N. Wiseman, “A Note on ‘Hartz-Horowitz at Twenty’: the Case of French Canada,” *CJPS* 21 (1998)

**Overview**

Forbes argues, in his piece, that the basic weaknesses of Hartz’s fragment theory are most easily exposed in the case of French Canada. This paper argues the opposite: Hartz’s approach in this case is particularly illuminating rather than representing its Achilles’ heel. Hartzian analysis is consistent with the historiography of French Canada. The growth of liberalism in the 19th century that Forbes points in the French-Cdn fragment pales when placed in a comparative perspective, as Hartz’s theory requires. It is the mix of feudal and liberal ideas in the twentieth century that helps to explain the rise of social democratic forces like the PQ.

**Background**

* Forbes, in his paper, contends that the basic weaknesses in Hartz are apparent when examining its treatment of French Canada
* Wiseman poses the opposite – that feudal French-Cdn fragment created a universe of implicit perceptions and values that shaped, limited, and then – with the liberal Quiet Revolution – exploded the kinds of politics that developed within it.
  + Hemmed by the physical pressure of Anglophones all around, cut off from a France that was no more, the French-Cdn feudal fragment unfolded.
* Forbes begins with semantic issue – is the right label “feudal” or “Catholic”?
* Wiseman also argues that Forbes does not fully grasp the Hartz-Horowitz thesis – it is **not**: if toryism yesterday, then socialism today.
  + **Rather** it is: if toryism (or feudalism) *and* liberalism yesterday, then, *possibly*, socialism today
* Hartz’s theory applied to French Canada is corroborated by the independent analysis of Marcel Rioux, the Quebec sociologist. He analyzed Quebec’s hx as a succession of three ideological eras:
  + The first, ran through the last half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century was the “ideology of conservation”
  + The second, emerging in the late 1940s, labeled the “ideology of contestation and recoupment” came to power in the form of the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s and can be linked to the liberal tradition
  + The third ideology, “the ideology of participation and development” emerged as Rioux was writing in the 1960s – it identified with worldwide socialist movements for decolonization and liberation. The outside world was “crashing in” on the French-Cdn fragment
* Hartzian theory, moreover, does not claim that the rise of socialist ideas and parties in Quebec’s politics in the 1960s and 70s was exclusively the result of the interaction of feudal and liberal ideas in the political culture. Quebec was moving from rural to urban, religious to secular – and some of the material conditions necessary for the rise of socialist ideology were created even before the Quiet Revolution
* Horowitz’s landmark contribution: socialism emerged in English Canada because of the presence of a significant tory streak in the liberal fragment (though Wiseman notes he would prefer to stress, as Tom Truman does, the direct role of transplanted British socialists”

**Conclusion**

That socialism emerged in French Canada as a result of the dynamic, synthetic interaction of feudal and liberal ideas is easier to demonstrate and consistent with the historiography of French Canada. The history of the French-Cdn fragment is perhaps the most powerful confirmation of the insights offered by the Hartzian approach, not its Achilles heel.