and free to pursue their goals. This third proposition implies that the nation is the only legitimate source of social and political power.<sup>19</sup>

The term 'nation', as distinct from 'state', refers to "a group of people who feel themselves to be a community bound together by ties of history, culture, and common ancestry".<sup>20</sup> A state, then, refers to the legal-political entity "which provides its residents protection from internal insecurity and external aggression".<sup>21</sup> Where the boundaries of the nation and the state coincide, there exists a 'nation-state'. Typically when a nationalist movement unfolds as a result of inequalities between ethnic groups, it is in a multi-ethnic, and therefore, multi-nation state.

Multi-ethnic states are often equated with multi-lingual states, making language a significant issue in a nationalist movement. While ethno-linguistic groups may not have a nationalist agenda, language is often the issue that nationalists rally around. Subordination by another ethnic group - particularly if it is a foreign one - can lead to the imposition of another language. The preservation of the ancestral language then becomes a focus of nationalist sentiment. As language can be manipulated by government, particularly through education, it may gain its importance to nationalists by being a more objective and concrete dimension of ethnic group suppression. Other more subtle forms of discrimination or barriers may not gain the salience that language does when the survival of an ethnic group is threatened. However, language must not be seen as merely a banner for nationalism, but also as "inseparably bound to the definition of the national culture and collective history".<sup>22</sup> Therefore, "linguistic nationalism may arise to establish balance among diverse

ethno-cultural groups; to promote socio-economic goals and advancements; to redress the debasement of indigenous cultures and languages".<sup>23</sup>

Group mobilization to redress linguistic inequalities requires a framework of literacy, and a linguistic elite supporting the diffusion of the language. The control of a language correlates with the control of knowledge, and by extension, education. Built into this concept is the nationalist ideology of disseminating ethnic group history and constructed national mythology through the educational system. This, of course, is in furtherance of the nationalist agenda. Linguistic-based nationalism, then, requires some state control, or, at the very least, state acknowledgement of the group's language.<sup>24</sup> Language planning and manipulation is then possible, once an ethnic group has established itself. This can take many forms, but results in the language being entrenched in all facets of society: education, state, judiciary, and even geographically by an emergent ethnic group reclaims its territory by changing place names from a previous, and very likely, colonial, regime.

Nationalism, as a movement, should be addressed in terms of the "historical patterning of relations between ethnic groups and the dimensions of cultural stratification".<sup>25</sup> Clearly the emergence of an ethnic nationalist identity is not formulaic although there are some conditions which are conducive to the launching of such a movement. In the cases of both Québec and South Africa, there are many parallels in the historical circumstances out of which ethnicity and nationalist trends evolved.

In very general terms, these parallels are the initial struggle of a European population to establish itself in a new land; the conquest of that frontier population by another

European power: the British; the campaign to assert their true identity, or at the very least, to protect it and keep it from disappearing, in the face of British control over most aspects of social and political life. The 'anti-colonialist' or 'anti-British' sentiments were forefront in the emergence of the 'sense of self', and thus in the nationalist legacy of both the Québécois and the Afrikaner people. Of critical importance to each of their cultures and ways of life was their language, which the British authorities attempted to quell as they undertook plans for cultural, social, and linguistic uniformity.

### ***Emergence of Québécois Ethnicity and Nationalism***

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The Québécois way of life was distinguished by the ideology of ultramontanism, a belief in the "blend of church and state, the primacy of agriculture and the rejection of industrialization, and the belief in the moral mission of French Canadians in North America".<sup>26</sup> It was also marked by self-sustenance, eschewing all things modern, English, from 'outside'. The 1759 British Conquest ignited hostility and resentment towards the British, as it effectively made the French a minority in the country that they first settled. The French then retreated into their families and their parish communities to protect themselves against the onslaught of anglicization. This is the first tangible emergence of the Québécois sense of identity, defined in terms of their self-perception, and in distinction to their perception of the English. The threatened anglicization led to linguistic insecurity, prompting the Québécois to rally around the preservation of their uniqueness and their heritage.

The regional concentration of the French in Canada helped to foster and sustain their group identity and connectedness.<sup>27</sup> It also helped to reinforce the boundaries of the ethnic group: some imagined boundaries, and some very real boundaries. In the post-Quiet Revolution era of the 1960s, this prominent regionalism was partly responsible for the identity shift "from French Canadian to Québécois, linking the group to a territory and a potential state".<sup>28</sup> The cleavages between the two dominant language groups within Canada were accentuated by the persistent regionalism and lack of interaction between them. The importance of the Québécois' territory, and their close identification with it is not lost when one considers that "83 per cent of the francophone Québécois can trace their roots back to the original settlers from France".<sup>29</sup>

Those original French settlers maintained an essentially rural, isolated existence dominated by self-sufficient agrarianism. The initial waves of settlers maintained ties with the metropole but as time, distance, and infrequency of contact went on, the settlers began to view themselves more as Canadian than as French colonists. The very palpable Roman Catholic Church influence on their lives helped to shape their identity, as the Church and the State were intrinsically interwoven.

The British conquest of New France led to a reshaping of the Québécois identity, for until this time, that identity had no existence independent of France. While the British did not immediately deny the Québécois the use of the French language, their presence was a reminder of their disassociation with their metropole, collectively seen as rejection by France.<sup>30</sup> With the British inhabiting the rest of Canada outside

of Québec, the Québécois became further isolated from the remainder of the country as their French traditions persisted.

The age of Québécois isolationism continued as Québec was cut off from the first stirrings of commercialism and industrialization. Moreover, as the rest of Canada began to increasingly develop and evolve, the Québécois increasingly kept to themselves, culturally, socially, and economically, keeping at bay that which was growing more and more foreign to their way of life. As well, the thriving English population imposed a threat to Québécois traditions causing them to fold inward around their institutions and myths.<sup>31</sup> The inevitable lag between the English and French social, industrial, and economic programs caused an even greater rift as the French were made to feel inferior from any contact with their more advanced neighbours. This of course further contributed to the cycle of avoidance and withdrawal.

French-English relations were characterized by this ubiquitous cycle, until the mid-20th century when a new Québec emerged. Accompanying an industrial and economic shift was more urbanization, secularization, and more interaction with English Canada.<sup>32</sup> "This contact became the source of a sense of group awareness, and a sense of relative deprivation among francophone Québécois."<sup>33</sup> While the Québécois' virtually complete institutional enclosure was of their own volition, they were not forcibly deprived, but it was the only available option for protecting their culture and more importantly, their language. Upon realizing that they had been left behind, the Québécois embarked on their 'Quiet Revolution', implementing plans for their rattrapage (catching up). It became clear to the Québécois that they could not

idly exist within Canada, as that would mean eventually relinquishing their identity. The dominant English Canadians - perhaps more English than Canadian - involved themselves in every possible aspect of life leaving little room for the Québécois. At least, this was the case prior to the Quiet Revolution, which "catapulted Québec into the modern world".<sup>34</sup> The years of taking second place to the English and finding many doors closed to them were over as the Québécois embraced their new identity and their new sense of Canadian society and their place in it. "This was no longer the traditional French Canadian nationalism of la survivance in which French cultural survival was predicated on ruralism, avoidance of modern (read: English) influences, and total fealty to the Catholic Church".<sup>35</sup>

The Quiet Revolution gave Québec's nationalist linguistic movements new momentum. The Québécois elites became much more pro-active in seeking language rights for the province. "After approximately 150 years of asking for 'French also' in Québec and in Canada, many Québécois had begun asking for 'French only' within Québec at the same time federal authorities were proclaiming bilingualism for a new Canada."<sup>36</sup> This effected changes in many spheres, such as schooling, businesses, signage and even television programming. The province was able to implement quite stringent regulations, particularly when the nationalist Parti Québécois gained strength.

Québec history shows a very strong Roman Catholic Church influence, with religion being the significant distinguishing factor. However, in recent times, language has become more important, taking precedence over religion in denoting ethnic group identity.<sup>37</sup> "By the early 1970s, the French language had clearly replaced the Catholic

religion as the primary symbol of Québec society, and the Québec 'state'.<sup>38</sup> As language takes the form of a quasi-secular religion, it becomes institutionalized, becoming fundamental to their society and their identity.

The self-improvement programs of the French aimed at countering the anglophones with their own systemic 'francization', their goal being cultural and linguistic preservation. This was manifested by the Québécois transformation to nationalism in the guise of the Parti Québécois, formed in 1968, and elected to provincial power in 1976. Nationalists of all persuasions flocked to the beacon of the Parti Québécois in order to remedy the situation which had seen the French "become a minority in the country that their ancestors founded".<sup>39</sup> The impact of this ideological swing was Québec's transformation "from a defensive minority sheltered in a linguistic and cultural enclave, to a self-confident majority and, in its own terms, a distinctive 'nation' ready if it wishes to assume control of its own national state".<sup>40</sup> The Parti Québécois, as a political vehicle for nationalists and the French language, has always enjoyed the most support "when the language issue is at the top of the Québec political agenda".<sup>41</sup> In fact, their mandate, upon election, was "to attempt the full linkage between Québec ethnicity and language".<sup>42</sup> "The French language is not, of course, the whole of Québec culture, but it is the most reliable sign of its originality and vitality. Language is a fundamental concern, because it is a matter of personal interest and because it represents a powerful collective symbol: the state of the language is the most reliable indicator of the health of the nation."<sup>43</sup>

The ongoing antagonism between federal government efforts at both bilingualism, and accommodating the interests of the French, and the Québec provincial



government's insistence on unilingualism and autonomy, has done little for harmonious French-English relations. Various laws and regulations instituted by one party provokes a reactive law or regulation by the other party. Conflicting goals seem to be at the root of the antagonism, however, as the Canadian government pushes for unity, and the Québec government strives for independence. The French-speaking Québécois account for no more than 2% of the North American, predominantly English albeit very multicultural population. Québec independence would allow French to solely dominate Québec's society, but to what degree would that independence alter the defensive structures already engrained in the Québécois psyche?<sup>44</sup>

Popular opinion in Québec would make it seem that their own national state is their objective. Attempts to negotiate mutually-agreeable conditions between the federal and Québec provincial governments (Repatriation of Constitution, 1982; Meech Lake Accord, 1987; Charlottetown Agreement, 1992) have been unsuccessful in accommodating the interests of such a diverse population as Canada. Twice, referendums have been put to the people of Québec to address issues such as sovereignty and independence, and each have failed, although by a narrowing margin. In 1980, with a voter turnout of 85.6%, 40.5% voted 'yes' to explore a route to sovereignty, and 59.5% voted 'no'.<sup>45</sup> In 1995, the difference was much slighter, with the 'yes' vote at 49.4% and the 'no' vote at 50.6%, and the voter turnout being 94%.<sup>46</sup> Clearly, from the voter turnout, this is an issue of crucial importance to all residents of Québec, and to Canadian unity as a whole. However, it is not an issue which has suddenly reached crisis proportions, but one which has been stirring the Québec population for some time.

The roots of nationalism are deeply imbedded in the history of Québec, but they really became salient during the 1960s' Quiet Revolution. As Québec emerged from its social and economic shell and realized that the rest of Canada had been moving forward despite Québec's lack of participation, there surfaced a sense of marginalization by the rest of the country, whom Québec perceives as 'the English'. To rectify the situation, the provincial authorities began implementing a number of language policies so as to have more direct control within their own domain. They began a program of catching up "aimed at building a society in which the French language and culture could flourish in a dynamic, modern North American context".<sup>47</sup>

In the 1970s, shortly after the emergence of their more assertive neo-nationalism, the Québécois found that English was still the language of business, and of mobility, and that most immigrants were sending their children to English language schools, upsetting the balance. The fear was that Québec's immigrants would integrate into the anglophone population, further eroding the stability of the French.<sup>48</sup> In reaction to this situation, the nationalist government of Québec advocated restrictive language laws, beginning by enacting Bill 101 in 1977. This law "radically reshaped Québec's linguistic landscape: It required all new immigrants to send their children to French-language schools, mandated French as the primary language of the workplace, and proscribed, with minor exceptions, languages other than French in commercial signs in the province."<sup>49</sup> Thus, Bill 101, the 'Charter of the French Language', put French into place as the official language of the province, and quenched immediate fears about the longevity of the language.

Shortly thereafter, in 1980, came the first of two highly emotional referendums on the place of Québec within Canada. Although nationalist spirit was riding high, nearly 60% of the voters said 'no' to sovereignty. Québec residents had already achieved, by way of Bill 101, the advances sought at that time. Their agenda had been to acquire linguistic security, which they successfully did within the federation, thereby casting aside, for the time being, the immediate need for independence. The threat to their institutions was greatly diminished, as "Bill 101 had taken the edge off the language question, historically the prime stimulant of the nationalist movement".<sup>50</sup>

In 1982, the Canadian government adopted a Charter of Rights and Freedoms and appended it to the newly repatriated Canadian Constitution (formerly the British North America Act of 1867). While the document mandated widespread bilingualism, it was not satisfactory to the Québécois, who were endorsing their own brand of unilingualism. The Québec government, in a profound assertion of their own identity and nationalist sentiment, refused to ratify the Constitution.<sup>51</sup>

In 1987, the then federal government attempted to redress the constitutional discord by negotiating and promoting the Meech Lake Accord. The central tenet of the Meech Lake Accord was the decentralization of certain powers and rights from the federal government to the provincial level. Significantly though, the Accord also recognized Québec as a 'distinct society' within Canada. The premier of Québec put forth five minimum conditions which, if adopted through the forum of the Meech Lake Accord, would bring Québec's endorsement to the Canadian Constitution. They were:

1. Formal recognition of Québec as a 'distinct society' in the Canadian Confederation;
2. Constitutional formalization of a 1978 federal-provincial agreement giving Québec primary control of immigration to the province;
3. A Québec veto over future constitutional amendments changing federal institutions;
4. Restrictions on federal spending in areas of provincial jurisdiction, and guarantees of Québec's right to 'opt-out' with compensation from any programs that were transferred by other provinces to the federal government; and
5. Québec participation in the appointment of judges to the Canadian Supreme Court.<sup>52</sup>

In order for this constitutional amendment to be adopted, each provincial legislature had to ratify it within three years. As that time passed, the 'distinct society' clause became an insurmountable condition, unacceptable to many Canadians who felt that, in fact, Canada contains ten 'distinct societies'. And so, the Meech Lake Accord, "a potent symbol of whether Québec's distinctiveness as a Francophone society would be recognized by the rest of Canada"<sup>53</sup>, failed.

In the meantime, the Canadian Supreme Court struck down as unconstitutional some sections of Bill 101. These sections were in respect of the unilingualism of commercial signs. The Québec government then invoked a 'notwithstanding clause' from the 1982 Constitution which entitled them to nullify decisions from the country's highest judiciary. Bill 178, the so-called 'inside-outside' law, was introduced as an alternative, which allowed for French signs outside of commercial enterprises, but English on signs inside.

The failure of the Meech Lake Accord was a turning point for Québec nationalists. There were unprecedented levels of support for the nationalist cause, including

separatism, as they felt that their rejection by the rest of Canada through Meech Lake was irreconcilable. In 1992, the federal government once again offered a constitutional amendment - the Charlottetown Agreement - recognizing, among other things, Québec as a distinct society. This proposal was put to the people of Canada in the form of a national referendum, and was ultimately rejected, 55% - 45%.<sup>54</sup>

In 1995, the most recent referendum on Québec sovereignty was held. As already mentioned, it was defeated by the narrowest of margins: 1%. The Québécois nationalist movement had reached a point where, feeling rejected by the rest of the country, their only hope for cultural and linguistic survival lay not in yet another tentative constitutional amendment, but in independence. "The referendum result provided vivid evidence, notwithstanding the ebb and flow of support for independence during the 1990's, that something fundamentally 'snapped' for Québec Francophones in their allegiance to Canadian federalism after the Meech Lake debacle".<sup>55</sup>

### ***Emergence of Afrikaner Ethnicity and Nationalism***

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It is difficult to consider Afrikaner ethnicity beyond their grand scheme of apartheid, however the roots of their ethnic identity are found much further back in their occupation of the Cape Colony. In fact, as early as 1705, it is recorded that a Hendrik Bibault identified himself as an Afrikaner: "*Ik ben een Africaander*".<sup>56</sup> Early in the history of the Cape settlement, the Dutch regime promoted cultural assimilation among the settlers who were not Dutch in origin (mainly German, and French). As a

result, the Afrikaner group was largely uniform, homogenous, and in solidarity. Their uniformity was in regards to their linguistic, religious, cultural, social, and even somewhat their occupational same-ness. This allowed their easy identification as a group, particularly upon the arrival of the British.

One of the group's primary identifying features is the Afrikaans language, one of the world's youngest. Afrikaans emerged out of the ethnic amalgam in South Africa. It's influences were Dutch, French, and German, there was also an infusion of Malay and Portuguese, and some grammar structure was co-opted from the indigenous Khoikhoi language.<sup>57</sup> Despite its multi-ethnic origins, Afrikaans became that which is most identified with the Afrikaner people. The language "changed during the course of South African history to become that sacred tongue, divinely sanctioned and peculiar to the Afrikaner".<sup>58</sup>

The British conquest of the Cape Colony in 1806 was the impetus to the emergence of 'Afrikanerdom'. In fact, prior to that time, "events were unimportant except to the extent that they delineated a scant 'myth of origin'".<sup>59</sup> But the British quickly imposed policies to solidify their position in the colony, largely to the detriment of the Afrikaners and the Black South Africans. This included encouraging immigration in order to make the colony more 'British', and a rigorous system of anglicization policies. In the 1820s, there were various proclamations to make English the only official language of the country: all official documents had to be in English; Scottish ministers were imported for the Dutch Reformed Church; Englishmen were brought to teach in the schools; and all official posts were reserved for the English-speaking.<sup>60</sup>

The British also appeared to be more liberal with respect to the rights of Black South Africans. In particular, the authorities repealed previous discriminatory laws, and abolished the practice of slavery. However, embedded in the Afrikaner religious philosophy was the perception that all people had a specific place in the cultural hierarchy, with Whites maintaining a superior position. To have legislation contrary to this so unsettled the Afrikaners that there was a mass retreat into the hinterland. Between the years of 1835 and 1846, more than 10,000 people moved out of the Cape colony to an area beyond the reach of British control. The Afrikaners refused to be subjected to the authority of the British, thus the 'Great Trek' was in pursuit of their freedom as a group and at the same time, acquiring new lands and territory. Ironically, one of the thrusts behind the Trek was the freeing of slaves; clearly group freedom in this instance was unilaterally applied by the Afrikaners.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, the *voortrekkers* believed themselves to be inhabiting unused, available land, when in fact they were displacing and further marginalizing the Black groups traditionally occupying the territory.

The Great Trek represented the inauguration of Afrikaner nationalism as it was an assertion of autonomy, and two republics were founded where the Afrikaners could live according to their own principles and authorities. While at the time, the Trek was a strategy for distancing the Afrikaners from British rule, it later became infused with nationalist mythology and perpetuated as a defining event in their history. The Trek became recognized as monumental to the Afrikaner history, celebrated with visions of heroes and martyrs fighting for their people. "It produced for the Afrikaner a mythology on which he could firmly base his nationalism."<sup>62</sup> The Trek also institutionalized the image of the *voortrekker* as a symbol for Afrikaner nationalism:

"They were God-fearing, hardy, tenacious and resplendent in the wilderness".<sup>63</sup> In 1938, Afrikanerdom celebrated the centenary of the Great Trek with a re-enactment. Nationalism blossomed with the event, as the Trek symbols were paraded, and "myths solidified into dogma".<sup>64</sup> Even today, the Trek remains an important symbol of those who forged the Afrikaner identity, as it "stands as the marker between those who submitted to alien (British) rule and those who, through great personal sacrifice and hardship, stood up for what they believed in and set off to find a territory of their own where they could govern themselves. Today's Afrikaner nationalists claim they are descended from, and genetically linked to, those who embarked on the Great Trek".<sup>65</sup>

Afrikaner nationalism was crystallized on two fronts. Initially, there was the *voortrekker*, seeking freedom, new land, and to escape from the British to preserve their threatened way of life. Shortly thereafter was an intellectual and cultural rebirth in the Cape Colony from which appeared the proliferation of cultural organizations that were instrumental in promoting the material, cultural, and spiritual interests of the Afrikaner. These organizations were founded by and for the Afrikaners to provide an institutional alternative to that of the British organizations. Afrikaner groups felt that in order to protect their rights from the outside group, they must insulate themselves, by providing for their people all forms of social, economic and educational interactions. This meant that the Afrikaners were able to turn inward to their own institutions that they had created rather than be forced to turn to the 'foreign' institutions.

Crucial to maintaining their own institutions was the First Afrikaans Language Movement, which developed in Cape Colony intellectual circles in the 1870s. The



language movement was a struggle "against the position in which the Afrikaners found themselves at that time in their history".<sup>66</sup> The Afrikaans language became a symbol for nationalism, both as a means to shift away from English, but more importantly as a buttress to Afrikanerdom. "The desire to establish and develop their own language was a vital aspect of the Afrikaner's struggle to maintain their identity."<sup>67</sup> The two notions - that of nationalism and the Afrikaans language - were very closely aligned, as the language struggle represented a new national self-consciousness among a people who equated their language, their spiritual inheritance, and their nationhood.<sup>68</sup>

The Afrikaners felt that their language was divinely proscribed and sanctioned, and it therefore became one of the historically mythologized symbols so crucial to Afrikaner cohesion. Biblical analogies were drawn to the Tower of Babel, justifying division according to spoken language. This linguistic separateness became the religious legitimation of apartheid, and "infused passion and holiness into the expansion and propagation of *die taal* [the language]".<sup>69</sup> In fact, as the language movement was so important to the national consciousness of the Afrikaners, it was also "closely aligned to the attempts to have the Bible translated into Afrikaans."<sup>70</sup>

The friction between the British and the Afrikaners which began over the control of the republic's mineral wealth resulted in the greatest threat to the survival of Afrikanerdom: the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). The war did manage to unite the sometimes disparate ranks of Afrikanerdom against their common foe, but in the end the Afrikaners were defeated and their sense of nationalism was left in a very tenuous state. The feeling of the Afrikaner was not simply being overwhelmed and

therefore subjected by the British, but also of being forsaken by God.<sup>71</sup> Their religiosity inspired the Afrikaners to believe that they settled South Africa for a divinely-ordained purpose, and thus their sense of self was shattered in the aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War. However, "despite the freshness of their own struggle, few Afrikaners recognize that those deep human emotions - the desire for self-determination and for equality of treatment, and the pride which burned deep into the Afrikaner soul and sparked the anti-Colonial fight - are the same fundamental emotions producing similar determination in African hearts".<sup>72</sup>

The Anglo-Boer War was a benchmark for Afrikaner nationalism. Not only did it mythologize and "emphasize the resilience of Afrikanerdom",<sup>73</sup> but it also renewed the animosity towards the British. "The heroism of outgunned Boers and the suffering of their wives and children provided new fuel for Afrikaner nationalist fires."<sup>74</sup>

Afrikaners have also demonstrated that with every new obstacle encountered, they are able to rally together with a new sense of unity. In their defeat and disillusionment after the Anglo-Boer War, they were determined to do just that, and to retain their identity. The peace treaty that ended the war was designed to assuage Afrikaner nationalism, and in the years that followed, "the comparatively liberal race policies that had been proclaimed as part of British war aims were jettisoned, and dual English-Dutch domination was enshrined in law in 1910".<sup>75</sup>

The Anglo-Boer War, the result of which represented the lowest point of Afrikaner national identity, provided an opportunity for more creative expression of Afrikaans. In the post-war period, they were dominated by the British in many spheres, not the least of which was their language. However, a literary movement brought on by the

Afrikaner defeat in the Anglo-Boer War took steps to regenerate their identity and their nationalist spirit. "Through the music of their own tongue, Afrikaner poets created beauty in the midst of suffering, and their poetry's cathartic renewal helped restore dignity and purpose to their people."<sup>76</sup>

In the 1920s, burgeoning industrialization plus the effects of a drought and economic depression, took the Afrikaners off their farms and into the cities. In this new environment, it was exceedingly difficult for Afrikaners to establish themselves, as they found they were "hemmed in by English capital and African workers".<sup>77</sup>

Therefore, the Afrikaner elite established a two-fold plan: "It laid groundwork for creating a new Afrikaner community capable of challenging British domination, and it successfully lobbied the government to reserve jobs for whites".<sup>78</sup> Many of the urban migrants were poor, landless Whites, marginalized from the rural existence who became unskilled labour in the commercial and industrial sectors.

Afrikaner nationalist goals could not be realized until they, as a group, were recognized by the British. To this end, a number of further organizations, most significantly the Afrikaner Broederbond, were created to promote Afrikanerdom. These organizations also had the effect of recreating some of the past institutional completeness which had been diminished by urbanization. This strategy mobilized the Afrikaner population into ever increasing positions of influence, which in turn helped to further their cause, that of promoting the interests of Afrikanerdom so as to improve their status.

The intensity of the language issue cemented divisions between English and Afrikaans-speaking groups. While the language struggle in South Africa was fairly consistent with the experience of colonized people the world over,<sup>79</sup> the Afrikaans language was complete with religious and nationalist symbolism. The Second Afrikaans Language Movement (born in 1905) proved to be very fruitful, as Afrikaans was legislatively declared an official language in 1925, already having been adopted in schools and churches. In time, though, Afrikaner language rights became more than wanting to worship or educate their children in their own language. The "struggle for language rights was also a struggle for political rights and, eventually, for the right to take over the whole country".<sup>80</sup> After the Afrikaner National Party acceded to power in 1948, the Afrikaans language became an even greater dividing force in South Africa. In what is described as "language imperialism",<sup>81</sup> language was used as a justification for policies of racial segregation, as their leaders "found in the Afrikaners' language evidence of their separateness as a group, and the basis for the religious legitimization of what became apartheid".<sup>82</sup> The Biblical analogy, in which mankind was separated according to spoken language, was a clear affirmation of divine authority sanctioning apartheid, so that:

What began as an effort to protect Afrikaans from English predations evolved into an ideology applied to all of South Africa's 'groups'. Since Afrikaans made the Afrikaners a 'nation', the reasoning went, black Africans too were defined by their languages. To fulfil God's will, the apartheid system divided them up. Each 'group' - Zulus, Xhosas, Swazis, Ndebeles, North Sothos, South Sothos, Tswanas, Shangaans, and Vendas - was assigned to a 'homeland' or 'Bantustan'.<sup>83</sup>

The Afrikaans language was also imposed on people throughout the country, primarily through the national education system that the Afrikaner government implemented. The irony of this enforced language is clear with a look back into

history. "Even with the Afrikaners' experience of belittlement by the English, many of them could not see ... that they had meted out analogous, if not worse, treatment to Africans."<sup>84</sup> In so doing, the Afrikaans language, that which unites Afrikaners across the political and social spectrum, became a language of oppression. Although the movement for the recognition of Afrikaans evolved as a strategy to distinguish the Afrikaners from the British, the resultant widespread imposition of Afrikaans was viewed by Black South Africans as an attenuation of their language rights and traditions. Language issue conflicts created much racial hostility in the country, with Blacks wanting education in English, rather than Afrikaans. This hostility culminated in the 1976 Soweto uprising, which began as a student march against the compulsory use of Afrikaans as a medium of education in schools.<sup>85</sup> The Afrikaners, though, did not understand the preference of English, an "equally foreign colonial language".<sup>86</sup> Gradually, it was recognized that the Afrikaans language itself was not what was oppressive, but rather what it represented.

Afrikaner nationalism, while in its infancy, was sustained by animosity towards the more dominant British, and the threat of the erosion of their identity. In the mid-20th century, however, it transformed to a centralized, federal power over all residents of South Africa, fraught with strategies to maintain that power. The institutionalized segregation that became known world-wide as apartheid was "not a goal in itself but merely an instrument of Afrikaner nationalism".<sup>87</sup> In other words, it gave the Afrikaners the self-government that they wanted, and they also were able to control every other group in South Africa. However, apartheid was only one of the two strategies of the governing National Party.

The other strand is the ideology of Afrikaner sovereignty on the land.<sup>88</sup> The roots of this concept somewhat parallel the evolution of the Afrikaner 'nation' in that as the Afrikaners created for themselves a new language and a new identity, they also of necessity created for themselves a permanent niche in South Africa. Their ties with Europe increasingly diminished, making South Africa their 'homeland'. They felt, therefore, bound to uphold their language and their ethnicity in order to protect their future, in the form of a *volkstaat*.<sup>89</sup>

Afrikaner nationalism, through the vehicle of the National Party, increasingly structured South African society to enhance the position of the Afrikaner, and to the detriment of Black, Coloured, and Asian South Africans. The host of laws and regulations that enforced segregation upheld the nationalist principles of the government for many years. However, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, under more liberal leadership, apartheid policies began to soften and organizations formerly considered threatening were un-banned, most notably the African National Congress (A.N.C.). In 1992, an all-white referendum was held for public input on whether or not then president F.W. de Klerk should be given a mandate to continue negotiations with the A.N.C. and promote political reform; 68.7% voted 'yes'.<sup>90</sup> As well, Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners were released. The structures of apartheid were being dismantled, transforming the government to a view towards individual rather than group constitutional rights and equality for all citizens.

Dissent within the National Party created some political fissures. Significantly, in 1969, some members broke away to form the *Herstigte Nasionale Party* (H.N.P.: Re-established National Party) over concerns that some of the governmental policies

and structures were being compromised. Later, in 1982, more ultra-right people left to form the Conservative Party. During the transition out of apartheid, the ranks of Afrikaner nationalists became more and more divided. The term *broedertwis* (division among brothers) refers to this dissent, as the solid alliances of the past unravelled.<sup>91</sup> Some shifted their loyalties to the more conservative right in favour of "ethnic solidarity, group identity and cultural cohesion, invoking Afrikaner 'tradition' as the wellspring of identity politics".<sup>92</sup> Others openly left the National Party and affiliated themselves with the A.N.C.<sup>93</sup> The National Party, therefore, only retained those at its ideological center. The homogeneity and enclosure that had characterized Afrikanerdom was becoming a remnant of a past era. Fractures within the *volk* demonstrated that there was no longer a clear goal for Afrikaner nationalism, and disunity reigned.

In 1994, the country's first democratic election was held, with a racially-inclusive electorate. This was the first opportunity for the majority of South Africans to participate in the electoral process. The African National Congress garnered 62.7% of the vote, the National Party 20.4%, and the last-minute right-wing contender, the Freedom Front, received 2.2% of the vote.<sup>94</sup> The National Party, while still a presence in the South African government, no longer enjoyed its previous hegemony. With this change came about a gradual change in the characterization and identity of the Afrikaner nationalist adherents. There is still a fragment of support for the Freedom Front, which promotes the development of a *volkstaat*, a separate territory in which Afrikaners can live and govern themselves. The 1999 election won more votes for the A.N.C. (66.5%) and fewer for the Afrikaner parties (FF: .75%; NNP: 7%).<sup>95</sup> Support for the Afrikaner parties has been diminishing over the past number of

years, as "the Nationalists apartheid policy created a tragic legacy for the Afrikaners".<sup>96</sup> The support that persists seems to be from a very small core, exclusive group rather than the mainstream population.

Necessitated by this shift in support has also been a redefinition of what constitutes an Afrikaner. Over the past decade and past elections, Afrikanerdom has come to be identified politically more with the right-wing parties. The sense of who is an Afrikaner is being moulded in the new South Africa as the population reconstructs itself in reaction to the ever-changing social and political landscape. The historically unequal distribution of power in South Africa, traditionally related to race, and therefore, language, is being remedied.<sup>97</sup> To the Afrikaners, language retention and appreciation has been intrinsic to their ethnic identity, as "the language is a cultural treasure to be cherished, and to deny it is to deny Afrikanerhood, and therefore a heritage."<sup>98</sup> This principle, of the intrinsic nature of language to one's ethnic identity is now more universally applied to the many South African ethnic groups. Afrikaans is now one of eleven official languages, all of which have constitutional equality.



## ***Ethnicity and Nationalism Endnotes***

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<sup>1</sup> A.L. Epstein, *Ethos and Identity: Three Studies in Ethnicity* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1978), x.

<sup>2</sup> See: Simon Bekker, *Ethnicity in Focus: The South African Case* (Natal: University of Natal, 1993), 24; Harry Hiller, *Canadian Society: A Macro Analysis* (3rd ed.) (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc, 1996), 196; Johan Degenaar, *Nations and Nationalism: The Myth of a South African Nation* (IDASA, 1991), 7.

<sup>3</sup> See: M. Elaine Burgess, "The Resurgence of Ethnicity: Myth or Reality?", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1,3 (1978), 270; Paul R. Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison* (London: SAGE Publications, 1991), 15-16.

<sup>4</sup> See: Richard Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and Explorations* (London: SAGE Publications, 1997), 13-14; Brass, 19; Burgess, 270.

<sup>5</sup> Jenkins, 51.

<sup>6</sup> Brass, 21.

<sup>7</sup> Anna Triandafyllidou, "National Identity and the 'Other'", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 21,4 (1998), 594.

<sup>8</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 51.

<sup>9</sup> Dale Thompson, "Language, Identity and the National Impulse: Quebec", *Annals, American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 538 (1995), 72.

<sup>10</sup> Eliezer Ben -Rafael, *Language, Identity, and Social Division* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 26.

<sup>11</sup> H. Giles, R.Y. Bourhis & D.M. Taylor, "Towards a Theory of Language in Ethnic Group Relations" in Howard Giles (ed.). *Language, Ethnicity and Intergroup Relations* (London: Academic Press, 1977), 307.

<sup>12</sup> Triandafyllidou, 598.

<sup>13</sup> Epstein, xii.

<sup>14</sup> Triandafyllidou, 600.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Brass, 20.

- <sup>17</sup> Alan B. Anderson and James S. Frideres, *Ethnicity in Canada: Theoretical Perspectives* (Toronto: Butterworths, 1981), 29.
- <sup>18</sup> Brass, 41.
- <sup>19</sup> Triandafyllidou, 595.
- <sup>20</sup> James Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity* (London: MacMillan, 1991), 2.
- <sup>21</sup> T.K. Oommen (ed.), *Citizenship and National Identity: From Colonialism to Globalism* (London: SAGE Publications, 1997), 33.
- <sup>22</sup> Ben-Rafael, 12.
- <sup>23</sup> Yolanda Russinovich-Solé, "Language, nationalism and ethnicity in the Americas", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 116 (1995), 112.
- <sup>24</sup> Hobsbawm, 110.
- <sup>25</sup> Katherine O'Sullivan-See, "The Social Origins of Ethnic National Identities in Ireland and Canada" in Jacques Dofny and Akinsona Akiwowo (eds.). *National and Ethnic Movements* (London: SAGE Publications, 1980), 107.
- <sup>26</sup> Hiller, 214.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid, 201.
- <sup>28</sup> Sandro Contenta, "Oui et Non", *Toronto Star*, November 14, 1998.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> Christian Dufour, "A Little History" in William Dodge (ed.). *Boundaries of Identity: A Quebec Reader* (Toronto: Lester Publishing Ltd., 1992), 32-33.
- <sup>31</sup> David W. True, "Quebec: Regionalism in French North America", [www.ultranet.com/~dwtrue/quebec1.html](http://www.ultranet.com/~dwtrue/quebec1.html)
- <sup>32</sup> Hiller, 214.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup> Marc T. Boucher, "The Struggle to Save Canada: A Quebec Perspective", *Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs*, 41,3 (1997), 454.
- <sup>35</sup> Marc V. Levine, "Canada and the Challenge of the Quebec Independence Movement" in Winston Van Horne (ed.) *Global Convulsions: Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Albany: New York State University Press, 1997), 317; emphasis in original.

<sup>36</sup> Jacques Brazeau & Edouard Cloutier, "Interethnic Relations and the Language Issue in Contemporary Canada: A General Appraisal" in Milton J. Esman (ed.). *Ethnic Conflict in the Western World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 206.

<sup>37</sup> Thomson, 72-74.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 75.

<sup>39</sup> Dale Thomson, "Language, Identity and the Nationalist Impulse: Quebec", *Annals, American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 538 (1995), 74.

<sup>40</sup> Berel Rodal, "State and Nation in Conflict" in William Dodge (ed.) *Boundaries of Identity: A Quebec Reader* (Toronto: Lester Publishing Ltd., 1992), xv.

<sup>41</sup> Levine, 318.

<sup>42</sup> Thomson, 76.

<sup>43</sup> Stéphane Dion, "What drives Quebec separatism", *Montreal Gazette*, September 29, 1998, B3.

<sup>44</sup> Ron Burnett, "The Frontiers of Our Dreams Are No Longer the Same" in William Dodge (ed.). *Boundaries of Identity: A Quebec Reader* (Toronto: Lester Publishing Ltd., 1992), 225.

<sup>45</sup> Hiller, 218.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 221.

<sup>47</sup> Levine, 317.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 318.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 319.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 321.

<sup>51</sup> See: Thomson, 77; Hiller, 218.

<sup>52</sup> Levine, 321-322.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 323.

<sup>54</sup> Hiller, 220.

<sup>55</sup> Levine, 332-333.

<sup>56</sup> Vernon February, *The Afrikaners of South Africa* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1991); 5.

<sup>57</sup> See: James C. Armstrong, "The Slaves, 1652-1795" in Richard Elphick and Hermann Giliomee (eds.). *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1820* (Cape Town: Longmans, 1979), 83; June Goodwin and Ben Schiff, *Heart of Whiteness: Afrikaners Face Black Rule in the New South Africa* (New York: Scribner, 1995), 255-258.

<sup>58</sup> February, 74.

<sup>59</sup> T. Dunbar Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, Apartheid, and the Afrikaner Civil Religion* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 43.

<sup>60</sup> See: Joel Novek, *Cooperation and Conflict in Dual Societies: A Comparison of French Canadian and Afrikaner Nationalism* (Quebec: International Center for Research on Bilingualism, 1970), 42; Moodie, 3.

<sup>61</sup> February, 42.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 43.

<sup>64</sup> Goodwin and Schiff, 188.

<sup>65</sup> Courtney Jung, "After Apartheid: Shaping a New Afrikaner 'Volk'", *Indicator South Africa*, 13,4 (1996), 16.

<sup>66</sup> February, 43.

<sup>67</sup> S.B.Spies, "Reconstruction and Unification" in C.F.J. Muller (ed.) *Five Hundred Years: A History of South Africa* (Pretoria: Academica, 1969), 367.

<sup>68</sup> February, 77.

<sup>69</sup> Goodwin and Schiff, 260.

<sup>70</sup> February, 79.

<sup>71</sup> Moodie, 10.

<sup>72</sup> Edwin S. Munger, *Afrikaner and African Nationalism: South African Parallels and Parameters* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 64.

<sup>73</sup> Spies, 366.

<sup>74</sup> Ben Schiff, "The Afrikaners After Apartheid", *Current History*, 95,601 (May, 1996), 217.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Moodie, 41.

<sup>77</sup> Novek, 68.

<sup>78</sup> Schiff, 217-218.

<sup>79</sup> February, 74.

<sup>80</sup> February, 90.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 93.

<sup>82</sup> Goodwin and Schiff, 260.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Goodwin and Schiff, 264.

<sup>85</sup> See: T.R.H. Davenport, *South Africa: A Modern History* (3rd ed.) (Johannesburg: MacMillan, 1987), 430; and Dan O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The apartheid state and the politics of the National Party, 1948-1994* (South Africa: Ravan Press, 1996), 180-181. Note: the official figures from the Soweto uprising list 192 deaths and 1439 injuries, although the unofficial estimates are much higher.

<sup>86</sup> Goodwin and Schiff, 264.

<sup>87</sup> Hermann Giliomee and Lawrence Schlemmer, *From Apartheid to Nation-Building* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1989), 41.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, 42.

<sup>90</sup> William A. Munro, "Revisiting Tradition, Reconstructing Identity: Afrikaner Nationalism and Political Transition in South Africa", *Politikon*, 22,2 (1995), 25.

<sup>91</sup> Dan O'Meara, 296.

<sup>92</sup> Munro, 17.

<sup>93</sup> Schiff, 219.

<sup>94</sup> Note: 1994 election: ANC: 62.7%; NP: 20.4%; IFP: 10.5%; FF: 2.2%; DP: 1.7%; PAC: 1.3%; the remaining 1.2 % was divided among 13 small parties. See Schiff, 220.

<sup>95</sup> Note: 1999 election: ANC: 66.5%; DP: 9.5%; IFP: 8.5%; NNP: 7%; UDM: 3.5%; ACDP: 1.5%; UCDP: .75%; FF: .75%; PAC: .75%; the remaining 1.25% was divided among 4 other parties. See: [www.eisa.org.za/1999/Results.html](http://www.eisa.org.za/1999/Results.html).

<sup>96</sup> Goodwin and Schiff, 384.

<sup>97</sup> Vivian DeKlerk and Barbara Bosch, "Linguistic Stereotypes: Nice Accent - Nice Person?" *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 116 (1995), 19.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 34.

## 5. *The Struggle for Self-Determination*

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All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.<sup>1</sup>

The right to self-determination: something which all peoples have, and yet it remains a highly elusive concept. The notion of self-determination is complex and largely contingent on the domestic political, social and economic situation of the peoples involved in a self-determination campaign. It therefore can be impractical to consider each circumstance of self-determination according to a standard definition or a firm set of criteria. International law and organizations such as the United Nations do, however, recognize the implicit right of disadvantaged peoples to embark on a quest for their rights even though historical circumstances, strategies, and expected outcomes differ from one situation to another. "The principle of self-determination as a general concept is of universal applicability; its concretization will, however, according to the particular political circumstances vary from case to case."<sup>2</sup>

The historical development of the concept of self-determination can be traced back to the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. This era saw the emergence of the territory of Great Britain, a multi-ethnic state consisting of England, Scotland and Ireland. In conjunction arose the doctrine of nationalism and of popular sovereignty, challenging the tradition of royal absolutism and divine kingship.<sup>3</sup> Popular sovereignty and human rights became increasingly legitimate as the principle of ethnic nationalism became more widespread across Europe. This was related to the growing linguistic and ethnic consciousness of European populations.<sup>4</sup> Subsequent to the spreading awareness of

the doctrine of self-determination, was the French Revolution in 1789, considered to be a benchmark in ethnic and minority rights. The era of the French Revolution was marked by human society having evolved to a stage where human freedom became prominent.<sup>5</sup> The event “symbolized the right of the ‘ruled’ to rebel against the ‘rulers’”.<sup>6</sup> As such, minority demands for autonomy were grounded in the oppression, expatriation, and genocide perpetrated by their government.<sup>7</sup> This unfolding of self-determination “is rooted in the need of a nation or minority to be free from suppression and discrimination...[and]...it represents a need for people to take their own decisions, make their own choices, develop their potential and pursue their interests”.<sup>8</sup> Since the time of the French Revolution, the concept of self-determination “has spread throughout the world, unifying peoples into nations, prompting revolutions, crumbling empires, freeing colonies, and threatening modern states”.<sup>9</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, ethno-linguistic groups were considered to be entitled to the same rights of self-determination as nation-states. This view was primarily concerned with group dynamics, but also addressed territorial issues. The events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had a profound impact on the modern understanding of the concept of self-determination. Following World War One, then American President Woodrow Wilson advocated national self-determination. The League of Nations was formed, also promoting this principle. The emphasis was not only the protection of minority rights, but also on the viability of the state, in the context of preparedness and ability to rule democratically. This brought about representative government, with authority predicated on the consent of the governed.<sup>10</sup> Regarding this issue, Wilson emphasized “that self-determination can not be implemented unless subordinate groups aspiring to rule themselves are sufficiently prepared for and able to rule



democratically, *inter alia*, by upholding the doctrine of popular sovereignty".<sup>11</sup> This criterion of democratic rule as a forerunner to self-determination was subsequently extended. The League of Nations view became that every nation, or sub-nation that has the ability to rule democratically and so opts, qualifies for self-determination.<sup>12</sup>

As the League of Nations had not developed an explicit conceptualization or limitations of the right to self-determination, the principle was seized upon and perverted by Nazi Germany and the events of World War Two. This resulted in the discrediting of the tenet of the ethno-nationalist state.<sup>13</sup> Following the war, which was fought in the interests of democracy and the rights of nations, however, self-determination was revitalized. The United Nations was formed after World War Two for the purpose of promoting international peace, and established principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples.<sup>14</sup>

Also in the post-World War Two era nationalist feelings were emerging in Africa, accompanied by a move towards liberation from colonial rule. The original mapping of colonial boundaries was carried out regardless of ethnic, cultural, or linguistic considerations, resulting in numerous multi-ethnic and multi-lingual colonies.<sup>15</sup> Therefore very few African colonial boundaries were aligned with ethnic boundaries, and many colonial peoples were distanced from their ethnic kin by frontiers.<sup>16</sup> The decolonization process which took place in the aftermath of World War Two has been buttressed by the United Nations' more concrete establishment of the right to self-determination. Decolonization is seen as "the desire for liberation from colonial rule, a rejection of political domination by a foreign society, especially of a different race, and not merely the will to secure more rights within the colonial framework".<sup>17</sup>

Peoples involved in the process of decolonization were considered to be engaged in bona fide nation-building, and therefore the international conception of self-determination could be applied in that circumstance. International doctrine, though, supported the maintenance of colonial boundaries for the purposes of territorial integrity. Once a colony had achieved independence, then self-determination served to reinforce non-interference from the previous colonizers, and socio-political sovereignty.<sup>18</sup>

In the context of decolonization, self-determination gained immediate acceptance, although there is a lack of consensus on its legitimacy in non-colonial situations. However, as “nearly every state in the world was founded directly or indirectly on conquest”,<sup>19</sup> there may be a very few instances where the right to self-determination is not applicable.

There are some criteria used by the international community in recognizing a legitimate claim for self-determination. These include: a group defined by language, culture, religion and tradition; territoriality; and common-sense criteria regarding the viability of the nation. With respect to the viability criteria, there are a number of relevant factors: the size of the population; the size and distinctiveness of the territory; the expected growth of population and economic output; the recency of separate existence; the crimes of the past; the status of self-government; the level of public awareness; the likelihood of success; and that its nature is non-threatening to other interests.<sup>20</sup>

A struggle for self-determination will emerge within a population, typically an ethnic minority, which has suffered injustice or exploitation at the hands of an oppressive majority. Dependent on the extent of the discrimination experienced, the ethnic minority will establish its own goals to redress the injustices. Therefore, the minority may have its self-determinist needs satisfied by certain accommodations within their existing state, such as: their own language being recognized as an official language; having a bilingual national anthem; or the right to mother-tongue education. They may, however, expect greater independence, and achieve regional autonomy or sovereignty association through political negotiations. As a more extreme measure, the minority group may not be content with any affiliation with their state and work towards complete independence in the form of secession. This is the very ambiguous nature of self-determination, that a group can consider itself to have achieved self-determination by securing certain rights or representation within the state, without being committed to the road to secession.<sup>21</sup> Other groups, however, are satisfied with nothing less.

Secession, although it is most commonly associated with it, is not necessarily equal to self-determination. Secession is defined as “an abrupt unilateral move to independence on the part of a region that is a metropolitan territory of a sovereign independent state”.<sup>22</sup> Clearly secession involves great disruption to the domestic order and should be considered as an option only when all other accommodations have been exhausted. With a broad range of political statuses available, groups can have more control in the governmental sphere with different levels of autonomy.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, multi-ethnic states are encouraged to utilize flexible constitutional agreements to accommodate levels of autonomy and cultural protection, thereby

avoiding serious conflict.<sup>24</sup> Statehood, or independence, “is not necessary to guarantee the legitimate human rights of groups and individuals to protect and promote their culture, language, and traditions”.<sup>25</sup>

However, where the interests of different ethnic groups within one state are conflicting and irreconcilable, the creation of new political communities becomes a viable option. This allows for peoples “who are extensively predominant in a distinct territory to determine their common destiny, provided they do not violate the civil liberties of others, including, of course, minorities who live in the same territory”.<sup>26</sup>

Claims for secessionist self-determination can be adjudicated according to four principles:

1. A pattern of systematic discrimination or exploitation against a sizeable, self-defined minority;
2. The existence of a distinct self-defined community or society within a state, compactly inhabiting a region, which overwhelmingly supports separatism;
3. A realistic prospect of conflict resolution and peace within and between the new and old state as a result of the envisaged self-rule or partition; and
4. The rejection of compromise solutions on the part of the central government.<sup>27</sup>

Secessionist self-determination claims are made by nationalist leaders when accommodations by the main state government are either not made, or are deemed insufficient to protect the interests of the group. Their identity, culture, language, and traditions — that which makes them a unique ethnic group — are threatened within the framework of the larger state. The fragmentation of groups within a territory gives rise to the assertion of one group’s identity in the face of others. “Human beings speaking a certain language, guided by similar values, and relating to a historical past have always existed, but only when threatening neighbours or rulers, who may

not speak the same language or related to the same historical past, are perceived as 'them' or 'others' is an 'us' born."<sup>28</sup> When the 'us' and 'them' can no longer co-exist, one or the other may opt for territorial separation in order to regain past cohesion and homogeneity.

Ethnic nationalism will make some form of self-determinist demands on the state. These may be easily accommodated through language policies, religious allowances, constitutional amendments, or regional authority. However, some nationalist movements may make greater claims to self-determination if they perceive that territorial secession would better protect their culture, language and traditions. Economic sustainability may have no relevance as sometimes "secessionists are prepared to live in a poorer, weaker — almost inviable — state and be 'free' rather than remain in a richer, larger and more powerful country that they do not regard as their own or geared to meet their needs".<sup>29</sup>

### ***Civic Nationalism***

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The struggle for self-determination can also effect a transformation in the basis of group nationalism. Ethnic nationalism emerges out of a sense of group collectivity, founded on cultural similarity and in distinction to other groups. Ethnic nationalism can evolve into a form of civic nationalism, a more inclusive structure. This involves the transformation from ethnic conformity and homogeneity within a segment to the acceptance of more ethnically varied peoples through a redefinition of group identity and membership.

Exclusive ethnic nationalism is represented by a collectivity of institutions constructed on cultural unity. Membership comes with a high degree of group loyalty and a primary focus is on threats to its cultural and linguistic security.<sup>30</sup> “In this type of nationalism, multilingual and multicultural states do not make much sense: they are perceived as awkward and unstable; as likely to entail discrimination and therefore internal conflict; and, as a result they are seen as conducive to a lower quality of life.”<sup>31</sup>

Civic nationalism, however, is more instrumental and utilitarian. “Societies are constructed in order to acquire control over resources; to solve problems; and to defend members against enemies...the preoccupation is with the domain of territory over which societal institutions have jurisdiction.”<sup>32</sup> Membership can be claimed by anyone who meets the legally established criteria, as it is removed from cultural factors.

A genuine example of one of these nationalisms would be difficult to find in the modern world, as most nations exist on a continuum between these two constructions. Social and political circumstances can affect a society's place on the continuum, and it can also be manipulated depending on the agenda of the leaders of a nationalist movement. Demographic shifts, for example, may require an ethnic nationalist state to redefine its boundaries and open up its membership in order to sustain its numerical or electoral support. Necessitated by this transformation, then, is a displacement of cultural symbols and historic mythologies that had supported the previous ethnic enclave. Language, one of the salient factors in group identity, is

reduced to a means of communication and loses its importance as a symbol of group membership.

These issues are very relevant to both Québec and South Africa. Their ethnic entities have long been supported by their cultural and historical symbols, and factions within each population believe that their interests are not well served and protected by the governing state. Therefore, their heritage would be more secure with exclusive political control in their own territorial state. Recent social and political events require a reconsideration of their membership and mandate. The historical evolution of both Québec and South Africa as distinct ethnicities has many parallels, although their recent power structures indicate a growing divergence between these two cultures.

### ***The Québécois and their Struggle for Self-Determination***

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A faction within Québec society — by no means everyone — has long felt in a disadvantaged position within the framework of Canadian society. Efforts have been made on both sides, with the Québécois pushing for greater recognition of their distinctiveness and greater legitimacy to their language claims. On the other side, the federal government attempts to appease the Québécois in the name of Canadian unity have been unsuccessful perhaps on two fronts: the Québécois persist in their claims that they would be better off as an independent state, and the rest of the Canadian population, composed of several ethnic groups in itself, watches as Québec gets preferential treatment.

The collective identity of the Québécois has always been a strong presence and is easily conjured to prove their distinctiveness from English Canada. In fact, “the Québécois separatists denied commonality with the rest of Canada except that of common humanity because they argued that their language and history were irreconcilably different”.<sup>33</sup> Their struggle for self-determination is rooted in the fact that they once had their own nation, until the British Conquest and subsequent constitutional marriage, and therefore want to reclaim their autonomy. All of the language policies that have been implemented, and constitutional negotiating that has taken place, have not provided the Québécois with a satisfactory framework nor the confidence that their position within the Canadian federation is sacrosanct. Separatism is, therefore, the mandate of the Québécois nationalists. “The case of Québec suggests that some groups will settle for nothing short of separation to form their own sovereign state even when offered membership in an extremely loose federal system and special group rights, such as veto over federal constitutional changes and the right to official use of a separate language, both of which Québec currently enjoys.”<sup>34</sup>

The history of Québec demonstrates how a high degree of ethnic enclosure was maintained, and the effect that has had on the independence movement. “The deeper well-springs of [Québec separatism] derive from the peculiarities of the Québécois ethno-history of subordination to British domination, from earlier defensive Catholic beliefs in ethnic superiority and from powerful territorial attachments to the province, all of which sustained the community in its long period of relative agrarian isolation and which now undergird its modern secular expressions.”<sup>35</sup> Their traditional survival myths are no longer adequate, though, as the world in which those myths



emerged no longer exists. In order to maintain any semblance of their traditional order, so key to their identity, complete separation from the rest of Canada appears to be mandated.

Secession is not a simple transaction, though. At first glance, Québec falls into the realm of decolonization, even though it is in a more developed country than most nations experiencing the same process. However, it must not be overlooked that although the British colonizers claimed authority over the French, those same French colonizers took the territory by conquest from the Native Canadians.<sup>36</sup> The lack of consensus in Canadian history over who are the founding nations complicates the issue of self-determination. Currently there are 11 Aboriginal First Nations residing within the present boundary of Québec, occupying more than half of the province. These First Nations also claim, and legitimately so, a right to their own self-determination should the province of Québec elect to secede.<sup>37</sup>

Territory is also, clearly, a major issue regarding secession. By rights, self-determination should be “confined to areas which encapsulate territory where the national group resides”,<sup>38</sup> thereby excluding any person or group not considering itself a member. Therefore, “the native peoples in northern Québec, who have a distinct history and culture, and who conceive of themselves as distinct nations, should not be included as Québécois”.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, their territory should not be included in the transaction. By sub-dividing the province to leave native lands under Canada’s domain, Québec would be left with a much smaller area. But there is continuing uncertainty about what territory Québec may be entitled to: perhaps that with which it entered Confederation. “The original French territory of Québec was

only a narrow strip of land along the St. Lawrence River; the remainder of what now constitutes Québec was ceded to the province by the English after the conquest."<sup>40</sup> One certainty is that the manner in which the territorial issue is resolved will impact the economic viability of an independent Québec.

Despite the numerous logistical factors that appear to cloud the issue, the separatist movement in Québec has never really lost its momentum. At times, particularly in the wake of failed constitutional negotiations, it seems that separatism has waned, but then becomes resurgent again. There are some primary structural conditions which exist in most national movements which help to explain the persistence of nationalism and self-determination. These factors will influence the political organization of the state in which they occur, and are very clear in the Québec context. They are:

1. the presence or absence of socio-economic inequality between the segments of a dual society, and its definition as a salient issue;
2. the presence or absence of a threat to the continued existence of central institutions of the socio-economically subordinated segment; and
3. the presence or absence of an influential elite faction within the subordinate group which is dissatisfied with its position in the larger society.<sup>41</sup>

Firstly, socio-economic inequality existed between the English and French Canadians for a substantial part of their history. Because the Québécois tended towards non-participation in the economics of industrialization until fairly recently, they experienced a kind of socio-economic 'generation gap'. Their tradition of rural agrarianism, which was quite acceptable to them for a time, meant that English domination in the financial and industrial sectors was firmly entrenched before they

realized that they could do anything about it. However, the Québécois emerged from their shell during the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s and began to establish their own sustainable industry and gain a foothold in the commercial and financial spheres. Separatist discussions were initially tentative regarding this, but gradually the business leaders gained confidence with their ability, some saying that “Québec has a strong diversified economy. If we have to, we’ll go it alone.”<sup>42</sup> In the past few decades, then, Québec’s “economic progress can be measured by the shrinking gap in the standard of living between francophones and anglophones in Québec and the growing francophone ownership of business”.<sup>43</sup> This is partly attributable to Québécois business people stepping in to fill a void left by English business withdrawing from Québec because of the uncertainty about the future.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, while socio-economic inequality was a definite factor in the mobilization of nationalist forces, it is now not an obstacle to Québec’s survival as an independent state.

Secondly, there was clearly a perceived threat to Québec’s cultural institutions, in particular, their language. Anglicization policies were directed towards social and cultural assimilation. Industrialization and urbanization caused people to be transplanted from their own environment to a distant and foreign one. Therefore, “French-Canadian nationalists, under the leadership of the clergy, began a program of social action involving the creation of ecclesiastical bureaucracies, interest groups and voluntary associations to insulate the urban French-Canadian within a French and Catholic environment”.<sup>45</sup> This institutional security warded off some of the threat in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but today the threat is perceived to be greater than ever. In fact, “a solid majority of Québécois have come to feel that Canada is unwilling to accommodate even the most basic cultural needs of the province ...

Québec's historical struggle to maintain its language, culture and heritage is no longer compatible with being Canadian".<sup>46</sup>

The third structural factor — the dissatisfied elite who are able to guide the rest of the population — rested with the professional and clerical leaders.<sup>47</sup> They first made a foray into local politics and once that was established, they gained more political leverage with each subsequent election. The Québécois elites also had a role in the development of the institutions which protected French culture. They provided an alternative set of institutions and networks for Québécois' to turn to, rather than promoting their reliance on the English-Canadian institutions.

Another crucial structure is that of political power, and the influence that it wields. Currently, the Québécois nationalists have a governmental presence on two levels, provincial and federal. However, this was not always so. L'Union Nationale, a nationalist party supported by the secret society L'Ordre de Jacques Cartier, governed Québec from 1936-1939.<sup>48</sup> In approximately the same era emerged the Bloc Populaire, a movement of nationalist and Catholic intellectuals and a contender against L'Union Nationale.<sup>49</sup> In 1960, the strongly federalist Liberal party governed the province until 1966 when L'Union Nationale was re-elected.

In 1968 the nationalist movement in Québec was revitalized through the vehicle of the Parti Québécois. The drive of nationalist parties at that time was to reclaim some of the economic and political control that was vested in the federal government. This became the goal of the Parti Québécois, "whose agenda centers around the political self-determination of Québécois as a condition for the continued social, economic,

and cultural development of Québec as a distinct society”.<sup>50</sup> Through democratic, electoral means, the Parti Québécois sought the independence of Québec. They obviously filled an electoral void, as “the growth of the PQ [Parti Québécois] during the 1970s was meteoric”.<sup>51</sup> Effectively, they became the only political alternative to the Liberal party.<sup>52</sup> The Parti Québécois was elected to provincial government in 1976. Within a year of the election, they introduced and passed the significant Bill 101, the Charter of the French Language in Québec, which began with the words: “Whereas the French language, the distinctive language of a people that is in majority French-speaking, is the instrument by which that people has articulated its identity...”<sup>53</sup>

The Parti Québécois has been in government since their election in 1976, except for the period between 1985-1994 when the Liberal Party occupied the position. The separatist movement has gained much momentum through the Parti Québécois and remained resilient, surviving the unsuccessful referendums and constitutional amendments. Support behind the independence parties even reached a point where the Bloc Québécois, a separatist party, became the official opposition in Canada's federal parliament in 1995. This “created an ironic situation of a separatist party, seeking independence from Canada, forming the official opposition with all of the rights and privileges associated with that status”.<sup>54</sup> The most recent Québec election was held in November, 1998. The Parti Québécois won 76 seats of the legislature, the Liberal Party won 48 seats, and L'Union démocratique holds 1 seat. However, it is interesting to note that the Parti Québécois received 43% of the popular vote, 1% behind the Liberal party.<sup>55</sup> The political authority enjoyed by separatist parties permits

much greater leverage with regards to the protection of their cultural institutions. It also allows for more autonomy in decision-making in the interests of the province.

The endurance of the separatist movement is related to the perceived threat to the existence of the Québécois identity, the salient issue being the French language.

Their resilience is buttressed by the continuing strong presence of the resolutely separatist political parties. Initially their predominance in Québec, confined to the provincial boundaries, gave them a level of autonomy to conduct their own affairs.

Once established in that niche, their campaigns gained momentum and their confidence in their ability to govern on their own, for their own, increased manifold.

The presence of the Bloc Québécois as the federal opposition party is a measure of successful efforts to mobilize separatist support. With their political will, and depending on the demographic framework of the population, Québec's next referendum could put them over the half-way mark, if and when that referendum is called. As yet, the Parti Québécois leadership are biding their time for appropriate political and social conditions.

An issue as significant and emotional as national independence is bound to produce many opinions, and not always consensus. For example, one perspective claims that "[separatists] maintain that English Canada is not interested in making any real concessions, and that in spite of rhetoric to the contrary, the majority of Canadians have never really been willing to accommodate Québec as a distinct cultural unit".<sup>56</sup> And on the other hand, "French Canadians want to secede in spite of governmental efforts to appease them with special rights".<sup>57</sup> Public campaigns for Canadian unity have been mistaken, in the past, for narrow federalism and the lack of interest in the

future of Québec, causing “many Québécois [to] feel they would have to deny two centuries of their history in order to remain Canadian”.<sup>58</sup>

### ***Civic Nationalism in Québec***

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Québécois nationalism has undergone rigorous transformation, with the Quiet Revolution being an integral factor. The strategic changes in the nationalist agenda are reflective of the equally significant changes in the structures of Québec society, leaning towards a more civic brand of nationalism in some spheres. Four main transformations affecting the once-traditional society have been identified:

1. The nationalists adopted the term ‘Québécois’ rather than ‘French-Canadian’, signifying a shift in their self-perception from minority to majority.
2. Nationalism shifted from a defensive stance to become more forward-looking and development-oriented, aiming to control the structures that influence it.
3. Growing secularization resulted in the increased importance of state institutions, over those of the long-entrenched Roman Catholic Church structures.
4. A substantial drop in the birth rate has diminished the strength of the group, thereby raising the issue of the integration of immigrants.<sup>59</sup>

These changes have required a reorganization of priorities within the nationalist movement. They also require a reconciliation of seemingly conflicting identities. For example, the significant number of Québec anglophones who left the province because of uncertainty of the future produced a greater concentration of francophones, giving them extra electoral leverage. Then the declining birth rate has resulted in greater amalgamation of immigrant populations, who may or may not use the French language. However, in order to maintain the momentum of their separatist movement, their high profile with the Canadian public, and their accustomed

percentage of the Canadian population, the nationalists lean towards incorporating immigrant peoples, making their campaign less about ethno-linguistic nationalism and more about territorial boundaries.

This shift is partly strategic, utilising what political and social structures were available, but also to more easily obtain international recognition by shifting the focus away from it being an 'ethnic' problem. The recent and current spate of world-wide ethnically-based conflicts has discredited the issue of ethnic exclusivity. As American President Bill Clinton recently remarked at a Canadian conference on federalism, "It seems to me that the suggestion that a people of a given ethnic group or tribal group or religious group can only have a meaningful political existence if they are an independent nation ... is a questionable assertion in a global economy where cooperation pays greater benefits in every area of life than destructive competition".<sup>60</sup>

The current status of self-determination and separatism in Québec is highly contingent on the greater political and social mood. While the Parti Québécois leadership is still committed to the goal of independence, they refuse to declare a referendum until the optimal conditions for success exist. Their urgency, however, is clear from the provincial premier's recent statement, "We must explain to Québécois that the future of their state, their capacity as a people, as a nation, to control their destiny are endangered as rarely before".<sup>61</sup> Their newly re-established alliance with France should boost their confidence, as France supports their right to self-determination.



The federal government, meanwhile, struggles with issues such as: what constitutes a clear majority in a referendum; the constitutionality of secession; the possibility of internal partitioning; the division of the national debt; and most crucial for the federalists, alternative strategies to preserve Canadian unity.<sup>62</sup> However, it is a certainty that the issue is still a strong factor in Québécois identity and nationhood, as “they are very determined and articulate and they simply see secession as a natural outcome of Québec’s growing up”.<sup>63</sup> Whether or not this works to the advantage of Québec remains to be seen, but as one theorist cautions:

The act of leaving Canadian federation would inevitably produce strong economic and commercial relations with the USA, so the next step would be a process by which Québec is likely to become ‘Americanized’. This would threaten the French heritage of the Québécois and finally their politics. So perhaps, ironically, it is better for them to stay within the Canadian federation as a means of defending their separate identity.<sup>64</sup>

### ***The Afrikaners and their Struggle for Self-Determination***

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The inception of Afrikaner self-determination traces back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century days of the Great Trek. Many Afrikaners refused to live under British rule, and rather than rebelling in defiance, they opted to pursue a new land, pushing the limits of the frontier. Afrikaner republics were established with the mandate of self-government. However, in doing so, the rights of the Black South Africans in the territory were negated. The many Black groups living in the regions assumed by the Afrikaners were no longer able to govern themselves according to their own traditions and laws.

Their rigorous protection of their own Afrikaner-governed territories culminated with their defeat during the Anglo-Boer War. The British campaign to gain control of the resource-rich republics mobilized and united the Afrikaners in a quest to preserve their land, their autonomy, and ultimately, their identity. At stake was not merely farms and land, but an independence that they knew could not continue under British rule. Past experiences with British authority confirmed for the Afrikaners that assimilation and conformity would result and that their unique customs and heritage would be subordinated, if not lost. "It was this traumatic experience of conquest, combined with the arrogance of the British conquerors, which marks the decisive moment for the development of the bases of modern Afrikaner nationalism."<sup>65</sup>

Throughout their history, the Afrikaners have been on a constant campaign to preserve their culturally distinct identity, and to promote the interests of the Afrikaner as a group. This is represented by the thrusts towards ethnic homogeneity and cultural uniformity, by the depth of sentiment demonstrated through the Afrikaans Language Movements, and by the network of interconnected cultural organizations implemented to support and nurture the Afrikaner. These illustrations of nationalist ardour are the cornerstones on which a self-determining nation is built.

In the post Anglo-Boer War era, the Afrikaners were subjected by the British, having lost the autonomy and self-government they had previously enjoyed in their republics. In order to recoup their losses and consolidate Afrikanerdom, "nascent Afrikaner cultural and business elites set out in the 1920s and 1930s to secure Afrikaners' 'legitimate' place in the economy by protecting Afrikaner workers, supporting Afrikaner businessmen, and capturing cities for the Afrikaners."<sup>66</sup> As well,

the National Party was formed in 1914, in reaction to the newly formed Union of South Africa, and to ensure the Afrikaner voice was heard in the political realm. By this time, “Afrikaner nationalism had moved from fanciful schemes and rhetorical bombast to a definite crystallization of its aims”.<sup>67</sup> These aims, the endorsement of Afrikanerdom, were buttressed by the saturation of society by Afrikaner networks and organizations. Finally in 1948, the National Party was elected to power, and “the South African government was transformed into an arm of Afrikaner nationalism”.<sup>68</sup> Through the vehicle of the National Party, Afrikaner leadership was able to recover the cultural pride lost during the Anglo-Boer War, and take steps to ensure and perpetuate Afrikaner domination. It was this historic juncture — their ascension to nation-wide power — which marked the enactment of Afrikaner self-determination. Their control and superiority was ensured through a rigorous and coercive system of laws that dominated all other races. Apartheid was used by nationalists to achieve their prominence in South Africa. The National Party “was aimed at enhancing Afrikaner nationalism by entrenching white political control in South Africa. Through apartheid, Afrikaners governed not only themselves, but also all other groups in the society.”<sup>69</sup> Justifying segregation on the grounds that each ethnic group in South Africa was entitled to self-determination, the National Party applied its self-determinist ambitions across the country. This unfolding of apartheid and the unrelenting drive for Afrikaner self-determination can be examined by revisiting the existing structural factors that create an environment amenable to nationalist fervour:

1. the presence or absence of socio-economic inequality between the segments of a dual society, and its definition as a salient issue;
2. the presence or absence of a threat to the continued existence of central institutions of the socio-economically subordinated segment; and

3. the presence or absence of an influential elite faction within the subordinate group which is dissatisfied with its position in the larger society.<sup>70</sup>

The first factor, socio-economic inequality, was a resultant feature from the past institutional isolation and ruralism of many Afrikaners. The British became the political and economic elites, contributing to the cleavage between these two segments of the plural society.<sup>71</sup> The residential patterns, and the Afrikaner avoidance of urban or British elements, left the British to enjoy a position of dominance in the urban areas where they gained a foothold in the industrial sector. The Afrikaners were daunted by this inequality, but also by the fact that redressing it meant participating in the industrialization process. This drew Afrikaners into the foreign cities feeling very displaced and insecure. However, some of the Afrikaner elites were able to integrate workers into the business and industrial sectors. Later, with the help of very restrictive labour legislation, White workers were protected, closing the socio-economic gap between the British and the Afrikaner, but severely limiting the opportunities and potential of the Black South African workforce.

Institutional enclosure was crucial to the well-being of Afrikaners. When their institutions were threatened by British domination and anglicization, their welfare and their identity were jeopardized. The Afrikaners felt the encroachment of their conquerors as “the British authorities attempted to turn South Africa into an English-speaking colony”.<sup>72</sup> Institutional completeness was rescued, though, as cultural organizations were introduced which could support and assist the young and the old in every facet of their life. These organizations were largely run under the umbrella of the Broederbond, the elite, secret society of the Afrikaner nationalists. British and English-language influences did impact the Afrikaner institutions, but in time, they

were able to re-assert themselves as their cultural institutions were integral to their drive for self-determination.

Education was also a critical domain to support, and particularly Afrikaans-language tuition. Once the Afrikaners secured governmental control, they ensured that the education system was aligned with the ideology of the National Party. Through the education system, the myths of the Afrikaner nation could be transmitted, inculcating future generations with apartheid-inspired nationalist dogma. This was achieved “by placing Afrikaner children in exclusively Afrikaans schools, where, insulated from contamination, they would develop a strong sense of Afrikaner identity”.<sup>73</sup>

The third structural factor is the emergence of an elite dissatisfied with the ethnic group's position in society. This consisted of business leaders, political figures, and influential academics who were behind such campaigns as Christian National Education, and the Afrikaans Language Movements. These leaders were instrumental in implementing the institutional factors that would, in the end, save the Afrikaners. They were also critical in influencing the general population and rallying them to the cause of furthering the interests of the Afrikaners. Through these efforts, the Afrikaners' position in South Africa would be remedied by their assumption of autonomy and political control, as “often the claim to self-determination lies at the very heart of a group's identity, and a political movement's efforts to mobilize”.<sup>74</sup>

These factors all contributed to a very strong nationalist identity among the Afrikaners, culminating with their election to lead the South African government in 1948. Their plans for self-determination, “shaped by a history of colonization,

conquest and domination”<sup>75</sup> were implemented by the construction of apartheid. At this time, the goals of Afrikaner self-determination were to maintain governmental control, to distance themselves from British hegemony, and to separate themselves from the Black population. This was done effectively, although not willingly, through the homeland structures.

The government continued to work through its educational system and its racially-based policies, to build cohesion within Afrikanerdom and to buttress the apartheid apparatuses. Dissemination of the ideology could easily take place through the pre-existing network of cultural organizations, which most Afrikaners patronized. In this manner, Afrikaners created for themselves an all-encompassing, yet insular state, with relative security as the government also dictated which people may vote for it. In terms of self-determination, the state at this time was meeting the needs of the Afrikaners, as they triumphed over their traditional rival, the British, and carved out governmental policies in their own interests. Later, when the political structures began to change, were their calls for territorial secession in the shape of a *volkstaat*.

P.W. Botha, elected Prime Minister in 1978, began a series of government reforms which were to have a significant impact on the National Party machinery. His reforms were a “cautious liberalization, which aimed neither to relinquish any significant trappings of power nor to abandon the political alliances that lay at the base of Afrikaner nationalism. Nevertheless, it did propose to re-arrange the relationship between the state, race and class interests which lay at the core of Afrikaner nationalism.”<sup>76</sup> Because of this liberalization of policies, a number of politicians left the National Party to form the Conservative Party, a right-wing faction which “founded

its political appeals on the language of ethnic solidarity, group identity and cultural cohesion, invoking Afrikaner 'tradition' as the wellspring of identity politics".<sup>77</sup> The Conservative Party presented Botha's reforms as a betrayal of the volk's cultural heritage, garnering support from the now weakened National Party. These events served to fracture the National Party and Afrikanerdom and the cohesion would never be regained.

The Conservative Party and the other main right wing party, the AWB (Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging: Afrikaner Resistance Movement), represented the very traditional Afrikaners, and harked back to the early conceptions of Afrikaner nationalism. The main aim of the AWB "was to create a *volkstaat* (people's state) based on the Boer Republics of the nineteenth century. This was not simply a geo-political vision. It rested on a powerful nostalgia for an agrarian utopia (quite literally the '*boerestaaf*'), conjured from a selective and highly romantic historical memory."<sup>78</sup>

The concept of a *volkstaat* is not new, but only became prominent when the structures of apartheid began to crumble. Since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, "Afrikaners have perceived themselves, and have been perceived by others, as an indigenous African people, distinct in their socio-cultural origins and their local history, heritage and language".<sup>79</sup> Since the Afrikaners have become rooted in South Africa and retain none of the original ties to Europe, they have no homeland to reclaim and must therefore control their culture and identity and protect their future by creating a *volkstaat*.<sup>80</sup> As with many other issues, unanimity is not to be found within Afrikanerdom regarding how a *volkstaat* should be implemented, who the members should be, and where the territory would be situated.

The creation of a *volkstaat* would require territorial secession, as the right-wing Afrikaners do not feel that constitutional accommodations would sufficiently preserve their heritage. Finding a territory in which to situate a *volkstaat* is an enormous obstacle, which may never resolve itself. Afrikaners' earliest assertions of autonomy and self-determination — the Great Trek and the Boer Republics — guaranteed that their population would be dispersed across the whole of South Africa and not confined to one area. This also means, of course, that non-volkstaaters, be they Black or White, may be living side-by-side with those who are in favour of secession. In any case, the proposal would be accompanied by significant displacement and relocation.

The changes that took place in the South African political realm during the 1990s impacted on every political party in the spectrum. The once monolithic National Party engaged in a series of reforms which greatly diminished their own power, practically disbanding their own party in the process. Those on the left opted to join the newly-legalized ANC, while the right-wing members preferred the Conservative Party, and later the Freedom Front. Only the center remained of the National Party.

The reforms that led to this upheaval were the result of a long process of negotiations, primarily with the ANC to bring democratic government to South Africa. The National Party approached the negotiations confident that they could survive this crisis, as they had survived so many others.<sup>81</sup> "The NP entered the negotiations in 1990 from a position of strength and with a reasonably confident assumption that it could engineer a constitution that would severely restrict the power of the majority and thus diminish democratic uncertainty."<sup>82</sup> The main objectives for the National



Party were: a non-elected party drafting the constitution; a power-sharing cabinet and rotating presidency; and mother-tongue education and single-medium schools as entrenched rights. After the drawn out negotiating process, what the Afrikaners essentially walked away with was an assurance that they had a role to play in the government, and that a *volkstaat* council would be appointed to investigate the proposal.<sup>83</sup> However, cognizant of both the domestic and international climate, the Afrikaners knew that proceeding with the negotiations was really their only choice. The “settlers who had become indigenous finally realized that they had to co-exist on equal terms with the disenfranchised, even if this meant losing political power”.<sup>84</sup>

Because the status quo could not be maintained,<sup>85</sup> the reform process began, culminating in majority rule with the ANC at the helm. The National Party leadership, presenting that it had broken away from the structures of apartheid, could not then convincingly argue for special rights or status for Afrikaners. Nor were they able to delineate a specific territory for partition, as they were not geographically confined to one area. Rather, the National Party “shed the identity politics of Afrikanerdom and adopted a much more clearly class-based political platform”.<sup>86</sup>

The events surrounding the negotiations and the country’s first democratic election decisively redrew the political map. The National Party, initially a partner in the transitory Government of National Unity, withdrew in 1996 after ratifying the new Constitution, “the published reason being that its minority voice had not been able to make sufficient input into policy decisions to balance the loss of its image as a party bound in a coalition”.<sup>87</sup> In the 1999 election, the National Party had renamed itself to the New National Party, offering a more inclusive constituency, and cooperating with

the ANC government. Electoral support for the New National Party dropped to a new low, retaining only about one-third of the support they received in the 1994 election.<sup>88</sup>

The voice of the Afrikaner now rests with the right-wing factions, the Conservative Party and, predominantly, the Freedom Front. The Freedom Front, which gives as its purpose “to acquire freedom and a *volkstaat* for the Afrikaner, as well as to serve the interests of compatriots inside and outside the *volkstaat*”,<sup>89</sup> lost a significant amount of support in the 1999 election. In 1994, 2.2% (approximately 540,000 people) voted for the Freedom Front, but five years later, the result was fewer than 90,000 votes, approximately 0.8% of the electorate.<sup>90</sup>

Currently, the era of the Afrikaner has essentially eclipsed. There are still pockets of militant support and exclusive communities but the political will is just not behind the movement towards a *volkstaat*. The momentum of Afrikanerdom has lost its force.

The *volkstaat* issue will probably surface from time to time but without credibility unless there is internal consensus amongst its supporters about where it should be situated, who would take up residence there, and how the territory would be administered.

### ***Civic Nationalism in South Africa***

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Civic nationalism played a role in Afrikaner politics, although a relatively minor one. The transition period demonstrated how fluid ethnic identity can be. The reconstruction of the Afrikaner identity took place after their displacement from a very solid base of power to a more marginal influence. The fractures that had occurred within the National Party in 1969 with the formation of the Herstigte Nasionale Party,

and again in 1982 with the birth of the Conservative Party, clouded who was a true Afrikaner and which political party served their interests. "The definition, meaning, and boundaries of Afrikanerdom have become highly contested as the white right attempts to co-opt Afrikanerdom for its own purposes."<sup>91</sup> However, as the right-wing represents a select small group of Afrikaners, some of the moderates would prefer to see their identity depoliticized and to "substitute Afrikaans for Afrikaner identity. In this way, Afrikanerdom is reconstructed on the basis of language to broaden the traditionally racially based definition of Afrikaners to include coloureds."<sup>92</sup>

Civic nationalism is more typically associated with territorial identity, therefore it is problematic for Afrikaners to utilize this principle to re-build group cohesion. Although many Afrikaners feel a special affinity for the land, they are not historically nor symbolically tied to any one particular area. The creation of a *volkstaat* would necessitate the partitioning of a section of land, the *volkstaat* supporters migrating in, and other people who might already live in the area — probably Blacks — migrating out. The extent of displacement would depend on the area chosen, but would certainly create a rift between the people involved. However, as the current status of Afrikaner self-determination and the *volkstaat* is arrested, what its physical boundaries are may be negligible.

## Self-Determination Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations General Assembly Resolution #1514.

<sup>2</sup> Konrad Ginther, "Introduction" in Konrad Ginther and Hubert Isaks (eds.) *Self-Determination in Europe* (Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1991), 11.

<sup>3</sup> W.J. Breytenbach, *Self-Determination in African Politics: The Problems of Ethno-Linguistic and Territorial Self-Determination* (Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa, 1978), 14.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Dov Ronen, *The Quest for Self-Determination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 7.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> C.J. Jooste, *Afrikaner Self-Determination: A Current Appraisal* (South Africa: SABRA, 1994), 4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>9</sup> Ronen, 6.

<sup>10</sup> Breytenbach, 10.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>13</sup> Michael Freernan, "Democracy and Dynamite: the People's Right to Self-Determination", *Political Studies*, 44,4 (1996), 747.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> See: Alexis Heraclides, "Secession, Self-Determination and Non-intervention: In Quest of a Normative Symbiosis", *Journal of International Affairs*, 45,2 (1992), 404; Breytenbach, 7.

<sup>16</sup> Heraclides, 1992, 404.

<sup>17</sup> Ronen, 36.

<sup>18</sup> Heraclides, 1992, 405.

<sup>19</sup> Hurst Hannum, "The Spectre of Secession: Responding to Claims for Ethnic Self-Determination", *Foreign Affairs*, 77,2 (1998), 15.

<sup>20</sup> Breytenbach, 8.

<sup>21</sup> Allen Buchanan, *Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce from Fort Sumter to Lithuania and Québec* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1991), 50.

<sup>22</sup> Alexis Heraclides, *The Self-Determination of Minorities in International Politics* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1991), 1.

<sup>23</sup> Buchanan, 1991, 21.

<sup>24</sup> Hannum, 15.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>26</sup> Kai Nielson, "Secession: The Case of Québec", *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 10,1 (1993), 29.

<sup>27</sup> Heraclides, 1992, 411.

<sup>28</sup> Ronen, 8.

<sup>29</sup> Heraclides, 1992, 413.

<sup>30</sup> Raymond Breton, "From Ethnic to Civic Nationalism: English Canada and Québec", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 11,1 (1988), 86.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 87.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Tamara Dragadze, "Self-Determination and the politics of exclusion", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 19,2 (1996), 345.

<sup>34</sup> Buchanan, 1992, 352.

<sup>35</sup> Anthony D. Smith, "The resurgence of nationalism? Myth and memory in the renewal of nations", *British Journal of Sociology*, 46,4 (1996), 594-595.

<sup>36</sup> Buchanan, 1992, 357.

<sup>37</sup> See: Avner De-Shalit, "National Self-determination: Political, not Cultural", *Political Studies*, 44,5 (1996), 917; and Jane Jenson, "Mapping, naming and remembering: globalization at the end of the Twentieth century", *Review of International Political Economy*, 2,1 (1995), 98.

<sup>38</sup> Margaret Moore, "On National Self-determination", *Political Studies*, 45,5 (1997), 906.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 907.

<sup>40</sup> Buchanan, 1992, 357.

<sup>41</sup> Joel Novek, *Cooperation and Conflict in Dual Societies: A Comparison of French Canadian and Afrikaner Nationalism*. (Québec: International Center for Research on Bilingualism, 1977), 140.

<sup>42</sup> Pierre Bourgault, *Now or Never! Manifesto for an Independent Québec* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1990), 20.

<sup>43</sup> Stéphane Dion, "What drives Québec separatism", *Montreal Gazette*, September 29, 1995, B3.

<sup>44</sup> Marc V. Levine, "Canada and the Challenge of the Québec Independence Movement" in Winston Van Horne (ed.). *Global Convulsions: Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism at the End of the Twentieth Century*. (Albany: New York State University Press, 1997), 329.

<sup>45</sup> Novek, 79.

<sup>46</sup> Marc T. Boucher, "The Struggle to Save Canada: A Québec Perspective", *Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs*, 41,3 (1997), 449.

<sup>47</sup> Novek, 76.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 82.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 84.

<sup>50</sup> Michèle Lamont, "The Frontiers of Our Dreams Are No Longer the Same: Cultural Dynamics of Exclusion and Community in France, the United States and Québec" in Wolfgang Danspeckgruber and Arthur Watts (eds.). *Self-Determination and Self-Administration: A Sourcebook*. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997), 208.

<sup>51</sup> Levine, 318.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Dale Thomson, "Language, Identity and the National Impulse", *Annals, American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 538 (1995), 76.

<sup>54</sup> Harry Hiller, *Canadian Society: A Macro Analysis* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Canada Inc., 1996), 304.

<sup>55</sup> Robert McKenzie, "PQ: sovereignty 'very alive'", *Toronto Star*, January 31, 1999.

<sup>56</sup> Boucher, 447.

<sup>57</sup> Jooste, 1994, 8.

<sup>58</sup> Boucher, 449.

<sup>59</sup> Breton, 94-95.

<sup>60</sup> Bill Grimshaw, "Clinton weighs in with plea to Québec", *Toronto Star*, October 9, 1999.

<sup>61</sup> Robert McKenzie, "Bouchard – No Retreat", *Toronto Star*, September 26, 1999.

<sup>62</sup> Levine, 333-335.

<sup>63</sup> Chantal Hébert, "Believing in Québec as it could be", *Toronto Star*, June 13, 1999.

<sup>64</sup> De-Shalit, 917.

<sup>65</sup> Hendrik W. van der Merwe and David Welsh, "Identity, Ethnicity and Nationalism as Political Forces in South Africa: The Case of Afrikaners and Coloured People" in Jacques Dofny and Akinsola Akiwowo (eds.). *National and Ethnic Movements* (London: SAGE Publications, 1980), 265.

<sup>66</sup> William A. Munro, "Revisiting Tradition, Reconstructing Identity? Afrikaner Nationalism and Political Transition in South Africa", *Politikon*, 22,2 (1995), 8.

<sup>67</sup> Novek, 104

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 113.

<sup>69</sup> Hermann Giliomee and Lawrence Schlemmer, *From Apartheid to Nation-Building* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1989), 41.

<sup>70</sup> Novek, 140.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 47.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>73</sup> Leonard Thompson, *Political Mythology of Apartheid* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 49.

<sup>74</sup> A.M. Johnston, "Self-Determination in Comparative Context: Northern Ireland and South Africa", *Politikon*, 17,2 (1990), 6.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>76</sup> Munro, 12.
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid, 13.
- <sup>78</sup> Ibid, 18.
- <sup>79</sup> *Seventh Report of the Volkstaat Council: Self-Determination for Afrikaners*, 6.
- <sup>80</sup> Giliomee and Schlemmer, 42.
- <sup>81</sup> Hermann Giliomee, "Surrender Without Defeat: Afrikaners and the South African 'Miracle'", *Daedalus*, 126,2 (1997), 119.
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid, 137.
- <sup>83</sup> Ibid, 140-141.
- <sup>84</sup> Heribert Adam, Frederik van Zyl Slabbert and Kogila Moodley, *Comrades in Business: Post-Liberation Politics in South Africa* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1997), 52.
- <sup>85</sup> Dan O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The apartheid state and the politics of the National Party, 1948-1994*. (South Africa: Ravan Press, 1996), 402.
- <sup>86</sup> Munro, 26.
- <sup>87</sup> T.R.H. Davenport, *The Transfer of Power in South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1998), 87.
- <sup>88</sup> Howard Barrell, "Knives out for Kortbroek", *Mail and Guardian*, June 4 – 10, 1999, IV.
- <sup>89</sup> "Our Election" Supplement, *Mail and Guardian*, February 26 – March 4, 1999, 4.
- <sup>90</sup> Adrian Hadland, "Afrikaner disunity shatters Viljoen's volkstaat dream", *Sunday Independent*, June 6, 1999, 5.
- <sup>91</sup> Courtney Jung, "After Apartheid: Shaping of a New Afrikaner Volk", *Indicator SA*, 13,4 (1996), 13.
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid.



## **6: Conclusion**

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The breadth of European colonialism redefined the map of the world. It also re-organized territorial boundaries, displaced indigenous peoples, and imposed new languages, standards and laws as part of its regime. The 20<sup>th</sup> century has, in part, been disposed to the emancipation of peoples from colonial structures.

This liberation owes its legitimacy to the internationally recognized principle of self-determination. The decolonization process features ethnic groups, amongst others — frequently minority, and subordinated segments — making claims or demands to improve their status. Foreign rule is abolished and ideally, indigenous peoples have the freedom to democratic rule.

Self-determination can have different meanings for different peoples. The goals, strategies, and outcomes are all contingent on the historical group relations. Ethnicity and nationalism are critical features on the continuum towards self-determination, whatever its manifestation. While ethnicity and nationalism can stand on their own without leading to self-determination, the reverse is not true. A campaign for self-determination must be supported by a foundation of ethnic affiliation and nationalist sentiment.

Nationalist movements that lead to claims for self-determination often emerge because of contemporary events in group relations. Antagonism between ethnic groups, though, can often be traced back to a time in their history when one group achieved dominance over the other. Therefore, ethnicity, and nationalist sentiment

can, at times, be more or less prominent, dependent on the socio-political mood. There is, however, an immutable foundation where sometimes ethnicity is just ethnicity without aspirations for anything else.

Historic trends of domination or inequality contribute to the degree of animosity between ethnic groups. However, despite the extent of inequality, a campaign for self-determination will succeed or fail based on the contemporary domestic political order. The self-determination movements of both the Québécois and the Afrikaners illustrate this. For virtually the first 300 years of their existence, the Québécois and the Afrikaners followed a similar path. The parallels between them are their settlement, their subsequent colonization by the British, their rural lifestyle, the importance of family and religion, and the struggle to maintain their language in face of encroaching English. They also had comparable experiences in regards to industrialization and urbanization, which greatly impacted their previously insular, protected lifestyle. The emergence of secret societies intervening in all spheres of society to provide a support network for citizens, and their participation in government through nationalist political parties also progressed in the same fashion. An examination of this pattern of similarity between the Québécois and the Afrikaners in approximately the first three centuries of settlement could lead to the conclusion that the present-day scenario is also similar, and yet that can't be more wrong.

There are essentially two main differences between the Québécois and the Afrikaner groups. The first is the territorial aspect. The Québécois are concentrated in one area and confined by the boundaries of the province of Québec. There are French-Canadian communities in other provinces but they are unaffiliated with the

Québécois nationalist movement. There is a link between regionalism and nationalist government also, as when the Parti Québécois was elected, they governed exclusively the province of Québec.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century dispersion of Afrikaners resulted in their occupation of all of South Africa, as opposed to one exclusive territory within the country. The area that is occupied is also shared with many other groups of people. This complicates self-determination in the form of a *volkstaat* as there is not a specific, logical site for a *volkstaat* to be developed.

The second significant difference is that while both groups are minorities in their respective countries, the Québécois represent approximately one-quarter of the Canadian population, and are by far the majority within their province. The Afrikaners, though, are a significantly smaller part of the South African population, which greatly impacted their potential to govern in view of an inclusive electorate.

In the case of Québécois self-determination, they did achieve some of the goals that they had established, firstly to have French recognized as one of the official languages in Canada, and then secondly, to achieve sole official language status in Québec. Many other concessions that they earnestly negotiated for did not transpire, these being failed constitutional amendments and referendums. However, these obstacles served only to strengthen their resolve for a sovereign state. Currently, there is a persistent call from separatists to work towards independence. The Parti Québécois has made it very clear that the priority on their agenda is to seek the appropriate time and forum for a referendum on independence. As secession is one

of the forms of self-determination guaranteed by international law, this is an option that they are entitled to explore.

In contrast, Afrikaner nationalism lies virtually dormant at present. They too had some success, though, as their struggle for self-determination did come to fruition in the past. The pivotal events were the 1948 election of the National Party, and then again when South Africa became a Republic in 1961. Afrikaner nationalists achieved self-government, but this also entailed the oppressive nature in which they governed the Black South African majority. The structures of, and enforcement of apartheid gave rise to African nationalism, though, which is now enjoying success with the overwhelming electoral support of the ANC. The legacy of apartheid, however, does little to generate local or international support for Afrikaner self-determination at this time.

In order to understand a peoples' struggle for self-determination, one must first look to their history to know why different ethnic groups interact the way they do. But then one must examine the current socio-political atmosphere as that will impact on the outcome of self-determination, particularly so in the case of the Québécois and the Afrikaners. This is why the Parti Québécois, knowing that they will hold another independence referendum, and having avowed that they will have one when they know they can win, are waiting for the right mood, and atmosphere conducive to a majority vote. This is also why the Afrikaner Nationalists went from having exclusive white state power, to being a fringe party with just a few seats in the legislature, and this in the matter of less than a decade. The domestic social and political structural conditions called for a change, and could no longer support the nationalist regime.

The struggle to achieve self-determination is an international concern, as there are currently many global examples of ethnicity-based movements for autonomy. The waning of the age of colonial authority has created a context for the pursuit of self-determination. This pursuit is facilitated by the salience of ethnic affiliation, as colonial-era oppression, or oppression of any kind, is typically delineated along lines of ethnic groupings. While globalization and modernization would imply that ethnic conflict and nationalist independence movements would subside, they in fact have retained prominence.

This thesis has illustrated the importance of looking back to the history of a people to understand both their alliances and their rivals, but also of looking at the present-day influences on the workings of a self-determination movement. The utility in comparing two groups such as the Québécois and the Afrikaner is in the demonstration that two groups with virtually identical histories and influences for a significant part of their ethnic development can have such vastly different outcomes in their struggle for self-determination.

## ***Appendix 1: Methodology***

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As an English-speaking Canadian, I have had lasting exposure to the French language travails of the Québécois. Canadian unity crises unfold, and ominous sounding terms such as distinct society status, sovereignty association, or independence are hammered out. I believe, however, that the ethno-demographic situation in Canada is such that, in all fairness, distinct society status cannot be accorded to one group and one group only.

This issue has always been of interest, and my arrival in South Africa enlightened me to the vast historical similarities — and vast present-day differences — between the Québécois and the Afrikaners. Exposure to both cultures has been influential on the production of this thesis.

This study was completed by a review of secondary sources, including media. A historical comparative study of both the Québécois and the Afrikaners as ethnic groups, but also in the context of the larger nation-state was carried out. This thesis investigates their historical pattern of development, the emergence of their exclusive ethnic identity, and their struggles for self-determination, using historical and current literature. The primary institutional structures used to highlight ethnic relations and the development of ethnic identity are:

1. socio-economic inequality between social segments;
2. a threat to the survival of cultural institutions;

3. the emergence of a dissatisfied elite;
4. and political mobilization.

Through these structural factors, ethnicity, and nationalism and self-determination of the Québécois and the Afrikaners can be traced.

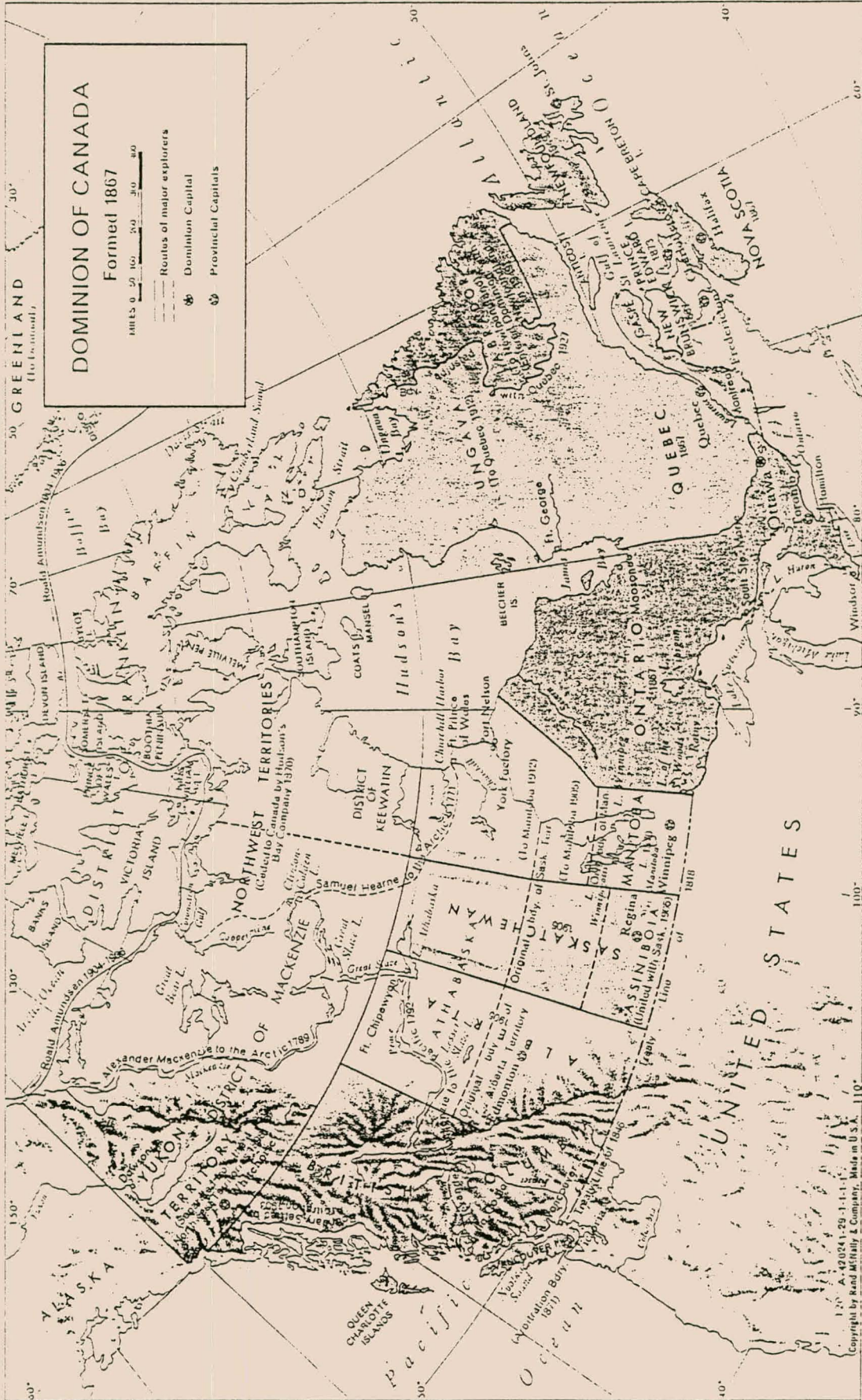
## Appendix 2: Timeline of Québécois History

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Pre-existing	Native Indian and Inuit groups
1534	French explorer Jacques Cartier first traveled to Canada
1608	first French settlement along the shores of the St. Lawrence River
1609	Samuel de Champlain arrived in Canada
1628	decision made not to admit any French Protestant Huguenots
1759	British conquest of New France
1763	French King ceded Canada to British: Proclamation of 1763
1774	Quebec Act: restored French civil law and Roman Catholic Church control (repeals Proclamation of 1763)
1776-1780	American Revolution
1791	Constitution Act united Upper and Lower Canada
1837	Patriot Rebellion; Durham Report
1840	Union Act: declared English sole official language
1849	French restored as one of two official languages
1867	Confederation: British North America Act
1899-1902	Anglo-Boer War
Late 19th century-early 20 <sup>th</sup> century	demographic explosion, massive industrialization and urbanization
1914-1919	World War I
1920s	'maitres chez nous' campaign; L'Action Catholique formed
1928	L'Ordre de Jacques Cartier
1930s	'achetez chez nous' campaign
1936-1939 &	L'Union Nationale Party in power
1944-1960	
1939-1945	World War II
1960s	Quiet Revolution
1960-1966	Liberal Party in power
1968	Parti Québécois formed
1966-1976	L'Union Nationale Party in power
1976-1985	Parti Québécois in power
1977	Bill 101 enacted
1980	first Quebec referendum on sovereignty association
1982	repatriation of Constitution
1985-1994	Liberal Party in power
1987	Meech Lake Accord
1992	Charlottetown Agreement
1994-present	Parti Québécois in power
1994	Bloc Québécois became official opposition in Ottawa
1995	second referendum seeking mandate to pursue independence
1996	25.5% of Canadian population is French; 74.3% of Canadian population is English. Total Canadian population is 30 million. There are just over 7 million Francophones, more than 6 million of whom live in Québec.
1999	'Nunavut' is established for Inuit territorial self-government



# Appendix 3: Map of Canada



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## Appendix 4: Timeline of South African History

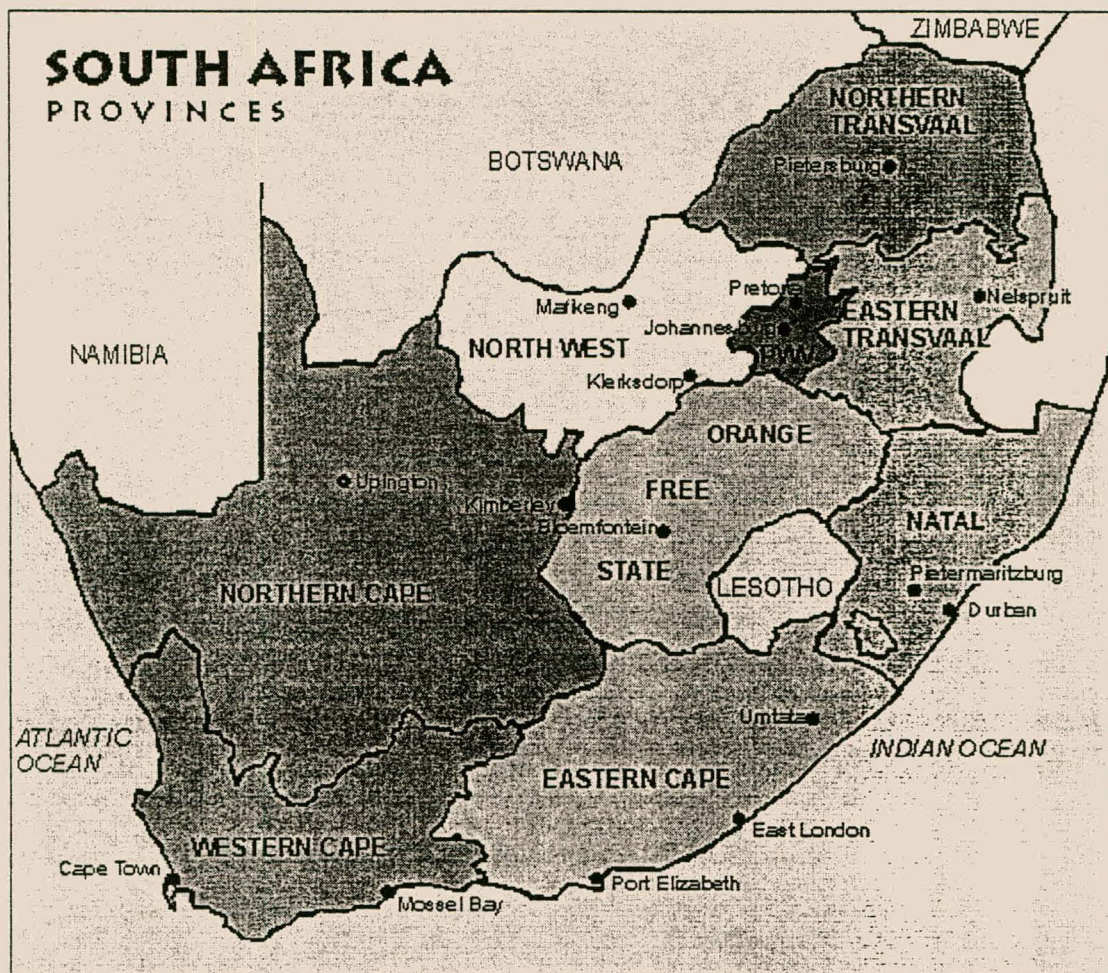
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Pre-existing	Khoikhoi and San groups
1652	V.O.C. founded refreshment station at Cape of Good Hope
1657	first burghers freed from V.O.C. service
1658	first introduction of West African slaves
1688	arrival of exiled French Huguenots
1794	V.O.C. insolvent and their rule at the Cape ended
1795	Britain took control of the Cape Colony from the Dutch
1803	Dutch (Batavian Republic) regain control
1806	Britain abolished slave trade
1828	Ordinance 50: repealed past racially discriminatory laws, Khoisan received protection under the law, legal equality for all
1833	abolition of slavery
1835-1840	Great Trek
1838	Republic of Natal founded
1843	British annexation of Natal
1852-1854	Britain recognized the Transvaal and the Orange Free State as independent Afrikaner states
1867	discovery of diamonds near Kimberley
1870s	cultural revival in Cape Area
1871	British annexation of diamond fields
1872	responsible government to Cape Colony
1877	British annexation of Transvaal
1880	formation of Afrikaner Bond
1880-1881	first Boer War, or first War of Freedom
1881	independence of Transvaal recognized, Transvaal became the South African Republic
1886	gold mining began on the Witwatersrand
1899-1902	Anglo-Boer War
1902	Treaty of Vereeniging ended Anglo-Boer War
1904	Het Volk formed
1906	responsible government to Orange Free State and South African Republic
1910	constitution of the Union of South Africa: joined the Cape Colony, Natal, the Orange Free State, and the South African Republic in a white-controlled, self-governing British dominion
1910	Lesotho and Swaziland became English protectorates
1912	creation of ANC
1914	creation of the first Afrikaner Nationalist Party
1914-1919	World War I
1918	formation of Broederbond
1925	Afrikaans declared an official language, replacing Dutch
1926	Colour bar passed
1929	FAK formed
1930	European women enfranchised
1933	Dutch Reformed Church has Afrikaans Bybel

1939-1945	World War II
1948	National Party in power and began to apply policies of apartheid
1949	Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act; Christian National Education introduced by FAK
1950	Population Registration Act; Group Areas Act
1952	ANC launches passive resistance campaign
1955	ANC adopted 'Freedom Charter'
1960	ANC banned; Sharpeville: 67 killed at anti-pass law demonstration
1961	South Africa left the Commonwealth and became a Republic
1963	Mandela jailed for life
1966-1968	Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana became independent states
1976	Soweto uprising against Afrikaans use in schools
1984	new Constitution gave Asians and Coloured limited participation in political system
1985	state of emergency declared
1989	DeKlerk became leader of National Party
1990	ban on ANC lifted; Mandela released
1992	whites-only referendum: 2/3 supported reforms
1994	first democratic election, ANC won; South Africa rejoined the Commonwealth and United Nations
1996	new Constitution approved; 11 official languages; National Party withdrew from Government of National Unity
1999	second democratic election, ANC won with close to a 2/3 majority



## Appendix 5: Map of South Africa



## Appendix 6: Glossary of Terms

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Bloc Populaire – The People's Block  
 BQ – Bloc Québécois (Québécois Block)  
 Caisse Populaires – People's credit bank  
 Jeunesse Ouvrieres – Youth Workers  
 la survivance – survival  
 L'Action Catholique – The Catholic Action  
 L'Action Catholique Jeune Canadiens – Young Canadian's Catholic Action  
 le parti patriote – the patriot party  
 L'Ordre de Jacques Cartier – The Order of Jacques Cartier  
 L'Union Nationale – The National Union  
 maîtres chez nous – masters in our own house  
 rattrapage – catching up  
 OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development  
 PQ – Parti Québécois (Québécois Party)  
 Scouts Catholiques – Catholic Scouts



ANC – African National Congress  
 AWB – Afrikaner Weestandsbeweging – Afrikaner Resistance Movement  
 boer(e) – farmer(s)  
 Broederbond – The Brotherhood  
 Broedertwis – division among brothers  
 bywoners – poor whites, landless squatters  
 Capo de Boa Esperanca – Cape of Good Hope  
 CP – Conservative Party  
 die taal – the language (referring specifically to Afrikaans)  
 DP – Democratic Party  
 F.A.K. – Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings (Federation of Afrikaans Culture Organizations)  
 FF – Freedom Front  
 Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners – Society of True Afrikaners  
 Het Volk – The People  
 IFP – Inkatha Freedom Party  
 Ik ben een Africaander – I am an Afrikaner  
 Nagmaal – the quarterly communion gathering  
 NP – National Party  
 NNP – New National Party  
 Orangie Unie – Orange Union (Orange Free State equivalent of Het Volk)  
 Taalbond – Language Union  
 V.O.C. – Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie (Dutch East India Company)  
 volk – the people  
 volkstaat – the people's state  
 Voortrekkers – foretrekkers, the Afrikaners who participated in the Great Trek

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