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**RHETORIC, RESENTMENT AND THE  
DEMANDS FOR RECOGNITION  
IN QUEBEC**

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## RHETORIC, RESENTMENT AND THE DEMANDS FOR RECOGNITION IN QUEBEC<sup>1</sup>

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Since the time of ancient Greece, rhetoric has been used as an instrument of persuasion and convincing, in which the ideas of clarification and manipulation indicate two opposing dimensions of rhetorical discourses. Within this context, political discourses arouse great interest and concern in contemporary society. This paper explores the link between the rhetoric of resentment and the demands for recognition of Quebecois identity through an analysis of political discourses presented during the campaign for the referendum on the sovereignty of Quebec, in October, 1995. Given that these demands for recognition are frequently associated with the affirmation of a moral right, whose perception or foundation does not find appropriate support in juridical language, up to what point are feelings such as resentment a legitimate and illuminating instrument to convey the experience of a moral insult in need of repair? Or, to what extent does the rhetoric of resentment risk provoking not only the emotions of actors, with the aim of facilitating the perception of moral insult that one has suffered, but also a passionate attitude which inhibits the development of understanding that is trying to be conveyed?

### **The Referendum of 1995 on the Sovereignty of Quebec**

On October 30, 1995, in Quebec, a second referendum was carried out on the sovereignty of the province, which resulted in a narrow victory of NO. That is, the proposal to give to the Quebecois government a mandate to negotiate with Canada a new relationship of political and economic *partnership* was rejected by 50.6% to 49.4% of the votes.<sup>2</sup> The proposal demanded the institutionalization of a new relationship whereby Quebec and the rest-of-Canada (ROC) would have equal political status, within which they would be committed to joint action, and it even included the possibility of Quebec making a unilateral declaration of independence from Canada, if no agreement could be reached between the parties in the period of a year. The population was asked the following question:

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<sup>1</sup> A preliminary version of this paper was presented in Work Group #17, "Rituals, representations and violence in politics," during the XXII Annual Meeting of ANPOCS, in 1998. I thank Yves Chaloult for his comments, though I remain responsible for any interpretative problems of the text.

<sup>2</sup> On May 20, 1980, the first referendum on the sovereignty of Quebec was held, when the federalists, defenders of NO were victorious by a wide margin: 59,6% voted NO, while only 40.4% voted YES.

"Acceptez-vous que le Québec devienne souverain, après avoir offert formellement au Canada un nouveau partenariat économique et politique, dans le cadre du projet de loi sur l'avenir du Québec et de l'entente signée le 12 juin 1995?"<sup>3</sup>

The bill mentioned in the question was signed by Jacques Parizeau (Prime Minister of Quebec at that time), Lucien Bouchard (leader of the Quebecois Block)<sup>4</sup> and Mario Dumont (head of the Democratic Alliance of Quebec)<sup>5</sup> four months before the holding of the referendum. As I mentioned above, the bill foresaw the possibility of a unilateral declaration of independence and it represented a more flexible position than that defended by Parizeau, who sought to approve a non-conditional definition of Quebec's sovereignty. Parizeau had been elected Prime Minister of Quebec in September, 1994, and he had as a main goal the holding of a referendum on the sovereignty of the province during the following year. He is identified as a *pur et dur* sovereigntist and his original proposal was considered too radical to find support within a wide enough portion of the population in order to assure victory for the sovereignty vote. The proposal of "a new *partnership*..." made the idea of separation from Canada more flexible and sought to entice those people who did not want to completely lose their identity bond with the country, or those who were afraid of the economic consequences that a radical split would bring. Besides, the idea of a partnership connects well with the less radical project of "Sovereignty-Association Movement" created by René Lévesque in 1967, and which a year later would become the Quebecois Party. The referendum of 1980 also asked for a popular authorization to negotiate the new relationship with the ROC, with the difference that the agreement that would be signed would be submitted to a new popular referendum, and where the possibility of a unilateral declaration of independence was not an alternative.

Although the political climate that informed the demands for the recognition of Quebecois identity and the relationship with the ROC were very different in the two referendums, the identification with Canada never ceased to have a certain appeal and the economic risks of a sovereign Quebec were a constant concern. However, to the contrary of the situation in 1980, when Quebec lived under the positive impact of the survival of French and French-Quebecois identity of Law 101 which regulated the use of the French language in the province, the referendum of 1995 was carried out after repeated failures of constitutional negotiations intending to satisfy the demands for recognition of Quebec, which refused to endorse the *patriated* constitution in 1982.<sup>6</sup> In addition to considering the new Charter of

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<sup>3</sup> "Do you agree that Québec should become sovereign, after having made a formal offer to Canada for a new Economic and Political Partnership, within the scope of the Bill respecting the future of Québec and of the agreement signed on June 12, 1995?"

<sup>4</sup> The Quebecois Block is a federal party and, in spite of defending the sovereignty of Quebec, played the role of "official opposition" in Ottawa at the moment of holding the referendum in October, 1995. After the last federal elections in June of 1997, the role of official opposition passed to the Reform Party, which surpassed the Quebecois Block in number of seats in parliament, being the party with the second highest vote count in the country.

<sup>5</sup> The Democratic Alliance of Quebec (DAQ) is a dissidence of the Liberal Party of Quebec (LPQ) which has a federalist orientation, and has strong nationalist positions. It is identified with the written report of the Allaire Committee which demanded a massive transference of powers from Ottawa to Quebec, and which was taken up by the LPQ in April of 1990 to advise the government after the defeat of the Lake Meech Accord. The divergence over the understanding between the LPQ administration and Ottawa concerning the referendum to approve the Charlottetown Accord, in 1992, caused the division which led to the creation of DAQ.

<sup>6</sup> The Constitution of Canada was kept in the English parliament until 1982, when it was *patriated* and, until then, could not be autonomously amended by Canadians. In 1982, with the *patriated* constitution, Trudeau gained approval for and annexed to the constitution a Charter of Rights and

Rights and Freedoms as a threat to its cultural survival, the French-Quebecois population tended to interpret the rejection of the accords of Meech Lake and Charlottetown as a rejection of their identity and, therefore, as acts of *inconsiderateness* or as a moral insult.<sup>7</sup> It is within this framework that the debate about sovereignty opens a space for the expression of more radical nationalist positions.

However, if the dissatisfaction with the constitutional status quo or with the status of Quebec in the federation is widespread in the province, the identification with a project of a unilateral declaration of independence is much more restricted. Many *Francophones* told me that they voted in favor of sovereignty with the objective of changing Quebec's situation within the federation, but they claimed that they had no intention of supporting the separation from Canada. On the other hand, *The Gazette* – the main *Anglophone* newspaper of Quebec and totally identified with the federalist position – in its edition of October 21, 1995 reports on a poll according to which one third of the voters intending to vote YES said that they would do it more for provoking changes (within the federation) than to promote separation. Besides this, opinion polls made before and after the referendum indicated that a significant percentage of those who voted YES believed to be voting for the new *partnership*, but not for the separation from Canada, in spite of Parizeau's frequent statements that the victory of YES would represent the sovereignty of Quebec, and only perhaps the implementation of a *partnership* between two sovereign countries: “R pondre OUI, c'est effectivement se donner un pays. , a veut dire que les Qu b cois vont avoir leur pays” (Parizeau in the *Le Devoir* newspaper of October 8, 1995).<sup>8</sup> In this context, the defenders of NO systematically criticized the wording of the referendum question, that did not seem clear for them, and they tried to convince the supporters of the proposal of a new *partnership* that a YES would mean, indeed, separation.

### The Bouchard Effect

Even with the flexibility given to the original proposal of Parizeau and with the growth in the support for YES caused by the dissemination of the proposal of *partnership*, at the beginning of the official campaign the number of adherents of YES seemed not to have increased much in relation to the referendum of 1980. On September 7, 1995, when the wording of the question to be submitted to the population of Quebec on October 30 was defined, and when the referendum campaign was formally started, the majority of the opinion polls placed the intentions of vote at 58% for No and 42% for YES respectively, against 59.6% for NO and 40.4% for YES deposited in the ballot-box in 1980.<sup>9</sup> According to the analyses published in the press, in spite of the demand for greater autonomy for Quebec and with the eventual enlargement of powers to the province – mainly in the cultural area – which had widespread support in local public opinion, the prospect of the separation from Canada did not

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Freedoms which did not recognize Quebec's specificity and placed in risk important aspects of Law 101 of the French language. That is to say, to the degree that these aspects of the law were seen as a threat to individual rights, whose defense constituted an absolute imperative.

<sup>7</sup> In another paper I characterize *inconsiderateness* as the opposite of recognition. As I argued there, acts of *inconsiderateness* injure citizenship rights which, despite not finding support at the legal level, can be intersubjectively grounded at the moral level (Cardoso de Oliveira 1997).

<sup>8</sup> “To answer Yes is to give oneself a country. This means that Quebecers will have their own country.”

<sup>9</sup> According to the table below, with the exception of the first opinion poll carried out after the publication of the referendum question by L ger & L ger Company on September 8, which showed a minor difference between the supporters of YES (47.1%) and of No (52.9), all the other polls showed numbers nearer to the result of the 1980 referendum.

have the same level of support. Thus, the adherents of NO insistently emphasized the perception of the unfeasibility of the *partnership* proposal, saying that a YES vote would only result in separation.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, the ambiguous character of the question (see page 2 above), when combined with the total lack of proposals by the supporters of NO that sought to give some kind of answer to the demands of the Quebecois, allowed for the growth of YES votes. However, if the supporters of NO were limited to pointing out the probable economic difficulties and the loss of the international status that a possible victory of YES would bring, thereby trying to frighten the electorate, the adherents of YES prepared for the referendum by trying to show that Quebec was not only ready to face the eventual difficulties of separation, but that independence would actually improve the living conditions of the population. The fact is, that if the federalists seemed to deny the existence of the problem that motivated the calling of the referendum, since they did not present proposals and affirmed that the population was tired of constitutional debates (after the failures of Meech and Charlottetown) indicating that the important things for the moment were to create jobs and economic growth, the adherents for sovereignty appeared to direct almost all their attention to the necessity of correcting the perceived economic imbalance that would have put Quebec in disadvantageous position in the heart of federation.<sup>11</sup> That is to say, without developing a more refined discourse concerning the recognition of the *distinct* identity of Quebec and the necessity of reparations for the acts of *inconsiderateness* that Quebecois have suffered.

Only with the nomination of Lucien Bouchard as the official representative of Quebec in the negotiations of the *partnership* with Canada, in case of victory of YES, did the picture start to change. This was not only due to his personal credibility as the main defender of the proposal of *partnership* with Canada, but above all due to his charisma and rhetorical abilities, through which he expressed a feeling of indignation that still had not been properly articulated until then in the campaign.<sup>12</sup>

The nomination of Bouchard was announced on October 7, and at about the same time he decided to change his political strategy along with his moving away from Ottawa, where he used to concentrate his campaign in the daily sessions of the "question period" in Parliament, confronting Jean ChrŽtien with great media coverage.<sup>13</sup> Since then Bouchard

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<sup>10</sup> One of the most emphasized aspects by the supporters of NO referred to the difficulty, or even to the impossibility, of a sovereign Quebec to keep the Canadian dollar as its currency, to maintain access to a Canadian passport for the population, and also share the armed forces with Canada. The adherents of YES insisted that these three points would be negotiated with Canada and, indeed, the feasibility of an agreement of *partnership* with these characteristics gave a certain ambiguity to the idea of sovereignty, and made the perspective of separation from Canada an ever more distant possibility.

<sup>11</sup> See the fourteen numbers of Bulletin published by "SecrŽtariat □ la Restruturation," disseminated between March and October, 1995.

<sup>12</sup> Besides this, Bouchard is a special character whose *mana*, associated with his personal charisma and rhetorical talents, had been significantly increased in recent history. After having obtained an excellent performance for the recently formed Quebecois Block in the federal elections of 1993, Bouchard faced a major personal challenge that would strongly mark his life and had an impact on his Quebecois supporters. On November 24, 1994, Bouchard was hospitalized in serious condition, with an infection in his left leg caused by the "carnivorous bacteria" and the doctors amputated his leg. After a relatively brief period of convalescence, on February 22, 1995, Bouchard entered triumphantly into the House of Commons, as if he had been resurrected in order to defend the interests of Quebec in the parliament. In this sense, his trajectory corresponds to that of many Shamans in tribal societies who have similar life threatening experiences in the process of the acquisition of their special powers (See, inter alia, Melatti 1970:65-76).

<sup>13</sup> As the leader of the official opposition, Bouchard occupied a great part of his time in the "question period" in the parliament, where the opposition has the right of demand a public response by

dedicated a great part of his time to appearances in rallies in the most diverse places and regions of Quebec. As the numbers of the table below reveal, this change of strategy rapidly began to have an effect.

But, before discussing the numbers of the table, some clarifications are necessary. The first column identifies the polling institute followed by the dates in which the polls were carried out and its meaning poses no problem. However, I would like to call attention to the division of the data in the next three columns: Gross Results, Proportional Ponderation and Realistic Ponderation. The experience with similar votes in the past allowed the polling institutes of Quebec to develop a very simple and effective formula for forecasting the real distribution of the undecided voters on voting day. The last two columns are connected to the application of this formula, and represent already a first interpretation of the gross results collected by the opinion polls and shown in the first column. Thus, the so-called realistic ponderation systematically attributed 75% of the undecided votes to the position opposing sovereignty and just 25% to the supporters of YES. In order to get an idea of the precision of this type of prevision, we only have to take a look at the gross results of the last poll at the end of the table, where we will notice that, while the gross results gave an advantage of 6% to YES, since it had 46% of the intention of the vote against 40% for federalist position, after the application of the realistic ponderation the advantage passes to the supporters of NO, who would win by 50.5% to 49.5% of the votes; that is, almost exactly the same numbers counted in the ballot-box on voting day: 50.6% NO against 49.4% YES.

**Polls of Voting Preference after Publication of the Question of the Referendum  
Conducted on October 30, 1995, in Quebec\***

POLL - DATE	#	Gross Results			Proportional Ponderation		Realistic Ponderation	
		NO	YES	Undecided	NO	YES	NO	YES
Léger & Léger (8/9)	959	42.9	43.8	13.3	49.5	50.5	52.9	47.1
SOM (12/9)	1003	45.0	37.0	18.0	54.9	45.1	58.5	41.5
COMPAS (14/9)	500	40.0	36.0	24.0	52.6	47.4	58.0	42.0
CRÉATEC (19/9)	1004	46.2	38.8	15.0	54.4	45.6	57.5	42.6
DECIMA (25/9)	750	41.9	40.3	17.8	51.0	49.0	55.3	44.8
CROP (25/9)	2020	47.0	39.0	14.0	54.7	45.3	57.5	42.5
SOM (25/9)	1820	48.0	39.0	13.0	55.2	44.8	57.8	42.3
ANGUS REID (27/9)	1000	45.0	41.0	14.0	52.3	47.7	55.5	44.5
Léger & Léger (28/9)	1006	45.1	43.8	11.1	50.7	49.3	53.4	46.6
LEPAGE-P.Q. (29/9)	1369	45.7	44.3	10.0	50.8	49.2	53.2	46.8
Léger & Léger (4/10)	1015	43.7	42.9	13.4	50.5	49.5	53.8	46.3
LEPAGE-P.Q. (9/10)	1285	42.0	<b>45.0</b>	13.0	48.3	51.7	51.8	48.3
CRÉATEC-PLQ (11/10)	470	48.8	43.2	8.0	53.0	47.0	54.8	45.2
Léger & Léger (12/10)	1002	42.4	<b>45.0</b>	12.6	48.5	51.5	51.9	48.2
GALLUP (12/10)	1013	43.0	39.0	18.0	52.4	47.6	56.5	43.5
SOM (16/10)	981	43.4	42.9	13.7	50.3	49.7	53.7	46.3
CROP (16/10)	1151	42.6	<b>43.6</b>	13.8	49.4	50.6	53.0	47.1

the government to the criticisms that they raise. The major coverage that these debates receive in the press provided for the opportunity to confront ChrŽtien (Prime Minister of Canada) daily as a campaign strategy.

ANGUS REID	(18/10)	1012	43.6	<b>45.4</b>	11.0	49.0	51.0	51.8	48.2
Léger & Léger	(20/10)	1005	42.2	<b>45.8</b>	12.0	48.0	52.0	51.2	48.8
CROP	(23/10)	1072	42.2	<b>44.5</b>	13.3	48.7	51.3	52.2	47.8
ANGUS REID	(25/10)	1029	40.0	<b>44.0</b>	16.0	47.6	52.4	52.0	48.0
SOM	(25/10)	1115	40.0	<b>46.0</b>	14.0	46.5	53.5	<b>50.5</b>	49.5

\*Table taken from the article by Pierre Drouilly (Et si l'improbable se produisait?) published in the homepage of GROUPE in the World Wide Web [<http://www.coopcr1.qc.ca/base/politique/drouil5.html>].

Indeed, a quick review of the table suggests that the Bouchard effect cannot be disregarded. If we ignore the results of the first poll after the formal start of the campaign, which was carried out on September 8 and gave a slight advantage in the voting preference to YES, we observe that the YES option among voters with a defined position came back to lead the voting preference in the polls only on October 9, just two days after Bouchard's nomination as "chief negotiator" for Quebec in the event of a victory of those in favor of sovereignty. However, this result does not mean yet the consolidation of a tendency in voting preference, since NO would regain the preference of the voters in three of the next four polls. Only from the CROP poll of October 16 onwards the YES option holds a definitive lead among decided voters in all the opinion polls made until the holding of the referendum. Besides this, it can be seen that from this time onwards, the YES option does not stop growing and it is noteworthy that this progression coincides with the main speeches and declarations given by Bouchard during the campaign between October 14 and 27. A major characteristic of these speeches and declarations was the link between the demands for recognition of Quebec, expressed in the offer of *partnership* and the list of "aggressions," or acts of *inconsiderateness* that the Quebecois population has allegedly suffered throughout the history of its relationship with the ROC. Such acts would not only reveal some quite often-successful efforts to take political and economic advantage from Quebec, but they would also constitute a true moral affront or expression of contempt on the part of English Canada. As we will see, this idea of moral affront was very well transmitted by Bouchard who, through the rhetoric of resentment, made good use of the tradition and of the experience of Quebecois in order to imbue them with feelings of indignation, and thereby stimulating them to face the problem by voting YES in the referendum. Drouilly calls attention to the importance of Bouchard's performance in the campaign in bringing back the symbolic dimension of Quebec's demand, which until then had taken a secondary role in the discourse of the two sides in the dispute. From my point of view, the importance of the symbolic dimension lies not only in the fact of it being constitutive of the problem of recognition and of the perception of moral insult, but lies also in the connection between reason and emotion made in Bouchard's speeches, and which, I think, is constitutive of the problem too. It is this relationship between reason and emotion that I would like to analyze now.

### **The Obligatory Evocation of Sentiments (Rhetoric and Emotion)**

We owe above all to Mauss the unveiling of the importance of the expression of sentiments as a moral obligation (1979:147-153), especially with regard to primitive societies, by calling attention to the fact that "a whole series of oral expression of sentiments are not exclusively psychological or physiological phenomena, but are also social phenomena, characterized by non-spontaneous manifestations of the most perfect obligation..." (idem:

147).<sup>14</sup> In the similar vein, I would like to suggest here that the perception of moral insult frequently requires, and in a particularly acute way in modern societies, the *obligatory evocation of sentiments*. This occurs not because such perception requires that the actors directly experiment the emotion of insult, but rather because it is necessary that they identify themselves with it. In other words, the identification with the emotion or sentiment of resentment, as in the case of moral insult, allows for the socialization of the meaning of the experience and, thus, for a intersubjectively shared understanding of the phenomenon. My argument is that even when the socialization of perception does not produce an adequate link with the social (moral) meaning of this experience, it nonetheless facilitates a publicly shared identification of the problem and its classification as an improper act.<sup>15</sup>

At this point, one can introduce the ideas of Strawson about the role of resentment in the phenomenology of moral facts, which are related both with the point of view offered by Mauss about the connection between the expression of sentiments and morals and with my characterization of *inconsiderateness* as a moral insult (Cardoso de Oliveira 1997), developed through a dialogue with Taylor (1994) and Berger (1983) concerning citizenship, identity and dignity. Strawson defines resentment as a reaction to an offense/aggression or to indifference, and it has as its focus the attitudes or intentions of others towards us, as human beings:

“...If someone treads on my hand accidentally, while trying to help me, the pain may be no less acute than if he treads on it in contemptuous disregard of my existence or with a malevolent wish to injure me. But I shall generally feel in the second case a kind and degree of resentment that I shall not feel in the first...” (Strawson 1974:5)

In other words, resentment is more likely to be caused by the attitudes or intentions that motivate and give meaning to an act, rather than by the act itself, if we can make this analytical distinction. In the same way, the feelings of gratitude Ð the opposite of resentment according to Strawson – would be motivated by the use of good manners and courtesy. But if resentment, as a sentiment, has a strong emotional component, it also has a cognitive dimension that directly involves reason, and that allows for the understanding by third parties of the experience of resentment felt by any person, as a personal reaction to an improper attitude or intention of somebody else. It is exactly this capacity of understanding through the identification with the resentment of others, and which Strawson defines as a sympathetic or vicarious (impersonal and disinterested) reaction to the attitude that provokes the resentment, that marks the moral dimension of sentiments under discussion here. The sentiment equivalent to resentment in the case of a vicarious reaction would be indignation or moral disapproval. That is to say, the moral dimension is not exclusively associated with a vicarious reaction, since it is also present in the (personal) experience of resentment, but can also be characterized as being socialized and/or intersubjectively shared. Besides this, since the sentiment of resentment is associated with the demands that we make on others in relation to ourselves, and the sentiment

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<sup>14</sup> As we know, the moral dimension of the expression of sentiments, as well as the practice of exchanging *gifts*, does not manifest itself only in the so-called simple or primitive societies. However, as Godbout (1992 and 1994:297-302) points out concerning the *gift*, though these acts or sentiments still have a moral significance in modern society, among us they are successfully performed only when they carry the appearance of being a spontaneous or free act, thereby relativizing its obligatory nature.

<sup>15</sup> In my work on small claims in U.S. I attempted to show how a certain type of aggression to a person was usually associated with the emotional realm, and wrongly considered as a problem of the psychological order which would not find legal support, even though the manifestation of indignation expressed by the aggrieved party often received the sympathy of mediators of the dispute or from third parties. That is to say, the socialization of perception does not guarantee, by itself, a proper understanding of the phenomenon (Cardoso de Oliveira, 1989:399-451; 1996:105-142).

of moral indignation is linked to demands that we make on others in relation to others, the sentiment of (moral) obligation is tied to the demands that we make to ourselves in our relation with others, thus completing the set of sentiments activated by the phenomenology of moral facts:

“...Just as there are personal and vicarious reactive attitudes associated with demands on others for oneself and demands on others for others, so there are self-reactive attitudes associated with demands on oneself for others. And here we have to mention such phenomena as feeling bound or obliged (the ‘sense of obligation’); feeling compunction, feeling guilty or remorseful or at least responsible; and the more complicated phenomenon of shame.” (Strawson, 1974:15)

Thus, with this brief exposition of Strawson’s ideas, we can continue with the discussion of the Bouchard effect, by making the connection, inspired in Mauss, between the obligatory evocation of sentiments and the perception of moral insult. From my point of view, much of the so-called "Bouchard effect" is due to the success of the current prime minister of Quebec in evoking sentiments of resentment among the *Francophones* of the province through speeches or political declarations made between October 14 and 27, 1995. In order to illustrate Bouchard's rhetoric, I reproduce six passages from his speeches or declarations that were selected by Trudeau in an open letter addressed to the prime minister on February 3, 1996, printed under the title "J'accuse Lucien Bouchard!" and where he made a series of criticisms of Bouchard's performance during the campaign for the referendum. The fact that they were selected by Trudeau in this context gives an idea of the political repercussion of these passages during the campaign.<sup>16</sup>

(1) “Depuis trente ans, il y a eu je ne sais combien de dizaines de négociations entre le Québec et le reste du Canada: dans tous les cas on a échoué...On a profité de notre faiblesse politique...” (Oct. 14, 1995-Centre Communautaire de St. Justin, Rosemount)<sup>17</sup>

(2) “Durant 30 ans, la raison profonde pour laquelle...on n’a jamais réussi à convaincre le Canada anglais (de concéder) la moindre revendication historique du Québec, ce n’est pas parce qu’on a envoyé des gens qui n’étaient pas des bons négociateurs. On avait les meilleurs. On avait René Lévesque.” (Oct. 18, 1995-St. Léonard)<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Following the orientation of the Committee for No in the referendum, Trudeau practically did not participate in the campaign. The political image of Trudeau is poor in Quebec, where people often claim that he did not fulfill his promise to promote a renovation of Canadian federalism after the victory of NO in the first referendum, held in 1980. Thus, it was feared that the active participation of Trudeau would hurt the campaign of NO.

<sup>17</sup> “Countless negotiations have been held between Quebec and the rest of Canada over the past 30 years. All have failed. ...Others have profited from our political weakness. ...”

<sup>18</sup> “For 30 years, the fundamental reason why ... we were never able to convince English Canada (to concede) even Quebec’s smaller historical demands is not that we sent people who were not good negotiators. We had the best ones. We had René Lévesque.”

(3) “Alors qu’il y avait une alliance avec René Lévesque pour faire une entente qui avait du bon sens, ces sept province anglophones...l’on laissé tomber, une seule nuit [la nuit des longs couteaux].” (Oct. 23, 1995-CEGEP de Limoilou)<sup>19</sup>

(4) “[La Constitution de 1982] a réduit les pouvoirs du Québec dans le domaine de la langue et de l’éducation... René Lévesque l’a refusée. Claude Ryan l’a refusée. L’Assemblée nationale du Québec l’a refusée.” (Oct. 25, 1995, 7 p.m., Radio-Canada television)<sup>20</sup>

(5) “On a rapatrié la Constitution en 1982 contre notre volonté... parce que les intérêts du Canada anglais étaient tels qu’il fallait qu’ils fassent cela.” (Oct. 27, 1995-Radio-Canada TV)<sup>21</sup>

(6) “Ils (le Canada anglais) on repoussé la main du Québec en 1990... Il n’y a personne qui est venu faire de manifestation à Montréal pour nous dire “On vous aime.” Ils ont tout simplement dit non à Meech.” (Oct. 27, 1995, 7:30 p.m. Radio-Canada TV)<sup>22</sup>

The six passages selected by Trudeau are representative of the theme and tone presented by Bouchard in his declarations during the last month of the campaign. They all share an aggressive mood in relation to the ROC, alleging that the latter had systematically imposed on Quebec its vision of the country as a result of its condition as political majority, without duly considering the demands of the French-Quebecois minority. In the strongest passages of the speeches, such as number 3 for example, Bouchard accuses the ROC of acts of betrayal, which Trudeau Ð as one of the involved parties in the event mentioned in the speech Ð could not accept. Besides the fact that all the passages make reference to experiences that, from the symbolic point of view, occupy a privileged place in the memory of French-Quebecois, and are particularly well suited to dramatizing the relationship with English Canada, they highlight at least three important aspects of the perspective of Quebec: (a) the risk of turning *Francophones* into a minority within Quebec, indicating a probable disappearance of the French presence in North America; (b) the difficulties of negotiating their demands at the federal level, where their minority condition does not give them political bargaining power; and (c) the lack of recognition of Quebec's specificity, perceived as a negation of the worthiness of Quebec's culture and way of life. In a certain sense this last aspect represents the essence of the moral insult demanding repair, to the extent that it denies the worthiness of an identity and of cultural traits or characteristics by reference to which the collectivity, or the subjects (citizens) that comprise it, are situated in the world. In contradistinction to the traditional claims of citizenship, which are usually satisfied at the level of the promulgation of laws and the respect of legal rights, the demands for recognition presuppose the internalization of a value or the acceptance of the worthiness of the group that presents the demand.

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<sup>19</sup> “Although there was an alliance with René Lévesque to reach a reasonable agreement, these seven English-speaking provinces ... abandoned him in the course of the night [the night of the long knives].”

<sup>20</sup> “[The Constitution Act of 1982] reduced Quebec’s powers in the fields of language and education ... René Lévesque refused it. Claude Ryan refused it. The National Assembly of Quebec refused it.”

<sup>21</sup> “In 1982, the constitution was patriated against our will ... because the interests of English Canada impelled them to act in this fashion.”

<sup>22</sup> “They (English Canada) rejected the hand offered by Quebec in 1990. ... No one came to Montreal to demonstrate and claim ‘We love you.’ They simply said No to Meech.”

The first two passages refer to the long process of negotiation of the *patriation* of the Canadian Constitution, which formally began in 1962 when Quebec signed the Fulton-Favreau agreement (which it would renounce in 1964), and coincides more or less with the beginning of the so-called "Quiet Revolution" which marked the modernization of Quebec and the taking of a more affirmative political position within the federation, both with relation to the valorization of French-Quebecois identity and the enlargement of the political-administrative autonomy of the province. If the beginning of the Quiet Revolution is marked by the arrival of the LPQ to power, with the election of Jean Lesage in 1960, the movement was strengthened in the provincial elections of 1962 when the LPQ was reelected under the demand for the "nationalization of electricity,"<sup>23</sup> and using the quite powerful slogan *Maîtres chez nous* ("Masters of ourselves"). This period is characterized by transformations that led to the formation of a modern, Francophone political-economic elite, with the enlargement of access to higher education, along with the intensification of the urbanization of Quebec and, as the slogan suggests, it is also characterized by a movement of the affirmation of identity (of the Quebecois majority). The new perspective has also changed the character of Quebec's nationalism, which up until then was under the leadership of the Catholic Church and was more concerned with the possibilities of cultural survival of the group.<sup>24</sup> The noting of these changes that came with the Quiet Revolution is important for understanding the intensification of negotiations concerning the relations between Quebec and the ROC, as well as the points of impasse between them.

In this context, the mention of René Lévesque in passage number 2, who was a very important politician in the recent history of Quebec and is still highly admired by the *Francophone* population of the province,<sup>25</sup> serves to emphasize the lack of the receptivity of the demands of Quebec by the ROC, not only due to divergent or different perspectives, but also due to a lack of attention or interest by English Canada in listening to the voice of Quebec. After all, how could it be possible that after so many negotiations and with good negotiators such as René Lévesque, the point of view of the province was not successfully put forth? In a similar vein, the mention of Claude Ryan (ex-leader of the PLQ and a federalist) in the fourth passage alongside with the National Assembly, that never accepted the conditions of *patriation*, serves to emphasize the negative and unreasonable way through which the Constitution of 1982 was imposed.<sup>26</sup> Considering that even the federalists do not accept the new constitution and feel

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<sup>23</sup> The demand for the nationalization of electricity was a political demand of nationalist segments of Quebec since the 1930's (Chalout 1969).

<sup>24</sup> In relation to the Church, the political activity of the priest and historian Lionel Groulx represents a significant exception. In spite of his conservative positions, Groulx always defended a more affirmative national identity for Quebec, and he had a significant influence on Quebecois nationalism up until at least the end of Fifties. In addition to being the founder of the important magazine *L'Action Nationale* in 1919, Groulx published during the Twenties one of the main nationalist novels of Quebec, *L'Appel de la Race*, which had a great impact in the press and in the population of the province.

<sup>25</sup> In addition to creating the "Sovereignty-Association Movement" and founding the Quebecois Party, René Lévesque was one of the main collaborators of the two Lesage administrations when the Quiet Revolution started, was Prime Minister of Quebec for 8 years and was responsible by the approval of Law 101 of the French language. René Lévesque died on November 1, 1987, two years after his political retirement.

<sup>26</sup> The National Assembly refers to the legislative power of Quebec, the only province where the legislative power has the status of a national institution. Here it is worth mentioning that, from a certain perspective, the great majority of the French-Quebecois population (corresponding to a more than 80% of the population of the province) is nationalist. That is to say, even the federalists have a strong national identity and support, by and large, the nationalist demands whose implementation does not imply separation.

threatened by it, only the intransigence and the lack of consideration for Quebec could explain the insistence of the ROC in denying the *distinct* character of Quebec.<sup>27</sup>

In fact, all of these speeches and declarations are dramatically pronounced, where the listeners are prompted to participate and to take a position as actors in the images reconstructed by the orator, and are simultaneously touched at the levels of reason and emotion. The listeners do not readily distinguish between, on the one hand, the cognitive understanding of acts or the situations mentioned in the speeches and, on the other hand, the identification with the dramatized characters in the speeches of the orator, which is accomplished through the evocation of sentiments on the actors. This connection is particularly clear in passage number 3 of the speech where the accusation of betrayal is made.

The reference to the famous "night of the long knives" in passage 3 is particularly dramatic, harsh and polemical, since it evokes strong feelings on both sides. That is to say, just as the *Francophones* interpret what happened as an act of betrayal, and therefore as moral aggression (or as a major moral insult), the *Anglophones* do not accept under any circumstances the accusation and they feel equally offended by the insinuation that such an act would have indeed taken place. At any rate, the famous night (with or without the "long knives") occurred on November 4, 1982, the day before the constitutional session, which approved the *patriation* of the constitution in the Parliament. According to the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, in order for the Constitution to be legitimately *patriated* and amended, it was necessary that the federal government have the support of a significant majority,<sup>28</sup> and the agreement or alliance (mentioned in Bouchard's speech) that the Prime Minister of Quebec (René Lévesque) had made approximately six months before with 7 of the other 9 *Anglophone* Canadian provinces, could have foiled the plans of Trudeau with regard to the *patriation*. With the Court decision, the "Group of Eight" as the participants of the agreement were known, could block any formula of *patriation* that they did not like, a fact that gave the group a greater political weight than that of Ottawa in the negotiations.<sup>29</sup> In order to facilitate a feasible agreement within the group, Quebec had even abandoned its right of veto for the future constitutional changes, allowed in the initial formulation of Trudeau, which characterized its good faith in the negotiations and would lead to the accusation of betrayal by the *Anglophone* provinces as events developed.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Also, up until 1992, Bouchard was a federalist and member of the Conservative-Progressive Party, changing his position after the failure of the Meech Lake accord, when he abandoned the position he held in the federal government and decided to create the Quebecois Block with a sovereignist orientation.

<sup>28</sup> According to the Supreme Court, though the unilateral *patriation* of the constitution (i.e. without the approval of the provinces) was not in and of itself illegal, it would violate the non-written conventions of political life in Canada and, therefore, the federal government should obtain support of a clear majority of the provinces for the process of *patriation* to be consummated in a proper way.

<sup>29</sup> In general, the provinces saw in the annexation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms a threat to the autonomy of provincial legislative powers, and the negotiations considered alternative formulas for amending the Constitution. Meanwhile, the Victoria Formula, proposed initially by Trudeau, foresaw a right of veto to constitutional changes by Quebec, Ontario, a set of the two provinces of the West, or the union of two provinces of the Atlantic. The Vancouver (or Alberta) Formula agreed to by the Group of Eight held that constitutional changes should be subject to approval by at least seven Canadian provinces and the approval of 50% of the population of the country. In 1996 the federal government approved in Parliament a non-constitutional principle similar to the Victoria Formula, with the difference that now British Columbia would also have veto power.

<sup>30</sup> In a similar way, the fact that René Lévesque assumed the *beau risque* strategy in 1984, abandoning the project of sovereignty while seeking to approve an agreement for the renovation of federalism that included the demands of Quebec, also reinforced his image of good faith as opposed to

With the aim of finding a solution to what seemed to be an impasse in the negotiations, Trudeau offered to LŽvesque the possibility of calling for a referendum in order to approve the formalization of conditions of *patriation* and, according to him, the dissemination of the statement of LŽvesque supporting the proposal annoyed his partners in the Group of Eight, for whom the statement represented a breach of the agreement. In this way, the prime ministers of the seven provinces felt free to join the other two and approve the proposal of *patriation* presented by Ottawa, without the clause that gave to Quebec a right of veto. The version of these same events according to French-Quebecois, and that Bouchard presents in the speech that he made to the nation on October 25, is that on the night of November 4, the seven prime ministers went to meet Jean ChrŽtien in a hotel in Ottawa to conspire against Quebec.<sup>31</sup> According to Trudeau, this version is historically false. Nonetheless, the image of "the night of the long knives" had a major impact in the press (*Francophone and Anglophone*) and it was very effective in evoking the sentiments of resentment, thus fomenting the perception of moral insult among the French-Quebecois.

Furthermore, passages 5 and 6 mention images perceived as aggressive to Quebec and confirm the perception of lack of commitment and/or consideration by the ROC for the province. In the first passage the topic of lack of interest in negotiating the demands of Quebec is taken up, characterized by the decision to impose on Quebec the solution agreed upon by the other provinces at the moment that the Group of Eight was dissolved, and the *Belle Province* no longer constituted a "legal" constraint for the approval of *patriation*: "... the interests of English CanadaÓ were of such order that it was not worthwhile to wait for the approval of Quebec. The last passage refers to the huge rally for the unity of Canada, sponsored by the Committee for NO on October 27, with the support of organizations from all parts of the country, and which gathered more than two hundred thousand people in the center of Montreal. The event brought sympathizers of NO from all provinces, who invaded Montreal in order to declare their love for Quebec. For many of the militants of YES the rally seemed like a false or empty declaration and, therefore, sounded like a last minute aggression. The speech of Bouchard that mentions the rally was pronounced on the same day, and it is to the dubious character of this declaration of love that Bouchard refers to when he affirms that on the occasion of rejection of the Meech Lake accord, by two *Anglophone* provinces, no rally of this kind was held.

Though polemical and/or exaggerated in some cases, the passages cited above are successful in the sense that, through the evocation of the sentiment of resentment, they transmit the perception of moral insult expressed in the negation of the recognition of QuebecÓs *distinct* identity, which appears as an act of unilateral *inconsiderateness*, provoking a reaction of indignation or moral disapproval of which Strawson speaks. As such, perhaps one could say that the link between rhetoric and emotion in these cases would have evoked cognitively fertile sentiments, to the extent to which they have contributed to the expansion of the horizon of the audience, allowing for a better understanding of their experience. Now I would like to ask if this link between rhetoric and emotion might not also produce results in the opposite direction by evoking passionate feelings that, instead of expanding the horizon of the audience, would limit and constraint the actorÓs capacity for understanding.

In the case of Quebec, I can think of at least two examples of the perverse link between rhetoric and emotion, suggesting that caution should be taken regarding the evaluation

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the perception of intransigence by English Canada. LŽvesque bet on the efforts of Brian Mulroney (the Prime Minister of Canada at the time) which led to the Meech Lake Accord, and which was eventually defeated in 1990. Just as with the image of the "night of the long knives," the defeat of Meech also is perceived as an act of rejection, i.e. as a moral insult.

<sup>31</sup> The current Prime Minister of Canada, Jean ChrŽtien, was an important member of the Cabinet of Trudeau at that time.

of the potential of the rhetoric of resentment for the perception of moral insult. First, I would like to mention the beginning of the speech of Parizeau to the militants of YES when the ex-prime minister accepted defeat in the referendum with a very emotional speech in which he blamed businessmen and immigrants for the victory of NO: "*Nous avons été battus pour l'argent et pour le vote ethnique*" ("we lost to money and to the ethnic vote").<sup>32</sup> In spite of the fact that the militants seemed to support the unfortunate declaration of Parizeau at the moment, the repercussion of the speech was very negative, even for the French-Quebecois majority, and on the following day there was a strong feeling that Parizeau should resign his position, something he did a few weeks later. The allusion to the "anti-patriotic" interests of big capital was considered sufficiently strong, but the recrimination with an air of accusation of the ethnic vote was considered as an intolerable aggression. The second example had a more ambiguous repercussion, though it had equally negative ethical and cognitive implications. I am referring to one of the speeches that Bouchard pronounced in the weeks before the referendum, in which he recriminates "*la faible natalité chez les Québécoises blanches...*" ("the low birth rate among white female Quebecers"). In addition to the potentially racist or ethnic implications of this statement, Bouchard faced protests by feminist leaders who explicitly refused to assume the role of reproducers or child raisers attributed to them. Although the birth rate has been traditionally seen as a political issue in Quebec, such that it has always been perceived as an important deterrent to the growing imbalance between *Anglophones* and *Francophones* in Canada, it was entirely unacceptable that the topic had been approached in these terms by Bouchard. This became especially so at that time, given that those in favor of sovereignty had been making a major effort to eliminate any ethnic connotation of Québec nationalism, even emphasizing the territorial dimension in opposition to the ethnic one and calling attention to the democratic character of their kind of nationalism, which would be open to inclusion of any citizen, regardless of his/her ethnic, racial or linguistic origin.

In this context, I would like to suggest, as a conclusion, that the meaning and the implications of the rhetoric of resentment in specific cases should be understood through the potential in terms of cognitive fertility of the sentiments actually evoked. That is to say, while passionate reactions characterize a significant cognitive deficit and demand support for illegitimate relations or institutions, the mobilization of sentiments that direct the person towards a better understanding of moral insults can have an edifying character and, why not, an emancipatory one.

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<sup>32</sup> The immigrants are significantly classified as *Allophones* (foreign language speakers) in opposition to *Francophones* and *Anglophones*, and today constitute a significant contingent of voters in Montreal. While *Francophones* correspond to 82% of the electorate in Quebec, *Anglophones* and *Allophones* correspond to 9% each. Indeed the last two groups have difficulty in identifying themselves with the project of sovereignty, having voted almost exclusively (i.e. more than 90%) for NO, to the contrary of *Francophones* who are divided on the question, and among whom 61% voted for YES.

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