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“What is the cry even of the Canadians?”: Resistance towards Imperial Paternalism and US “braggadocio” in Anthony Trollope’s North America

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**“WHAT IS THE CRY EVEN OF THE
CANADIANS?”:
RESISTANCE TOWARDS IMPERIAL
PATERNALISM AND US “BRAGGADOCIO”
IN ANTHONY TROLLOPE’S *NORTH AMERICA***

Abstract

Published in 1862, *North America* describes the travels of Anthony Trollope, the prolific British writer, publicist, and public servant, who set out on his ten-month journey around Canada and the Northern States of America on behalf of the General Post Office at the beginning of the American Civil War. In his travelogue, Trollope documents his impressions of Canada and its people, as well as his reflections on the relations between Great Britain, its colonies, and the United States. Although only four chapters of Trollope’s two-volume work are devoted to his observations about Canadians, his remarks are informative about Canadian responses and resistance to both the structural oppression of the British Empire and the expansionist pressure from the United States. The purpose of this article is thus to discuss the strategies of the Canadians’ defiance of the two external powers and their persistence in demanding a responsible government for themselves.

Résumé

North America, récit de voyage écrit à la veille de la guerre de Sécession et publié en 1862, décrit les voyages d’Anthony Trollope, l’un des romanciers et essayistes britanniques les plus célèbres de l’époque victorienne, publiciste et fonctionnaire parti en voyage pour deux mois à travers le Canada et les États-Unis d’Amérique au nom du Bureau Central des Postes (General Post Office). Dans *North America*, Trollope recueille ses impressions sur le Canada et ses habitants ainsi que ses réflexions au sujet des relations entre la Grande-Bretagne, ses colonies et les États-Unis. Alors que les thèmes canadiens comprennent seulement quatre chapitres dans ce travail en deux

volumes, les remarques de Trollope fournissent beaucoup d'informations sur les attitudes et la résistance des Canadiens à l'oppression structurelle de l'Empire britannique ainsi qu'à la politique expansionniste des États-Unis. Le but de cet article est d'aborder la stratégie d'opposition des Canadiens vis-à-vis des deux puissances extérieures ainsi que d'examiner la ténacité des Canadiens à obtenir un gouvernement basé sur le principe de responsabilité politique. Le texte rend compte de la réponse et de la résistance canadienne à l'égard, à la fois, de la politique impériale de la Grande-Bretagne et de la pression expansionniste des États-Unis et met en évidence les stratégies 'douces' développées par les Canadiennes pour se défaire du protectionnisme de la Grande-Bretagne et obtenir un gouvernement responsable.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an increased interest in postcolonial studies on Anthony Trollope (1815-1882), a prolific British writer, publicist, and public servant. This article is devoted to the issue of the Canadian response and resistance towards both the structural oppression of the British Empire and the expansionist pressure from the United States as presented in Anthony Trollope's *North America*. Hence, the title of this article refers to the question Trollope asks in his travelogue: "What is the cry even of the Canadians?" (98), which opens up a discussion about what expectations were held by the Canadians with respect to the way they were governed, or put differently, what their political and social demands were in the face of Canada's geopolitical circumstances of the day. The purpose of this article is thus to present Trollope's perception of Canadians, which he gained during his travels around Canada and which he consequently reported on in his travelogue that also includes his interpretation of Canadians' attitude towards the British government as well as the United States. The essay puts Trollope's thoughts, impressions, and observations into a political and historical context, using a hermeneutical approach. The comparative method is also applied in parts, in which Trollope's work is considered alongside travelogues written by other famous English writers who visited Canada, namely Trollope's mother, Frances Trollope, and Charles Dickens.

While Trollope remains best known for his novels, his travelogues gain more and more recognition as they reflect the Victorians' attitude towards the Other(s) as well as the prejudices and stereotypes of the epoch. Among many of Trollope's travel writings, his two volume-travelogue *North America* continues to carry its special meaning. For example, in her comparative study *Three Victorians in the New World*, Helen K. Heineman discusses Trollope's travelogue together with Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* and Charles Dickens's *American Notes*, arguing that Trollope's *North America* is the best of his travel writings because "[i]n it he reveals the

full gamut of his talents as a traveller: his genial tolerance, his resistance to judging things evil because they displeased him personally, his prophetic voice, his patient good will and affection for those he saw. If his subject matter is not always new, his presentation never fails to imbue his material with freshness” (212).

Trollope’s acute perception is also praised by Michael Heinze, who compliments the author on his historical and political descriptions and analyses that are missing in Trollope’s other famous travelogue *The West Indies and the Spanish Main* (109). Mickie Grover, on the other hand, underlines the fact that Trollope wanted to write a book which would in no way resemble his mother’s *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, a work notorious for its prejudices and stereotypes (389). The same opinion is expressed by Amanda Claybaugh in her essay “Trollope and America” (211). And yet both Grover and Claybaugh only briefly mention Trollope’s voyage to Canada.

While there are many literary analyses of Trollope’s *North America*, the majority of scholars concentrate on Trollope’s description of the United States. The three chapters focused on Canada remain relatively overlooked by critics. Scholars either do not mention them at all in their works, or like James Buzard, they stress that “in spite of its title and its inclusion of some chapters on Canada, the book’s focus was clearly on the United States” (174). The scope of Buzard’s research is very broad—his article “Trollope and Travel” not only covers Trollope’s travelogues, but it also deals with the theme of travel in Trollope’s novels. Claybaugh in “Trollope and America” concentrates on the comparison between *North America* and *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, and it should be underlined that when she writes about America, she means the United States. Such is not the case with Heinze, who, in his article “Victorians Abroad: Charles Dickens and Anthony Trollope in Canada,” gives a valuable account of Trollope’s reflections on Canada, comparing the author favourably with Dickens, who had visited the country twenty years earlier, in 1842. Heinze’s essay remains the most detailed analysis of Trollope’s description of Canada although it concentrates on the comparison between Trollope’s *North America* and Dickens’s *American Notes*.

It should be underlined that Trollope wrote his travelogues in a specific way, noting his impressions, as he confesses in his *Autobiography*, “*currente calamo*” (129)—literally: “with a running pen,” i.e. very quickly and often without any preparations or further research. This particular method made his travel writings prone to mistakes and inaccuracies. Catherine Hall coined the term “going a-Trolloping” to define the practice of describing places without preparations, knowledge, and in-depth analysis (181). According to Hall,

Trollope was also a writer who was mapping the Empire, providing his readers with broad, albeit superficial knowledge concerning colonies.

Trollope firmly believed his impressions and prejudices to be truthful. He tried to be or appear unbiased, yet one cannot deny that he remained the chronicler of the upper class and middle classes (Sadleir 362), for whom he actually wrote *North America*. Unlike his later travelogues serialized in magazines and newspapers, both *North America* and *The West Indies and the Spanish Main* were targeted at more wealthy Englishmen, who could afford expensive volumes. It is worth noting that, although Trollope addressed his books to English or British readers, he was, unlike his mother Frances, conscious of the way his travelogues were perceived by the inhabitants of the described places.

Anthony Trollope went to America for the purpose of writing a travelogue, which would also deal with the burgeoning conflict between the North and South. Trollope clearly wanted to capitalize on the interest that British public opinion took on the American Civil War. Against the wishes of his superior, Sir Rowland Hill, the writer took a leave of absence from the General Post Office and spent almost nine months visiting all the Union States (except California) as well as Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto. Trollope sailed to America on 24 August 1861. From Boston, he travelled north by rail and went to Quebec in September.

At that time, Canadian colonies, i.e. Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, were in the process of integration, which was accomplished on 1 July 1867. While Trollope constantly writes about Lower (southern portion of present-day Québec) and Upper (lower reaches of the St. Lawrence River) Canada, these two provinces were actually united in 1841¹ in response to the turmoil and unrest of the Rebellions 1837-1838.² The creation of the United Province of Canada was followed by the introduction of the system of responsible government, according to which the authorities of so-called white colonies should be responsible to representative assemblies of the colonists (Ferguson 111). This doctrine recommended by the famous Durham Report made Canada a unique experiment and contributed to the development of Canadian democracy (Mills). On the whole, it can be stated that none of his former colonial journeys prepared Trollope for the encounter with Canadian self-governance. Canada bore little resemblance to either Ireland, where Trollope spent several years as a Post Office official, or the West Indies, which he described in his famous work *The West Indies and the Spanish Main*.

¹ While the Act of Union was passed by the British Parliament on 23 July 1840, it was proclaimed by the Crown on 10 February 1841.

² See Careless; R. Hall; Oullet.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: CANADA AND ITS CITIZENS IN THE EYES OF AN ENGLISHMAN

“I must confess that in going from the States into Canada, an Englishman is struck by the feeling that he is going from a richer country into one that is poorer, and from a greater country into one that is less” (*North America* 52)—that is, perhaps, Trollope’s best known opinion on Canada. Unlike Dickens, who, disillusioned with the United States, had been delighted to find peace in Canada, Trollope was not particularly impressed either with the landscape or with the rural quietness of the country. He noted the relief he felt in crossing the border, relief caused by the fact that he was not restrained by the rules and habits of a foreign country anymore. He reflects: “An Englishman going from a foreign land into a land which is in one sense his own, of course finds much in the change to gratify him. He is able to speak as the master, instead of speaking as the visitor” (52). Canada is therefore regarded as a dependent territory, the land subjugated to the will of English masters. Trollope recognizes the changes in an Englishman’s behaviour once he crosses the border: “His tongue becomes more free, and he is able to fall back to his national habits and national expressions. He no longer feels that he is admitted on sufferance, or that he must be careful to respect laws which he does not quite understand” (52).

Trollope must have observed these changes in his own behaviour and attributed them to the ongoing political crisis and tensions between the Union and Britain (*North America* 52), yet it can be argued that other English travellers, coming to Canada under different political circumstances, felt the same kind of relief. Trollope’s mother, Frances Trollope, who visited Canada some thirty years earlier, expressed her joy in crossing the border, writing on the occasion: “I was delighted to see British oaks, and British roofs, and British boys and girls. These latter, as if to impress us that they were not citizens, made bows and courtesies as we passed, and this little touch of long unknown civility produced great effect”³ (379). Like many people of the epoch, Frances Trollope was obsessed with the concept of rank and social position held by an individual in Victorian class society. While Americans in general dismissed this notion, at that time, i.e. in 1831, the inhabitants of Canada preserved or seemed to preserve (for the sake of being civil) all the differences of class and rank. Frances Trollope could respond to this and patronize them in a way, which was unimaginable in the United States. Therefore, it can be said that for Frances Trollope Canada was just another version of Britain.

Charles Dickens, who went to Canada in 1842, regarded the country as a better version of his homeland:

³ By “citizens,” Frances Trollope meant citizens of the United States.

. . . Canada has held, and always will retain, a foremost place in my remembrance. Few Englishmen are prepared to find what it is. Advancing quietly; old differences setting down, and being fast forgotten; public feeling and private enterprise alike in a sound and wholesome state; nothing of flush or fever in its system, but health and vigor throbbing in its steady pulse: is full of hope and promise. (785-86)

Dickens, while more progressive than Frances Trollope, was also repulsed by an American lack of manners, and he found Canada an ideal country, balancing between old traditions and new ideas of freedom. In his delight, he clearly overlooked the dramatic events of the 1830s such as the Rebellions of 1837-1838 in Upper and Lower Canada or the existing tensions between the English and the French and between Protestants and Catholics. However, it can be argued that to Dickens Canada must have seemed like a peaceful land compared to the United States. According to Heinze, Dickens tried to make Canada a smaller version of Britain herself and thus gave a joyous account of what he saw (110).

Anthony Trollope was not satisfied with Canadian peacefulness and civility, or the beauty of the landscape. Unlike Dickens (or his own mother), he was interested mainly in politics, industrial development, economic growth, and urbanization. Trollope did not mind “flush or fever” (Dickens 786) if they contributed to the wealth of the country. He was rather impressed with the rapid development of American cities, and he found Canada strangely lacking the entrepreneurial spirit: “I could not enter Canada without seeing, and hearing, and feeling that there was less of enterprise around me there than in the States—less of general movement, and less of commercial success” (*North America* 52).

According to Trollope, this lack of entrepreneurship was caused by Canada’s colonial dependence. He argues that Canada as a colony could not grow rich in the same way as a sovereign country, i.e. as the United States or specifically the Northern States (*North America* 52). Struck by this difference, Trollope could not abstain from sharing his thoughts with Canadians. Their response characterized them as mildly defiant people and, in fact, can be described as a form of resistance towards the author’s attitude of paternalism. Trollope writes:

I return to my assertion, that in entering Canada from the States one clearly comes from a richer to a poorer country. When I have said so, I have heard no Canadian absolutely deny it; though in refraining from denying it, they have usually expressed a general conviction, that in settling himself for life, it is better for a man to set up his staff in Canada than in the States. (54)

Canadian interlocutors did not oppose his opinion violently, instead they tried to convince him, referring to their life experience, that he might be wrong. This was done in a very polite manner; nevertheless, they remained adamant in their beliefs (54).

The fact is more clearly visible when, in his narrative, Trollope gives voice to an unknown Canadian who argues the following: “I do not know that we are richer, . . . but on the whole we are doing better and are happier” (qtd. in *North America* 54). What Trollope fails to grasp is a different goal of the people who prefer happiness to wealth and quiet, steady development to rapid industrialization. To be happy and content, to arrange matters in a way that suit people best—that is the response the anonymous Canadian gives to Trollope.

The author is not satisfied with this statement, and the passage is followed by a long lecture on the role of money, commerce, and industry in building a new society:

Now, I regard the golden rules against the love of gold, the “aurum irrepertum et sic melius situm,” and the rest of it, as very excellent when applied to individuals. . . . But such a doctrine is absolutely false as regards a nation. National wealth produces education and progress, and through them produces plenty of food, good morals, and all else that is good. It produces luxury also, and certain evils attendant on luxury. But I think it may be clearly shown, and that it is universally acknowledged, that national wealth produces individual well-being. If this be so, the argument of my friend the Canadian is nought.⁴ (*North America* 54)

There is a relatively new word, referring to the process of explaining something in a particularly patronizing and condescending manner. It is called “richsplaining” and it has been used to express the way the wealthy people impose their ideas and values on the poor (Wood). “Richsplaining” gained recognition on the Web at the beginning of the current decade although this phenomenon has not been thoroughly studied by scholars as yet. Trollope’s lecture on wealth, with his reference to Horace’s Ode 3.3, and his both ironic and patronizing expression “my friend Canadian” can be described as richsplaining. Despite Trollope’s eloquence, nothing in the text indicates that he succeeded in convincing his Canadian interlocutors that they were wrong.

It should also be acknowledged that Trollope “richsplains” to the Canadians but not to his English readers, who come from the upper or middle classes. Trollope assumes that readers share his beliefs that rapid industrial, urban development and financial success matter more than a quiet, happy, and

⁴ The Latin phrase used by Trollope, “aurum irrepertum et sic melius situm,” meaning “undiscovered gold and in that way better situated” (my trans.), comes from Horace’s Ode 3.3 (see also Horace 55).

“slow” life. Trollope fails to understand that the Canadians might cherish other values than money, probably because he himself was preoccupied with financial matters. Money and finance play a fundamental role in his novels, and this predilection also shapes his attitude towards his Canadian interlocutors. However, it should be noted that the Canadians do not oppose him in any violent or passionate manner. They pretend to understand him yet do not change their beliefs—that attitude can be recognized as a soft yet firm resistance to English paternalism. This and other ways of silent defiance will be presented in the next part of the article.

“SOFT RESISTANCE”: CANADIAN STRATEGIES TOWARDS PATERNALISM

Trollope’s patronizing attitude towards the inhabitants of Canada can be regarded as a representation of imperial paternalism, i.e. the influence that British propaganda had over the mind and hearts of the subjects. What are strategies of defiance against the condescending approach of the “English masters” coming to the country? How do Canadians contest patronizing behaviour? The answer to these questions can be found in chapter five of *North America*, devoted to the description of Upper Canada and its inhabitants. The first strategy involves, what Trollope would call, deliberate insolence on the part of people belonging to the working class. Trollope describes his brief visit in Prescott, a small town on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River: “I was much struck at Prescott—and indeed all through Canada, though more in the upper than in the lower province—by the sturdy roughness, some would call it insolence, of those of the lower classes of the people with whom I was brought into contact” (*North America* 82). Then Trollope begins apologizing to the readers for his use of the expression “the lower classes,” denoting the working class and, in particular, servants. It might seem that Canadian servants found a specific way of annoying English visitors by being at the same time deliberately polite while referring to other servants and defiant towards their supposed “masters.” Trollope notes:

When the man to whose services one is entitled answers one with determined insolence; when one is bidden to follow “that young lady,” meaning the chambermaid, or desired, with a toss of the head, to wait for the “gentleman who is coming,” meaning the boots, the heart is sickened, and the English traveller pines for the civility—for the servility, if my American friends choose to call it so—of a well-ordered servant. (83)

Shirley Robin Letwin, the author of *The Gentleman in Trollope*, explains the role of social hierarchy both in the society and Trollope’s novels:

A social hierarchy, with or without a hereditary aristocracy, has a value of a standing reminder that some kinds of conduct and character are more worthy of esteem than others, that the equal worth of men as God’s creatures does not make them equally worthy of men’s esteem. (132)

Canadian servants and commoners described in *North America* remain defiant towards this understanding of social hierarchy and devise a strategy to express their own notions of equality and independence. Using this strategy, to call a chambermaid “that young lady” is to subvert a traditional notion of being a lady. To call a boot boy “a gentleman” means to make him equal with every noble visitor. It is a positive way to oppose such concepts as “rank,” “class,” “nobility,” which were the fibre of Victorian society. This behaviour can be interpreted as a “soft” resistance against the hierarchic structure of the Empire, the custom and norms imposed by the upper classes and the so-called Victorian morality.

Trollope acknowledges that he can see through this kind of behaviour and understand it when he writes: “I know well what the men mean when they offend in this manner. And when I think on the subject with deliberation, at my own desk, I can not only excuse, but almost approve them” (*North America* 83). Extreme politeness towards other servants becomes the efficient “weapon” against the patronizing ways of the “English masters.” What is even more important is the fact that the English visitors encountering this kind of behaviour are helpless. They cannot “correct” their hosts or suggest that they are wrong in devaluating the term of “gentleman” or “lady.” They cannot express their disappointment or anger in finding that a servant might not be “servile” at all.

The second strategy of personal defiance is simpler and much more visible. It involves openly manifesting one’s independence and equality:

A man is asked by a stranger, some question about his employment, and he replies in a tone which seems to imply anger, insolence, and a dishonest intention to evade the service for which he is paid. Or if there be no question of service or payment, the man’s manner will be the same, and the stranger feels that he is slapped in the face and insulted. (Trollope, *North America* 83)

This time defiance is manifested by the refusal to share personal details with a complete stranger, a desire to protect one’s privacy.

To a modern reader it is not the working class man who is insolent and rude, but Anthony Trollope, who expects the poor man to feel the class difference and act accordingly, replicating the class relations characteristic of English society. Maybe such was the case when Trollope’s mother visited Canada thirty years earlier, yet it seems that since that time there has been a significant change or shift in feelings and habits of the Canadians. Trollope narrates:

The translation of it is this. The man questioned, who is aware that as regards coat, hat, boots, and outward cleanliness he is below him by whom he is questioned, unconsciously feels himself called upon to assert his political equality. It is his shibboleth that he is politically equal to the best, that he is independent, and that his labour, though it earn him but a dollar a day by portorage, places him as a citizen on an equal rank with the most wealthy fellow-man that may employ or accost him. (83)

This demand to be treated as equal, the conviction that all people are in fact equal, no matter what they do and how they earn money, remains the specific Canadian strategy of opposing imperial paternalism, consciously or subconsciously expressed by the English visitors.

Trollope's attitude towards Canadian "soft resistance" is complex. On the one hand, he seems to approve the notions of equality and progress, but on the other it is clear that he feels uncomfortable encountering assertive servants and self-confident workers. Trollope might declare his support for Gladstonian Liberalism, yet he is unable to accept the consequences of equality. It seems as if the reality of Canadian life surpassed his declarations. He knows that the Canadian way is better and more just, yet he cannot surpass his feelings.

RESPONSE TO NORTHERN STATES "BRAGGADOCIO" AND CANADIAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

According to John Boyko, there are many myths concerning the relationship between Canada and the United States such as the myth of the undefended border or the myth of Canadian-American friendship and support (2). Boyko refutes these myths when he argues that "Canada and the United States were bad neighbours in a dangerous neighbourhood" (2). In fact, since the American War of Independence, Britain was concerned about the probable annexation of Canada by the rapidly growing United States. The possibility of such an incorporation was expressed in article 11 of the American Articles of Confederation, according to which: "Canada acceding to this Confederation, and entirely joining in the measures of the United States, shall be admitted into and entitled to all the advantages of this Union" (McFerran 121). In his narrative, Trollope refers to this conception when he writes:

Some years since the Americans thought that Canada might shine in the Union firmament as a new star, but that delusion is, I think, over. Such annexation if ever made, must have been made not only against the arms of England but must also have been made in accordance with the wishes of the people so annexed. (*North America* 88)

It is remarkable how Trollope, who in his other travelogues justified annexation of foreign lands and colonization, decides here to defend a people’s right to self-governance.

The United States indeed tried to annex British territories in 1812. In retribution for the British interference in Tecumseh’s War, the United States sent an army of twelve thousand, which was defeated—a circumstance which has vastly contributed to the forging of the Canadian nationality (Ferguson 110). At the beginning of the American Civil War, there were still living people who remembered that conflict. While, in the past, there were some republican tendencies among the Canadians (mainly during the Lower and Upper Canada Rebellions), two decades of stabilization influenced the opinion of the society, which is duly noted by Anthony Trollope:

It was then believed that the Canadians were not averse to such a change, and there may possibly have then been among them the remnant of such a wish. There is certainly no such desire now, not even a remnant of such a desire; and the truth on this matter is, I think, generally acknowledged. (*North America* 88)

Canadians had reasons to be suspicious of, as Boyko puts it, (an) “increasingly belligerent America, that was tearing itself apart” (5).

Trollope uses the word “braggadocio” to describe both the Northern United States policy and the behaviour of the Americans he met during his journey around America. According to *Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary* (178), “braggadocio” means “empty boasting,” “brag” as well as “a boasting person,” “a braggart,” while the term itself comes from Braggadocchio, the boastful character of Edmund Spenser’s epic poem “The Faerie Queene.” However, Trollope uses this particular word not to describe an empty boast but as a synonym for “aggression.” The author underlines various factors that not only contribute to a Canadian predilection for the British Crown but also draw Canadians closer to the Southern cause:

Their sympathies are with the Southern States, not because they care for cotton, not because they are anti-abolitionists, not because they admire the hearty pluck of those who are endeavouring to work out for themselves a new revolution. They sympathize with the South from strong dislike to the aggression, the braggadocio, and the insolence they have felt upon their own borders. (*North America* 90)

Then Trollope begins to name different offences and offenders who, according to him, contributed to the general dislike of the policy of the Northern States. He mentions several examples: “They dislike Mr. Seward’s weak and vulgar joke with the Duke of Newcastle. They dislike Mr. Everett’s flattering hints to his countrymen as to the one nation that is to occupy the whole continent. They dislike the Monroe doctrine” (90). William H. Seward (1801-1872), the

United States Secretary of State, was particularly disliked by both British and Canadian political leaders, who perceived him as a warmonger, and there was a good reason for that. Trollope's words about "weak and vulgar joke with the Duke of Newcastle" refer to Seward's notorious remark about avoiding the civil war by evoking a new conflict with Great Britain. In 1860, Seward supposedly told the Duke of Newcastle, Britain's colonial secretary, that if he became a President of the United States, he would bombard Liverpool (Winks 79). The statement might have been intended as a joke, but it was nevertheless not taken as such by the Duke of Newcastle, who felt obliged to inform the British cabinet and Canadian general governor, Sir Edmund Head, about this remark (Boyko 63). What is more, for years, Seward threatened both the British and the Canadians with the possible annexation of Canada.

Another offender from Trollope's list, Edward Everett (1794-1865), was an American politician, famous teacher, and rhetorician. In this case, Trollope was probably biased by his own opinion of the man. Everett's diplomatic service as an ambassador to Great Britain, at the time when there was a dispute over the location of the Oregon and Maine-Canada boundaries, had been almost universally praised (Reid 278). During his stay in Boston, Trollope had an opportunity to listen to Everett's lecture *The Causes and the Conduct of the Civil War*, and he disliked it on account of its anti-Southern bias and an unflattering portrait of Great Britain (Terry, "Everett" 188). In this case, Trollope expresses his own thoughts, yet he is manipulating the readers into believing that this is how the Canadians perceive Edward Everett and his ideas.

The Monroe doctrine is a subject too broad to be discussed in this article, yet it should be noted that while nowadays it is almost universally understood as a declaration of American isolationism, such was not the case in the nineteenth century. This most common understanding of the doctrine's goal is wrong. Robin Winks thus describes the doctrine in *The Civil War Years: Canada and the United States*:

The Monroe Doctrine . . . was not isolationist. With respect to the New World it was given an increasingly internationalist interpretation from the time of James K. Polk's presidency. The Doctrine in its original form did not include the British provinces within its orbit, but in the years before the Civil War many American expansionists avowed that the provinces violated the spirit of Monroe's supposed intent. (1)

That the Canadians might have felt threatened by such an interpretation of Monroe's doctrine cannot be doubted.

On reading Anthony Trollope, one can often wonder if his interpretation and understanding of other cultures was right. Trollope's narratives were often biased by his own, strong opinions. He was convinced of anti-North feelings

spreading in Canada, but the question remains whether he was right. His picture of the Canadians opposing the Northern States in favour of the Confederacy seems simplified.

In fact, the Canadians were divided on the subject of the secession. There was no one opinion on the North and South and all popular sentiments were influenced by existing divisions in the society. The French and Catholic minority living in Quebec sympathized with the South for two reasons—the Catholic Church opposed American republicanism, and the Québécois could feel for the Southerners as another minority oppressed by the powerful government (Boyko 7). The Montreal *Gazette* remained strongly anti-North, demanding a 100,000-men militia to defend the country from the supposed Northern aggression (Winks 91) and calling the United States “the most immoral country in the world” (Boyko 7). However, even in Montreal, the heartland of Conservatism, the liberal Montreal *Witness* warned its readers against engaging in the Civil War (Winks 92). Similarly, the *New Brunswick Reporter* expressed pro-North opinions, probably because of the vast majority of Protestants living in the city and sympathizing with the government and its endeavours to preserve the Union (Boyko 7). According to Boyko, Saint John was the most pro-South town in Canada, while Halifax remained pro-North, both on account of their economic dependency on the Confederation and the Union, respectively (7).

Anthony Trollope’s attitude towards the North and South was also complex. He had some feelings for the South, yet he was convinced that the North would and should win. He failed or did not want to acknowledge that many Canadians resented the North not because of their supposed Southern sympathies but because they were disappointed with Lincoln’s politics regarding slavery. According to Boyko, Abolitionist Canadians as well as the Maritimes expected that Lincoln would declare the emancipation of American slaves in his inaugural address in 1861 (8). Pro-North Toronto *Globe* wrote on the occasion in its editorial: “At first the sympathies of the British people were unmistakably with the North. They imagined that Mr. Lincoln had determined to wage a war against slavery, and in heart and soul they were with him” (qtd. in Boyko 8). Unfortunately, they were disappointed in their hopes. What is even more important is the fact that Canadians fought and died in the American Civil War. About forty thousand young men went fighting and, despite the pro-South sentiment expressed by the majority of the newspapers, they fought overwhelmingly for the Union (Boyko 8). Therefore, it might be argued that Trollope’s image of anti-North Canadians is simplified and unjustified. He expresses his own opinions while the true feelings of the inhabitants of Canada escape his observations.

IMPERIAL PATERNALISM IN TROLLOPE'S NARRATIVE

“Canada did not get Home Rule because she was loyal and friendly but she has become loyal and friendly because she has got Home Rule”—such were the famous words of William Ewart Gladstone (qtd. in Ferguson 253). Anthony Trollope admired and supported Gladstone all his life, yet his opinions on the right to self-governance were slightly different. Trollope regarded colonies as children of the mother country, and he devoted many passages in *North America* to the description of this particular metaphor. What is more, he did it with his clear intention of supporting Canada in a potential conflict with the United States. Trollope, like many other upper-class Englishmen, was afraid of this war and he expressed his feelings in two letters entitled *The American Conflict* (Lyons 9-10). In *North America*, he uses the mother-country-child-colony metaphor to argue that the British government was right in its decision to send to Canada two thousand soldiers. Trollope wanted to persuade his readers that Great Britain should support her colonies in military terms:

Why should the colonies remain true to us as children are true to their parents, if we grudge them the assistance, which is due to a child? They raise their own taxes, it is said, and administer them. True; and it is well that the growing son should do something for himself. While the father does all for him the son's labour belongs to the father. (*North America* 92)

Trollope refers here to the ancient Roman concept of *pater familias*—a father who provides for his wife, children, and slaves. In Trollope's interpretation, *pater familias* is a benevolent master who cares for all his people (92).

While this picture might seem endearing, and it certainly was endearing to Trollope, it should be noted that, according to ancient Roman law, *pater familias* (“father of the family”) had an absolute power over the life and death of *vitae necisque potestas* ‘his relatives.’ Trollope never addresses this aspect of the metaphor he uses, which is not surprising. It does not suit his idealized picture of mother-children love between Britain and her colonies. And it can be argued that despite the dramatic events of the Rebellions of 1837-1838 and the (later) atrocities of the Saskatchewan Rebellion⁵ and other conflicts, Canada never

⁵ The Saskatchewan Rebellion, also known as the North-West Rebellion, was an uprising by Métis and Aboriginal people, who fought against Canadian government for four months in 1885. The insurgence was led by a politician and leader Louis Riel, the founder of Manitoba. There were seven battles and other incidents such as Looting of Battleford or Frog Lake Massacre. Eventually, insurgents were hanged. Louis Riel remains a controversial figure perceived either as a traitor or a hero and fighter for freedom (Beal

faced the worst consequences of British Imperialism. To understand what British *vitae necisque potestas* really meant in the nineteenth century, one should go not to Canada but to Ireland during the Great Irish Famine.

It is symptomatic that Trollope uses this metaphor also when he describes French Canadians living in Lower Canada. According to Trollope, they live in “the quiet, orderly, unimpulsive manner” although he acknowledges that “there have been times in which English rule has been unpopular with the French settlers” (*North America* 57). In his view, these times are over. He is convinced that the French Canadians are quiet, contented people, who, unfortunately, cannot thrive as they cannot successfully compete with Englishmen. However, the main difference between the French and English Canadians lies not in their different national identities but in religion. Trollope blames French complacency on the fact that they are Roman Catholics:

They do not advance, and push ahead, and become a bigger people from year to year as settlers in a new country should do. They do not even hold their own in comparison with those around them. But has not this always been the case with colonists out of France; and has it not always been the case with Roman Catholics when they have been forced to measure themselves against Protestants? (57)

Trollope is convinced that the Roman Catholic Church is a source of poverty although in a strange manner he professes his love for this religion. He states: “There is something beautiful and almost divine in the faith and obedience of a true son of the Holy Mother. I sometimes fancy that I would fain be a Roman Catholic—if I could; as also I would often wish to be still a child—if that were possible” (58). Here, Trollope uses a parent-child metaphor in reference to the Catholics and the Roman Church.

Trollope’s vision of complacent French Canadians is wrong, yet because he likes the image of obedient, childlike Catholics, he dismisses all facts which prove otherwise. For example, he very briefly mentions Joseph Papineau, the leader of Patriote Movement and Lower Canada Rebellion of 1837-1838, making him an exception to the rule. Trollope also fails to understand the persistence with which French Canadians preserved their language and traditions. He acknowledges that they retain their identity in small villages yet argues that in big cities they become “less and less French” (58). Trollope patronizes French Canadians even more than Anglo-Canadians.

Trollope never analyzes all the consequences of the metaphor he introduced. He prefers to dwell on the nature of the idealized relationship between mother-country and child-colony:

and Macleod). For a very different reading of the Northwest Resistance of 1885, see the contributions by Klooss, Kostash, and Lehmkuhl in this volume.

Then comes a middle state in which the son does much for himself, but not all. In that middle state now stand our prosperous colonies. Then comes the time when the son shall stand alone by his own strength; and to that period of manly self-respected strength let us all hope that those colonies are advancing. (*North America* 92)

According to Trollope, Canada belongs to the prosperous colonies along with Australia, New Zealand, Cape of Good Hope, and Jamaica. Trollope predicts that sooner or later these colonies will become independent. The question is when this time will come and what would be the outcome of the necessary separation from parental authority:

It is very hard for a mother country to know when such a time has come; and hard also for the child-colony to recognize justly the period of its own maturity. Whether or no such severance may ever take place without a quarrel, without weakness on one side and pride on the other, is a problem in the world's history yet to be solved. (92)

Trollope is convinced that the United States of America remains the most successful daughter of Great Britain, and even the ongoing Civil War can be treated as a proof of the success achieved by the Americans. The American response to British paternalism was violent and loud—they wanted independence and achieved it, albeit at a great cost.

But what is the Canadian response to this kind of paternalism, i.e. the benevolent yet very firm reign of Great Britain? What can Canadians expect from the British government? Trollope finds an answer to that question in Aesop's famous fable about "The Frogs Who Desired a King." In this story, the frogs wanted to have a king, and Zeus granted their wish by sending them King Log. King Log lay quietly and did nothing, and after a while the frogs became bored and annoyed with such a pathetic monarch. Therefore, they once again asked Zeus to send them a better king, and this time the god sent them a new king—Stork (or Snake in other versions of the story). Trollope perceives the Canadians as the wiser version of Aesop's Frogs, when he writes:

What is the cry even of the Canadians—of the Canadians who are thoroughly loyal to England? Send us a fainéant Governor, a King Log, who will not presume to interfere with us; a Governor who will spend his money and live like a gentleman and care little or nothing for politics. (*North America* 98)

The Canadians desired to govern themselves. That means their submission to British Imperialism was superficial. They accepted the formal superiority of Great Britain, but they wanted real power. And Trollope admits that such desire is natural and justified:

They are to govern themselves; and he who comes to them from England is to sit among them as the silent representative of England’s protection. If that be true—and I do not think that any who know the Canadas will deny it—must it not be presumed that they will soon also desire a fainéant minister in Downing Street? Of course they will so desire. Men do not become milder in their aspirations for political power, the more that political power is extended to them. Nor would it be well that they should be so humble in their desires. Nations devoid of political power have never risen high in the world’s esteem. (98)

Trollope’s next pages are devoted to the question of the potential unification of the Canadas with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, as well as the possible separation of Canada from Great Britain. It is interesting that Trollope was sure that even after gaining independence Canada would retain the monarchy although he thought that she should have a new king, presumably one of Queen Victoria’s sons: “I will venture then to suggest a king for this new nation; and seeing that we are rich in princes there need be no difficulty in the selection” (100-01).

Anthony Trollope’s political diagnoses might seem simplistic. Yet it should be underlined that they reflected to a certain degree the feelings expressed by many Canadians. John A. MacDonald, the first Prime Minister of Canada, in his famous speech of 6 February 1865, acknowledged that the colonies were in a “transition state,” shifting from being dependent territories to being Britain’s valuable allies: “Gradually a different colonial system is being developed – and it will become, year by year, less a case of dependence on our part, and of overruling protection on the part of the Mother Country, and more a case of a healthy and cordial alliance” (qtd. in Egerton and Grant 394).

In *North America*, Trollope writes with irony about British imperialism, defining it as “hope that the glory and extent of the British Empire may remain unimpaired in *sæcula sæculorum*” (98). He pretends to be above such desires, knowing that all empires must sooner or later be destroyed. However, one cannot deny that Trollope’s mother-country-child-colony metaphor is based on the concept of British superiority.

CONCLUSION

It is a paradox, well illustrating the complex nature of the Victorian epoch, that Anthony Trollope fancied himself a Liberal or, as he called himself, “an advanced conservative Liberal” (*Autobiography* 294). According to Trollope, the main difference between Conservatives and Liberals lies in their attitude towards inequalities and progress. A Conservative wants no progress and wants to preserve the *status quo* and the distances between classes. A Liberal “is alive to the fact that these distances are day by day becoming less, and he regards this continual diminution as a series of steps towards that human

millennium of which he dreams” (Trollope, *Autobiography* 293-94). A man unable to accept calling a chambermaid a young lady because of the supposed class difference, proclaimed himself to be progressive, tolerant, and open-minded. This paradox is also discernible in his travelogues, in which liberal thoughts often coexist with bigotry and an overbearing sense of superiority, and his sense of superiority made him blind to certain aspects of the phenomena he perceived and described.

Indeed, the Canadian response to British imperialism was unique—it involved superficial submission and, at the same time, persistence on self-governance. Anthony Trollope noticed this tendency even on the very basic level during his encounters with Canadian workers and servants. Despite their lower socio-economic status, they demanded to be treated as equals. By showing respect to the poorest workers, they subverted the conservative notions of Victorian society.

Philip Buckner argues in *Canada and the British Empire* that while English-speaking Canadians felt a bond with the “mother country,” accepting her heritage, they “realized that they were British with a difference” (8). Recognizing this difference made them feel not worse but better. As Buckner writes, “In some respects they thought of themselves as Better Britons, living in a land that offered greater economic potential, that avoided the rigid class distinctions of the mother country and that produced healthier and stronger men and women” (8). This is the phenomenon Anthony Trollope perceived yet failed to understand.

Trollope was essentially right in many of his predictions concerning Canada and the Canadians. He rebuked the concept of the American annexation of the Canadas—despite his fear of the conflict between the British and the Americans. He clearly saw that this could happen only if the Canadians wanted such a solution themselves. Trollope was convinced that the inhabitants of Canada had much more in common with the British. Therefore, they would never agree to become another state of America, which for him was belligerent and expansionist, governed by politicians of William H. Seward’s type. Trollope thought it probable that all the British territories and colonies in North America would and should unite, which was accomplished on 1 July 1867.

Trollope also guessed that the Canadians would retain the monarchy although he was of the opinion that they would want to have their own monarch—a new king for a new country. That did not happen. Yet Trollope was essentially right when he predicted that the Canadians would consent to the continuation of the kabuki theatre of the British monarchy if only they were to rule and decide for themselves and their country. It was true a hundred and fifty years ago, and it is true nowadays when Canada remains a member of the Commonwealth of Nations and has Queen Elizabeth II as the reigning constitutional monarch.

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