In Search for Canadian Political Development:
An Examination of Canadian State Transformations through the APD Lens

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Practical considerations have led most national political science associations and university departments worldwide to distinguish four major subfields of the discipline – the politics of "one's own" political system, comparative government, International Relations, and political theory. Few political scientists would, of course, claim that this distinction – and especially the one between the first two subfields – is *more* than convenient. A quick glance at the situation in the United States suggests a slightly different picture. Some of the most prominent students of American politics now subscribe to an ambitious research program called American Political Development (APD), and although this group of researchers does clearly not *monopolize* the study of U.S. government, its prominent role is, for instance, highlighted by the existence of its own scholarly journal (*Studies in American Political Development*) as well as an entry (by Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek) in Ira Katznelson's and Helen Milner's authoritative edited volume *Political Science: The State of the Discipline* (2002). According to its proponents, however, the label APD does not merely refer to a set of *substantive* research interests and questions exclusively linked with U.S. government, but also indicates a specific *theoretical* understanding of politics at large which supposedly transcends American idiosyncracies and therefore promises to be useful in a much wider comparative perspective. In fact, a review (by Rogers M. Smith) of Orren's and Skowronek's (2004) programmatic book-length treatment of APD research and its conceptual innovations states that "it is a major contribution to inquiry on how best to study not just American politics, but politics, period". If so, comparativists and Canadianists might ignore the literature on APD – which has gone largely unnoticed outside the United States – at their own peril.

In this paper, we therefore explore that literature's potential contribution to research in the fields of Canadian – and ultimately, comparative – government. We are particularly interested in APD's specific conceptualization of government authority, (formal) political institutions including the state as a whole, and political change or development. As the paper intends to show, a theoretical framework inspired by the APD literature may indeed be usefully applied to Canadian political development and holds the promise of yielding fresh insights that give full weight to the issues of temporality, order, and disorder highlighted by that literature.

We proceed in three steps. In the following section we begin by outlining the theoretical essentials and key concepts of APD, primarily drawing on Orren's and Skowronek's seminal book. Here we clarify APD's relationship with different strands of the new institutionalism and the recent historical turn in political science: What exactly does APD *contribute* to these broader literatures which also claim that institutions and history "matter"? We also discuss a number of *tensions* in the APD research program: its focus on the past and on one specific case – the political system of the U.S. and its exceptionalism – on the hand, and on the other, its interest in the "big" questions of social theory and its promise to yield generalizable (empirical as well as normative) insights that are relevant for an understanding of the present. These apparent tensions not only signal the great ambition of the research program, but also shed doubt on its promises and alleged transferability to *other* political systems.

As always, the proof is in the pudding, and so we propose a (necessarily tentative and cursory) reading of Canadian political history through the APD lens in the remainder of section two and section three. Canada is both a rather obvious test case for the transferability of the APD approach and a relatively hard one. On the one hand, the two North American democracies certainly share more than a border; in terms of geography and history, or culture and language, Canada has more in common with its neighbour than any other test cases that we might have

chosen. On the other hand, extant comparative work on the two countries tends to highlight the *differences* between them – and the love-hate relationship of Canadians with their U.S. neighbours has long been mirrored in the reluctance of Canadian political scientists to adapt theoretical frameworks developed stateside to the study of their *own* governance arrangements. Instead, as Vipond suggests, Canadian political science has long had a pronounced "sense of […] exceptionalism" (2008, 6), too. The recent comparative turn of the discipline in Canada might make it more receptive for the potential contribution of the APD approach, though (White et al. 2008).

In the main part of the paper, then, we intend to show how the basic ideas underlying APD can be liberated from their narrow engagement with U.S. political history to establish a framework for the investigation of political development in Canada and elsewhere. We distinguish two core dimensions of such an analysis, *politics in time* and *politics through time*, and apply this framework to an examination of Canadian state transformations. Under the heading of politics in time, we reconceptualize the Canadian state as a multi-layered political order. Here we discuss the juxtaposition of different historically constructed modes of governance – such as federalism, Westminster democracy and constitutional jurisprudence – and try to demonstrate the value-added of a focus on the simultaneous operation in the Canadian state of different contextual layers that cannot be jammed into what Orren and Skowronek (1994, 321) have called "neatly ordered periods". Consideration of the Canadian state through time will then allow us to identify endogenous sources of change stemming from mismatch and frictions between these layers and to scrutinize how these pressures translate into typical patterns of change. In particular, we probe three distinct patterns of change suggested in the APD literature and their value for the analysis of Canadian political development: persistent, recurrent and emerging patterns. Thus we offer a thumbnail sketch of what is to become a systematic reconstruction of Canadian political history that aims to uncover the "deep structures" of the Canadian state and to trace the "common grammar" of its development and transformations since 1867. In conclusion, we briefly discuss "next steps" of this work in progress and speculate on the comparative uses of the APD approach.

1. From American to Canadian Political Development

There is, of course, a long-standing and rich tradition both of historical and political science scholarship occupied with the political history of the U.S. and the (perceived) exceptionalism or finality of its political order, which includes classics all the way back to Tocqueville, Louis Hartz's (1955) work on the liberal foundations of the U.S., Burnham's (1970) on critical elections and realignments, and many others (see the overview in Orren and Skowronek 2004, ch. 2). However, as a clearly identifiable academic enterprise with its own research interests, and with its own explicit set of theoretical foundations and methodological orientations, APD is both narrower and younger than this tradition. Here we follow John Gerring (2003, 86) in viewing Stephen Skowronek's *Building a New American State* (originally published in 1982) as APD's founding text.

To grasp the contribution of APD, we have to consider its specific relationship with the *institutional and historical turn* in political science, and moreover, to clarify what makes it a *political science* rather than a historical research agenda. Skowronek's title (and, of course, the book as a whole) hint at a number of key characteristics as well as revealing (potential) tensions

of the APD approach: The substantive focus is on the U.S. as a political system that is undeniably sui generis, research questions are developed with a view to this specific context, and so research in the APD mould is essentially case-study research. Yet, at the same time, it is pursued against the backdrop of "big" and "meaningful" questions – such as class relationships and state (trans-)formation – that have preoccupied major strands of "grand" social theorizing and comparative historical research in Europe and North America (Marxists and Weberians, the modernization paradigm, etc.). APD's take on the political history of the U.S. is thus clearly informed by broader comparative perspectives and frameworks, however implicitly, the discovery of *generalizable patterns and causal mechanisms* is undoubtedly part of its agenda (Gerring 2003, 82-3), and hence APD scholars like Orren and Skowronek insist on their *political science* credentials: *explaining* political development rather than "merely" describing (or narrating) it is the ultimate objective. Arguably, such context-sensitive research on a specific political order – the U.S. – that is nevertheless informed by (and contributing to) broader comparative perspectives and their explanatory objectives combines the best of two methodological worlds, but it is equally clear that there might be tensions and pitfalls in such an endeavour.

Secondly, it is readily apparent that APD research is primarily interested in the *macro* level of "structures". More precisely, the focus is on government authority, on constitutions and other formal political institutions, and ultimately on the state writ large – although the micro level of political behaviour or "agency" is not completely neglected either.[1] This makes APD one of the "leading force[s] in the rediscovery of institutions" (Gerring 2003, 82), along with other variants and proponents of the *new institutionalism* (Evans et al. 1985; Steinmo et al. 1992; Immergut 1998; Hall and Taylor 1996; Lecours 2005). APD scholars, then, highlight that "institutions register order; they are mechanisms through which individuals coordinate their actions and expectations" (Orren and Skowronek 2004, 79), implying and enforcing norms and rules, and hence "participat[ing] actively in politics: they shape interests and motives, configure social and economic relationships, promote as well as inhibit political change" (78). And while we have to refrain from a more detailed examination of APD's conceptualization of institutions here, it bears mentioning that it is a fairly narrow understanding: The focus is on *government institutions* that "establish relations of authority" (83) between and among citizens and political actors of various kinds. Most importantly, then, institutions are not conflated with, for instance, social norms and discourses, or ideas, as in the sociological and discursive strands of institutionalism (Smith 2006). Instead, the focus is on a set of arrangements – such as presidentialism, federalism and judicial review, or party and electoral systems – that has long preoccupied "traditional" research in constitutional law and political science. We believe that this somewhat "conventional" focus is hardly inappropriate or outdated but rather provides the institutional analysis of political development with a clear and "manageable" focus.

Thirdly, APD research partakes of – and contributes to – the historical turn in political science (McDonald 1996; Pierson 2004). It shares with this much broader literature – and especially with the so-called historical institutionalism – the conviction that history and timing "matter" in the analysis of political issues, and that historical explorations – even going back to the distant past and the founding moments of political orders – are required to understand contemporary issues. Much of the historical institutionalist literature puts forward the notion of

[1] And as with the new institutionalism in general, the question how exactly the relationship between "structure" and "agency" – between the roles of institutional constraints and political leadership, for instance – is conceptualized in APD would deserve (and need) considerably more attention than we can give to it here.

path dependence (Mahoney 2000) – and some version of a *punctuated equilibrium model* – to justify its focus on history and timing. Prior decisions – embedded in and perpetuated by institutions – represent constraints for political actors down the road; critical junctures or windows of opportunity for institutional and policy change (thought to be usually "opened up" by exogenous shocks) are therefore considered to be rare and brief. Overall, a focus on institutions entails an accent on *stability*.

Scholars like Orren and Skowronek fully acknowledge that this, at first glance, seems to clash with their interest in *political development* (see also Lieberman 2002). However, the tension is perhaps only apparent. In fact, the case might be made that one of the most important (potential) contributions of APD to the historical institutionalist literature resides precisely in its much more sophisticated understanding of the relationship between institutions and political development, an understanding that might help this literature to get beyond the (now widely conceded) shortcomings of the path dependency and punctuated equilibrium models. For APD scholars, political history is *not* adequately described as a sequence of phases of stasis, interrupted ("punctuated") by brief critical junctures, and hence periodization schemes that carve up the flow of time into internally coherent slices are viewed with considerable suspicion (Orren and Skowronek 1994, 321, and 2004, 103; see also Crouch and Farrell 2004; Falletti and Lynch 2009). A narrow conceptualization of path dependence has been criticized for being "both too contingent and too "deterministic" – overestimating the role of institutional constraints in phases of "normal politics" and, conversely, the scope of agency in critical junctures that disrupt established orders and usher in far-reaching change (Thelen 1999, 385; see also Harty 2005; Howlett and Rayner 2006). From an APD perspective, critical junctures do not grow out of nothing; they are *themselves* contextualized. Politics is constantly "in motion" – and even instances of extraordinary political change are set against an historical context, with some authority relations already in place. There are, in other words, no "clean slates." Not every change represents *political development*, however, and again, APD provides what we consider to be a helpful solution for the "threshold problem" of any research into the change of political orders: What constitutes (major, enduring, …) change, as opposed to the kinds of temporary fluctuations, false starts, etc., that may always be discovered as long as we look closely enough? According to Orren and Skowronek (2004, 123), political developments is "a durable shift in governing authority."

Moreover, APD views political orders as multi-layered, each layer moving (or not) according to its own logic and at its own pace. APD – like other variants of historical institutionalism – thus aims to historically reconstruct the evolution of political orders by tracing its constitutive elements back in time. However, instead of analytically separating change from continuity, as in path dependency theory, the approach posits that different temporal processes and mechanisms whose respective logics may not always be compatible operate simultaneously, and that there may be frictions between these processes ("intercurrence"). This intercurrence – and hence the fact that political orders are usually *not* in equilibrium – is, in turn, thought to be the crucial factor in (the explanation of) political development. Thus we believe that intercurrence and related concepts have the potential to breathe some fresh air into institutionalist research because they enable a more fine-grained and "realistic" analysis of temporal processes.

However, it must be conceded right away that APD's understanding of institutions and temporality as well as its insistence on the role of historical and political contexts is not without its own problems. The tension between context-sensitivity and ambitious comparative and

explanatory objectives has already been pointed out. Likewise, the value-added of "going back in time" for research that is supposedly motivated by current empirical (and normative) issues has to be demonstrated. The problems are not least of a methodological kind, as John Gerring (2003) has recently pointed out. The causal models suggested – or implied – by APD are exceedingly *complex*. Whether – or how – these models can be adequately tested in case-study or comparative research has now become the issue of heated debates (which are, in turn, linked with much broader debates on qualitative-interpretive v. quantitative-statistical research, case-study and small-N v. large-N designs, or even *Verstehen* v. *Erklären* and history v. political science; see for example King, Keohane and Verba 1994; Brady and Collier 2004; Gerring 2006).

Before we turn to our empirical application of APD concepts to the political development of Canada, we might ask ourselves in general terms why they have so far not been widely used or discussed by Canadian scholars. On the one hand, one could argue that there was much less of a *need* to 'bring the state back in' and rediscover institutions in Canada (and Europe) than in the U.S. – that Canadians have devoted much of their attention to the history and constitution of their nation, to institutions and the state all along, and that the approaches against which U.S. institutionalists and APD scholars position themselves (behaviouralism, rational choice, and so on) have never come to dominate Canadian political science to the same extent as its American equivalent. The key planks of the new institutionalism and the historical turn, then, might be said to "embody continuity rather than rupture" (Lecours 2005, 4) from a Canadian point of view. On the other hand, the transfer of APD concepts and themes to the Canadian environment does not always seem straightforward, and might even require an inappropriate amount of "conceptual stretching." In the words of Robert Vipond (2008, 7), "the most obvious way to extend the analysis of Canadian politics in a comparative direction would have been through a serious encounter with the politics of the United States," but "there has never been a strong scholarly foundation in Canada for studying American politics. Until the Second World War, the centre of gravity for Canadian scholarship in comparative politics was Britain, not the United States." There were, of course, good reasons for this – and many of these reasons for ignoring U.S. approaches altogether or engaging in no more than selective borrowings might remain valid.

With Orren and Skowronek (2004, 33), "examining political development in the United States is tantamount to interrogating the national premise," the "master narrative of American politics." It would seem that this premise is very different in Canada, and this has, of course, also been the key message of much extant comparative work on the two North American democracies, their political cultures and development (Lipset 1990). Although the concept of political development itself has more and more lost its normative and teleological overtones, the belief in the "manifest destiny," robustness, and perfectibility of the American political order certainly has to be understood as a crucial element of its peculiar development. Canada was established after the first and major unity crisis of its neighbour had just been overcome, and Canada's master narrative – if indeed there is such a thing – has certainly remained more disputed than the American creed. The highly optimistic thrust of that creed is undoubtedly contrasted with an awareness of the controversies around and precariousness of the Canadian national project. However, instead of pursuing such a discussion on political cultures and master narratives, we are going focus on three institutional aspects of the Canadian political order (in the sense defined above) and their development in the remainder of the paper.

2. Building Blocks of Canadian Political Development

Before we can engage into an inquiry of how (and why) authority relations between actors or institutions have changed over time, it is necessary to clarify how the governing authorities of a given polity – such as Canada – are constituted. An analytical perspective that situates politics "in time" thus needs to be receptive to different institutional layers simultaneously in operation when investigating processes of continuity and change. Taking seriously the notion that politics is always historically constructed requires a disaggregation of the unit of analysis into its constitutive parts, each of which probably has different roots and trajectories. This "temporal matrix" (Orren and Skowronek 2004, 116), then, makes it possible to scrutinize how political development is endogenously generated by frictions and mismatch between the layers of the political order, and to examine how the polity itself is historically pre-set to respond to such demands for political change.

2.1 Canadian Politics in Time

We posit that institutional order and disorder within the Canadian polity is primarily created by the juxtaposition of three unsynchronized (and not always compatible) layers: Westminster democracy, federalism and (Charter-based) constitutional jurisprudence. Together, these three layers and their development over time create the web of authority relations in which political entrepreneurs operate, and with which they are confronted whenever they want to depart from the historically established status quo. To uncover the historical roots of the first two layers, Westminster democracy and federalism, we have to return to the formative event that brought the modern Canadian state into existence. The critical juncture which opened between 1864 and 1867 gave way to a lasting rearrangement of the governance regime in British North America by reallocating power resources between the British motherland, the colonies and the newly established federal tier, thereby firmly entrenching these two ordering mechanisms constitutionally. Its theoretical significance as a formative act results from the order-shattering effect of this comparatively brief period. A combination of exogenous shocks and processes with endogenously generated frictions made the established imperial order more vulnerable during the second half of the nineteenth century. A major reorientation of Britain's imperial policy, the growth of the "colonial leviathan" (Greer and Radforth 1992) and political deadlock stemming from the requirement of a double majority from both halves of the United Province of Canada for political decision-making were important in that that they ushered in a situation of increased historical openness. As a consequence, structural constraints on political action were substantially relaxed and made possible a major departure from the historically established status quo.

However, this critical juncture is also a case in point for the claim that there are no clean slates. Garth Stevenson (1977, 74), for instance, denies that Confederation was a critical juncture at all. For him, it "was not really the establishment of a new state, but rather the adaptation of an existing state to new purposes and new circumstances. The Canadian state had been established by the Act of Union in 1841, complete with its government, bureaucracy, courts and legislature." The historical roots of Westminster democracy, and especially of the principle of parliamentary supremacy, reach back well into the first half of the nineteenth century. Already before the arrival of responsible government in 1848 British American parties resembled those of Britain rather than those of the United States or France (Underhill 1974, 10). The acceptance of responsible government marked an important turning point as it further amplified and accelerated this

emerging but still rather loosely structured pattern. After the realignment of 1854, the contours of that two-party system – which lasted until the end of World War Two – were roughly discernible (Careless 1967; Cornell 1962). Moreover, parliamentary supremacy migrated from the imperial parliament to the newly established House of Commons in the wake of Confederation. Not surprisingly, defenders of provincial autonomy have hinted at the structural similarity in the relationship between the British motherland and the colonies on the one hand, and Ottawa and the provinces post-1867 on the other (Laforest 2007, 56). From this point of view, the power of reservation, the declaratory power and, since the mid-twentieth century, the spending power appear as remnants from the old imperial order which became de-institutionalized and then re-institutionalized as they found their way into the set of prerogative powers of the federal government.

Uncovering the roots of federalism itself, as enshrined in the BNA Act, proves more problematic. The United Province of Canada was formally a unitary system of government. This was the intention of the Durham Report, which deliberately broke with the federal principle by fusing Upper and Lower Canada into one single system of government. And yet, political contingencies stemming from unintended consequences ensured that the political system in the colony soon operated like a quasi-federal system. Contrary to Lord Durham's expectations, the device of equal representation resulted in the survival of English-French dualism within the framework of a formally unitary system, fostering the emergence of dual parties, double ministries and sectional politics (Careless 1967). This quasi-federal system of government, however, primarily displayed features of intrastate federalism for it incorporated constituent units into the decision-making process at the federal level, thereby establishing institutional entanglement and joint decision-making (Smith 1984).

After the critical juncture of 1867, in contrast, the federal system evolved in a highly path dependent fashion, almost prototypically along the lines of interstate federalism (Broschek 2009). Thus while in the case of Westminster democracy the critical juncture amplified and firmly entrenched an already existent pattern, the opposite holds true for the federal layer of the political order. What became amplified was not a federal layer marked by institutional entanglement but one that fostered self-rule – including, of course, the self-rule of Quebec – by clearly demarcating the division of powers between the federal government and the provinces. Negative feedback effects generated by stalemate in the United Province of Canada appear to have shaped the delegates' attitudes towards the federal principle during the critical juncture. Moreover, institutional disentanglement meant that frictions were significantly reduced after 1867 since there was a greater institutional fit between interstate federalism and Westminster democracy (Smith 1984; Vipond 1985, 272-73). As Jennifer Smith (1984, 270, italics in original) put it,

> [t]he 'inherent defect' of the latter [the United Province of Canada] was that it tried to combine *within itself* two contradictory principles, federalism and unity of action. […] The Quebec scheme […] remedied this by modifying the federal element of the new national government in such a way that it no longer seriously interfered with unity of action.

Although a critical juncture, unlike more gradual forms of political change, signifies an encompassing shift in authority relations, it is not necessarily the case that all layers of a political order are equally affected. As Capoccia and Kelemen (2007, 349) point out, "a historical moment that constitutes a critical juncture with respect to one institution may not constitute a critical

juncture with respect to another." Whereas the reconfiguration of power relationships accompanying the critical juncture of 1867 was at least modest in the case of Westminster democracy and substantial in the case of federalism, the established judicial system by and large remained stable. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC) kept acting as the final court of appeal until 1949, notwithstanding the creation of the Canadian Supreme Court under the Mackenzie government in 1875. It was not until 1982 that "patriation" made the Canadian state and its Supreme Court the sole custodian of constitutional development. Yet while this transfer of formal amending power from Great Britain to Canada only consecrated practices that had already been evolving over the course of time, the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms implied a major and abrupt shift in authority relations. Attaching the Charter to the existing judicial layer provided for a type of change that Streeck and Thelen (2005, 31) have labelled institutional conversion: It redeployed existing institutions, the Constitution and the Supreme Court, to new purposes. This political innovation substantially altered power relationships both within the boundaries of the state and its internal web of institutions, and between persons and institutions on the outside. Also, and quite similar to the layers of Westminster democracy and federalism, the Charter had a rather ambivalent impact as it simultaneously created (a new form of) order and disorder within the Canadian polity.

Overall, the evolution of a multi-layered political order has to be viewed as a highly contingent process. The notion of contingency signifies that the outcome of such a process, a specific institutional setting and its peculiarities, could also have been different at any given point in time.[2] Conceptualizing Confederation as a critical juncture thus does not imply that successful state formation was inescapable. Given the Maritime colonies' lack of enthusiasm for Confederation (Martin 1990; Stevenson 1989), the political landscape north of the 49th parallel could be looking very different today had Nova Scotia and New Brunswick ultimately refused to join the Confederation project. The historical evolution of the federal layer also registers highly contingent alignments. Interstate and intrastate elements within the federal layer of the Canadian state used to be more mixed in the post-Confederation decades, despite the undeniable prevalence of the former. Yet features more in line with the logic of intrastate federalism such as the representation of regional interests in the federal cabinet, the dual mandate or the Senate's exercise of veto powers were subject to temporal downstreaming whereas features resembling the logic of interstate federalism were amplified. This historical outcome was contingent upon positive feedback effects accruing to various actors from both tiers of governments for different reasons (Broschek 2009). For example, protagonists of the provincial rights movement soon discovered that the division of powers was more conducive to their efforts to force back the centralized federalism envisaged by John A. Macdonald than intra-institutional checks like the federal cabinet (Morton 1980; Vipond 1991). While the Bleus in the federal cabinet learned that intrastate "voice" strategies were an unsuitable device for preventing the New Brunswick School Act or the execution of Louis Riel, Oliver Mowat's "exit" strategies demonstrated that the

[2] On a very general level, the scope of contingent states is delimited by two poles: impossibility and necessity (Luhmann 1976; Schedler 2007). Sociologist Niklas Luhmann, for example, refers to contingency as the objective possibility that reality might always look different and that the boundaries of contingent alignments are solely demarcated by the negation of necessity and impossibility (Luhmann 1976, 295). However, as Schedler points out, to make sense of contingency in the social and political world requires acknowledging that contingency is not totally random but involves some degree of conditionality (Schedler 2007, 70-4). That is, certain options are more likely to materialize than others, and social scientists have to come to grips with what might be called "bounded" contingency. The analytical challenge, then, is to sketch out what relevant alternatives and scenarios exist within a given political order and to make plausible why a specific, contingent alternative has prevailed over others.

institutions of interstate federalism could be successfully employed for challenges to the federal government's superior position within the federation (Hodgins and Edwards 1978; Armstrong 1981; Vipond 1991). Such positive feedback effects favouring the expansion of interstate federalism at the expense of intrastate federalism were by no means limited, however, to provincial governments and parties. In fact, federal governments also cherished the emergence of a layer in line with the interstate logic as it permitted effective legislation without provincial interference in many important areas. Most notably, programmes such as the First National Policy, the National Energy Program (NEP) or, more recently, the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST) could not have been passed and implemented so easily had provincial governments had a say in federal legislation.

Finally, as for the emergence of the judicial layer of the Canadian political order, a significant dose of contingency was involved as well. In particular, the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 signifies the limits of the model of path dependence when it comes to explain important developments in Canadian political history as this event implied far-reaching, off-path change occurring both late in the historical sequence and without the appearance of an exogenous shock. Instead, analytical categories introduced by Stephen Skowronek (1993, 2008) in his studies on presidential politics in the United States can be helpful for making sense of this important shift in governing authority. Through this analytical lens, the authority pattern instituted by Pierre E. Trudeau during his last term of office much resembled what Skowronek describes as the "politics of disjunction" and the "politics of reconstruction". According to Skowronek, the politics of disjunction occur under two conditions (Skowronek 1993, 39-41; 2008, 61-4). First, the inherited political order is highly vulnerable as ideological commitments and the societal and political coalition of interests that have established or underpinned these commitments become increasingly fragile and challenged. What Skowronek has in mind here are broad paradigmatic views that constitute the parameters of politics for a long stretch of time like, for example, the notion of the Keynesian welfare state. Second, whether a political leader, a president or prime minister, still adheres to the established, yet vulnerable political order or repudiates it is also crucial for the analysis of leadership patterns. While the latter is typical for reconstructive leaders, the former applies to the politics of disjunction.

On the one hand, Trudeau's leadership style during his last term of office was consistent with the politics of disjunction. Most elements of the so-called Third National Policy – such as the National Energy Program (NEP), the new and rational approach to economic development with its special emphasis on the West or the restructuring of federal-provincial fiscal relations – can be considered as a desperate attempt to affirm and consolidate the precarious legacy of the Second National Policy (see, for example, Eden and Molot 1993; Leslie 1987; Milne 1986; Smiley 1987). On the other hand, his unilateral push for patriation and the entrenchment of the Charter clearly displays the leadership style that Skowronek calls reconstructive:

> By shattering the politics of the past, orchestrating the establishment of a new coalition, and enshrining their commitments as the restoration of original values, they [reconstructive presidents] have reset the very terms and conditions of constitutional government (Skowronek 1993, 38-9).

This description of reconstructive leadership nicely fits with Trudeau's new approach to constitutional politics. In particular, Trudeau deliberately sought to dismiss efforts to accommodate Quebec's demands by continuously devolving more and asymmetric competences.

In doing so, he not only broke away from the accommodating strategy of Lester B. Pearson but also departed from the pattern he used to follow himself until about the mid 1970s:

> We have tried governing through consensus, we have tried governing being generous to the provinces […] and that was never enough. […]. The pendulum will keep swinging […]. I thought we could build a strong Canada through cooperation. I have been disillusioned (Trudeau, cited in Milne 1986, 27).

By entrenching the Charter, Trudeau deliberately repudiated "old-style" territorial politics and instead aimed at the creation of an institutional counterweight which he hoped would contribute to the weakening of existing attachments to regional identities and anchor them in a pan-Canadian constitutional vision based on individual rights.

2.2 Canadian Politics Through Time

An important issue raised by APD scholarship concerns the origins and distinct patterns of change within a given polity. While the former section was devoted to the question how political order in Canada was established *in time* (and in three historically constructed institutional layers), this section elaborates on how the Canadian political order has made its way *through time*. This animated perspective, as it were, centres on two intertwined questions. First, what are the endogenous forces that systematically generate a demand for political change? And second, how, if at all, are these pressures channelled by institutions through time? Do they manifest themselves in typical patterns of adaption and processes of "institutionalization, de-institutionalization, and re-institutionalization" (Olsen 2009, 8)?

Frictions and Intercurrence

Without outright denying the existence of path dependencies in the political world, APD-oriented research has a slightly different approach to the analysis of stability and change (Orren and Skowronek 2004, 106-8). The concept of path dependence emphasizes the stickiness of political institutions. Once they have become "locked-in" early on in a historical sequence, contingent political outcomes are assumed to reproduce themselves by way of positive feedback effects that cause institutional self-reinforcement and inertia. In contrast, scholars in the APD tradition stress the *frailty* of ordering mechanisms. Institutions are not viewed as self-reinforcing until such feedback dynamics are disrupted by an exogenous shock. Instead, they are assumed to be permanently contested and challenged and, therefore, need to be kept alive and reproduced against threats of disruption. While the primary purpose of processes of institutionalization is to establish and maintain order, institutions also provoke contestation and so entail a built-in potential for disorder and change.

The notions of "frictions" and "intercurrence" have been introduced in order to capture how such endogenous pressures might emerge from the interplay between incongruent layers of a political order (Lieberman 2002, 702; Orren and Skowronek 2004, 116-18; Lecours 2005, 13, and 2005a, 187; Olsen 2009, 17-8). The multiple layers which constitute a political order and their temporal dynamics are usually not fully compatible and synchronized. Hence, mismatch stemming from their juxtaposition is assumed to be an important source for political change:

> [P]olitical arrangements are rarely, if ever, the products of a coherent, total vision of politics that informs institutions and ideas and knits them together into a unified whole […]. There may be instances in which ideological and institutional patterns 'fit' together and cumulate into something that looks like an equilibrium […]. At other times, however, they will collide and chafe, creating an ungainly configuration of political circumstances that has no clear resolution, presenting actors with contradictory and multidirectional imperatives and opportunities (Lieberman 2002, 702).

APD research has centred around three areas in its investigations of frictions and intercurrence between layers of a political order. One thread of the literature is preoccupied with a critical reconstruction of political identities and political culture in the United States (Smith 1993, 1997; Orren and Skowronek 2002, 725-37, and 2004, 33-77). This current within APD parallels similar efforts in Canadian political science as it sets out to modify, if not to fundamentally challenge, well established assumptions on political culture, most notably those based on a Tocquevillian or Hartzian framework. Most importantly, scholars have objected against interpretations portraying political culture as a rather monolithic entity and, instead, suggested that it is rooted in multiple traditions. A conceptualization of political culture as a multi-layered phenomenon that entails contradictory and non-simultaneous ideational layers can thus help to develop a more fine-grained picture. Rogers M. Smith, for example, hints at three distinct ideational layers which according to him constitute and drive American political culture:

> At its heart, the multiple-traditions thesis holds that the definitive feature of American political culture has not been its liberal, republican, or 'ascriptive Americanist' elements but, rather, this more complex pattern of apparently inconsistent combinations of the traditions, accompanied by recurring conflicts (Smith 1993, 558).

In a similar vein, recent contributions have criticized long dominant readings of Canadian political culture such as the "tory image" (Whitaker 1977) or Gad Horowitz's (1966) adaption of the fragment theory to Canada. Janet Ajzenstat and Peter J. Smith (1995) have pointed to the importance of long neglected republican ideas for the formation of Canada's political culture during the nineteenth century, thereby uncovering not only an additional layer but also the different historical roots of and frictions between these layers. Nelson Wiseman (2007), while being far less critical of the Hartz-Horowitz argument than Ajzenstat and Smith, nevertheless paints a more complex picture of Canadian political culture as well. He notably detects regionally varying sequences and sheds considerable light on their multiple roots and trajectories. Finally, Hamish Telford's (2002) effort to find common ground between Horowitz on the one hand, and Ajzenstat and Smith on the other leads him to the introduction of a fourth constitutive element into the political-cultural order: He proposes that alongside the three pillars originally detected by Horowitz (toryism, liberalism and socialism), a fourth layer (neoconservatism) has to be taken into account.

Another thread of the APD literature investigates frictions emanating from tensions between ideational and institutional layers (Hacker 2005; Lieberman 2002; Lynch 2006). Institutional arrangements allocate authority and power resources between governmental branches, territorial units, citizens and the state. Given their distributional consequences, specific authority structures need to be justified through the social construction of cultural meanings and scripts. Hence, ideational and institutional layers are highly intertwined since the allocation of authority, as embedded in the institutional layer, cannot be isolated from such legitimating frameworks that may justify or challenge its distributive consequences. In Canada, the institutional evolution of interstate federalism has, for example, been accompanied by a continuous differentiation of

diverging ideational layers, each offering a distinct normative frame about the moral foundations of the federation (LaSelva 1996; Montpetit 2008; Rocher and Smith 2002). As a consequence, since Confederation, the status quo of federal-provincial relations has almost always been challenged. The provincial rights movement was successful in establishing the "myth" (Russell 2004, 48) of the compact theory and prevented an early "lock-in" of John A. Macdonald's imperial and highly centralized conception of the federation. A second variant of the compact theory, which gained considerable currency just a little later at the end of the nineteenth century, refused the notion of a compact among equal provinces and, instead, claimed that Confederation was a pact between two founding nations.

Frictions between institutional and ideational layers thus kept the Canadian federation permanently in a state of disequilibrium. They emerged both vertically between the federal government and the provinces and horizontally between the provinces. As for the former, the two compact theories were crucial for triggering a process of rather implicit institutional change, supported by the JCPC, which prevented Ottawa's dominant position within the federation from stabilizing, notwithstanding its initial temporal advantage. While the two compact theories thus converged as they significantly contributed to constrain the federal government's use of some of its prerogative powers notably including the Peace, Order and Good Government clause (POGG) and the declaratory clause, they used to collide whenever the question of asymmetrical arrangements within the federation came up. In particular, the constitutional struggle over the Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accords provides for an illuminating example of how frictions can eventually culminate in an irresolvable and highly contradictory configuration. Finally, intercurrence, a term coined by Orren and Skowronek, factors in mismatch between institutional layers:

> Intercurrence […] refers to the simultaneous operation of different sets of rules, to a politics structured by irresolution in the basic principles of social organization and governmental control, and it describes the disorder inherent in a multiplicity of ordering rules […]. [I]t is not the historical juxtaposition of different ideas or traditions that is critical but the historical juxtaposition of differently constituted governing authorities, which may be created, modified, and displaced without any discernible effect on traditions (Orren and Skowronek 2004, 118).

A reconstruction of intercurrence highlights the (inter-)action of multiple institutional layers of a political order – how they are layered upon one another in an incompatible and sometimes even antagonistic manner and how these incongruous patterns of authority relationships endogenously generate a potential for disorder and change. This analytical lens brings us back to our interpenetration of the three institutional pillars that constitute the Canadian polity: Westminster democracy, federalism and Charter-based jurisprudence.

However, before we can sketch the intercurrent authority relations between the three institutional layers and how they impinge on each other, we need to take into consideration that each layer can also be a source for both order and disorder itself. For example, scholars have disagreed on the question whether Westminster democracy in Canada has fostered or eroded national unity. Whereas Alan Cairns (1968, 62) criticized the disintegrative effects of Canada's electoral system, claiming that it is "detrimental to national unity," MacGregor Dawson (1970, 430) and J.A.A. Lovink (1970) have held the opposite view. Both positions can, in fact, claim some plausibility as the electoral system has advantaged both political parties with a highly centripetal orientation such as the Liberals and parties representing centrifugal forces within the

federation, most notably the Bloc Québécois. Federalism, too, has had a highly ambivalent, order-creating and order-shattering impact over the course of time. On the one hand, Canadian federalism has offered, by and large, an adequate institutional device for the accommodation of a highly diversified and heterogeneous society. Not surprisingly, no small number of comparativists, many of them from outside Canada, regard it as a role model for conflict resolution within multi-national democracies (Papillon 2008, 123). On the other hand, as Lawrence Anderson has recently demonstrated, federal institutions created incentives to ultimately direct grievances among French Canadians towards the goal of secession (Anderson 2007). The federal institutional framework, according to his argument, was crucial in making secession a viable remedy for these grievances and promoting it over other, less radical options. Finally, the ordering and disordering effects triggered by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms have manifested themselves in various forms, most notably in tensions emanating from the juxtaposition of individual and group-oriented rights as well as from the judicialization of the political process. The contradictory impact of the Charter is not only reflected in the highly politicized discourse within the scholarly community (Knopff and Morton 1992; Morton and Knopff 2000; Smith 2002), but also became particularly visible within the political realm when the emergence of a negative coalition comprising political actors with very different ideological commitments significantly contributed to the failure of the Charlottetown Accord.

Before the Charter was adopted in 1982, intercurrence between institutional layers primarily concerned the interpenetration of Westminster democracy and federalism. The principle of parliamentary supremacy almost inevitably collided with the division of powers laid down in the BNA Act. The combination of both institutional provisions simultaneously reduced tensions which had existed in the United Province of Canada due to entanglement and joint-decision making and generated new ones as it turned out that both tiers of government would not be fully operating in mutual isolation from each other after Confederation. Until the first decades of the twentieth century, it was notably the broad set of prerogative powers that interfered with constitutional provisions safeguarding provincial autonomy. For example, frictions manifested themselves in brief reactive sequences of action and counteraction. Between 1867 and 1896, the federal government made frequent use of the power of disallowance, rejecting sixty-five provincial bills within this period. Provincial governments, most notably the Mowat government of Ontario, in turn re-enacted most of the disallowed bills, often more than three times (Russell 2004, 39). As is well known, this constitutional "dance" was finally settled by the JCPC, which usually upheld the provincial position.

While judicial review thus contributed to rendering politically unusable most prerogative powers of the federal government by the first decades of the twentieth century,[3] frictions emanating from institutional intercurrence between the two layers did not wane. A functional equivalent, the federal spending power, has emerged as an enduring and so far unresolved source of conflict between Ottawa and the provinces. This simultaneous operation of different sets of rules – the power of parliament to raise money by any mode of taxation and the right to spend in any expenditure field on the one hand, provincial autonomy sustained by the exclusive assignment of jurisdictions on the other hand – clearly highlights how politics is often structured

[3] As Alan Cairns, in his landmark 1971 article, has persuasively argued, the JCPC and its rulings should not be viewed as a cause in its own right but rather as an intervening variable as it merely reinforced an already existing trend: "It is impossible to believe that a few elderly men in London deciding two or three constitutional cases a year precipitated, sustained, and caused the development of Canada in a federalist direction the country otherwise would not have taken" (Cairns 1971, 319).

by irresolution in the basic principles of governmental authority. Not only is the spending power another striking example of how institutions generate order and disorder: It can even be considered, with Telford (2003), both as an instrument of nation-building and of nation-destroying. The intercurrence of institutional layers, moreover, has been an important source of dynamism within the Canadian polity triggering, for example, processes of "competitive state building" (Banting 1995) and what Alan Cairns (1979) has called the "other crisis of Canadian federalism." As provincial governments have not been able to effectively constrain the federal government in making use of its spending power, they have themselves capitalized on their institutionally entrenched power resources and, in a sense, emulated Ottawa's approach:

> The federalism of contemporary big government at both levels can best be understood in terms of the tendency of each government to seek to minimize the policy contradictions in its own jurisdiction and reduce the environmental uncertainty emanating from the conduct of other governments….Each government, in brief, strains, to exaggerate somewhat, to attain and exercise the powers of a unitary state (Cairns 1979, 192).

Patterns of Change

Frictions within a multi-layered political order do not automatically translate into political change. Nor may friction-induced political change take off in any direction. Instead, such tensions and the manner in which they might alter the status quo are channelled through institutions. As the degree of institutional rigidity, that is, the specific combination of enabling and constraining institutional properties, can vary considerably, political orders tend to yield different patterns of change. An investigation into the historical construction of governance regimes, therefore, requires an understanding of the more comprehensive regularities operating at a deeper level of the political order: How can this "grammar" of a polity, understood as an institutional mechanism that translates inputs (demands for change resulting from frictions and intercurrence) into a certain scope of contingent outcomes (or "bounded contingency"), be captured?

Karl Loewenstein's classical distinction between inter- and intra-organ controls can be a valuable starting point in this endeavour. According to Loewenstein,

> [t]he techniques of control are structurally of two kinds. If the control devices operate *within* the organization of an individual power holder, they are spoken of as *intra-organ* controls. If, however, they operate between the several interacting power holders, they are called *interorgan* controls (Loewenstein's emphasis, 1957, 164).

In order to shed light on the transformative capacity of a contingently structured institutional order, we thus have to examine how power resources are distributed and assigned among its constitutive layers. Political orders significantly vary in their capacity to translate endogenously generated pressures for political change as they differ in terms of how they combine facilitating inter-institutional and constraining intra-institutional properties (for a similar argument, see Sheingate 2007; Olson 2009). Inter-institutional mechanisms facilitate patterns of far-reaching change as agents operating within a historical site hold power resources rather independently of each other. In contrast, intra-institutional mechanisms complicate a departure from the status quo since they create interdependence by entangling the power resources between political agents. This institutional environment thus tends to favour status quo defending coalition over entrepreneurial agents.

By and large, the Canadian polity displays inter-institutional rather than intra-institutional features. The federal layer has amplified interstate federalism while institutional devices more in line with intrastate federalism lost relevance until the early twentieth century. Westminster democracy, too, performs as an inter-institutional rather than an intra-institutional mechanism. The electoral system, for example, fosters (single-party) majority governments, exceptions notwithstanding.[4] Likewise, the transformation from cabinet government to prime ministerial government has further increased the concentration of power within the executive (Savoie 1999). Finally, the Supreme Court has become increasingly engaged in judicial activism since 1982. Without being the sole interpreter of the constitution, as James B. Kelly (2005) has argued, it is nevertheless an important additional agent of change within the Canadian polity which derives its power independently from other institutional layers.

Identifying regular but distinct patterns of change over time within a multi-layered political order is a thorny issue. Yet a tentative taxonomy aimed at systematizing such patterns is offered by Orren and Skowronek, who suggest to distinguish between persistent (or path dependent), recurrent (or cyclical) and emergent patterns (Orren and Skowronek 2004: 12-3; for similar attempts see Streeck and Thelen 2005; Bennett and Elman 2006). Dynamism inherent in a political order can amplify an initial event and yield stability or even inertia as in the case of persistent or path dependent patterns. Alternatively, as in the case of recurrent patterns, the aggregate state of the order might also oscillate between one ore more alternatives over the course of time. Finally, with emergent patterns, history does not repeat itself or oscillate but, instead, something qualitatively new is added to the order. This might even trigger (at least partial) transformations of other layers and their interplay via intercurrence. As a general observation, there is more room for contingent alignments in the case of recurring and emerging patterns.

Given the combination of marked frictions and a comparatively low degree of institutional rigidity due to the predominance of inter-institutional mechanisms, a specific feature of Canadian political development is the prevalence of recurrent and emergent patterns of change. This is not to say that path dependence is entirely useless for the study of Canadian political development. Such persistent patterns do exist and, somewhat paradoxically, have even contributed to keeping inter-institutional mechanisms alive. As was already pointed out above, this holds in particular for the interstate nature of the federal layer, which has become more pronounced over time and made any efforts to re-introduce or at least strengthen intrastate elements highly unlikely. The reform resistance of Westminster democracy points in a similar direction. To be sure, there have been modest adaptations as part of the "democratic reform" agenda of the Harper government such as, for instance, the attempt to fix election dates.[5] Whenever more substantial proposals are put forward which would involve a significant shift of governing authority, as was the case with Senate or electoral reform, they are, however, unlikely to finally materialize.

Recurrent patterns are of particular importance for an appropriate understanding of Canadian political development. Oscillating shifts in authority relations are ubiquitous because

[4] While there are indeed periods which tend to produce minority governments, most notably the late 1950s until the early 1970s (minority governments: 1957; 1962; 1965; 1972) and the current situation since 2004 (2004; 2006; 2008), it is striking that they do not hamper political change or create political deadlock. On the contrary, one of Canada's most important policy innovations, medicare, was initiated under a minority government.

[5] It is interesting that, as in so many other cases of policy innovation within the Canadian polity, such initiatives tend to be introduced ("bottom up") at the provincial level.

inter-institutional mechanisms allow for a comparatively broad scope of variation. This built-in potential for switching between two or more aggregate states is particularly obvious in the relationship between Ottawa and the provinces. It is commonplace in Canadian political science to describe the evolution of the federal system as oscillating between a centripetal and a centrifugal pole (for example, Black and Cairns 1968). Federal ascendancy has been reflected in a sequence of national policies (Eden and Molot 1993; Fowke 1957; Smiley 1987). The capacity to initiate and implement these large-scale, paradigmatic policy programmes was rendered possible, to a large extent, by Ottawa's successful exploitation of its prerogative powers, which allowed the federal government to circumvent, if necessary, constraints stemming from the division of powers by acting unilaterally.[6] Province-building, in turn, often became accelerated in response to periods of federal dominance:

- the politics of the so-called provincial rights movements, most notably Oliver Mowat's initiatives, can be considered as a counter-reaction to Macdonald's First National Policy;
- the "silent revolution" of the 1960s or the politics of the "New West" under Lougheed and Blakeney are related to the federal government's regained ascendancy under the umbrella of the Second National Policy;
- likewise, more recent trends labelled "pan-Canadian provincialism" by one observer (Courchene 2007), at least to some extent, bear upon the new and unilateral course taken by the Chretien government in the mid-1990s.

This oscillating-pattern interpretation of dynamics in the federal arena is certainly a somewhat simplified view and should, moreover, not be interpreted as a zero-sum game. In particular, as Alan Cairns (1979), among others, has pointed out, both tiers of government have simultaneously enhanced their statecraft capacities over the course of time. However, the switching nature of alterations of the status quo, bounded within the inter-institutional framework of Westminster democracy in combination with interstate federalism, can easily be detected, for example, in the recurrent debates on the vertical fiscal imbalance or the sequence of periods of unilateralism and cooperation within the system of intergovernmental relations.

Finally, the inter-institutional nature of Canada's multi-layered order has also been conducive to emergent patterns of change. As power resources are rather independently allocated between institutional layers, entrepreneurial agents have often been successful in challenging the historically established status quo. The formation of the Keynesian welfare state in Canada under the umbrella of the so called Second National Policy is a case in point. Between the 1940s and 1960s, the formerly established liberal order became transformed into the "two worlds" of the Canadian welfare state by juxtaposing liberal and social-democratic elements (Tuohy 1993; see also Banting 2007). The different policy regimes that constituted the Canadian post-war welfare state have emerged in a highly contingent pattern which has been shaped and filtered through the interplay of inter-institutional layers. As is well known, bottom-up innovation played a crucial role in this developmental process.

In particular, Al Johnson's (2004) biography of the Douglas government in Saskatchewan impressively demonstrates how provinces are furnished with a potential to develop statecraft as

[6] This also implies, as Cameron and Simeon (2000, 75) have pointed out, the opportunity to make use of the federal spending power "in reverse" as it was the case with Ottawa's unilateral introduction of the CHST and Employment Insurance (EI) in 1995/96.

an important prerequisite for change. After having inherited an economically and administratively backward province, the CCF government transformed Saskatchewan into one of the most advanced provinces at that time. Moreover, the politics of the Douglas government had important repercussions for the rest of the country as it became a role model not only for health care, but also in the field of public administration. If successfully exploited, therefore, inter-institutional allocation of power resources can be a crucial condition for successful large-scale policy innovation.

It is not least during unsettled times, when opinions over the direction of change fundamentally collide, that such institutional redundancies can facilitate the transformation of frictions into substantial change, whereas intra-institutional arrangements, in contrast, tend to favour status quo-defending coalitions. In this respect, the example of universal health care is particularly striking. Given the reservations of important political actors such as the Pearson and Lesage government and the strong objections of several provincial governments, the universal template that had already been implemented in Saskatchewan was, in fact, the least likely option to become realized. And yet, the contingent outcome of the 1965 federal election, which made the Liberal government dependent on the NDP in the House of Commons, ensured that a significant policy innovation on the provincial level became transformed into a pan-Canadian context.

4. Discussion and Outlook: Promises and Pitfalls of the Study of Canadian (and Comparative) Political Development

In this paper we explored the transfer of an analytical framework and concepts gleaned from APD scholarship to the study of Canadian government and its development over time. Although no more than a preliminary and highly selective thumbnail sketch of Canadian political development viewed through the APD lens could be offered here, we believe this to be a worthwhile exercise. The extant literature on Canadian political history and institutional development is, of course, impressive – and our point is certainly not that it stands back behind its American equivalent in terms of its richness and sophistication. Likewise, the various strands of the new and historical institutionalism are already rather prominent in Canadian political science and notably in research on the country's own government arrangements – certainly more so than, say, rational choice. What, then, might the value-added of a more systematic and explicit transfer of the APD framework to Canada be?

We argue that it provides a useful focus for a synthesis and reconstruction of different aspects of Canadian political development – a synthesis that might ultimately reveal the "grammar" and "complex institutional ecology" (Olsen 2009, 24) of government authority and its change over time in Canada. Even a holistic perspective on political development, as it is envisaged by APD scholars, requires some kind of focus or lens – otherwise the "big picture" will be submerged in historical detail. Unlike some other strands of the institutionalist literature, APD proposes crisp and empirically viable definitions of politics, institutions and change that remain close to the (presumptive) core meanings of these terms and thus provide researchers with the conceptual tools to separate the "wheat" of a polity's key structural features and instances of major change (development) from the "chaff" of secondary aspects and minor change. As we intended to show, APD also offers a promising alternative to the (by now rather stale and unconvincing) path dependence and punctuated-equilibrium models by highlighting frictions and

intercurrence (as opposed to the imagery of institutional equilibria and synergies), and also by highlighting the constant intertwining of stability and change, successful institutional reproduction and contestation in political development.

A reading of Canadian political development through this lens might, then, help us pull together findings from, say, research into federalism and the Charter (and then some) into a single, coherent perspective. And, of course, such insights on the patterns of change and causal mechanisms that are particularly salient in Canada might be usefully fed back into the APD literature itself. For it is hard to see how APD's ambition to contribute to answering "big" questions and to yield generalizable insights can in the long run be achieved without engaging in, and with, genuinely *comparative* research. Paired comparisons of the United States and Canada – which already have a certain tradition – would be obvious candidates here, and Canadianists might become 'makers' of comparative (political development) theory rather than being mere 'takers' in the process.

But one need not want to stop there. APD's interest in state (trans-)formation suggests that its analytical framework might be usefully adopted for research on globalization-induced institutional and policy change on a much broader scale. Various differences notwithstanding, the recent literature in that field has also privileged a kind of punctuated equilibrium model (see Hurrelmann et al. 2007) – with stylized narratives related to the heyday of the democratic (or Keynesian welfare) state in the post-war era, the disruptions of (or since) the 1970s, and the (presumptive) emergence of a new state type (whose contours, however, remain somewhat vague as the plethora of proposed labels indicates) as its building blocks. We venture to suggest that a much greater accent on the many variations and internal tensions of both "old" and presumably emerging "new" state forms, on their manifold ideational and institutional layers, on frictions and intercurrence might be a good antidote against overly simplistic accounts of the modern state's transformations – and on the (non-)convergence of institutions and policies – in the era of globalization.

Such an extension of APD-oriented research is, of course, greatly beyond the purview of this paper. However, it provides a good "anchor" for a brief concluding dicussion of APD's weaknesses and the pitfalls of its transfer to Canadian or comparative research. Gerring (2003) has probably voiced the most outspoken criticism to date. While we believe that APD (or at least the version proposed by Orren and Skowronek) is more coherent and less eclectic than many other strands of institutionalism, Gerring is probably right in suggesting that many of its concepts remain unwieldy and difficult to operationalize in empirical research. Likewise, his complaints about (too much) causal complexity, about circularity in causal logic, and about unclear – perhaps ultimately unverifiable – causal models and hypotheses in much of this literature appears to be at least partly justified. Such problems would, of course, have to be solved in Canadianist or comparative research drawing on the APD framework as well – and there is no denying that many of the conceptual and methodological problems highlighted by Gerring are likely to become even *more* acute in genuinely comparative research. By contrast, from an historian's and case-study researcher's perspective, the question is rather whether the "depth and richness of concentrated single-unit analysis" (White et al. 2008, viii) – the presumptive comparative advantage of historical and case-study research on the United States *or* Canada – should be sacrificed at all. Yet, if the ultimate goal is to indeed to make valid explanatory inferences, and to come up with "meaningful" generalizations, as presumably in much APD and institutionalist

research, then an increased and "relevant" sample of cases would seem to be helpful. Our exploration of the Canadian case was meant to be a small step in that direction.

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