

FORGOTTEN ASPECTS OF CANADA'S MILITARY ENGAGEMENT

Three articles written by Canadianists and published in the 2008 issue of the *International Journal of Canadian Studies* shed a new light on Canada's foreign policy and the participation of Canadian military forces to the Second World War and the following conflicts. Although since 1945, Canadians perceived their country as a nation favouring resolution of international conflicts through peace-keeping missions, the more recent participation of Canadian military forces in more belligerent operations such as in Kosovo and Afghanistan force them to question these preconceived ideas and to recognize and accept the paradigm that supply the framework to recent Canadian military interventions.

The first article written by Professor Justin Massie titled "Quadrilatère transatlantique: sources de légitimité politique de l'usage de la force au Canada," (A transatlantic quadrilateral: sources of political legitimacy in the use of military force in Canada) raises the hypothesis that France exerts an indirect yet undeniable influence on Canadian strategic culture. According to Massie, three theories may justify this influence. First, France could influence the strategic culture of Canada, through its status of permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and its membership in NATO, the two organizations with the most legitimacy to justify the use of force in the eyes of Canadians. The second theory is based on the existence of a tight relationship between France and the Canadian Francophone community and the influence exerted by Paris on French-speaking Canadians. The third theory essentially assumes that France and Canada share somewhat similar strategic interests. The significance of France to Canada is part of the necessity for Canada, during the middle of the 20th century, to institutionalize the relationships between Canada and the Anglosphere, especially with the decline of the British Empire and the rise in power of the United States. The adherence of France to NATO allowed Canada to align its strategy partly on France's own, preserving as such Canada's independence from England and the United States.

The second article titled *Canada at War in the Pacific The Case of Complex Neorealism*, written by Mark S. Williams, states that the weakness in the complex neorealism theory in explaining the Canadian government's decision to declare war to Nazi Germany in 1939 rests on the lack of consideration given to the Canadian identity factor. He continues by stating that for Prime Minister MacKenzie King, Canada had the duty of promoting a fairer world order and that the excellent relationship shared by Canada and the United States, that prevailed for the past 100 years, should serve as an example to guide European countries. For Mackenzie King, power politics was the main reason behind the declaration of war. To fight alongside England was the equivalent of defending freedom. The low level of participation from Canada in the Pacific war contrasted sharply with Canada's engagement in Europe. According to Williams, Mackenzie King refused to engage troops in the Pacific firstly, because England and the United States were reclaiming territories that did not concern Canada. Furthermore, he wanted to keep Canadian troops in Europe. And last, he refused to conscript more individuals to send them fight in the Pacific. The war in the Pacific was perceived in Canada as an imperial war for England and the United States.

The last article titled *Emergence: Towards a Historiography of Canadian Defence Research during the Second World War* and written by Jason S. Ridler, examines the literature published in Canada on defense research throughout the Second World War, and more specifically on the two organizations responsible for it, the *National Research Council* (NRC) and the *Department of Munitions and Supply*. According to Ridler, the historiography of technological development in Canada from a defense point of view proves to be a difficult endeavour due to the scattering of research throughout different sectors of history, the technical and technological complexity of this field of research and lastly, because until recently, the necessary files were still classified. Ridler concludes by writing that the field of the history of defense research during the Second World War is gaining in breadth and that a lot more work needs to be done in this field.

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