

Empowerment through Different Means: Regionalism, Nationalism and Federalism

Alain-G. Gagnon

Born in Quebec's Lower Saint-Lawrence region in the mid-1950s, Alain-G. Gagnon has long felt a moral obligation to advance a politics of empowerment for communities in need of dignity. From his early work on local and regional development to his more recent research on multinational federalism, Gagnon has consistently advocated for the advent of a democracy that feeds justice. The decolonization movement in Africa and Asia, the Maritime Rights Movement, and—closer to home—Quebec's nationalist movement and First Nations' claims for recognition, are some of the elements that have caught Gagnon's concern for regional and cultural realities. What does empowerment mean in a world that is increasingly globalizing and encompassing? How can such empowerment be achieved? In his Trudeau Lecture, Alain-G. Gagnon addresses three distinct ways to give meaning to empowerment: regional mobilization, nationalist expression, and federal pursuit.