

union was not only desirable but inevitable.<sup>119</sup> Goldwin Smith, who had been a professor of Modern History at Oxford, England, and had then taught at Cornell University in New York (State), had already aired such opinions during the American Civil War, that is before Confederation. Responding to the nationalism of the 'Canada First' movement, he found in the geographical facts, in the assumed impracticability and the lack of cohesion in a thinly populated country spanning a huge continent, but also in the shared Anglo-Saxon heritage of the two neighboring countries important reasons for advocating a union of Canada and the USA. His most detailed statement was contained in his monograph of 1891 *Canada and the Canadian Question*.<sup>120</sup> It is true, he thought of a federal system, which would allow diversity, and referring to the union of England and Scotland, he offered it as a model for a potential fusion on the North American Continent.<sup>121</sup> In another context he countered, almost facetiously, the argument of those eulogists who traced the straight thinking and moral purity of Canadians to the clear and frosty air by pointing to the heat of the stoves inevitable in their cold country.

What Goldwin Smith had advocated, was presented by some observers in the first decades of the twentieth century as a indisputable fact and reality. Several writers who diagnosed a rapid process of homogenization in the New World claimed that the two countries on the North American continent had already become indistinguishable – that 'continentalism' was already basically achieved. The most detailed claim based on evidence of the extent to which Canadian society had been affected and shaped by the new

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<sup>119</sup> Cf. Konrad Gross, 'America and Canada: Continentalist Approaches', in: Roland Hagenbüchle & Josef Raab, eds., *Negotiations of America's National Identity*, vol.ii, Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2000, pp. 590-607.

<sup>120</sup> *Canada and the Canadian Question*, Toronto 1891. Cf. also A. M. Smith, *The Book of Canadian Prose, Vol. II: The Canadian Century: English-Canadian Writing Since Confederation*, esp. pp. 40-50.

<sup>121</sup> There is also a touch of racism, a fear of Chinese irruption on the Western Coast, and there is direct reference to a hierarchy of races, for he says explicitly that the two 'Anglo-Saxon countries' are inhabited by a 'higher race than China'.