

support for the exaggerated claims of the members of the 'Canada First' movement. The existing ties with northern Europe were more welcome than the less desirable influence of less healthy regions in the south, also in the USA, which in the eyes of the members of the 'Canada First' movement did not recommend a closer alliance with the more southerly part of the continent.¹¹⁵ In fact there was anxiety in Canada about potential annexation by the US. Canadian cartoons from the 1840s to the 1890s which depict Uncle Sam's or Brother Jonathan's advances and attempts to seduce 'Miss Canada' reflect this concern.¹¹⁶

As Carl Berger has shown in his instructive study of such statements by early nationalists in the late nineteenth century¹¹⁷ Canadian writers extolled the sturdy race and the northern strain in the population of the new Dominion, which included both French and Anglophone settlers. The superabundance of ozone in the Canadian atmosphere, associated 'with soundness of mind and body', was praised by poet Charles Mair, who elsewhere emphasized the antagonism between Canada and her southern neighbor. There were, indeed, advocates of closer ties and a continentalist perspective in the economic sphere. Montréal businessmen, for instance, as early as 1849 called for the annexation of Canada to the U.S. but their voices were silenced by the members of the 'Canada First' movement.¹¹⁸

The continentalist assumptions were most memorably and emphatically put forward by the historian and journalist Goldwin Smith, who from the early 1860s onwards gave many reasons why a

¹¹⁵ It was felt that the U.S., which attracted vagrant populations from less favorable places of Europe, was clearly at a disadvantage.

¹¹⁶ Cf. the 20 cartoons in Laurence Cros, 'Le Canada et la peur de l'annexion américaine à l'époque victorienne, à travers les dessins politiques canadiens', *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 23, (Spring 2001), 157-86.

¹¹⁷ Cf. the chapter 'The Canadian Character' in *The Sense of Power*, pp. 128-52.

¹¹⁸ On the ramifications of the debate connected to the search for a national Canadian literature, cf. Carl Ballstadt, ed., *The Search for English-Canadian Literature: An Anthology of Critical Articles from the 19th and early 20th Centuries*, Toronto, 1975.